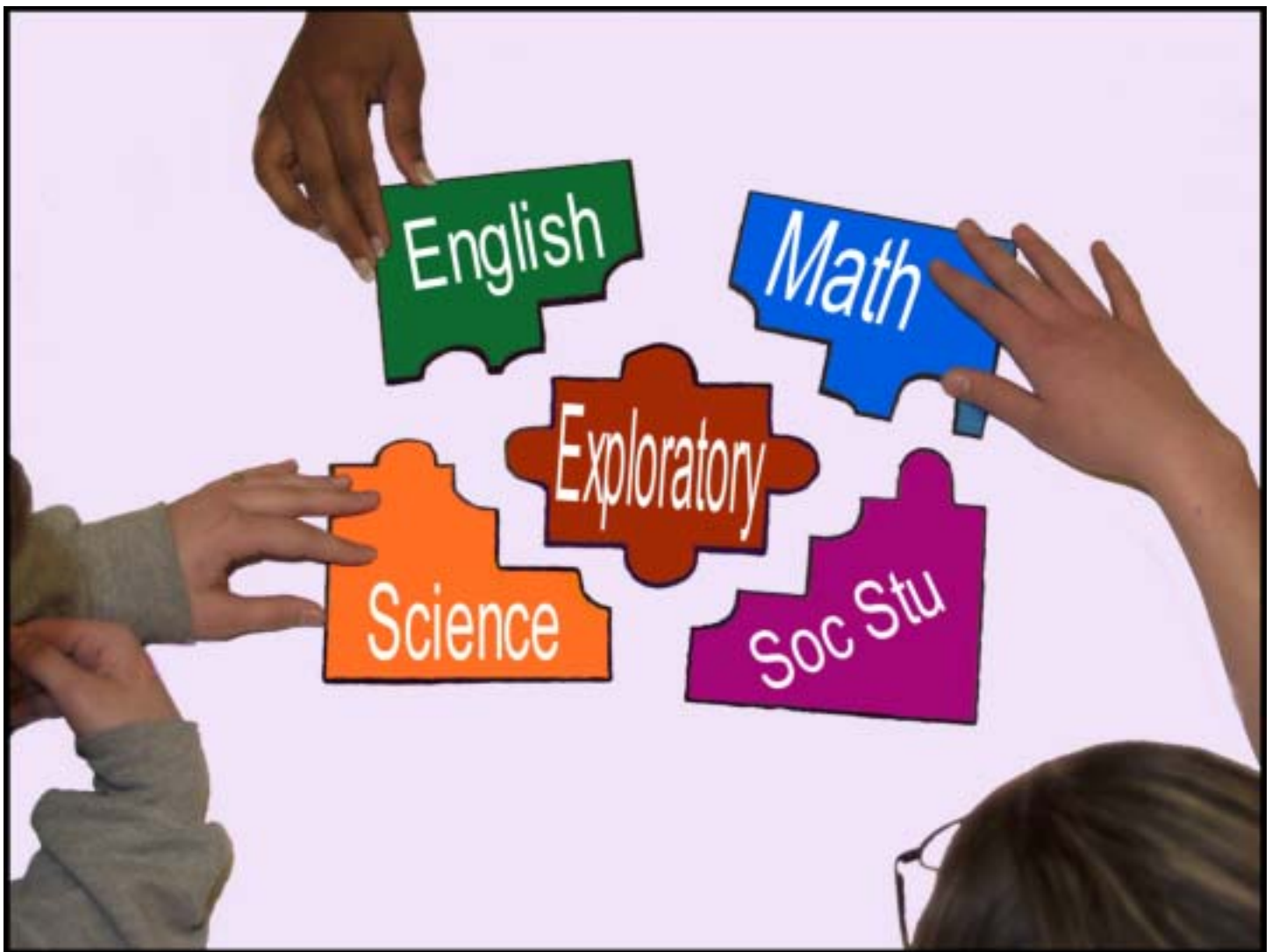


IN Transition

Journal of the New York State Middle School Association



Middle-Level Education:
It's ALL Interconnected

NYSMSA GOALS

The New York State Middle School Association (NYSMSA), representing the interests of those who serve the educational needs of young adolescents, recognized the uniqueness of middle-level students. NYSMSA is committed to helping to create and support educational programs in which all young adolescents can develop their natural capabilities to their fullest extent, building upon personal strengths and the richness of our state's culturally diverse population. The Association encourages both middle-level educators and community stakeholders to work collaboratively to meet the needs of emerging adolescents in developmentally-appropriate programs founded in academic rigor, but dealing with the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social needs of students of this age.

NYSMSA's goals are listed below. Taking into consideration current research and available resources, these goals will assist the Association in fostering the creation of new curricula in support of the NYS learning standards and, in general, supporting the improvement of instruction for middle-level students in New York State.

AWARENESS AND RESPONSIVENESS

NYSMSA believes that we must:

- Promote a climate of acceptance and understanding of young adolescents;
- Stimulate and promote the development of the middle level as a distinct educational structure for young adolescents;
- Promote middle-level education and be a significant advocate for the appropriate education of young adolescents;
- Offer a variety of professional development activities that positively impact the attitudes, performances, and practices of middle-level educators.
- Compile, maintain, and respond to current research and development initiatives.

SUPPORT

NYSMSA believes that we must:

- Be a significant source of information and resources on young adolescents and their schooling;
- Offer consultant support to schools and districts in refining and strengthening their middle-level programs;
- Provide a variety of resources (video, publication, teleconferences, position papers, etc.) in support of appropriate programs for young adolescents;
- Seek, secure, and provide grants and other financial resources to support planing and implementation of effective middle-level practices;
- Provide, throughout the year, member services to public and non-public urban, suburban, and rural schools;
- Engage regional directors who provide, assist, and support regional and state activities;
- Support the ongoing importance of communication and interaction between State Education Department personnel and members of the Association.

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT

NYSMSA believes that we must:

- Influence the quality and content of pre-service and in-service education for prospective and practicing middle-level educators;
- Support teachers, schools, and districts in refining and strengthening their middle-level programs;
- Work with constituent groups to identify effective models for curricular, instructional, and assessment issues;
- Disseminate position papers that provide guidance on appropriate curricula, instruction, and assessment issues;
- Monitor the implementation of the NYS learning standards at the intermediate level, promoting programs with strong academic rigor within the framework of good middle-level practice;
- Monitor the intermediate assessment results, seeking to ensure the results measure good middle-level practice and are developmentally appropriate in scope, content, and administration.

COLLABORATION

NYSMSA believes that we must:

- Work with other associations in sponsoring professional development activities;
- Implement a collaborative relationship with universities, departments of higher education, SED, SMSA, parent-teacher organizations, and other groups that impact on the lives of young adolescents;
- Develop and expand cooperative ventures and relationships with corporations and businesses;
- Create networks of educators, parents, and others involved in the lives of young adolescents;
- Serve on the boards of supportive organizations;
- Engage in continuous planning through participation and shared decision-making;
- Provide for internal assessment of all major Association functions with provisions for external audit where appropriate.

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A few thoughts from the President...

Jeannette Stern, Ed.D.



“An educational system isn’t worth a great deal if it teaches young people how to make a living but doesn’t teach them how to make a life.”

— Author Unknown

It’s spring, and while non-educators may welcome warmer days and flowers, public school personnel wait with trepidation for school report cards and the results of intermediate ELA assessments. The Board of Regents and the State Education Department are still deciding the form and content of the new middle-level regulations, and the state budget with its ever-important aid to education package is still in limbo as of this writing. In this atmosphere, it is easy to forget what should be the real purpose of education at this level.

This winter, NYSMSA published its paper on the *Middle-Level Exploratories: Their Intrinsic Value and Support for ELA and Math Success*. Research was gathered to show how important the skills and activities in these courses are for a well-rounded and successful education.

This issue is our next step. The difference is that the “research” here belongs to you, the

classroom teachers. When we sent out the call for articles to support the value of teaching art, music, health, technology education, and home and careers, we never expected the response to be this great.



Please take the time to read through this large issue, filled with exciting, valuable, and successful learning experiences from around the state. Take the time to investigate what is happening in these subjects in your own school or in neighboring ones.

Spring is a time for new growth. Let this issue be the “fertilizer” for new growth in exploratory subjects around the state and for new conversation on their value. Our students need this introduction into the arts, technology education and home and career skills. It is what is learned here that will make their lives more than just making a living!

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On The Cover

Photo art by Brian Sherman, Region X Director and principal of Indian River Middle School, Philadelphia, NY.

The Executive Director's Message

Dennis M. Tosetto



Recently, we finished putting the final touches on the second annual NYSMSA/CMoG Institute program that will be held on June 29 – July 1, and the results are exciting. The program is a collaborative effort between

NYSMSA and the Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG) and will utilize the ultra modern facilities at CMoG. Participants will pre-select one of seven different workshops, each of which will run over three days. The program will be limited to about 100 total registrants. The seven workshop offerings cover a range of middle-level topics that include standards-based leadership, curriculum development, subject-specific offerings, instructional methodologies and strategies, and using assessment data to guide instruction.

What makes our Institute unique is that we not only offer ten hours of middle-level instruction in a topic area that you select, but we are also offering excellent opportunities to socialize and network with fellow educators from across the state. For example, last year's catered reception was held outdoors on a rooftop terrace at the Rockwell Museum of Western Art, overlooking the city of Corning and the river that flows through it. Believe me, although there was a lot of education-related information being

shared, the reception had little else in common with your typical faculty meeting.

We usually give middle-level students a break from the rigors of classes that require a lot of "in seat" time by having them attend other classes that tend to be more physically engaging and interactive. Well, we not only ensure that our Institute workshop offerings involve considerable interaction and hands-on activity; we also provide creative, small-group breaks involving glass making. We believe ours to be the only middle-level training program anywhere in the world that provides all participants with the opportunity to not only watch and learn from hot glass workers, but also allows everyone to actually make his/her own creation in collaboration with a skilled hot glass artist!

When we're talking about hot glass, we're talking about a truly hands-on experience. Participants will use their own hands and creative skills to manipulate specialized tools to pull and twist molten glass into their own unique works of art. For example, last year I made a large long-stemmed multi-colored glass flower that could have come out of a store's display case. (That's not to say that I am that artistic, but rather that our expert helpers were that good.) In any case, my daughter Jackie loved my creation and the flower now sits lovingly on a cabinet in her home. (The way I see it, she probably believes that she still owes me for keeping her elementary school clay artwork on display in the living room all these years — I guess eventually everything evens out; given enough time.)

By now you're probably thinking that I became sidetracked in my writing and forgot to

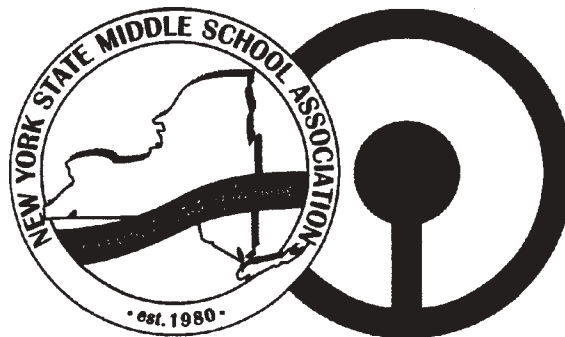
include specific information regarding the middle-level topics being offered at the Institute this summer. Actually, that's not the case. Based on personal experience, I know for certain that each of the NYSMSA/CMoG workshops is cutting edge, will be presented by truly gifted presenters, and that the workshops that are being carried over from last year were, without exception, rated exceptional by all in attendance. Unfortunately, describing them briefly in this article just would not do justice to either the quality of the content or methodology employed by each of our Corning presenters. Besides, why reinvent the wheel?

Visit us online at <http://nysmsa.org/associations/611/files/Corning04.pdf>, and the NYSMSA/CMoG Middle-Level Institute bro-

chure will appear. It can then be downloaded or printed at your convenience. It will provide you with all of the information that you desire including a tentative program schedule, workshop descriptors, and registration materials.

So, if you want to stay at the top of your profession, meet many different outstanding middle-level educators from across New York State, and enjoy one of the best experiences of your professional life, pony up \$320 and register now for this excellent three-day

program. Remember, in order to ensure appropriate class sizes, we are limiting the number of registrations that will be accepted to about one hundred. So, if you plan to join us, don't delay; register today!



Middle Level Institute at The Corning Museum of Glass

Corrections

The Winter 2004 issue of *In Transition* contained a chart (pages 24-26) of Middle-Level Education Support Schools. The contact information was incorrect for the following schools; corrections are in boldface.

Clarence Middle School
10150 Greiner Road
Clarence, NY 14031
Joel Weiss: (716) **407-9200**

Cuba-Rushford Middle School
5476 Route 305
Cuba, NY 14727
Nancy Sampson: **(585) 968-2650**

Victor Junior High School
953 High Street
Victor, NY 14564
Miryam Matulick-Keller: **(585) 924-3252**



James A. Kadamus, Deputy Commissioner
Office for Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education
Room 875 EBA (518) 474-5915

March 24, 2004

Dr. Jeannette Stern, President
NYS Middle School Association
Wantagh Middle School
3299 Beltagh Avenue
Wantagh, NY 11793

Dear Dr. Stern:

Congratulations to you and the New York State Middle School Association for your recent publication titled "Middle-Level Exploratories: Their Intrinsic Value and Support for ELA and Math Success." It is an excellent resource documenting the importance of the exploratories in grades 5-8.

I was also pleased to learn that the Middle School Association plans to augment this publication by soliciting and sharing from practitioners' practical, "real-life" examples of the role and value of exploratory courses. As you know, the Board of Regents is nearing the end of its deliberations on revisions to the regulations related to the middle grades. I anticipate that your work will help inform these discussions.

With a State as large and diverse as ours, sharing best practices among educators enables them to learn what is being done in other settings and then to have the opportunity to tweak those practices to fit individual circumstances and settings. Such sharing is an excellent professional learning experience and a chance to build local capacity.

As New York State pursues its Strategy to Implement the Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and the Department's Essential Elements of Standards-Focused Middle-Level Schools and Programs, examples of successful programs will be most helpful not only to the Board of Regents but also to the field. I appreciate your efforts. Once you complete your information collection activity, I would urge you to consider publicizing your results and findings on the Department's Virtual Learning Space so others can benefit from your work.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of young adolescents and those who educate them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Kadamus".

James A. Kadamus

Research at a Glance

Jeff Craig, NYSMSA Director of Research and Technology



The purpose of this feature of In Transition is to provide a succinct research reference for middle-level practitioners. Topics will reflect timely topics and best practices. To suggest a topic for a future Research at a Glance, send your suggestion to craig@nysmsa.org. The topic for this edition's column reflects the current review of the Commissioner's Regulations. To read a more thorough analysis of this topic, you can find NYSMSA's paper at www.nysmsa.org.

Weighing the Importance of Exploratories: What Does Research Say?

The NYS Board of Regents is presently considering the revision of the regulations that govern middle-level education in New York State. Commissioner's Regulations 100.3 and 100.4 are those that describe these requirements. Most of the discussion and debate has centered on questions of flexibility in meeting some of the NYS Learning Standards. More specifically, the debate has focused on whether the seat-time requirements for exploratory subjects should be reduced, eliminated, or made flexible or optional.

Exploratory subjects go by many different names: exploratories, specials, encore, subjects not tested, etc. Subject areas that are included under the exploratory umbrella most often include health, home and careers, technology education, art, music, and physical education. Up until now, most of the debate has centered on technology education, art, music, and home and careers. Professional organizations have written position papers, embarked on letter-writing campaigns, appeared at the Board of

Regents' hearing, etc. The division in the debate seems to have the School Boards Association and School Superintendents on one side, with the rest of the field on the other side. The School Boards Association and School Superintendents Association have argued that the NYS Learning Standards for exploratory subjects can be met without requiring specific seat time units in the regulations. Others argue that only when requirements are specific and descriptive can we ensure the integrity of instruction across New York State.

While readers may be of differing convictions in this debate, the question remains: What does research say about the relationship between academic achievement (in all measures) and the exploratory subjects? There is no research that can be found indicating that the study of art, music, and technology decreases student achievement. The only research that connects study in exploratories and academic achievement indicates a positive correlation. What follows is a summary of that research.

As cited in *Quality Health Education and Physical Education: An Integral Part of Middle Level Education*, a study released by the California Department of Education in December, 2002, showed that students in grades five, seven, and nine who were able to meet all of the six standards on a particular fitness test also scored significantly higher on the Stanford Achievement Test in math and reading.

Studies by Elias, Sins, and Weissberg (1997), Wise and Okey (1993), Marzano, Pickering & Pollock (2001), and Brendtro, Brokenleg, & VanBockern (1990) link the development of good decision-making skills and

the ability to engage in personalized planning and goal setting to increased academic success.

In a study entitled *Involvement in the Arts and Human Development: General Involvement and Intensive Involvement in Music and Theater Arts*, researchers found that there was “positive academic developments for children engaged in the arts...between 8th and 10th grade as well as between 10th and 12th grade.”

In a study entitled *Learning In and Through the Arts: Curriculum Implications*, researchers looked at progress of over two thousand children in grades four, five, seven, and eight at twelve public schools in four states. The researchers found that students who had experienced high levels of art instruction earned higher scores in measures of creative thinking than those who did not experience this high level of instruction.

In research related to the Chicago Arts Partnership in Education, Catteral and Waldorf found that more than 60% of elementary students who had the study of art integrated into their curriculum as part of the CAPE program performed at or above grade level on the math portion of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills while in the rest of the city, the percentage was at about 40%.

In a study conducted by the College Board between 1995-97, students with four years of study in the arts scored 59 points higher on the verbal and 44 points higher on the math portion than students with no course work or experience in the arts.

In a University of Sarasota Study conducted by Kluball and Trent, it was found that middle and high school students who participated in band scored higher in standardized tests (relating to math, science and ELA) than those students not in the band.

According to a report in *Neurological Research* (March 15, 1999), elementary students who were taught about fractions through the

study of the different notes in music scored higher on fractions tests than those taught about fractions without music instruction.

Kathryn Vaughn, reporting in the *Journal Of Aesthetic Education*, reports that students who studied music had higher scores on standardized math tests. Her study of SAT scores in math and music instruction showed a positive correlation over a 10-year period.

In the publication *Critical Links* by the Arts Education Partnership, Larry Scripp points to studies that have linked math instruction to gains in spatial-temporal reasoning (studies by Hetland in 2000), math achievement (Vaughn, described above), and reading and verbal standardized achievement tests. (Butzlaff in 2000).

It is pointed out in *Turning Points 2000* that the activities in exploratory courses peak student interest and provide impetus for consistent attendance and engagement. The different learning opportunities often associated with these courses often appeal to diverse learning styles and enable students to achieve success where they had not experienced so previously (p. 132).

Champions of Change is a collection of a variety of different studies that looked at the role of the influence of arts education on the academic, behavioral and the thoughts of children. In general, the report found that the arts reach students who are not usually reached in the mainstream of academic courses, that others are reached in ways that do not otherwise occur, that the arts connect students to themselves and others, that study of the arts transform the environment for learning, that the arts provide the opportunity for more positive interactions between adults and children, that new challenges are provided for students already finding success, and that learning experiences are better connected to the world of work.

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Have you visited NYSMSA's website lately?

Go to www.nysmsa.org for...

- the latest information on what's new "in the middle"
- updates on State Education Department discussions
 - articles of particular interest
 - the NYSMSA book store
- ways to contact your local regional director
 - conference materials
- membership renewal and more



Lea's Lessons

Lea Macdonald

"There is a dilemma facing young adolescents today in many of our schools. If young people are not challenged to utilize all of their talents in the learning process and to participate in creative ways, they will surely fall through the cracks."

—Steven Wolk

Adolescence is an important time to provide students with rich and complex experiences. It is imperative that we, as educators, actively engage our students in meaningful, engaged learning as we implement effective, standards-based, middle-level programs in our schools. Research studies conclude that the most effective programs for students include the integration of music, art, home and career skills, physical education and technology into the core curriculum.

In an age where cutbacks are common in schools, often the exploratory programs are the first to be reduced or eliminated. Some believe that to improve test scores on the Intermediate Assessments, middle-school students should spend more time in the core academic classes and less in the related arts or exploratory classes. This could well be detrimental, not helpful. To increase motivation to learn, children need to experience learning through an integrated approach using more than one medium of communication. Classrooms enrich the learning of all students by creating a community of learners, by engaging multiple intelligences, by addressing learning styles, and by implementing interdisciplinary connections. The exploratory classes meet these goals.

The New York State Middle School Association published a report in December 2003 to emphasize their commitment to the exploratory courses at the middle level. In this position paper, the roles of exploratory courses are clearly defined. Basically, these programs capitalize on the innate curiosity of young adolescents, exposing them to a wide range of academic, vocational, and recreational subjects for career options, community service, enrichment, and enjoyment." (NMSA, 2001)

At the Pleasantville Middle School in Pleasantville, New York, students are intently interested and continually questioning the real life application of all the information and concepts they are being taught each day. The Home and Career Skills program offers a multitude of hands-on opportunities to engage students in meaningful learning. For example, 6th graders learn to sew animals and pillows; however, during the process they develop critical thinking skills in reading and following instructions, shape recognition, sequencing, and time management. In addition, 7th graders complete a series of food labs, and in the process develop skills in measurement, decision-making, time management, teamwork, and the scientific method. It's obvious that many core academic content areas are integrated into these units. In addition, as a community service project, 7th graders make dog biscuits, package them for sale and sell them to the community. The money they earn is used to purchase pet food and is donated to the local ASPCA in Briarcliff, New York. These projects are critical in the development of character and citizenship.

In addition to exploratory courses, interdisciplinary instruction gives teachers opportunities to meet the developmental needs of young adolescents while addressing the state and national standards. To create lifelong learners, students must be actively engaged in creating real products, problem solving through team inquiry and investigation and taking ownership of the learning process. This type of in-depth study engages and motivates students to climb aboard the "Learning Express." For six weeks, all seventh grade students at the Pleasantville Middle School participated in an interdisciplinary performance-based project bringing the Civil War to life. In social studies, student teams researched key events, battles, issues, and most importantly how war affected all Americans and created Confederate and Union news magazines. In English, literature-circle teams read and discussed one of six historical novels focusing on life during the war and created collaborative scrapbooks. In math, students researched statistics from the Civil War and produced different types of graphs. In science, students learned about surgery, medicine, and the environmental impact of the war. In home skills, students fashioned a replica of a hot air balloon modeled after the spy balloon created from Confederate dresses.

There has been much research on the importance of the arts at the middle level. Studies show that arts education connects learners to the world of real work. In addition, arts education requires an environment of discovery that can rekindle the love of learning in students who are tired of being filled up with facts. This is exactly what happened during this interdisciplinary unit when the arts were included in the process and the culminating event.

In physical education, students learned dances such as the Virginia Reel and Patti-Cake-Polka. In music class, students learned to play and sing songs from the Civil War to perform on *Civil War Museum Night*. Finally, in computer class students learned how to format news

articles and, with the help of a multimedia designer, create an interactive CD-ROM documenting the process and the products. The *Civil War Museum Night* was the culmination of the unit where the students shared the depth of their learning with the community. The audience enjoyed "Voices of the Civil War," a stage performance of music, dance, drama, and original prose and poetry. This interdisciplinary project engaged the diverse learners in the classroom, motivated students to take risks and to make connections among the disciplines.

We, as educators, need to remember that the young adolescents we teach are unique; this a time period when there are more physical, emotional, and social changes than any time in life, other than infancy. We know that our students require hands-on opportunities across the content areas to foster the learning of new skills and new ways of thinking. Our children come to us from elementary school with dreams and a motivation to learn. Often, they leave middle school unmotivated, frustrated or discouraged with education. We need to prevent our students from "falling through the cracks" by continuing to offer exploratory courses, interdisciplinary units and an intrinsic love of learning.

References

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Art Education

Why Art Education in Middle School?

Joan Davidson

“Our economy is no longer based primarily in product manufacturing — instead, we have an economy that is rooted in ideas, innovation and design. The creativity that this requires does not arrive with a lightning bolt, it is a learned process.”

—Dan Hunter, Executive Director of Massachusetts Advocates for Art, Science & Humanities (MAASH)

It is from this perspective that we ask decision makers, before they reduce/eliminate mandates for arts programs in middle schools, to reflect on why arts education is desperately needed in all levels of education. Like the ongoing acts of creation in the universe, the act of creation during our artistic process produces new worlds within us to be explored, made visible, and shared.

We live in a multi-cultural society. Research has shown that the nature and content of an education in the arts gives students opportunities to grow cognitively and emotionally in terms of their abilities and within the context of their peers.

Elliot Eisner in his book, *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, 2002, explains: “The arts make possible meaningful communication. Culture depends upon these communications because communication patterns provide opportunities for members of a culture to

grow. The selection of a form of representation is a choice having profound consequences for our mental life, because choices about which forms of representation will be used are also choices about which aspects of the world will be experienced.”

The process and content of art education in the middle grades indelibly inscribes a pattern of how to learn and what is important to learn for years to come. Art education is an integral part of the overall middle school educational curriculum and provides equal access to educational opportunities for all children. It creates a shared learning environment for students and staff in which the excitement of discovery, experimentation and recognition of unique ideas is nurtured, welcomed and applauded.

Consider the following:

The content of an arts education curriculum

- How it engages students in working in a particular medium to create a visual/musical/dramatic/dance form that represents *their* thinking process and the ideas they had *and* discovered in the working process.
- How it expands students view of the world by connecting them with and asking them to critically examine the work and ideas of artists
- How it provides students with important knowledge and skills so that they can make their images reflect what they want to say

The art making process

- How it helps students discover their own voice
- How ideas are revealed to students when working through the art media

The art teaching methodology

- How the **inquiry-based** art teaching process gives students an opportunity to think “out of the box”...“to color outside of the lines”
- How working in the process students are moved to question, explore, and discover, to call up and build upon **their** experiences and responses to the world
- How built-in to the process is recognition for the active participation of each student

Images created by students or master artists

- How each image increases our understanding and appreciation for the uniqueness of each person
- How images evoke memories and emotions and can help us learn about the concerns, dreams, beliefs, culture, historical time, scientific information, and technology available to the artist

Assessment practices

- How self reflection practiced by students and modeled by staff can provide new directions
- How holistic approaches and “process” tools are used to measure and foster student learning, in place of one standardized test

School morale/climate

- How the results of arts activities, individual and collaborative arts projects create a learning community
- How arts activities in a school provide opportunities for positive engagement and

feedback from peer, staff, and community members

Staff development opportunities

- How collaborative environments offer arts specialists unique opportunities to become a genuine part of curriculum planning, allowing them to advance understandings about the importance of learning in the arts among their colleagues

We know that students, staff, parents, and community members believe that art education is part of a basic education for all children in middle school and beyond. We know that each day in our schools, art educators and students demonstrate that to be the case. We call upon the New York decision makers to keep the funding for the arts program so that the arts can continue to be an integral part of every middle school program.

Joan Davidson is President of the New York City Art Teachers Association/United Federation of Teachers.

The Arts in Public Education: Why?

Dr. John W. Healy

Have we ever been held back by what we know, or by what we don't know? The arts in public education contribute to the education of the whole child, not to the isolated specialist.

Metaphorically speaking, our students run on a track...in the interest of clarity, let's say, **THE TRACK OF LIFE**, on which they are evaluated constantly. At every distance mark, at every lap, and at every mile, we as educators go to the score board. We share this quantifiable information gathering and our observations with the child and their parents. We scrupulously strive to be precise and diligent in this task. Perhaps what is, at times, forgotten is that child development is not a Time, Rate, Distance problem. Given a discernible rate of progress and given a specific rate of time to achieve that progress, assumptions may at times be confidently made as to the distances that will be covered in a child's life. That which seems somewhat predictable may not be. One would be better served by considering the metaphor of a horse race.

The inside lane of the track of life is the shortest distance to travel to achieve one's goal – a good place to be. The lanes that are positioned farther and farther out from the inside lane are an increasingly greater distance to travel to achieve the same goal. Depending on the innate abilities of our students and their life circumstances, they find themselves in their respective lanes. Certainly one's ability in certain subject areas over others will establish a predisposition toward certain lane positions. Some children, with much regret, don't make it to the track and are outside the stadium dodging traffic, trying as best they can to breach the perimeter of the stadium to simply run on the track. Art can provide children a choice in our

schools. For these children, art brings them in from outside the stadium and positions them on the track. For them, any lane of the track will be just fine. Good to be here, thank you very much! Music, sports, clubs and other specialized school-sponsored activities have historically contributed to this kind of diverse inclusiveness.

Imagery and language combined are powerful communicators of ideas; through communication there is understanding. Ask anyone you know, "How many windows are there in front of a house that you have lived in?" Have them ponder this question for a time. The numerical answer is not what is important in this question, but rather the process of coming to the answer. The image for all of us is like a website, quickly recalled, giving us immediate access to vast amounts of information. For a time, I created court exhibits for civil and criminal proceedings and pre-trial conferences. In my opinion, the more the attorneys spoke, regardless of how eloquent the oratory, the less others seemed to listen. Attorneys frequently like to use the word "clear" and they want their arguments to be memorable. Images such as drawings, photographs, technical illustrations and models with well-chosen words rapidly communicate and simplify complicated volumes of instruction. For our students to repeat loudly that which can be read will not advance them in the marketplace of ideas. Problem solving in art education is at the top of what is expected of them. Seek to find a useful and original solution to a problem posed, because in the lives of the children we work with it is guaranteed that the shape of the track that they run on will be changed.

Art education assignments establish a foundation of fundamental art skills and techniques, much the same as in English the fundamentals of spelling, grammar and sentence structure are established. Both provide the vehicle for self-expression. Since artists build on the shoulders of those who have come before them, historical artists are reviewed. How did they solve similar problems and what other

disciplines influenced these kinds of artistic outcomes? It's interesting to note that Impressionism was made possible by the new technology of that time – oil paint in portable, easy-to-carry tin tubes. Painting outdoors requires quick, confident brush strokes that strive to capture a spontaneous impression of what is not seen from the artist's studio. It is that which is not seen, that which is not obvious, that art education best prepares children for.

There are limits to creativity and independent thought. We don't want creative and independent spellers; we don't want to work with those who creatively and independently subscribe to time schedules, but there comes a time in our lives when we take all that we have learned and express our own ideas. In art, to contribute to an original idea is held on the highest pedestal. It is that which has advanced us from the Stone Age to where we are today.

My grandfather, whose friends called him Jack, was from Saranac Lake in upstate New York. Painting landscapes of the Adirondacks was a great interest in his life. He worked for the post office there from 1911 to the early 1950s. For a number of the early years of service, he delivered the mail. Winter days of thirty below and colder are not uncommon for this beautiful, yet challenging, part of the world. While it is said in my family that the first few winters of delivering the mail (mail delivery in Saranac Lake was twice a day then) almost killed him, he lived to 101. His doctor told us his heart was so strong. Choices for grandpa clearly needed to be broadened. Grandpa never was offered an art course in the schools he attended. He became, instead, active in an Arts League created by those residents of Saranac Lake and its visitors who had similar interests. Their shared respect and love for the ecology of the area was expressed and endures in their art. The Adirondacks for them was revered. The Saranac Lake Public Library is filled with their paintings, which provide a historical accounting of the origins of this small and vibrant community.

Jack Smith is not remembered for delivering the mail on time but rather by his art, by those who loved him and those who knew him. To my knowledge, he never sold a painting but preferred to give his art to people he liked. He gave away many paintings.

My grandfather paid for piano lessons that my mother received, since at that time the schools she attended did not offer this instruction. The piano became her vehicle throughout her life to bring people together. She is now 95 and still the center of attention where she lives with her partner in life, the piano. During the Second World War, she left Saranac Lake and served as an officer in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in Burma and was bluntly confronted with the realities of war, not its victories. The United States Army, a most practical and objective of organizations, felt it necessary to send a small piano and organ to this remote, disease-infested theater of operations. How good was the beautiful music she played - popular tunes, patriotic songs, and diverse inspirational, religious music. The military likes to equate morale with the projected success of the individual and that soldier's unit. In education we use a similar and related concept – self esteem. We as educators have become aware of the possibility that self esteem is a greater determinant of success than intelligence.

I shared with mother the possible demise of funding for the arts in public education and she replied in a clear, straightforward tone, "They should be ashamed of themselves."

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Keypals: Click, Connect and Collaborate Reciprocating Skills in the Foreign Language Classroom with Other Core Courses

Rebecca Connolly

Language learning is never just about words. Language is the medium through which human beings think and by which they express what they have thought. The study of language – any language – is therefore the study of everything that pertains to human nature, as humans understand it (Massachusetts Foreign Language Curriculum Frameworks 1999).

Introduction

Have you ever stopped to think about what middle schoolers say to themselves when they have to get up at 5:30 on a school day? Chances are it is the same thing in Europe as it is in the United States. Language is language is language. No matter where we are in this world, we all have the same basic thoughts: I'm tired, I'm cold, and I'm thirsty. It is just the way we express our thoughts that is different.

Essentially, whether as teachers or students in the United States or in another country, our tasks are virtually the same: learning how to learn, as well as transferring that ability to the curricula. The most exciting yet most demanding element of language learning is the road we must travel in order to arrive at the realization that when we learn, we are learning to ultimately transfer this knowledge to our world. The Keypals experience does just this.

Keypals: Click and Connect

At the beginning of eighth grade at Indian River Middle School, the students in German foreign language classes obtain pen-pals from an eighth grade class in Germany. Advanced beginning-level English speakers of the same age in Germany communicate in German with advanced beginning-level German students in New York via a bi-monthly multi-media email

exchange, which directly incorporates the essential reading, writing, speaking, and listening components the German I curriculum. This eighth grade email project is particularly helpful in preparing for the New York State Proficiency Exam, which bases its questions on reality-based content in all of the reading, writing, speaking, and listening sections. Throughout the year, the students exchange letters, pictures, computer projects, sound recordings, and digital video via email.

The premise of eighth grade German is to develop an understanding of the German language as a medium of communication that is identical, in many respects, to that of their native English, thus showing students that knowledge and skills transfer. The purpose of the Keypal learning experience is to engage students in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in German and English across the curriculum as they develop a maturing view of our world.

Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

Standard 3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language

The National Standards for Languages Other Than English (LOTE) have highlighted the importance of reinforcing and connecting information of other curriculums. As the students who take part in this exchange develop a relationship with their Keypals, a formative realization occurs.

Blaz clearly states the importance of connections in her book *Bringing the Foreign Lan-*

guage Standards for Learning to Life: “The fact is that learning a language or languages provides connections to additional bodies of knowledge that may be unavailable to someone who only speaks English. Connecting is a two-fold goal, as evidenced in Standard 3 of the national standards (or Standard 5 in the New York standards).”

Essentially, as the foreign language classroom reciprocally integrates the curricula of other courses, it does it in a way that also transfers the methodology of learning as well. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills are tools that are equally important across curricular areas. These skills are practiced throughout the Keypal exchange.

Reading

Although we use Fahrenheit to measure our temperature and the students in Germany use Celsius, too much snow is too much snow, and it brings both New York students and German students “snow days”. In fact, as the students see our forecast for the next day, they intrinsically want to check to see if their friends in Germany will have the same fate. They have a reason to learn. Their Keypals reach into each others’ rarely understood realities! As they search the weather website, a primary source, they integrate geography into the lesson as they search for Germany from the map of Europe. Their reading skills are honed as they pull *critical information* from this data-based document to find the answer “they” are looking for. The Social Studies teachers call this search a DBQ. The German students call it “what I have to read to figure out what I want to know”. As they continue their student-driven search, they practice their math skills as they convert Celsius to Fahrenheit and *make comparisons*. They are self-driven to acquire the information. *Decoding, cause and effect, drawing conclusions and predictions* are among the reading skills the students are employing. *Word meaning, sentence meaning, and reasoning skills* are practiced as the students look for information on the weather

site such as they *search for contextual clues, seek out topic bullets, and create inferences*. A number of cross-curricular activities are evidenced as the students use reading strategies such as maps and charts from internet websites.

Writing

As we begin to get know our middle schoolers better, we realize that it is “all about them”. As this email project focuses the learning on them, they intrinsically want to learn. During our clothing unit, students enjoy perusing the online clothing magazines in preparation for the webbing exercise. They choose clothes that fit their style and begin to *brainstorm* some ideas about what they like to wear. They begin to *ask questions* about their similarities and differences with their Keypals. How many Euros do your jeans cost? What does a size 38 really mean? “You and I take the same size clothes!” As they progress, some students will note that they are doing the same type of process writing as in English class. During the pre-planning stage of their letters, they are *reading for understanding from the data-based documents* on the clothing websites, *extracting information*, and *preparing an organized idea that they want to share*. Additionally, they are *brainstorming and webbing*, they are *pre writing*, as well as *editing, proofreading, and sending* it to their *audience*. The writing process, honed in the letter writing portion of the project, reciprocally transfers directly between that which is being practiced in many other core classes. The one advantage these students have is that their audience is not “just” their teacher. It is their peers! However, it’s not just any peer; it’s a peer who speaks the language. For that reason alone, the students want to minimize their errors. Additionally, there is much more at stake for the writers when their peers are reading their products and reading it for a reason.

Speaking and Listening

The connection between reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills between the foreign language classroom and other classes

goes both ways. Public speaking skills learned in the other core courses are practiced in the email exchange as the students video tape themselves to send to their Keypals. Likewise, listening comprehension is reinforced when the students receive the voice recordings from the Keypals in Germany. They listen to the recording three times and learn to discriminately listen for essential information. This is exactly what the children are practicing to do for the New York State English Language Arts assessment. The development of oratorical and auditory skills plays a large roll across the curriculum.

During this exchange the German students learn to *organize and retrieve information as well as infer, follow directions and classify*. The more practice the children receive, the stronger their skills become in the other areas of reading and writing.

Integration

The following is an extensive table created by Blaz in her book *Bringing the Foreign Language Standards for Learning to Life*. The table demonstrates how foreign languages consistently integrate their curriculum with other core courses.

Mathematics	<p>Beginning level: numbers, adding, subtraction, multiplication and division. Telling time (24 hour method). Days of weeks and months. Metric measurements: prepare food using metric, convert temperature to Celsius, convert height and weight to meters and kilos.</p> <p>Intermediate: currency conversions for shopping, converting prices on menus or salaries for various jobs, and so on.</p>
Science	<p>Target language contributions to science: famous scientists, centers for science study, products used in science from target language (TL) countries.</p> <p>Weather terms</p> <p>Study of flora and fauna of TL regions.</p> <p>Discussions on ecological issues.</p> <p>Health unit: illnesses, vaccinations, medications</p>
Social Studies	<p>Geography: study of countries that speak the TL. Learning geographical terms in the TL.</p> <p>History: Study history of TL countries. Influence of TL countries on our own history. Famous TL historical figures.</p> <p>Economics: economic bases of TL countries. The European Economic Community: what is it, and how does it work? The United Nations.</p> <p>Government: governmental systems and leaders of TL nations.</p>
Fine Arts	<p>Visual arts: study famous artists and art styles originally from TL areas. Use basic elements of art: style, color and content, to describe selected art works by TL artists.</p> <p>Music: current and folk music and dances of TL countries (students both listen to and sing/perform), music history for TL regions, especially styles (e.g. salsa) and instruments used (maracas, castanets).</p>

Language Arts	<p>Discuss rhetorical devices (simile, metaphor), rhyme and rhythm, genres (lyric or narrative), plot devices (foreshadowing, denouement), characterization (flat vs. round) and style (stream-of-consciousness).</p> <p>Speech/broadcasting: videotape presentations to send overseas or show to parents (see Chapter 2.3 Presentational mode)</p> <p>Writing techniques: elements of composition, process-writing, textual analysis.</p> <p>Reading: ID themes and main ideas, graphic organizers to keep track of information</p>
FACS (Family and Consumer Sciences), formerly Home Ec	<p>Cooking: typical TL foods, regional cooking styles, attitudes toward food, cooking utensils (molinilla, chopsticks), table manners, and the nutrition pyramid.</p> <p>Concept of family in TL culture: roles, child rearing practices, etc.</p> <p>Marriage: typical age, attitudes, ceremonies, gifts.</p> <p>Homes: typical furnishings</p>
Physical Education	<p>Sports played in TL countries.</p> <p>Athletes who speak the TL who play in our country.</p>
Business	<p>Computer technology: Use of TL on the Internet. TL websites.</p> <p>Exchange e-mail with keypals in TL country, make Power Points, use word processing software (including accent marks), chart survey results using Excel, use electronic research skills (upper levels even use TL Internet search engines) for research.</p> <p>Business practices: important international companies from TL countries and companies from here that operate branches in TL countries.</p> <p>Marketing: strategies used to market foreign products here, or our products overseas (ads, product adaptations). Careers that use foreign languages as a job skill.</p>

As you can see, an enormous amount of integration takes place inside of a foreign language classroom. The students are learning about Math, Social Studies, Science and English Language Arts, among other curricula. Therefore, they are learning content from a multitude of curricula as they are learning how to learn. Perhaps more importantly, they are learning through and with others, namely their peers.

Conclusion

A foreign language is just another language. The students evolve with this realization as they participate in this Keypal exchange. As they develop relationships with their peers in Germany, they form a reality for themselves. Everyone is quite the same; we just express this

sameness differently at a different place and time. Transferring skills and knowledge between courses is essential for teachers and students. As we develop these connections, we grow in our thinking. As we grow in our thinking, we begin to build a nation of tolerance. It is with this tolerance that we will create a world of difference. Let the building begin as our students click and connect with Keypals.

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Health Education

Middle School Health: What's It All About?

Jeannie M. Petrosky

Health education, what is it all about? When seventh grade students are asked this question, a typical response includes something related to diet and exercise. Occasionally, a response reflects social health or the means by which one interacts with others. Most often, seventh grade students neglect to include intellectual and emotional health. Health education is so much more than eating a balanced diet and physical activity.

Health education has shifted from knowledge-based curricula to skill-building curricula. Health facts (i.e. the negative implications of smoking, poor diet, and lack of physical activity, etc.) have been and continue to inoculate our society. However, unhealthy behaviors flourish leading to the recent development of the New York State Health Skills Matrix (NYSED/CSHN Center Health Education Curriculum and Assessment Leadership Team, 2002). The emphasis is placed on skills needed to promote a healthy life style with an integration of the health facts. The skills included in the matrix are: decision making, communication, relationship management, self-management, planning and goal setting, advocacy, and stress management. Philosophically, the New York State Health Skills Matrix incorporates the facts while providing an opportunity to develop and practice the skills needed to enhance the quality of life in a safe classroom environment. The more students are prepared for life's challenges, the more

likely they will choose health-enhancing behaviors they feel good about.

The Seneca Falls seventh grade Health semester begins with "Why are rules and laws created?" Students discover that rules are a result of safety concerns, leading the class into the safety unit. Prior to researching a safety topic, students learn to decipher reliable and unreliable information — just because it is in print does not mean that it is factual. The students are exposed to a variety of written material and Internet sites. Once they learn to distinguish the reliable sources from unreliable sources, the students then search the web on a assigned safety topics. Students create posters depicting the information along with the reliable websites in which they gathered the information. The posters are orally presented to the class, exposing the students to all the safety topics. The posters are then displayed throughout the building, advocating safety.

As an extended assignment on fire safety, all students create fire exit plans for their families from the bedrooms of their homes (self-management skills). They may choose to draw a floor plan or write out the plan, labeling primary and secondary routes as well as a designated meeting place. When establishing the routes from the home, emphasis is placed on the safest way out, not necessarily the quickest (a doorway as opposed to the window). The fire plan is to be signed by all family members, advocating fire safety.

The course expounds on the opportunity to integrate with the science and library/media skills classes. Using the pedigree charts they created in science class, the students choose an

illness to research and create a pamphlet. The pamphlet has to illustrate the illness' effect on the body, prognosis, treatment (curable or manageable), and prevention or means to reduce the risk of contracting the illness. Source reliability is emphasized as well as correct documentation. The bibliography follows the guidelines learned in library/media skills class. In addition to the two websites, one 'other' (encyclopedia, magazine, book, etc.) resource is expected. Students 'complain' that information is repetitive from source to source. This observation leads them to the realization that the more information is repeated, the more reliable it most likely is. Finally, the students complete a chart that is posted in the classroom revealing the information that they collected on the illnesses they researched. After analyzing the class illness chart, students discover that the risk of many illnesses may be lowered or even prevented through a healthy diet, exercise, proper hygiene, etc.; in other words, making healthful decisions.

The essence of self-management, decision-making, stress management, communication skills, and relationship management are addressed through Life Skills Training (Botvin, 1979-2000), a research-based drug resistance program. The program is designed to equip students with skills to effectively deal with the challenges of life, specifically drugs. Many of the learning experiences have been extended to increase the depth of skill development. For instance, the students' first encounter with analyzing media advertisements is with this program. The students develop these analysis skills via teacher-modeled observations, a cooperative group analysis of an advertisement, and finally an individual advertisement analysis. A youth advocacy group, Reality Check, visits the classes to address media influences on youth as well as mechanisms advocating for a smoke-free community.

Health students are provided with several opportunities to advocate for a drug-free com-

munity. Drug-free legislation is researched and letters are sent to the local senator, expressing appreciation for supporting recent drug legislation or a concern with drugs they would like to see addressed. Students write public-service announcements that are either read on the local radio station or during school morning and afternoon announcements. Students create posters, stories, songs, or poems illustrating personal anti-drug messages that are displayed throughout the building. As students are completing these advocacy assignments, they are learning about the effects that the drugs have on all areas of health.

Exposure to several passive (deep breathing, reading, writing, drawing, etc.) and active (sports, running, etc) methods for managing stress is added to the coping with anxiety lesson in Life Skills. Although communication is a component of the Life Skills program, the skill is extensively explored through interactive lessons.

Students conclude the Life Skills Training program with a role-play scenario that is video taped. They are asked to create a role-play that demonstrates assertive skills based on a given refusal skill and a peer pressure technique. Every student needs to demonstrate the assertive skills. Teacher as well as peer evaluate the assertively skills of each student on pre-determined criteria. Upon completion of the role-play, students view the video and evaluation assessments performed. Students individually assess themselves by rating their demonstration according to a given scale, including an explanation of the rating.

Decision-making, relationship management, communication skills, and self-management are also practiced in conjunction with human sexuality. Students are asked what the two major consequences are of sexual activity. They are surveyed as to how many feel a teenager could be a responsible parent. Parental responsibilities are examined during class. Students investigate

only one parental responsibility — financial support. Stemming from Home and Career Skills class, students develop a budget for the items needed to survive. They continue their investigation with the employment opportunities for a teenager. Eventually, students discover that it is virtually impossible for a teenager to independently financially support a child.

Peer educators from selected high school courses assist in addressing sexuality, specifically relationship management. Emphasis is placed on abstinence being the only 100% guarantee against pregnancy and sexually-transmitted illness. The high school students explain that the only person who will protect you is yourself. You have a right to say no.

As it was once stated by a high school student, “First sexual experiences are not usually planned. You need to be prepared to make a decision that you will not regret.” Therefore, health students practice assertiveness skills with an age-appropriate human sexuality scenario (spin the bottle, instant messaging, etc.). Although this is the second role-play demonstrating assertive skills, the topic is outside the students’ comfort zone. Reiterating the concern, if an issue is uncomfortable being addressed in a safe classroom environment, what is it going to be like facing the real life situation?

After modeling the planning and goal setting skill, students thoroughly examine the skill by breaking the process into five steps adapted into a ‘Goal Journal’ to be kept for four weeks. Students individually enact the skill via a health-enhancing behavioral initiation or modification identified in a multidimensional health self-assessment. The five step design requires students to identify and access resources (personal, family and community), predict barriers and incentives, and establish rewards for obtainment of the goal; allowing students to examine intrinsic and extrinsic stimulus that impact their behavior. Progress, including plan adjustments, is monitored via bi-weekly entries in the journal, which are periodically peer shared or teacher

reviewed providing warm and cool feedback; fostering student self-efficacy. Students finalize the project by responding to a series of questions that assess their perception of how successful they were in accomplishing their goal, also indicating whether they plan to continue with the goal or not, and why.

Even though the students may select any health-enhancing goal, a majority of the goals tend to encompass physical fitness or nutrition. In order to increase the quality of the planning and goal setting project, students examine components of healthy dieting and physical fitness. The students learn how to incorporate the nutrition facts label, dietary guidelines, and the food pyramid with menu planning. They develop a physical fitness plan, which includes the elements of a healthy fitness program. Members from the community visit the class, exposing the students to a variety of options with fitness programs (kick boxing, yoga, body sculpting, etc.). While participating in these fitness programs, students discover that healthy fitness plans include flexibility, strength training, and aerobic exercises.

Homework assignments are designed to expose the students to resources that provide health-related information and/or current health issues. For example, students are asked to find a website that addresses health issues for homework. The students need to be able to share the web address and verbally summarize the information found on that website with the class. They discover a website that provides health-related information.

Other homework topics include: sharing hotline telephone numbers, along with the function of that hotline; gathering information about a community agency; and summarizing health related articles from a variety of resources (magazines, newspaper, Internet, etc.). Typically, the homework assignment is related to the topic of study, such as finding a community agency that provides information about a

body system. As the students collect their information they post it on the 'Community Agency' poster displayed in the classroom.

Health education is standards-based with an emphasis on skill building. Learning complex skills requires that a person properly demonstrate the skills while paying special attention to the many variations in implementing the skills. It is important that students adapt these skills to be compatible with their own individual needs. Health educators act as coaches, facilitating authentic experiences in a safe classroom environment that prepares youth to deal with the challenges of life. The more students are prepared, the more likely they will choose health-enhancing behaviors they feel good about. Health education is about preparing youth for life.

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Without Health, Many Children Will Surely Be Left Behind

Darlene Glasser

“Children must be healthy to be educated and they must be educated in order to stay healthy.”

—Dr. Antonio Novello, former Surgeon General

A dear friend and colleague of mine often says, “Health is not just a subject we learn in school, it’s for life.” Health supports the student in all endeavors by helping to maintain a healthy mind, body, and soul with which to learn. The health curriculum helps to address and alleviate the fears, confusion, and anxieties that all young adolescents face. Young teens are often overwhelmed with concerns about their rapidly changing bodies, uncomfortable discussing such issues with their parents, and left with oft times misinformation provided by their peers and the media. Expanding social milieus provide numerous opportunities for dangerous, risky, behaviors lurking at every juncture. Adolescence is a time when teens often pull away a bit from parents to assess their own value structure. Social concerns, as any parent or teacher of young adolescents knows, often consume the middle-school child.

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs confirms the fact that without a firm base of food, shelter, security, love, safety, a sense of belonging and self worth, human beings cannot address the next level, learning and self actualization.

The health curriculum should not be considered enrichment. It, in fact, provides the basic framework for all learning to take place. It focuses on the whole person and fosters the responsibility and the ability to take care of themselves and their environments. Teachers and parents know that it is difficult for students

to be successful in school if they are depressed, tired, being bullied, stressed, sick, using alcohol or other drugs, hungry or abused. School based stress management programs, often included in a health curriculum, have been demonstrated to reduce test anxiety and aggressive behaviors according to a study done by Cynthia Symons, D. Ed., CHES at Kent University. The adolescent obesity rate has tripled in the past 20 years. One in every five American children is overweight. 9 million children between 6 and 19 are overweight or obese. Kaiser Family Foundation reported in February 2004 that obesity is rapidly becoming the # 1 cause of preventable death in the US. The health unit on nutrition deals with these concerns. CDC researchers estimate that one of every two new STIs diagnosed each year occurs in Americans between ages 15 and 24 (2004 National STD Prevention Conference). Prevention education is necessary *before* an adolescent becomes sexually active.

Health is a skills based curriculum. Every unit incorporates the skills of critical thinking - scrutinizing the messages presented by the media on everything from health products and food, to alcohol, to family values, to sexuality, body image, and violence. Students learn and practice the social skills necessary to have healthy relationships in the school and workplace, as well as those needed to form healthy, personal, intimate relationships. They learn networking, developing a personal support system, and how to contribute in a meaningful and productive way to the world. Students learn and practice assertiveness and refusal skills and how to develop character traits such as honesty, leadership, responsibility, and respect for differences. The curriculum includes decision-making techniques and incorporates hands on, relevant practice. These life skills lessons provide a necessary framework as they are applied in all learning experiences.

Writing skills and communication skills are honed as students study and present research from current health related articles and pam-

phlets to their peers. Math skills become relevant as they are developed and applied when students study statistics, blood chemistries, drug dosages and nutrient densities.

The health curriculum involves a study of history as health and social trends over time are revealed. The science curriculum comes alive as the student studies the changes of adolescence and begins to take personal responsibility for caring for his or her own body. Health educators know that in order for an attitude and behavior change, the lesson must be engaging and relevant to the student. My students know of my no fail policy. If they fail, then I've failed at my responsibility to teach them to be healthy and safe. The top three killers for teens are accidents (often alcohol and or drug related), homicide, and suicide. My job is to help to prevent preventable death. There is no higher accountability. This is about life. Re-teaching in many different ways until "no child is left behind" is my mantra.

"Clearly, no knowledge is more crucial than knowledge about health. Without it, no other life goal can be successfully achieved," The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching believes.

When searching for a universal value, health appears on most adults' list. Unfortunately this is not true of most adolescents. This lack of an appreciation has to do with the adolescent's natural sense of invincibility. Heightening their awareness and empowering them with the means to protect themselves is an arduous process that must be repeated at each developmental level. It is imperative that health continues to be a mandated course at the middle school level.

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The Educational Benefits of Non-Core Classes on the Middle School Level

Patricia Quinn



At present, there is considerable debate taking place on the relevance of keeping the current education requirements in New York State, Commissioner's Regulations 100.4, related to instruction in the subjects of home and career skills, technology, health and physical education, and the arts. While one faction argues that time and resources should be allocated towards those subjects that have state assessments, such as English language arts, social studies, math, science and foreign language, another group states that, although academic subjects and assessments are important in our children's education, there exists an additional mission in educating our youth that includes the tools to cope with the "myriad of physical, intellectual, emotional/psychological and social changes" students undergo at the middle level of schooling (Regents Policy Statement, 1989).

As a certified family and consumer sciences educator, I support the group that believes a world-class school transcends a mere preparation for a vocation or even for the next level of formal learning. I believe that the exemplary school will provide a multitude of opportunities for the individual to develop a broad variety of skills for self-definition as well as for self-sufficiency (NYSMSA, 2003). Exploratory experiences encourage students to take ownership of their learning and to work as members of a community or team – skills that while not formally in the scope of testing and evaluation are essential for success in many of life's arenas (NYSMSA, 2003). In addition, I concur with Jackson and Davis in *Turning Point 2000* that the activities in exploratory courses peak student interest and provide impetus for consistent attendance and engagement. The different

learning opportunities often associated with these courses appeal to diverse learning styles and enable students to achieve success where they had not experienced so previously (p.132). As stated in the Essential Elements in a middle-level program, the standards-focused middle level school or program is purposeful. It has two basic goals: The intellectual development and academic achievement of all students, and the personal and social development of each student (Essential Elements, 2003).

The Rockville Centre School District recognizes the need to educate the whole child. Although it is a strong proponent of increasing academic achievement, it also acknowledges that, particularly on the middle-school level where children undergo many emotional, social and physiological changes, it is essential to include the specials, or non-core classes that meet the needs of diverse learning styles and explore the emotional and social growth of our students in addition to navigating hands-on learning experiences that emphasize life skills.

The district offers home and career skills courses in grades 6, 7 and 8. In each of these grades the curriculum is tied to the New York State resource guides and the Learning Standards. In addition to meeting the Learning Standards for family and consumer sciences, we also incorporate standards from all of the other subjects taught, specials as well as core subjects.

This year the district has introduced a new curriculum in the sixth grade called Exploratory 6. This is an interdisciplinary course combining elements of home and careers, technology and music, while meeting the standards for all three. Students cycle through five units: foods and

nutrition, manufacturing, careers, music and technology to create a culminating television show produced, directed, scripted, acted, and filmed by the students. The students will also produce set designs in the form of banners and create a musical theme for the show. In the foods and nutrition unit students are given the basic premise for the show – a food show like those on the Food Network. They work in groups to arrive at a theme for their show and develop logos. Each group will make pizza for the product. They meet with the manufacturing group and the music group and barter (pizza) for a banner and a musical piece that matches their show's theme. Students write a script that incorporates food science, technology and equipment, techniques, historical facts and trivia, nutrition, safety and sanitation. All groups perform for the class and one group in each class will be chosen as the group to be filmed. In the career unit students explore values and ethics. Character education is incorporated in this unit. Students participate in a values auction in which they are given a set amount of money to bid on items such as a Britney Spears concert or health for life. It is always interesting to see how they spend their money and how many students go bankrupt or to jail for stealing another student's money. They research careers in foods, television, the music industry, the arts, film and the manufacturing area. They also interview, on camera, members of the community who have careers in these areas. In technology the students learn to create storyboards from the scripts and how to operate the cameras to film the production. The music unit has students applying learned skills to create a unique piece of music for their group's show. The students also hold an entrepreneurship sale and use the banners to set up their "stores". The final product will be four shows that will be shown on the local school channel on cable.

The Exploratory 6 program has been very challenging but, with input from each of the teachers involved, it has evolved into a viable course. A grant has been applied for next year's

program in which professional actors will come to the school and hold a workshop for the students on acting and directing. Students are very excited and engaged and love the hands-on aspect of the course. Learning is constantly taking place, often without the students' conscious awareness. Interdisciplinary connections not only exist between the three content areas involved in the course, but throughout the entire sixth grade curriculum. Math, science, English language arts, art, social studies, and, very rarely, foreign language are all incorporated. Brainstorming, working with group members, time management, competition, compromise, safety and sanitation, research skills, technology skills, and life skills are all part of this program. The use of differentiated instruction taps into emotional and multiple intelligence strengths. The number of skills utilized in a course such as this is difficult to enumerate, however I do believe that all skills used will benefit the students and give them life-long skills that will enrich their lives.

In seventh grade, the students cover six units with three teachers. These units include personal development in which the student develops a positive self-knowledge while exploring multiple and emotional intelligences, skills and talents, likes and dislikes, relationships with family and friends and personal successes. This leads into the careers unit, where they will develop resumés based on the skills and talents they possess and research careers that meet their personal profiles of pros and cons. In the textile and clothing management unit, students learn skills that will serve them throughout their lives. They learn simple maintenance sewing techniques and basic interior design. The childcare unit teaches responsibility and consequences. Students also develop childcare skills in regard to babysitting and/or parenting. This can no longer be assumed to be taught in the home, as evidenced by headlines in the newspapers. In the Foods and Nutrition I unit, students learn about nutrients and nutrition, food labels and recommended amounts of fats, sugars and sodium,

healthy snack choices, fast food choices and incorporating the food pyramid in meal planning. The need for this is apparent in the recent research findings on the increased obesity of American children and our perception of how to define a serving. Foods and Nutrition II focuses on the pros and cons of additives and ways to minimize hazards from unintentional side effects, preparing a meal for a family of four on a budget of \$5.00, and an entrepreneurship that includes the marketing of the product, including negotiating a contract for a celebrity endorsement (any person in the school from the principal to a teacher to a student to the custodian). Each of these topics has cross-curriculum connections. Science is addressed in the chemical changes that occur when you cook food, the results of yeast eating the sugar and releasing carbon dioxide, creating gluten while kneading, giving students not only the skill but also the reason why they are performing the skill. Sanitation issues are emphasized and the negative results of poor sanitation are explained. Math skills are needed to figure out the food portions and measurements as well as used to measure and sew on a 5/8 seam line. Reading skills are needed throughout all units and the ability to read and follow directions is of particular importance when following a recipe. Listening skills are also addressed in all units. In short, whether completing a Webquest for healthy eating, a research paper on a career, making pretzels for an entrepreneurship and creating an advertising campaign, or being responsible for an egg-baby, students in this course are constantly using information from other content areas and transferring that knowledge to a real-world, hands-on connection.

In eighth grade the course is called Creative Living and is an elective focusing on life skills. This class is an extension and expansion of the previous two years' learning experiences and students have input into topics taught. Past courses have covered multicultural foods and societies with a field trip to an ethnic restaurant. This unit included reinforcing ELA skills in the

assignment to research and write a paper on a chosen culture. It also connected to social studies and technology. The career explorations unit included formulating a budget based on a career's entry level salary using real world resources (for example: newspaper real estate ads, car ads, railroad and bus fees, mortgage amortization charts). The real world, hands-on activity made interdisciplinary connections to math, technology and social studies. Students are generally shocked by the amount of money from their paycheck that goes to taxation and how much it costs to live. They are permitted to use the computer to research the cost of living in other geographical areas in the United States and some choose to relocate. Some of the students are "married" and can combine incomes. If they decide to buy a house, some offer to rent a room to a single classmate in order to cover expenses. This lesson also touches interpersonal as well as intra-personal skills. We have had a few divorces when an amicable solution to financial planning has not been able to be met with the intervention of a marriage counselor (teacher). This is a great problem-based learning lesson. Students are interested and engaged and more than once they have said that this was the best lesson they have ever had.

In conclusion, I feel that not only are these courses necessary for our students in their journey to learn about themselves and their world, but also hold value to us as a society. Everyday we read about the hazy lines of values and ethics in our business and political world. We learn how people mistreat children through anger or ignorance. We see unfair treatment of workers. We watch as the entertainment industry blurs what is obscene and what is not. We eat out more often, buy prepared foods and our nutrition and health suffer. Advertising influences our healthy choices. Many Americans are crippled by access to easy credit and mountains of debt. What are we teaching our children? We cannot say that these issues are taught in the home because we know that, in many cases, they are not. I believe that these courses impart

to our students knowledge that is needed just as much as the knowledge to do advanced math. In fact, more so – I cannot remember the last time that I had a need to find the cosine of a number. What we teach is often a transference of the academics taught in the core subjects to real world implementation, and it is always amazing to see that the students who perform best are not always the students who have achieved the highest scores on standardized tests. If students cannot transfer knowledge and apply it to real life scenarios, what value does it have? In the real world no one is going to ask you to pass a social studies test.

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Memo...

To: **NYS Middle-Level Educators**
From: **NYSMSA Annual Conference Planning Committee**
Re: **24th Annual Conference in Lake Placid, NY**
"Reaching New Heights in Middle-Level Education"
Dates: **October 21-23, 2004**



Olympic-quality events include...

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Conference Director



Home and Career Skills

The Breakfast Café Project

Diane Nelson

Americans, including school-aged children, are becoming fatter. This paper describes the nutrition component of a Home and Career Skills curriculum that includes the Breakfast Café Webquest created by Diane Nelson, a teacher and registered dietitian. It encourages kids to increase the amounts of fruits and vegetables in their diets as well as reduce serving sizes. This is an example of a non-tested subject that helps students become better learners by emphasizing skills development and integration across subjects.

I tell my 7th grade students in Home and Career Skills not to get too comfortable in their seats. After a unit on process skills including communication, decision making, problem solving, and time management, they rarely get a chance to sit still and that suits them just fine. During the rest of the ten-week course, the class divides itself into four groups. Two of the groups complete a resource management unit and sew a chef's apron, which includes embroidering with a state-of-the-art robotic sewing machine. At the same time, the other two groups participate in the Breakfast Café Project, a Webquest where the students "help the Breakfast Café in town plan a more nutritious breakfast menu". A Webquest includes an authentic task, websites, steps to follow, and a rubric to guide instruction and assessment. After about three weeks, the Chef's Apron groups and Breakfast Café groups switch. In this article, I will describe the Breakfast Café Webquest.

During the Breakfast Café Project, students use the Internet, mini lessons, "how to" sheets, teacher produced nutrition videos, and handouts to gain skills and information about planning a healthy, tasty breakfast menu. Some examples of Webquest topics are: Dietary Guidelines, the Food Pyramid, serving sizes, and how to calculate the cost of a menu using an Excel spreadsheet. The calculation of unit prices reinforces math skills. The videos and websites emphasize many of the concepts students learn in science class like preventing food borne bacteria and using centrifugal force to dry greens in a salad spinner; at the same time, students learn how to analyze the nutritional value of a menu. ELA skills come into play when students write in journals to process information. In addition, they practice group discussion skills when they decide on a menu to prepare and serve for the rest of the class. Social Studies topics like economics and geography come alive when students consider, for example, that fresh raspberries are expensive to serve during the winter unless a bumper crop is sent to our area from a warmer climate zone. Along with these interdisciplinary connections, students are also encouraged to think about their learning to help them recognize their strengths and how to improve their weak areas.

The challenge for any teacher is keeping the students who finish early involved and engaged while at the same time giving the students who need more time the attention that they need. The use of the Webquest helps meet this challenge. In addition, students who are absent can make up missed work more easily by watching a video lesson or getting help from a group member.

Webquests are a great tool for preparing kids for the world of work. In the 21st century, that has to involve technology, finding information on the Internet, being able to distinguish good information from misinformation, being a smart consumer if you purchase off the Internet and being careful of your privacy while communicating using the Internet.

A crucial component of a learner-based classroom is training students to manage their own time by using journals and schedules as parts of their Webquest. When that stage of self-reliance is reached, the teacher becomes the facilitator and technology becomes a partner in the process. The result? Kids take more ownership of their learning. Now that's worth getting out of your seat for.

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Quilting to Preserve History

Cynthia Theiss

Sewing skills learned in Family and Consumer Sciences have interdisciplinary applications for community service projects in the Seventh Grade Advisory Program at Babylon Junior/Senior High School. Since every seventh grader takes Home and Career Skills, they are prepared to participate in the yearly community service projects.

Eight years ago, the first quilt was proposed as a community service project to raise \$5,000 to sponsor a guide dog. Almost 1,000 one-inch squares were pieced together to make a mosaic design of a Golden Lab Retriever. The seventh graders were so excited about this project that they came to the Family and Consumer Sciences room both before and after school to work on the quilt, in addition to the scheduled periods in their advisory classes. Each student gained confidence in their creative ability and took pride in their work. They employed mathematical concepts as well as comprehending the historical significance of quilting.

The Babylon community, as well, has had an important role in the quilting projects. Joy Torrey, an 82 year-old graduate of the school, brings expert assistance as well as being a surrogate grandparent. She has been joined by Karin Cotter, a parent, an excellent quilter and librarian at our town's library. The Babylon Historic Society has generously donated fabric for many of the quilts, helping to defray the cost.

This is the fourth year that students have sewn a quilted tree skirt that is raffled off in December at the annual Candlelight Holiday Tea in the historic Conklin House in Babylon Village. Proceeds from this raffle provide funds for the ongoing restoration of the house. The seventh graders tour the decorated house in December to learn about its history and see how their efforts are contributing to the house's

return to its original state. The self-esteem of the students is increased and they feel a personal connection to their community.

This year's quilt is an ambitious and original undertaking. The students are working on an impressionistic quilt of the historic Sagtikos Manor which has recently been purchased by Suffolk County and is in dire need of restoration funds. The quilt has an "I Spy" format, with eight pictures of historical artifacts included as 1½ inch squares sewn into the quilt. Marshall Aykroyd, the chairman of the Practical Arts Department, has utilized technology to reduce the photographs and print them onto heat transfer paper, so they could be ironed onto 1½ inch squares of fabric. Artistic principles have guided the placement of approximately 1,000 squares of fabric to create the impressionistic image of the manor. Seventh-grade English team teachers, Barbra Small and Suzanne Muldowney, will soon be helping students write the written clues for the eight hidden historical artifacts. The use of fractions, proportions and geometry are essential math skills needed for the execution of the impressionistic design. A field trip is planned in May, so that students can tour the historic manor in a living history experience.

The Family and Consumer Sciences program and teacher, Cynthia Theiss, is the guiding force behind these Seventh Grade Advisory service projects which connect students to their community for the support of worthy causes.

Cynthia Theiss is a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher at Babylon Junior/Senior High School; Babylon, New York 11702; 631-893-7910; c.theiss@att.net.

Sewing Up History

Sandra D. Catricala

"Harriet Tubman will appear at the Ballston Spa Middle School on March 31, 2004." When students in Home and Careers Skills classes heard the news, they were puzzled, to say the least. Is Harriet Tubman still alive? How could this be possible?

Harriet Returns for Us is a play produced by Capital Repertory Theatre and is offered to students through the Capital Region Center for Arts in Education Program (CRCAIE). Home and Careers Skills teacher Sandra Catricala has participated in training and workshops through CRCAIE along with colleagues in Art, Music, Social Studies, Science and English Language Arts. The participation of the staff made the hosting of this production in our school a reality

Students are prepared for the production by participating in various creative projects in classes with participating teachers. Often this includes a guest-teaching artist from CRCAIE. In Home and Career Skills, students are studying the Underground Railroad through quilt patterns. In Faith Ringgold's 1996 book, *Talking to Faith Ringgold*, the African-American woman is credited with the beginning of quilt making in America. Quilting then, as today, also provided beauty, creativity and a social outlet for slave woman.

Though slaves came from many different parts of Africa, they shared the tradition of oral lore, and this common practice along with the use of quilts and other symbols helped slaves escape to freedom (Tobin & Dobard, 1999). "The Quilt Code is a mystery-laden, secret communication system of employing quilt making terminology as a message map for black slaves escaping on the Underground Railroad." (Tobin, & Dobard, 1999).

Collaboration among teachers, a teaching assistant and students resulted in a portable display of framed quilt patterns whose symbols are decoded for the viewer. They can be used as a teaching tool in Family and Consumer Sciences, English Language Arts and Social Studies classes. When not in use they can be displayed in the school and in the community. Funding for the frames came in part from an award for “Best of Show” at the Saratoga County Fair for a group quilt created by 175 middle school students and staff as a September 11th tribute.

Students in the textile lab are creating one of the quilt patterns. This pillow project will form a display of 100 individual projects in our middle school library. Students will also explore literature by Faith Ringgold, an African American quilt artist, the quilts of former slave Harriet Powers and a 1993 children’s picture book, *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Deborah Hopkinson.

Quilt projects are a great tool for students to work cooperatively for community service, as well as for individual expression. Other quilt projects in the textiles lab have included ABC Quilts Projects for AIDS and drug addicted babies, Mystery Quilts for National Day of Concern Against Gun Violence, Peace Day Quilts, September 11, 2002 and 2003 Quilt projects, Middle School Spirit Quilts, Rainy Day Garden Quilt, Food Pyramid Quilt and scrap quilts for donation to local animal shelters. These projects allow hundreds of students to work together over the school year to create their own history through the exploration of textile art.

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Share YOUR Best Practices.

NYSMSA is interested in collecting examples of Best Practices from middle-level teachers. These will be distributed in paper publications and posted on NYSMSA’s website. SHARE the wealth! Submit your experiences to editor@nysmsa.org.

Career and Life Skills: How Does This Class Support New York State Standards?

Kelly M. Rupp

I had a professor in a graduate level course share the results of a survey that asked adults to rate high school classes from most to least important based on the adults' use of knowledge and skills learned in those subjects. While I don't have the original results to support the professor's claim, he stated Home Economics was rated number one. I don't suggest this proves Home Economics courses are superior to others; however, I do think this insight helps validate the worth of this field of study.

Many people associate Family and Consumer Sciences with sewing and cooking. While it is true that most middle school programs do still include these skills, units in communication, child development, career exploration, budgeting, goal setting, starting a business, nutritious eating, and learning to be a productive part of a team are now, more than ever, emphasized in the curriculum. Furthermore, like many other exploratory classes, Career and Life Skills reinforces New York State curriculum standards in Math, Science, English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Technology as well as Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) plus our own Health, Physical Education, and Home Economics standards.

At Amherst Middle School, students must use rulers to create a child development timeline. They learn equivalents and fractions to increase or decrease recipes plus measure ingredients. They must be able to calculate unit prices to determine "best buys" and budget the cost of a meal. Thus, mathematics skills are often reinforced through the accomplishment these and other hands-on tasks.

To measure liquids correctly, students become familiar with how to locate the meniscus and where it should be in relation to the amount desired. They learn how molecular friction results in microwave cooking. Yeast growing conditions and by-products are studied so students can understand how leavening agents cause dough to rise. Microorganisms, both good and bad, are discussed. Students learn that microbes can frequently result in food poisoning if not prevented or destroyed while good microorganisms help produce cheese, yogurt, and sour cream.

Learners are asked to practice public speaking skills to share child development milestones, facts about careers, entrepreneurial concepts, and character traits demonstrated by role models. They use research skills to locate information and organizations associated with specific careers. Finding telephone numbers and addresses for local police and fire departments, family doctors, first aid classes and poison control are also required so students learn how to find community resources using telephone books and the internet. Students practice interview skills to learn about babysitting, careers, and role models. Moreover, they write reports to summarize their findings.

Our career and life skills class also encourages students to understand cultures through recognition of similarities and differences in communication, especially body language. They are exposed to culture through food preparation terms and recipes. Students learn the history of the sewing machine along with events and conditions conducive to successes in business, such as the development of the razor, Monopoly™, Ebony magazine, and the pacemaker. Finally, they see how the evolution of people in separate locations resulted in physical differences among races that make sense based on climactic and geographic conditions.

Students are encouraged to use computers not only to find information, but to create

imaginative and/or descriptive ways to share what they have discovered. Thus, many improve their internet researching skills, PowerPoint techniques, and/or word processing abilities during a variety of individual and group projects. Some students even employ video cameras or tape recorders to create advertisements, share career findings, or present facts relevant to a project.

This brief overview of the Career and Life Skills curriculum at Amherst Middle School for grades six through eight demonstrates that Career and Life Skills are much more than cooking and sewing. Through a combination of lecture, videos, hands-on activities, and group and individual projects, students are reinforcing numerous ideas, skills, and concepts that address every one of New York State's Learning Standards. We take pride in reinforcing these standards while we also address those standards specific to our field: Personal Health and Fitness, A Safe and Healthy Environment, Resource Management as well as Career Development, Integrated Learning, and Universal Foundation Skills. Please remember that when you support exploratory subjects like ours, Career and Life Skills, you are giving students the opportunity to put their knowledge and skills from ALL their classes to good use.

Kelly M. Rupp is a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher at Amherst Middle School; Amherst, NY.

Service Learning Makes a Difference

Susan Epstein and Marcia Turletsky

Our Home and Career Skills program in Plainview, New York, is committed to integrating service learning into our curriculum. An interdisciplinary approach has been developed that incorporates ELA, Science, Art, Mathematics, Health, Social Studies, and Family and Consumer Sciences Learning Standards into service-learning experiences for our students. This integration of life skills across subjects, with an emphasis on an individual's role in the community, has had a tremendous impact on the personal development of our students — a major goal of our program.

During the 2003-2004 school year we have participated in three service learning projects. Our first project, "Hug a Bear," involved our fifth-grade students and focused on four major phases. First, a pen-pal program was established with a cancer center for children in the Long Island area. Students wrote letters to cancer patients and received responses, emphasizing the NYS ELA Learning Standards throughout the letter-writing process. Next, students sewed small teddy bears for cancer patients, focusing on Family and Consumer Sciences and Mathematics Learning Standards throughout the process. Students then wrote friendship poems and created pictures of bears that acted as "wrapping" for the stuffed bears. Again, ELA Learning Standards as well as Art Standards were emphasized. Finally, the bears and poems were presented to representatives from the cancer center and students read their poems aloud. Throughout this project, there was an emphasis on the importance of giving to your community, a life skill that is emphasized in the Home and Career Skills curriculum.

Our second project, "Care Bags," involved our seventh-grade students and focused on three phases. First, students were required to get

donations of travel-size toiletries, such as shampoo, soap, mouthwash, etc. Students were required to use good oral communication skills throughout this process. Next, students sewed small gift bags and filled them with the toiletries. Students then used their poetry-writing skills and creativity to make short, uplifting cards that they inserted into the bags. The “Care Bags” were donated to the Interfaith Nutrition Network and distributed to homeless families. Throughout this project we discussed the problems of the homeless population and the importance of giving to your community. This project emphasized Family and Consumer Sciences, Social Studies, and ELA Learning Standards throughout.

Project “Give a Heart” also involves our seventh-grade students. Students will participate in “Relay for Life,” a weekend community event in Plainview that raises funds for cancer research. Our involvement in “Relay for Life” involves three major phases. First, students will sew small heart pillows and write cards to cancer patients or caretakers. Students will present these pillows and cards to “Relay for Life” organizers. Finally, student volunteers will distribute pillows and cards during the “Relay for Life” weekend. This project emphasizes Family and Consumer Sciences, ELA, and Health Learning Standards.

The service-learning piece of our curriculum shows the practical application of life skills that are taught in Home and Career Skills classes and their natural integration across subjects. Home and Career Skills — where academics meet real life, where children develop into active community members, and where the practical application of the New York State Learning Standards is achieved.

Susan Epstein and **Marcia Turlletsky** are Home and Career Skills teachers at Mattlin Middle School; 100 Washington Avenue, Plainview NY 11803; (516) 937-6393.

Food for Learning

Lynn Beber

Middle school students love to cook. Actually they love to eat even more, which is the added bonus of their cooking experiences. I am very fortunate to have such a wonderful motivational tool to use with this rather tenacious age group. However, these active 7th and 8th graders are gaining a lot more than basic cooking skills as they work together in the kitchen. These activities draw from several disciplines including social studies, English, math and science, and address many of the New York State learning standards. * In the food lab, the students work in groups participating in hands-on activities experiencing many essential life skills. They must cooperate, work as a team, and apply organization and time management skills to insure that their end results are completed on time, look appealing, and taste delicious. Some of the best lessons are ones where mistakes are made, requiring them to evaluate and analyze their performance and look for ways to improve.

They start the semester by exploring relationships among themselves and their friends and family. Our community, as most in the state, has students from diverse backgrounds. Although most students have been born in this country, their ancestors come from a variety of countries. We research the different customs, cultures, geography, and religions and relate how these influenced the foods and eating styles in the countries studied. We then compare and contrast these customs with our own habits. The students have the opportunity to share their own unique family traditions and recipes. We then move to the food lab, where we prepare different foods, share new tastes and try new cooking techniques. The students are surprised to discover where many of the foods they love originate and that there is such a similarity of dishes between countries (in China it is a won ton and Poland it is a pierogi.) They conclude that their own neighborhood is truly a “Salad Bowl” of

nations offering a wide variety of ethnic foods and customs.

Another unit studied in Home and Careers is a consumer unit, designed to provide students with tools to deal with the myriad of products and services open to them, and aid them in exercising their rights and responsibilities as consumers. They learn to read labels, analyze packaging, advertising and pricing to compare products. One of their favorite lessons is the product comparison test. In the food lab we prepare four different types of brownies, two national brands, a generic and store brand. The first comparison is based on package information. Students evaluate the what is listed on the box, including ingredients, nutritional information, price, and then rate the package appeal. They then conduct a blind taste test and rate the brownies on taste, texture and appearance. Their final decision of which brand to buy is based on the results of these two tests. The students learn first hand about the power of advertising. Their initial choice may be based on their recognition of the cute little doughboy. After the taste test, they are surprised at how good the store brand tastes and what a good buy it is. This exercise always leads to a lively debate about advertising, cost, quality and their influence on buying decisions.

The growing weight problem in this country makes headlines daily. Adolescents, as a group, probably have the worst eating habits. Our unit on nutrition presents an increasing challenge, where we teach basic nutrition while competing with the abundance of fast food restaurants and the variety junk food. The students start by looking at the snacks they regularly eat, such as cookies, candy, chips, soda, etc. They learn to read and analyze the nutrition and ingredient labels. They take a close look at what is in their favorite fast foods. They use the Internet to analyze their favorite fast-food lunch. There are several web sites that give this nutrition information. They are amazed to learn how much fat, salt and calories are present in some of their

favorite snacks. Showing them what is not good for them is one thing, but now they need healthy alternatives. In the food lab, students learn to prepare and share a variety of “healthy snacks” including, fruit smoothies, pizza, vegetables with dip and fruit kabobs. Then the students evaluate and rate these snacks. They are pleased to discover tasty alternatives for their usual unhealthy snacks and take great pride in being able to prepare them on their own.

Much of our life centers around food and eating. Cooking is more than an essential life skill; it is a way of socializing and building relationships. Just as the kitchen has become the center of most gatherings in the home, it can be used as a focal point in teaching many essential skills. In order for school to become more relevant, it is crucial that adolescents understand how to integrate the information they learn into their daily lives. Precisely as a recipe needs the right mix of ingredients to be tasty, students need the right blend of courses to become well rounded. Imagine how bland chocolate chip cookies would be without the chips.

The lessons cited meet the following NY State learning standards:

Social Studies

Explore the meaning of American culture by identifying the key ideas, beliefs, and patterns of behavior, and traditions that help define it and unite all Americans

Know the social and economic characteristics, such as customs, traditions, child-rearing practices, ways of making a living, education and socialization practices, gender roles, foods, and religious and spiritual beliefs that distinguish different cultures and civilizations

Understand how people in the United States and throughout the world are both producers and consumers of goods and services

Understand how civic values reflected in the United States and New York State constitutions have been implemented through laws

and practices

Discuss the role of an informed citizen in today's changing world

English Language Arts

Interpret and analyze information from textbooks and nonfiction books for young adults, as well as reference materials, audio and media presentations, oral interviews, graphs, charts, diagrams, and electronic data bases intended for a general audience

Compare and synthesize information from different sources

Produce oral and written reports on topics related to all school subjects

Use Standard English for formal presentation of information, selecting appropriate grammatical constructions and vocabulary, using a variety of sentence structures, and observing the rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Listen attentively to other's and build on other's ideas in conversations with peers and adults

Distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information and between fact and opinion

Analyze, interpret, and evaluate information, ideas, organization, and language from academic and nonacademic texts, such as textbooks, public documents, book and movie reviews, and editorials

Compare and synthesize information from different sources

Math, Science, Technology

Add, subtract, multiply, and divide fractions, decimals, and integers

Estimate, make, and use measurements in real-world situations

Apply mathematical knowledge to solve real-world problems and problems that arise from the investigation of mathematical ideas, using representations such as pictures, charts, and tables

Locate and utilize a range of printed, electronic, and human information resources to obtain ideas

Health, Physical Education, and Home and Careers

Understand how the family can provide for the economic, physical, and emotional needs of its members

Investigate why people and places are located where they are located and what patterns can be perceived in this location

Understand the resources available to them, make informed decisions about the use of those resources, and know some ways to expand resources

Apply principles of food safety and sanitation

Analyze the multiple influences which affect health decisions and behaviors

Understand the relationships among diet, health, and physical activities; evaluate their own eating patterns; and use appropriate technology and resources to make food selections and prepare simple, nutritious meals

Apply decision-making process to dilemmas related to personal health

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Middle School 'FACS' Matters

Fran Callan, Grace Gerard, Eileen McNamara, Gail O'Mara, and Beth Rickli

As Family and Consumer Science (FACS) teachers at the middle-school level, we believe that FACS courses are imperative to middle-level students. We all agree that our courses provide practical applications of information learned in the core subjects. It is in our classes that students begin to understand the validity of material learned in other classes, and its practical applications. As students apply the information learned in math, science, social studies, and language arts to various hands-on projects in "non-tested" classes, they begin to make the connections between their learning and their daily lives.

We take basic math skills and reinforce them through practical use in our foods, sewing and consumerism units. When cooking, students must accurately measure all of their ingredients before combining them. Fractions take on a whole new meaning when they precede the words: cup of flour, teaspoon of salt and skim milk. Math skills are also required when measuring for a hemline and constructing a garment using a specific seam allowance. Spatial relations are needed when putting together a poster on self-esteem or today's purposes of clothing. Creating a pair of boxer shorts from a flat pattern to a finished product also enables a student to understand visual/spatial relationships. Balancing a checkbook and learning to live within a budget is essential for everyone. During our consumerism unit students learn the value of a dollar, how far it will go, and how to make it go farther by being consumer savvy.

Language Arts teachers read, write, and research with their students. Once again this is a

skill that is enhanced in our program. We strongly believe in developing reading and writing skills in our content area. To accomplish this, we build a writing and oral-presentation component into many of our units. For our child-care unit, students create a lesson plan on how to keep a child busy and out of danger. This lesson is then carried over into their babysitting jobs and into their future roles as parents. In the kitchen, students need to read and understand a banana bread recipe before they can make it. When creating a garment with the use of a sewing machine, pattern directions must be read, understood and sequentially followed in order to successfully complete the project. Writing skills are reinforced each day through their journal entries. Language Arts skills also come into play when students research entrepreneurs and careers using the many resources available in the media center. Students enhance their word-processing and technology skills by completing their projects and presenting their findings using PowerPoint, a program which further affords students the opportunity to improve their public-speaking and social skills.

"When dedicated and knowledgeable middle level educators work in concert, they create exciting possibilities for all their students." (National Middle School Association, 13). Our classes have worked in conjunction with the Social Studies Department to prepare an Iroquois Harvest and to participate in Colonial Day celebrations. Recognizing the National Middle School Association's emphasis on creating a positive school climate where students and adults recognize and accept one another's differences and where diversity is celebrated, we co-teach with the LOTE Department to prepare cultural foods such as Spanish rice (19). Students are also required to research the history of a specific garment that is still worn today and to present a project on an entrepreneur that includes: where, when, how and why a business was started.

Where would FACS classes be without science? (or science without FACS?!) Students learn about the function of ingredients in a baked product and the chemical reactions that take place in the oven when using baking powder, baking soda or yeast. During our safety and sanitation unit, students learn that steam is capable of leaving a burn worse than boiling water because its temperature is higher. They also learn about the seriousness of food-borne illnesses and how to prevent them. Problem-solving (scientific method) skills are always needed to complete a task. Problem solving is used in our classroom on a daily basis, whether the students are cooking, sewing, or in the computer lab working on a WebQuest.

Cooperative groups, successful completion of food labs and sewing projects, creating child-care lesson plans that will actually be used, PowerPoint presentations, self-esteem building projects: all work toward improving a student's self-confidence and sense of initiative. Our classroom environment is inviting, warm, and comfortable with visually-pleasing displays of students' work. It is a place where students can leave academic frustrations behind and find success in a myriad of concrete hands-on projects.

Education can be viewed as a circle that encompasses all classes to make the students and their learning complete. The following, written in a letter to the Board of Education, St. Mary's County, Maryland, embodies the importance of "non-tested" courses: "Pure academics without the integration of basic life knowledge and skills classes fall woefully short of preparing a student for the realities of higher education, life long learning, employment, and family life" (Letter to the Board of Education). The courses provided by the Family and Consumer Science Department show an ongoing effort to maintain an integrated program that teaches to

all areas of student development. Skills for life are learned with us.

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Bringing Skills to 'LIFE' in Home and Career Skills Class

Catherine L. Corapi

Teaching home and career skills in the middle school is a rewarding experience. It is satisfying to witness our young adolescent students develop an understanding of skills and how they apply in real life situations. In class, students are given many opportunities to use reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. There is no avoiding the use of math when a recipe must be doubled or reading a recipe in order to prepare food. It is also important to note that many students find a special kind of success in a home and career skills class that may be difficult to find in other classes.

In the home and career skills class, students are afforded exposure to such subjects as nutrition, food preparation, child development and care, career exploration, decision-making, problem solving, and personal development. These subjects contribute greatly to the development of young adolescents as they prepare for the future. Even if a career choice is to become a nuclear physicist, there is a need to know about those things that refer to life outside of the work environment.

It is important to know that home and career skills courses are not being taught in a vacuum. School districts have been addressing the need for every subject area to include the New York State learning standards across all curriculum areas and this is true in the area of home and career skills as well. Included in a recent seventh-grade lesson plan on child development and care were five obvious learning standards, two family and consumer sciences standards, two English language arts standards, and one career development and occupational studies standard. The lessons included practice in reading, writing, and speaking, as students

researched information about the development and care of children at each of four stages of development. Students are required to develop ideas for appropriate activities, identify nutritional foods, address child hygiene, and suggest health and safety measures for young children at each stage. After completing their investigation, students utilize technology and apply information by choosing a project to share the information they have gathered. Among these choices are a babysitting business brochure, a babysitter's guide to better childcare, a PowerPoint® presentation geared to teach a babysitter's class, or a script for a play depicting several dilemmas faced by a babysitter. Integration and application of these NYS standards and skills enabled the students to learn in a meaningful way.

Keeping the New York State Education Department's Mandate in place for thirty weeks of home and career skills in the middle school where it belongs should not be an issue under debate. Middle school students need to have exposure to the lessons described above to acquire a well-rounded education, be able to explore various career options through a variety of subjects, and experience successes to become lifelong learners.

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Home and Career Skills, Connecting the Standards to Life

Ellen Shurgan

Home and Career Skills, Don't Leave School Without Them! This tell-all slogan was written by a group of my students for entry in a poster contest sponsored by the Long Island Chapter of New York State's Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Education (NYFACSE) and how true it rings. Wouldn't the quality of all our lives improve if we were armed with these skills as we navigated our way through each day?

Open any newspaper or magazine or turn on the television and hear about the obesity epidemic plaguing our youth. Juvenile diabetes has doubled in that last decade. Bankruptcy rates are on the rise. Incidence of violence, hazing and bullying fill the airways. Drug and alcohol use, promiscuity and other forms of risk-taking behavior have become commonplace among the young. At the same time, two-income families are becoming the norm. Single-parent families are increasing. Extended families often are continents away. Young people today are alone for prolonged periods of time, needing to manage for themselves. Unlike previous generations, children don't have the luxury of significant adults present to teach and model life-skills.

The Home and Career Skills Curriculum fills this void. The course is designed to help adolescents live in a society of constant change and to improve their quality of life by preparing them to meet their present and future responsibilities as family members, consumers, home managers and wage earners (The University of the State of N.Y., 1986). Written with an ever-changing future in mind, the curriculum withstands the test of time. Its objectives are broad-based and include developing skills for effective decision making, problem solving and management in home, school, community and workplace and developing concepts and skills basic

to home and family responsibilities. Also included is the development of personal skills to enhance employment potential.

The Middle School Concept and Home and Career Skills

The problems of early adolescence seem to be intensified in the school environment. Radical physical, psychological, emotional, intellectual and social change takes place during this period. Students need to understand their changing self. "The central purpose of the middle school curriculum should be helping early adolescents explore self and social meanings at this time in their life" (Beane, 1993). Home and Career Skills address these problems by dealing with subject matter and issues relevant to the student. True to the middle school philosophy, it addresses the "whole child" and provides an environment of social and emotional enrichment. By design, the course helps students to discover who they are and helps in the formation of a positive self-concept while meeting the diverse need of the students. A well-designed Home and Career Skills program uses experiential approaches that appeal to the adolescent. An old Chinese proverb states, I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand. Hands-on instructional activities help students to achieve understanding.

Integration of Standards through research-based instructional strategies

Inherent to the instructional activities in Home and Career Skills is an integration of all curricula areas. It serves students by putting content learning in context and provides real-life applications. Lessons give meaning to abstract ideas. In her book on middle schoolers, Linda Perlstein includes a chapter "but what does this actually have to do with real life?" exploring the middle schoolers need to see relevance in what they learn (Perlstein, 2003). A well-designed Home and Career Skills course helps students to make the connections.

Outlined below is a small sample of how course content based on the Home and Careers

Skills curriculum is delivered using research-based strategies including educational opportunities for students to experience academic content in a real-life context. The possibilities for meaningful content integration are endless.

According to Gardner, problems developed for students should be as close to real life as possible and provide opportunity for careful manipulation or observation to establish a degree of understanding (Gardner, 1991). This research drives the problem-based design of this lesson. Entitled, *How Can I Make Money Work for Me?*, students use standards in ELA, health, physical education, and home and careers, math, science, and technology, and career development and occupational studies to calculate how they can replace their entire wardrobe using only \$2000. They must spend the entire amount, but not go over budget. Students determine the clothing they will need based on their lifestyle. Using an EXCEL spreadsheet they track their clothing expenditures. Students research the price of the clothing they want by shopping the Web.

The unit below is designed using the backward design process outlined in *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins and McTighe, 1998). Again, utilizing multiple NYS standards, students are asked to imagine themselves 20 years from now, living the lifestyle of their dreams. What are their days like? Where are they living? With whom? What kind of work are they doing? Have they achieved their goals? They are asked to consider how they will find a career that suits them and provides that dream lifestyle. To do this, they must start with the end in mind. During their research, they analyze their own personality characteristics and interests after engaging in different activities such as playing *The Career Game*, creating a career plan portfolio (www.nycareerzone.org), researching careers, and creating resumes.

Grabbing student attention is an integral part of lesson design in Home and Career Skills. In his research on the brain and its affect on learn-

ing Jensen writes: "The attention process consists of alarm, orientation, identification, and decision. This sequential laser beam process is akin to, 'Whoops, something is happening,' then, 'Where?' and finally, 'What is it?' The answer to the final question will usually tell us how long we need to attend to it. Attention is expressed in a student when there's greater flow of information in the specific target area of the brain's pathway. In short, when specialized brain activity is up, attention is up" (Jensen, 1998). In an integrated unit, entitled *How Do I Choose What to Eat?*, students apply information learned about nutrition to create a Personal Health Plan. The problem posed states: *Nutrition researchers report that if young people today continue to eat the way they do and live a sedentary lifestyle they will be the first generation to die before their parents and their schools may be to blame.* Students must uncover why schools are to blame and figure out what they need to know about nutrition, fitness and lifestyle. Students research the information they need and use it to create a personally, suitable health plan.

Connecting Home and Career Skills to the Total Educational Environment

Beyond its obvious enhancement of middle school education and its impact on the school environment, Home and Career Skills can contribute favorably to the school environment in less obvious ways. Experiences, both social and educational gained in these classes are often remembered for a lifetime. The important direct and indirect effects of Home and Career Skills can make school a more positive and welcoming place.

Building Character

In July 2001, New York State passed a bill known as SAVE, Safe Schools Against Violence in Education. As part of the plan, districts were required to instruct students in civility, citizenship and character education. Topics included under the character education umbrella include principles of honesty, tolerance, personal re-

sponsibility, respect for others, observance of law and rules, courtesy, dignity and other positive traits. Home and Career Skills serve to directly address these topics in the Module “How Do I Relate to Others?” The coursework provides students with opportunities to work collaboratively and directly instructs students in group and interpersonal skills.

Educators for Social Responsibility studies have reported the following as a result of directly instructing the entire school population in character education and conflict resolution skills:

- Feel better about themselves;
- Indicate increased awareness of feeling and verbalization of feelings;
- Show more caring behavior toward other students;
- Exhibit more acceptance of differences;
- Develop improved listening, communication, and anger management skills;
- Understand and use effective conflict resolution strategies;
- Increased sense of empowerment;
- Have better relations with their teachers and other students;
- Improved rates of attendance;
- Reduction in the number of reported violent incidences among students;
- Decreased level of disciplinary referrals and rates of suspension (www.esrnational.org).

High Stake Assessments

Reviewing the 8th grade State Assessment Tests and the Regents Exams it can be determined that although the content varies, exams from all disciplines require students to have the same skills to answer questions successfully. Built into the Home and Career Skills curriculum are real-life opportunities to practice these skills, some by direct teaching, and some by lesson design. To prepare a recipe one must read, organize and follow directions. To make use of the information on a food label requires interpreting. A lesson in advertising might be structured to have students “take a stand.” To do

this requires the use of reasoning to defend their position. The above examples only touch the surface of the skills development lessons Home and Career Skills teachers use everyday in the classroom. Analyzing skills are needed in a nutrition lesson to determine whether the school lunch is nutritionally sound. These examples only touch the surface of how skills attainment is integrated into coursework. Student’s success depends on these skills being reinforced daily in all subject areas.

Reaching At-Risk Students

To reach low-achieving students, the first challenge is to get their attention. Stiff-William suggests that the use of integrated curriculums enables these students to make connections among disciplines and see the relevance for learning the material. Action projects for learning sustain student interest too and promote independent learning. (Stiff-Williams, 2002). The hands-on approach employed in most Home and Career Skills classes makes learning meaningful and understandable to at-risk students. Home and Career Skills services these students well giving them an opportunity to shine. Many develop skills that lead to future career interests.

Home and Career Skills is a vital part of a middle school program. Its mission is to empower students by providing information so that they can make wise decisions in their personal lives. It provides the knowledge and frameworks for solving problems thoughtfully. At a time in their lives when they seek autonomy from parents, they learn the skills needed to begin assuming personal responsibility. Students leave with a sense that they are in control. Life is full of choices that require well-informed decisions and careful consideration.

The scope and sequence of any well-delivered Home and Careers Skills program helps students to make connections between what they are learning and the lives they are or will be living. When asking students to respond to “In literature as in life...” they need to have explored life as thoroughly as literature to have greater

perceptiveness and sensitivity to understand their own experiences. It bears repeating, Home and Career Skills, Don't Leave School Without Them!

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The Importance of Home and Career Skills in Middle-Level Education

Erika Fallik

The Home and Career Skills program at Carle Place Middle School encompasses eight weeks in seventh and eighth grade. The course has been designed to help students live a society of constant change and to improve their quality of life by preparing them to meet their present and future responsibilities as family members, consumers, home managers, and wage earners. The goal of the program is to educate students to think constructively, make sound decisions, solve problems, manage resources, and learn from experiences. Home and Career Skills is a program that is primarily a hands-on curriculum that incorporates knowledge and skills from all of the New York State and National Learning Standards.

The Home and Career Skills curriculum in the seventh grade consists of three units. Within the personal development unit, students are required to use English-language Arts skills as well as art and health to complete a required project. The process skills unit incorporated the above standards as well as the career-development standards. Resource- Management is a topic that allows for the use of integrating curriculum from across the academic spectrum. Math and reading skills are used for recipe reading and measuring. Students must be able to read measurements and make conversions in order to be successful in completing their cooking unit.

In eighth grade, students are required to complete a sewing project. Students are given written directions to follow and must use math skills to create a pattern for their project. Students use reading and comprehension skills to take the steps of completing the project. Fine motor skills are enhanced through the use of the

tools associated with sewing. Following the sewing unit, students are then introduced to careers. Students learn to write a resume, how to read a help wanted advertisement, how to go on an interview, and how to research a career that interests them. These are skills in which these students will be able to use their entire life.

Home and Career Skills is a course that encompasses all areas of education. It is a subject area that allows students to apply the information that they have learned in other classes. Students are provided with a variety of practical skills and techniques for recognizing and solving problems in daily living. Family and Consumer Sciences is a subject that provides an environment that enhances the development of each student in all areas of education.

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Viewing the World of Work: Groundhog Job Shadowing Day

Mary Taylor

On February 26, 2004, fifty 8th graders from the Home and Career Skills class at Ballston Spa Middle School were invited to participate in the Junior Achievement Groundhog Job Shadowing Day at State Farm Insurance to further their career exploration and learn the skills that launch success. Our organizers of this field trip from State Farm Insurance Nancy Mack, Jody Mostoller, and John Willsie created a valuable and active program for the Ballston Spa Middle School. Students received more than a bird's eye view of the nature of work as they listened to presenters and spent time learning about the occupations of State Farm employees by job shadowing.

Keith Stewart introduced the State Farm mission statement that expresses helping others, customer service, vision, values and volunteerism. As an agent, Mr. Stewart related insurance to future dreams of a family or individual and its important function throughout life. As we reflect on the character traits worth developing our values, integrity and volunteering to lend a hand in our community we certainly can see why State Farm Insurance is our "Good Neighbor" and Educational Partner.

From the Human Resources area Tanya Carroll explained to the group that her position allows her to make people happy. She described working at job fairs, community activities, and recruiting candidates for employment. She is involved with the processes of hiring and interviewing, conducting orientations and granting promotions are all parts of the human resources department occupation.

We also met Sandy Dempsie of the Public Affairs department. This division focuses on communication, legislative outreach and a variety of community activities.

Next on the agenda the students toured with much fascination the State Farm complex.

We viewed many divisions, from the cafeteria to individual cubicles, from the storeroom to the boardroom. It is an impressive business environment so generously shared by the volunteers for this Junior Achievement job shadowing day.

Prior to visiting, each student in Mrs. Catricala's and Mrs. Taylor's class had compiled a portfolio of his or her career goals, abilities and skills. This information was helpful to match for the shadowing experience. The educational partners explained their job skills, occupational information and career insight with our class. Students were debriefed with the leadership of Peter Yerou. Students shared their shadowing experiences and related them to the classes they take now and will be part of in the future.

Student Quotes:

"I saw how many jobs there are in just one company." Kristen Kinstrey (Job Shadowed Cindy Allen, Event Planner)

"The most important thing I learned from it is that almost every occupation ties into another; I also learned how to make an estimate." Sara Wittek (Job Shadowed Heather Brandt, Auto Claims Representative)

Groundhog Job Shadow Day is made possible through the partnership of State Farm Insurance, Ballston Spa Middle School Home and Career Skill Classes and Junior Achievement. This career exploration supports the New York Standards for middle school level Family

and Consumer Sciences. We are grateful to have this opportunity.

At the beginning of each February your school can participate and gain valuable experience by hands on activities. To learn more about this program log on to www.jobshadow.org.

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Looking for a staff development program designed for middle-level educators?

Look into the **Middle-Level Academy**, a six-session, thirty-hour program sponsored by NYSMSA in conjunction with SED. The sessions included in the program are: The Middle-Level School — An Introduction; Appropriate Instructional Strategies; Teacher Teams; Advisor-Advisee, Community Service and Service Learning; Curriculum, Assessment and Interdisciplinary Instruction; Developing a Model Middle-Level School — A Personal Plan. Sessions can be adapted to the needs of your school and staff. For more information, contact Dr. James Tobin, NYSMSA Director of Professional Development, (315) 597-3401 or tobin@nysmsa.org.



Longwood JHS Students Crosswalk the NYS Learning Standards with Family and Consumer Sciences

Sarah Ferrar and Deborah Quick

Students weave the exploratory courses with their academic classes to create the fabric of their lives. Exploratory courses help students integrate the New York State Learning Standards into meaningful learning experiences. Students apply their academic coursework through their tangible exploratory courses.

Learning is the fabric of our lives. Learning starts the day we are born and continues until we die. The more we learn, the more intricate or interesting the fabric (life). The vertical or warp threads that make up a fabric correspond to the core academic courses (English, math, social studies, and science), whereas, the filling or weft threads that run across the fabric creating your design correspond to the exploratory courses (home and career skills, art, technology, music). The design of the fabric (life) is contingent upon one's exposure to exploratory courses helping to create a self-concept. Like fabric, education is based upon the interdisciplinary learning of the academic subjects and their reinforcement provided by the exploratory courses.

Home and Careers Skills promotes tangible learning experiences for students especially AIS (Academic Intervention) students who learn through varied modalities and cognitive abilities. It allows students to apply core courses everyday by concentrating on the lower half of the Learning Pyramid (National Training Laboratories) where the retention rate average is 30-90%. These techniques include demonstration, discussion group, practice by doing, and teaching others. Students have real life experiences in these classes, solidifying their understanding of English, math, science, and social studies.

Longwood's 7th and 8th grade programs provide a wealth of varied experiences that enable all students to easily walk across New York State Learning Standards. Students crosswalk not only Family and Consumer Science (FACS) learning standards contained within Health, Physical Education and Family and Consumer Sciences but also those in Career and Occupational Development (CDOS); English Language Arts (ELA); Languages Other Than English (LOTE); Social Studies; Math, Science, and Technology (MST); and The Arts.

ELA standards 1 and 4, are used on a daily basis in Home and Career Skills. Students must be able to read, interpret information, and interact to apply the skills necessary for the day's lesson. ELA standards 1 and 4 are met during the pre-parenting unit when students practice storytelling and writing storybooks. These standards are also met when students write essays about the origin of their name in the unit on personal development or when students write their own fables and interpret moral stories in studying a unit on values and goals. Even the simple task of writing a recipe reinforces ELA standards. ELA standard 3 is used when students evaluate their laboratory experiences in foods and textiles, critique food labels, consumer goods, and age appropriate developmental activities for children (pre-parenting skills).

Home and Careers Skills class addresses LOTE standards 1 and 2 when students interact with students from different cultures and when they learn American Sign Language while studying communication skills. Standard 2 for LOTE and standard 3 for social studies are met when students experiment with different cultural

foods in food labs, or when students locate the origin of their clothing assembly. Students connect social studies standard 2, world history, and standard 3, geography, when they discuss and use spices from around the world. The early explorers were looking for spices when the Americas were discovered. Home and Careers students discuss and locate country origins of clothing and consumer buying-power, meeting social studies standard 4, economics. Consumer laws, rights and responsibilities meet social studies standard 5. The integration of social studies standard 1 into the home and career skills course provides a visual clarification for the students in the form of graphic organizers (charts, Venn diagrams) and material resources (equipment, tools, foods, and fibers) historically speaking.

Home and Careers can support the student learning of the Iroquois Indian unit in 7th grade social studies with a native food lab. The westward expansion social studies unit is enhanced when Home and Career students study Levi Strauss and the blue-jean. During the homespun unit students can practice spinning and weaving, coming to realize the time and work involved providing some of its basic goods in colonial America.

Decision-making, Module 1 of the Home and Career Skills, curriculum parallels the scientific method. A geometric sewing pattern for a stitching project reinforces the geometry learned in mathematics. These are only a few ways students meet standard 1 of mathematics, science, and technology (MST). Many learning experiences involve standard 2 and 5 of MST; any time the students access computer information for foods, nutrition, careers, child development, budgeting, room and clothing design.

Standard 3 of MST states that students apply mathematics in a real world setting. Students need to measure for cooking, sewing labs and interior design, as well as the pre-parenting skill of measuring medicine for children. Reducing or

expanding recipes incorporates working with division, multiplication, addition and subtraction of whole numbers and fractions. Students also use math to figure a budget for a fictitious family or a market order, or a consumer lesson. Students apply the concept of symmetry and asymmetry in their room designs and creative stitching.

Home and Career students use MST standard 4, science, when they learn about leavening for cooking or writing the chemical notation for carbon dioxide as a leavening agent. Lessons on nutrition involve the periodic table to show minerals and elements that make up food. Simple examples are H₂O or CO₂ or NaCl. Students learn science by making emulsifiers (mayonnaise) or by studying the pH of different food ingredients and their chemical reactions (baking soda, baking powder, lemon juice, vinegar use within a recipe). Students learn about fitness, weight management, and general wellness. Current issues in the media exemplify national nutritional habits as is the case with the obesity epidemic. Students, again, incorporate food science when preparing and identifying different parts of the plants that they consume. Some major health issues addressed in class are food handling, safety, and sanitation. At this point microorganisms and parasites are discussed and how to prevent cross contamination when handling foods. Students walk away with an understanding of the intrinsic value of nutritional information for a lifetime and how poor nutrition and food sanitation affects their appearance and future wellness.

MST standard 5, technology; standard 6, common themes; and standard 7, problem solving is addressed in Home and Careers lab experiences everyday. Students use computers to research possible career interests, to explore current research being done in the areas of food preservation (Parmalat milk) and fiber technology. For example, silver ions are added to Parmalat milk to prevent bacterial growth and

the ions are added to molten polyester to make an antibacterial cloth. Activated carbons are directly woven into fibers to control odor in textiles that we buy and use everyday.

Family and Consumer Sciences courses provide learning experiences that touch students' lives today, and in their future as family, career, and community leaders. "85 % of children entering kindergarten will work in jobs that don't exist today (Long Island Works poster). The exploratory courses, such as Home and Career Skills, prepare students for a future that is constantly changing by guiding those students as they cross walk the New York State Learning Standards.

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Music Education



Music Education: A Necessity for All

Dr. Lyn E. Schraer-Joiner

Music's longevity is impressive, its history rich, and its power to invoke within each of us feelings, emotions, and connections to the things we hold dear, overwhelming. Why is it then that music educators frequently find themselves in the predicament of being bombarded with questions regarding the benefits of what they teach in their classrooms and asked constantly to justify its importance? Why also is music among the first courses considered for elimination due to budgetary constraints or as a viable solution for the improvement of low test scores? What ever happened to "music for every child, every child for music," a statement made by Dr. Karl W. Gehrkens in 1922 (Oberlin College Archives. 2004, <http://www.oberlin.edu/archive/holdings/finding/RG30/SG18/biography.html>)?

For man, music in some form has existed for thousands of years. Even early man created music, using a reindeer-bone flute (found in Czechoslovakia and dating 30, 000 years BC), an action highlighting his interests in the exploration and creation of new sounds (Brandenberg, 2003). Later examples represent the evolution of music through time and include songs of the traveling minstrels or troubadours of the Middle and Renaissance eras, or that of a Beethoven Symphony performed in the great concert halls of Europe. Our needs of the past and present blend and are similar to that of early man - to create and to explore, to express ourselves, and to communicate. Our abilities to create music

and to create our relationships to it separate us from other living things (Gaston, 1968).

Music plays a large role in who we are, a defining factor in individuality, culture, and society. Diminishing our middle school students' opportunities to engage in music denies them outlets for creative expression and personal growth. Music promotes the development of musical knowledge and opinions regarding a variety of performance mediums, compositional styles, or musical genres. Music provides a safe forum in which to express the students' varying musical opinions and ideas. This subsequently instills or enhances their potential to value art and music and to develop their sensitivity to artistic forms. Musical opportunities also enable students to explore their cultural heritage, instill tolerance, understanding, and appreciation for cultures, religions, and races apart from their own. Due to their experiences in the middle level music programs, our children will be provided with a foundation for lifelong enjoyment of music beyond school corridors as listeners, patrons, or even members of community choruses, bands, or orchestras. The arts can mean the difference between merely existing and living a full and meaningful life.

In Rachel Carsons' book, *Silent Spring*, the sounds and noises of nature ceased. The melody and essence of life were gone (Carson, 1962). What would life be without music? Music, while an intellectual pursuit in its own right, is versatile in its capacity to reach every person regardless of background or experience. It is from this perspective that my most precious musical experiences have formed. For the past four years, I had the opportunity to work with

two adult learners who each had a hearing loss. Despite this, music was for both an integral part of their childhood and adolescence. Carmen was a remarkable flute player with a moderate hearing loss with whom I performed in a college ensemble. Although I was intrigued by her abilities to compensate in an ensemble setting by taking off her shoes in order to feel the vibrations on the floor or her careful study of the principal flute's playing cues, I found her love of music and expressions of enjoyment to be truly amazing. Carmen attributes her initial successes in instrumental music to her 5th grade band teacher who believed her music education was an integral part of her overall development.

I met Catherine after she was implanted with a cochlear prosthesis. Our introductions came about as a result of her interests in learning to listen to music again. Catherine's severe to profound hearing loss was gradual. Over the course of 25 years, she experienced a loss of hearing the voices of friends and family, a loss of independence, and a loss of music (Schraer-Joiner, 2003). As music and environmental sounds gradually became unattainable, Catherine experienced a sense of aesthetic loss (Scadden, 1987). However, the successful implantation of the cochlear prosthesis gradually returned her to the world of music. While neither Carmen or Catherine are middle school students, my experiences with both have, for me, reinforced the importance of music for every individual regardless of background and ability. These experiences have also intensified my current fears of what the lives of my middle schools students will become without music as a part of their middle level education, void of aesthetic experience or opportunities for creative expression. As we all know, middle school students want to be heard and need to express themselves as they continue to learn, develop, and carve a place in the world. Music provides one of these outlets.

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Music Education: It's More Than a Catchy Tune

John Andersen, Edgar Meeks, and Peter Saladino

Ask students to sing the words to the latest popular tunes, and they immediately respond with not only the words, but the physical movements of the lead singer as well. However, ask these same students to relate what was taught in their last class, and the results may not be as successful. What does music education bring to the middle-level program? How does it enrich and enhance the experiences of our students?

A music performance, like a sporting event, enables students to work as individuals, as part of a small group, and as part of a large team. A chorus is made up of individual voices that combine to become voice groups (alto, soprano, etc.) to create the final performance where all voices interact to become the final presentation. Students learn that one voice is important, but at the same time, see the value of learning to work together in small groups to enable the entire team (here the chorus) to achieve success. The same interaction and interconnection occurs in the band or the orchestra. Depending on the size of the performing group, students within each division are further able to perform at their individual levels of talent and interest (first, second or third chair in band or orchestra or different subdivisions in chorus). In addition to having a successful performance, students learn the value of working together and how that interaction creates a final product more valuable than each of the parts that created it.

Music class provides a less structured environment where the skills of other disciplines are integrated in hands-on opportunities. Science is involved, as students understand acoustics and pitch. Foreign language is understood as students learn the meanings of the different terms used on the printed music page. Written

music is a form of graph, with axes for time and pitch. Indeed, rhythm and the notes themselves make the study of fractions valuable and often, for the auditory learner, make fractions more understandable. Understanding music means understanding the history and culture in which it was created. There is an aspect of physical education to music, as student become more cognizant of the need for proper posture and breathing as well as the coordination of fingers or tongue and mouth. Research has shown that music instruction enhances brain activity (Weinberger, 1998) as well as spatial reasoning, organization, quality of writing skills, and verbal ability (Catterall, 2002).

Sometimes, the music itself provides connections to other disciplines. Learning *The Battle of Bunker Hill*, a selection for seventh-grade band, enabled our students to perform for their peers and served as the basis for a lesson on listening skills, critical for not only music, but ELA, foreign language, and other areas as well.

But, most of all, music is an art. The history of music is a history of action and reaction, no different than life as we know it. It provides students with the opportunity to personalize what they have learned and glean the self-esteem and self-satisfaction that comes from performing a selection well. It provides insight into expression that no other discipline, except maybe art, can accomplish. In the words of President Gerald R. Ford: "Involvement in music is one of the finest ways that a child can learn about our society. Music education opens doors that help children pass from school into the world around them – a world of work, culture, intellectual activity, and human involvement. The future of our nation depends on providing our children with a complete education that includes music."

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Submission of Articles

In Transition is now accepting manuscripts for publication consideration. Our journal is produced by the New York State Middle School Association and is dedicated to those teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, and others serving the needs of students aged 10-15. *In Transition* is a juried publication; all manuscripts are reviewed and approved for publication by a panel of members from the NYSMSA Board of Directors.

Manuscripts describing successful programs, stimulating projects, exemplary teaching techniques, unique team concepts, action research, and promising practices are welcome! We are particularly interested in articles on implementing the new Standards, teaming, interdisciplinary instruction, authentic assessment, flexible scheduling, integrating technology into instructional programs, and application of the *Essential Elements*.

Please note the changes in the following format guidelines:

- LENGTH:** 400-2,000 words (two to eight pages)
- FORMAT:** MS Word or compatible, double space, Times New Roman 12, 1-inch margins. Citations of referenced works should follow current MLA or APA standards.
- ILLUSTRATIONS:** All illustrations, tables, charts, photographs, etc. must be high quality, black and white or grayscale. Photographs must be in JPEG format and include captions identifying subjects, activity, and source or photographer. All illustrations become the property of NYSMSA.
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Technology Education: The Nucleus of Middle-Level Philosophy

Robert R. Ike and Richard V. Ketcham



The battle rages to maintain exploratory subjects in middle-level schools. This notion must be erased from middle-level discussion and be replaced with the opportunity for educational leaders and classroom teachers to be empowered for the design and implementation of pedagogical practices and curricula that are in the best interest of adolescent learners.

Recalling the initial interview for a middle-level technology teacher, the discussion involved birdhouses and an administrative aversion to such curricular nothingness. This perceived notion of nothingness was far from accurate, and in fact, was irrational, lacked instructional merit, and was asynchronous to the middle-level ideals that the school leadership steadfastly paraded.

The State University of New York College at Oswego Technology Education Department mission statement declares,

Students who graduate with degrees from the Department of Technology are expected to promote authentic learning and technological literacy for all students (social justice)...The courses are designed to enable students to become more effective in their roles as technology educators (practice), assume positions of leadership in the profession as they become socially conscious catalysts for change in today's schools. Graduates...possess the necessary depth and breadth of knowledge in mathematics, science and related disciplines...

This statement embodies Stevenson's position that "authentic learning leaves unmistakable tracks in the talk and behavior of learners" (Erb, 2001, p. 64). SUNY Oswego technology education graduates are competent in and

responsible to the mission of their field, have ownership of their instructional practices, and stand on the ethical basis of providing a sound education. Technology educators mirror the exact attributes that are necessary for adolescent development and those that educators seek to be instilled in middle-level learners.

Technology education (tech. ed.) programs can be the center of middle-level education in New York State. At Newfield Middle School, the title, Introduction to Technology, is a misnomer. A more appropriate title for this course would involve conceptions of pre-engineering and laboratory activity for performance-based science and mathematics instruction. As was so aptly put by Schultz, "There is a beautiful and symbiotic relationship between technology and our ability to think" (1999, p. 2). Technology education at Newfield Middle School provides the coming together of three basic pedagogical theorists: Bloom, Krathwohl, and Harrow.

Success in tech. ed. can only be obtained when students push themselves beyond basic knowledge and understanding of mathematical, scientific, language, and/or social scientific concepts, through application in a hands-on, laboratory setting. Students are presented with tasks that provide enduring understandings (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998) that will not only have merit for synthesis but for life-long learning; "A 15-year-old who, after a successful experience in middle grades, is intellectually reflective, caring, ethical, healthy, a good citizen, and en route to a lifetime of meaningful work" (Jackson & Jackson, 2000, p. 63).

Instruction in tech. ed. pulls together the fundamentals of the *Essential Elements of*

Middle-Level Education (State Education Department). Tech. ed. curricula are designed to challenge students in a critical manner, as aligned to the New York State Learning Standards, as well as support academic and personal development.

In addition to cognitive theory, tech. ed. instructional design is centered on the affective (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964) and psychomotor (Harrow, 1972) domains. At Newfield Middle School students engage in a rich technology education experience that is “challenging, integrative, and exploratory” (NMSA, *This We Believe*, 1995, p. 20) combining the elements of student-centered, kinesthetic learning, with the development of the adolescent as a human being. Based on the learning experiences from SUNY Oswego’s technology education program, practical and vocational life lessons, and the work of Salvadori (1990), middle-level technology education provides rich learning experiences for our students.

Structures (Bridge Building)

Students research, design, and construct a model truss bridge from a specified amount of balsa material. A destructive test is then performed upon the completed bridge to determine its load bearing capacity. During this unit students discover the considerations of structural design such as *loads, compression, tension, torsion, shear, strength characteristics, and materials* (Long live, 2004).

Simple Machines (Mousetrap Powered Vehicle)

Using a mousetrap as the only source of energy, students design, build, and test a vehicle that will travel an expected distance. It is not as easy as one might think when taking into consideration many aspects of physics (e.g. gravity, friction, weight, and proportions). Students work in pairs to brainstorm various concepts in the early stages of the design process. Then they convert their best concept into a working model. During this activity, students discover the

mechanical advantage of simple machines such as the lever, pulleys, and the wheel and axle.

Aerodynamics (CO₂ Powered Cars)

In this activity, students work as design engineers for a fictitious automotive company. They are assigned the task of designing a new, aerodynamically sound, and aesthetically pleasing automobile for the company. The company establishes specific design criteria to which the students must adhere. Students research aerodynamic shapes and then develop a series of concept sketches. From the concept sketches, they develop full-scale working drawings of their prototype. The completed prototypes are then raced on a drag strip with the power coming from 8-gram carbon dioxide cylinders. Students record race times and distance and calculate the vehicles’ speed in miles per hour. *Newton’s third law* is an important concept illustrated by this activity.

Flight

Students discover the secrets behind flight. How does the shape of a wing affect lift? What are the forces that act on a plane in flight? What is the Bernoulli effect? Students also look back in time and follow the path that humans have taken in 100 years of flight. To get a real feel for flight, students use a variety of hand and power tools to construct a scratch-built glider (20-inch wing-span) from a specified amount of balsa material. Experiments are done with various wing shapes and profiles to determine which design creates the most lift. Students also become familiar with the parts of an aircraft: *fuselage, vertical and horizontal stabilizers, ailerons, rudder, landing gear, leading edge and trailing edge*.

Ergonomics (Cardboard Furniture)

Ergonomics is the study of designing equipment and devices that fit the human body, its movement, and its thinking patterns (Harms & Swernofsky, 1999). In this unit, students look at items that are used in day-to-day situations (e.g. chairs, computers, sneakers) and research

how they have evolved over time to better suit human needs and wants. In teams of four, students work as human factors engineers as they design and construct a chair completely out of cardboard. The chair must hold a 150-pound person. Research is completed to determine the critical angles and measurements needed for a comfortable chair.

ProDESKTOP 3D Design

ProDESKTOP 3D is the latest generation of engineering design software; engineers in manufacturing companies throughout the world use it. This exciting and powerful 3D design software enables students to create complex 3D designs quickly and easily. Introducing students to 3D design technology as early as middle school enables them to become better problem solvers, critical thinkers, and collaborators. Teaching design helps students solve multidimensional problems, make decisions, identify opportunities, and take effective steps (PTC, 2004).

“Building upon their childhood experiences, most people largely fashion their attitudes about learning and work, as well as their enduring adult values between 10 and 15 years of age. Relatively few people substantially change their beliefs in those attributes after reaching high school” (Topefer, Arth, Bergmann, Brough, Clark, & Johnston, In David, 1998, p. 160). While this is the belief that was held regarding the birdhouses, the main point was missed.

It is not about birdhouses. Rather it is about experiences that are rigorous and are designed first and foremost to internalize the value in learning, to provide “respectful tasks” (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998) and to challenge students to apply and analyze their surroundings to create new meaning. The point is not the *thing* or the end product to which educators are often focused. The point is the process, the measurement of the learning that is taking place along the journey of development.

As so eloquently stated in *This We Believe* (1995, p. 23), “The entire curriculum, not just certain courses or activities, should be exploratory. There are three earmarks of an exploratory curriculum. First, it enables students to discover their particular abilities, talents, interests, values, and preferences...Second, all courses and activities are taught so as to reveal opportunities for making contributions to society. Finally, exploratory experiences acquaint students with enriching, healthy leisure-time pursuits...such a curriculum helps to develop young adolescents who will become well-rounded adults.”

In the debate over impending regulatory change in New York State, we cannot miss the importance of the National Middle School Association’s statement. Ranks have been divided into subjects of perceived value (readin’, writin’, and ’rithmetic) and the subjects perceived as having less value (exploratory) to push against each other. The issue should surround what is known about middle-level learners: “Early adolescence is a time of discovery, when young people have significantly greater capacity for complex thinking” (Jackson & Davis, 2000, p. 7).

If the core subjects must be separated from the exploratories, then technology must be considered a core subject. It is the truest sense of middle-level learning that exists. A proposal, however, would be to overcome this disillusion and look at what is in the best interest of middle-level learners. The technology education program at Newfield Middle School, as well as the team approach, uses this tact. If subjects are isolated, learners are isolated. Ranks must be broken to commit to a model that Maley (In Snyder, 2000) recognized. “The program should be directed towards the development of the individual including such areas as the basic skills, learning to learn, social skills, communications, and a sense of self-worth” (p. 38). Boundaries must be erased.

The need to save exploratories should be diminished. Middle-level achievement will be increased when effective instruction is practiced, based on the needs of the learners. Educators must be empowered to create and/or maintain effective instructional practice for its merit to adolescents.

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Middle-Level Educators Speak Out: The Op Ed Page



YOU CAN'T MAKE ANYBODY LEARN!

Being a New York State Regent is no easy job. One question that they must grapple with is “What’s important and necessary for middle-level schools to teach ... what’s “nice” but not essential.” The answer to this should not be based on how much time is available for teaching reading and math since students will be tested, but on what is judged that they need to learn in able to be productive members of an ever changing democratic society. Even assuming a test is valid, it measures only how well a student did on that day on that test. But then the numbers are shown as an aggregate as if all the schools and situations are equal and comparable ... an unwarranted assumption. The high stakes testing in which we are engaged does not measure problem finding and solving, decision-making, ethical behavior, creativity, and most importantly the impetus to be a lifelong learner. These are harder to measure, but are they “nice” or “essential?”

The “No Child Left Behind” thrust has become “No Child Left Untested.” Reading tests do not motivate kids, they merely add to their adult-motivated stress. Test scores are a measure of team standing in the education league. People read about things that interest them. Eliminating subjects that can intrigue and motivate students to choose to learn more have the opposite effect. Students are left with materials and tests prepared by education’s big business firms that may be full of what “experts” sell as appropriate. They do not sell field trips or projects and performances that engage students’ imaginations

and energy. They do not sell the joy of serendipitous discovery in a rich library and then following up a happy accident that one is curious about. These are surely better motivators than being forced to read a paragraph and answer questions about it. Reading tests don’t get kids to WANT to read.

The so-called “special subjects” are the first to be eliminated in times of budget problems. But can any of us remember when there were not budget problems. In my 45 years of engagement with education, there has never been a time when we have not needed to press for the inclusion of subjects (such as art, music, technology, athletics) that may at the least motivate learning more, and at the best introduce our children to what may become life-long interest, even to pursuing career paths in those subjects.

We have heard a lot about “teaching standards” and “learning standards.” No one has talked about “delivery standards.” Schools are exhorted to do more with what they have or less, but there has been no pressure to ensure that the funding schools are allocated is adequate to enable them to acquire enough supplies and materials to do the job well. Computers were touted as the answer to improving education. But even now there are computers in boxes (stored along with old filmstrip projectors) that are not being used because of lack of wiring, training, interest, or obsolescence. Furthermore, there is little evidence to prove that being able to do a powerpoint presentation means that it is the result of reflective thinking, rather than producing results that may look impressive but are lacking in substance (like a fancy cover on a worthless report). Educators are not asked about

or given the resources they need to do their job well. It is easier for decision makers to assert that testing will determine whether folks are getting their money's worth from schools.

Teachers have made the decision to devote their lives to teaching our young. Their concern about what should be taught and by whom cannot be merely dismissed as interest in job security. Rather it is their professional judgment as to what will be best for their students. It is not enough that this concern be left only to educators. Since we are all responsible for present and future generations of young people, I urge that the public support subjects that are "special," that are more than "nice" but are instead "essential" yet may be eliminated in favor of "teaching to the tests." Life is more than reading and math scores. You can't MAKE anybody learn!

Hope Irvine, Ph.D.
Syracuse University

Dr. Irvine has been Chairwoman of the Department of Art Education at Syracuse University since 1982. From 1959-1982 she taught art at Eleanor Roosevelt JHS 143 in northern Manhattan.

Readers may submit Letters to the Editor and other opinion pieces for *Middle-Level Educators Speak Out: The Op Ed Page* for possible inclusion in future issues of *In Transition*. Use MS Word or a compatible word processor to create your document and send it as an e-mail attachment to editor@nysmsa.org. All letters and opinion pieces must include the author's name, address, and telephone number or e-mail address. NYSMSA will notify authors whose letters/pieces are chosen for publication and reserves the right to edit all submissions.

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Region 1 BOCES

Monroe #1
Monroe 2-Orleans
Wayne-Finger Lakes
Steuben-Allegany
and ALL Livingston County

Acting Region 1 Director

Jeff Craig (see **Director of
Research and Technology**)

Region 2 BOCES

Cayuga-Onondaga
Madison-Oneida
Oneida-Herkimer-Madison
Onondaga-Cortland-Madison
Oswego

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Region 3 BOCES

Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery
Herkimer
Washington-Saratoga-Warren-
Hamilton-Essex

Region 3 Director

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Region 4 BOCES

Broome-Tioga
Delaware-Chenango-
Madison-Otsego (except

Delaware County; see
Region 5)

Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga
Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga

Region 4 Director

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Region 5 BOCES

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Otsego-Northern Catskills
Questar III
and ALL Delaware County

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Region 6 BOCES

Dutchess
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Putnam-Northern Westchester
Rockland
Sullivan
Ulster
Southern Westchester

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Region 7

ALL New York City Districts

Region 7 Co-Directors

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Western Suffolk

Region 8 Director

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Region 9 BOCES

Cattaraugus-Allegany
Erie #1
Erie #2-Chautauqua-
Cattaraugus
Genesee Valley (except
Livingston County; see
Region 1)
Orleans-Niagara

Region 9 Director

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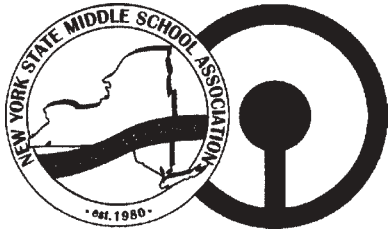
Region 10 BOCES

Champlain Valley
Franklin-Essex-Hamilton
Jefferson-Lewis
St. Lawrence-Lewis

Region 10 Director

Brian Sherman
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*Your region is determined by
your school's BOCES; for
retirees and businesses, it is
based on place of residence
or business location.*



Second Annual Middle-Level Institute

at The Corning Museum of Glass

Tuesday, June 29- Thursday, July 1, 2004

You are invited to join your middle-level colleagues from across New York State at the second annual NYSMA/CMoG Middle-Level Institute.

The New York State Middle School Association and the Corning Museum of Glass are proud to host the second annual NYSMSA/CMoG Middle-Level Institute in Corning, New York

The Institute will be held in the Corning Museum of Glass' ultra-modern facility. In addition to receiving ten hours of intensive hands-on middle-level instruction in a workshop of their choosing, participants will be able to spend time perusing the extensive glass exhibits that extend back to antiquity, as well as actually creating their own unique art forms out of both hot and cold glass.

All aspects of the Institute were rated as outstanding by those who attended last year. For detailed information about the 2004 NYSMSA/CMoG Institute and to download registration material, go to www.NYSMSA.org. The direct link to the Institute registration brochure is <http://nysmsa.org/associations/611/files/Corning04.pdf>.

The seven workshop offerings cover a range of middle-level topics that include:

- standards-based leadership
- curriculum development
- subject-specific offerings
- instructional methodologies and strategies
- using assessment data to guide instruction

Registration will be limited to about 100 educators.

Institute Contact: Dennis M. Tosetto
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