

PECONIC TEACHER CENTER

CENTERLINE WINTER 2008

Issue #1 Winter 2008

Message from the Director:

Dear Colleague,

I have come home again! Thank you to all for the good wishes as you welcomed me back to the Center. I will be assisting the Policy Board as it transitions to a new Director. On behalf of the Policy Board and staff of the Peconic Teacher Center, I want to thank Brigid Collins for her years as the Director. She instituted many new programs and professional development opportunities during her tenure here. We wish her the best in her new position as Assistant Principal in Montauk.

It is time to bundle up as winter fast approaches. Winter is a great time to participate in a Peconic Teacher Center activity such as Teacher as Reader or Professional Circles. We have some great courses that we will be offering beginning in January. By the time you read this, over 60 teachers K-6 will have participated in sessions with Debbie Diller, a nationally known author and consultant in Literacy. She worked with teachers in how to develop and manage Literacy Stations as a way to differentiate instruction. In December, PTC began an ongoing study group in Response to Intervention (RTI). See the article below *No More "Waiting to Fail"*, for a brief history of the legislation and the history of RTI. Many districts are just beginning to address RTI and we hope that PTC can provide resources and materials to assist them as they tease away at what RTI will look like in a specific district.

(continued on p. 2)

In This Issue:

Message from the Director

No More "Waiting to Fail"

Test Scores Mixed Results

Grants Available for Using
Local Government Records
in the Classroom

What's Going On In Our
Schools?

Online Tools for Handy
Classroom Projects

No More "Waiting to Fail"


Rachel Brown-Chidsey

Response to Intervention enables schools to identify the kinds of support struggling students need—and provide that support when it's needed.

Nearly 35 years ago, the U.S. Congress passed the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 as part of the nation's evolving commitment to accommodate the needs of all children in public schools. Soon after the passage of this historic legislation, policymakers became concerned about two trends. First, the number of students identified with learning disabilities grew much more quickly and reached much higher levels than expected. Second, the percentages of black and other racial minority students who were found eligible for special education services were much higher than the percentages of racial minorities in the U.S. population. Both of these trends have continued, and accumulating evidence indicates that special education services have not been as effective as possible (Kavale & Forness, 2000). Because of these concerns, many educators and policymakers have suggested that we need alternative methods for determining students' eligibility for special education services.

(continued on p. 2)

PTC Hours



**Monday-Thursday
8:30 - 4:30**

**Friday
8:30 - 4:00**

(continued from p. 1)

[Message from the Director continued](#)

When we learn from each other, a sense of commitment and community is fostered and it shapes our most effective practices.

In addition, **on January 30, 2008**, PTC will be hosting an **Open House** to determine if there is a sufficient audience to begin a Masters in Literacy program with St. John's University. Linda Faucetta, Administrative Director of the Graduate School of Education/Oakdale will be here to discuss the program and answer questions.

We are very excited to bring these opportunities to you as we know commuting to and from the East End just gets harder and harder. Our thanks to Southampton town and local school officials for providing the shuttles and LIRR service to alleviate some of the stress of traveling while County Road #39 is under construction. Many people hope that this service continues LONG after the construction is completed.

In the Spring, look for announcements of opportunities for content teachers to explore topics with scientists and historians. Since 1984, the Peconic Teacher Center has been "A source for teachers, a promise for students".

Support your local teacher center by being involved, and spreading the word about the great work that we do. Remember, this is your teacher center. Call us if you have ideas or suggestions. May your winter be cozy and warm.

Sincerely,

Larrilee Jemiola

(continued from p. 1)

["No More Waiting to Fail" continued](#)

One alternative approach—Response to Intervention (RTI) - has received increased attention since its inclusion in the most recent reauthorization of federal special education law. The 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) states that schools will no longer be required to determine whether a student has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability, the traditional method of identifying learning disabilities. Instead, schools are allowed to use evidence of a student's failure to respond to instructional interventions as part of the data documenting the presence of a specific learning disability.

The Prevention Model

The history of special education leading to RTI is a story of more and more prevention-focused instructional practices. Prevention-based practices have been used in other disciplines for many years. For example, immunizations are required for almost all children before school entry because the population reaps general health benefits from the prevention of infectious diseases (Fairbanks & Wiese, 1998).

The basic prevention model includes three types of activities: primary, secondary, and tertiary. Primary prevention includes steps taken to stop a certain outcome from happening at all (for example, healthy eating and regular exercise to prevent type 2 diabetes). Secondary prevention includes steps taken to address the problem at the first sign of symptoms (for example, using dietary and exercise changes to treat type 2 diabetes). Tertiary prevention is actions taken after the problem has already surfaced. At this stage, the prevention steps include methods to reduce the effects of the problem (for example, using insulin for lifelong management of diabetes). When this prevention model is applied to education, it manifests itself as RTI. Many studies have shown that students benefit when prevention practices are used in schools (Foorman, 2003).

The Three Tiers of RTI

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a systematic method for instruction and assessment of students. Figure 1 (page 3) provides a graphic representation of the three RTI levels of intervention to support students with varying instructional needs. Tier 1 includes universal instruction and assessment of all students—in other words, the general education curriculum. Schools need to ensure that this instruction and assessment are research based and effective in helping students gain academic proficiency. Success at Tier 1 is defined as the student demonstrating at least the levels of knowledge and skill expected for his or her age and grade.

(continued on p. 3)

(continued from p. 2)

Figure 1. Levels of Response to Intervention

All Students: General Instruction & Assessment

Some Students: Supplementary Instruction & Assessment

Few Students: Specialized Instruction & Assessment

Tier 2 includes selected instructional activities and assessments for students who have not achieved at the expected level while participating in Tier 1. An example of Tier 2 intervention is providing 30 minutes a day of additional reading or math instruction to 1st grade students who have not met grade-level benchmarks. Students receiving Tier 2 support are monitored weekly to learn whether their skills are improving. If their assessment data indicate progress, the students gradually receive less support until they are able to succeed within the general education (Tier 1) program. If they do not make progress after a specified period of Tier 2 instruction, the school either adjusts the students' Tier 2 instruction or refers them to Tier 3.

Only at Tier 3 does the school take steps to determine whether a student has a disability that requires special education. At this stage, the school conducts a comprehensive evaluation of the student's skills, including the data obtained in Tiers 1 and 2, to determine why a student's performance is significantly different from that of other students of his or her age and grade and to decide what additional instructional supports the student needs.

Why Is RTI Important?

RTI helps ensure that all students have equal educational opportunity. RTI provides mechanisms by which students can receive supplementary instruction without the stigmatizing effects of a disability label. Under prior special education laws, students had to show a deficit (such as mental retardation or a specific learning disability) to qualify for specialized instruction. The process to become eligible for special education services under the older laws was time-consuming and often meant that a student must "wait to fail" before receiving additional instructional support. Under RTI, schools must not only ensure that they are providing scientifically based instruction in the general education program, but also provide intervention to students not succeeding in the general education program before considering them for special education placement.

Such a significant shift in policy will take time to implement and evaluate. However, outcomes from schools that have practiced RTI for a number of years have shown that it raises education attainment of students in general and reduces the number of students who need special education (Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2005). For example, Speece, Case, and Molloy (2003) found that the earlier the intervention, the better the outcomes for students identified as being at risk for reading problems. Both Tilly (2003) and O'Connor (2003) found that RTI methods used over time reduced total special education placements and improved academic outcomes for students at risk.

RTI in Action

One way to see the benefits of RTI is through examples of students who received Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Consider the following two stories.

Helping an At-Risk Student Catch Up

Tim lived with both his parents and a younger sister in a northeastern U.S. town. When Tim was an infant and toddler, he spent his day at home with his mom. At age 3, he was enrolled in a private preschool that focused on allowing students to explore and learn from self-directed inquiry. Tim began half-day kindergarten in the same town where he had attended preschool. His teacher reported that he made good progress but was very shy and quiet in group settings.

During the summer between kindergarten and 1st grade, Tim's family moved to a new town in a different school district. Tim enrolled in 1st grade; most of his classmates had attended the local district's full-day kindergarten program. The district used the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) to measure students' literacy development (Good & Kaminski, 2002). Tim's scores on the fall DIBELS benchmarks showed that he lagged behind other 1st graders.

Because Tim's DIBELS scores revealed that he was at high risk of reading problems, he was immediately placed at Tier 2 of his school's RTI program. Tim participated in the evidence-based reading program "Early Reading Intervention", a small-group intervention with three or four students in a group. Tim's progress was monitored using winter and spring DIBELS benchmarking assessments; these data showed that once he began participating in the program, he started to develop work-attack skills.

(continued on p. 4)

(cont. from page 3)

Tim made excellent progress and met the winter DIBELS goals. As a result of the strong progress he made when participating in Early Reading Intervention five days a week, his schedule was changed to include two days of Tier 2 instruction each week. Tim continued to make good progress; he was eventually transitioned out of Tier 2 instruction and participated in Tier 1 instruction only.

Tim's story shows how early intervention can prevent later reading problems. Tim began 1st grade at risk of reading failure and in danger of being identified as learning disabled; he ended the year reading at the level expected for 1st graders. Coordinated and systematic intervention and assessment activities made a profound difference in this student's school success.

Providing Intervention for a Student with Learning Disabilities

Martha attended a half-day preschool program when she was 3 and 4 years old. When she was screened with the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) at the beginning of kindergarten, she scored lower than average in phonemic awareness and letter naming. As a result, her kindergarten teacher placed her in daily small-group lessons (Tier 2 intervention) that focused on developing these skills. Martha's language development showed progress by the end of kindergarten, but her skills were still in the low-average range compared with those of her classmates.

Martha's 1st grade teacher used the Open Court Reading program to provide Tier 1 instruction to all students. The school screened students at the start of the school year with the DIBELS, and Martha's scores indicated that she remained at risk for reading difficulties. For this reason, Martha participated in Tier 2 interventions in 1st grade. In addition to whole-class instruction, she attended daily 30-minute small-group reading sessions using the Reading Mastery program. These sessions were led by a special education teacher who worked with both general and special education students. To determine whether the extra lessons were helping, students in Martha's group completed weekly DIBELS measures of nonsense word fluency. Martha's classroom teacher and the special education teacher communicated regularly about Martha's lessons so that her Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction would be complementary.

By November of 1st grade, Martha showed sufficient gains in her reading skills to allow her to discontinue small-group lessons. But when all students in Martha's school participated in mid-year screening assessments that January, Martha's scores revealed that she was struggling again. Her teachers decided to resume the small-group intervention. Martha's progress in reading during February and March was slower than in the fall, and she gained an average of less than one word per week on oral reading fluency measures. Her limited progress, despite the use of well-validated Tier 1 and Tier 2 reading interventions, led her teachers to request a Tier 3 comprehensive evaluation.

The school psychologist reviewed all Martha's kindergarten and 1st grade reading data. These data suggested that Martha was able to learn the sound-symbol correspondence needed for reading, but that she read words much more slowly than typical 1st graders. The psychologist administered tests of memory and processing speed to test the hypothesis that Martha's reading difficulties were related to the speed with which she decoded and understood words. Using the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Awareness (CTOPA) as well as the Children's Memory Scale (CMS), the psychologist found that Martha's scores on measures of rapid automatic naming were well below average.

The evaluation findings were presented at a special education team meeting to discuss whether Martha was eligible for special education services. The data collected at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 all converged to suggest that Martha's reading difficulties were the result of a learning disability. The team, consisting of Martha's parents, teachers, and school specialists, developed an individualized education program (IEP) for Martha that included two major components: individualized reading lessons for 60 minutes each day, replacing both the whole-class and small-group lessons she attended; and additional time for completing all standardized, timed assessments so that her slower reading speed would not compromise her opportunity to demonstrate her learning.

Martha's story shows how RTI methods can be important for students who have disabilities. She was provided with high-quality, research-based reading interventions from the start of her schooling. Her progress was closely monitored as she received Tier 1 and 2 instruction, and by the time she was placed in Tier 3 and found eligible for special education services, her teachers had a thorough understanding of how to give her additional support she needed to succeed in school.

Timely Support for All Students

Response to Intervention is a data-based, systematic procedure that supports equitable educational access for all students. RTI provides school personnel with ways of knowing which students are at risk and whether efforts to help these students are working. RTI begins by ensuring that the general education classroom is providing effective instruction and assessment for all students. RTI then offers a way to bridge gaps between general and special education services by providing scientifically based interventions quickly and efficiently for all students who need such support, *before* going through a lengthy process to determine eligibility for special education.

(continued on p. 5)

(continued from p. 4)

RTI is a general education initiative and policy that requires the active participation of all general educators. The most effective RTI solutions include collaborative work by general and special educators to provide effective instruction for students as soon as they need it. The result? Greater success for all students and fewer students placed in special education.

Excerpted from:

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)

Volume 65, No. 2

October 2007

NAEP Report Shows Reading, Math Scores Up

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has released the statistics for the 2007 tests in reading and math for students in grades 4 and 8. The NAEP report—also known as the “nation’s report card” - reflected an upward trend on scores in both reading and mathematics.

Math scores for grade 4 rose two points, from 238 to 250, on a scale of 500 points. Eighth grade scores rose from 279 to 281 in the same time span. These scores reflect a change from test done in 2005.

Reading scores for grade 4 also rose over the two-year span, from 219 to 221. Grade 8 reading scores went up from 262 to 263.

(continued on p. 7)

Utilizing the Web for Evaluation Instruments

Want an easy way to collect information from your target audience? Try using one of the Web-based tools that allow you to easily create your own online survey.

Whether you are trying to gauge interest, perform a needs assessment or obtain feedback, an online survey provides you with an easy-to-use resource for acquiring information from virtually anyone, about anything.

All aspects of your survey can be specifically designed to fit your needs. Survey tools even analyze your results.

You will get the best results from an online survey by including a personalized invitation or by offering an attractive incentive such as entry in a prize drawing or a discount on workshop registration. An online survey is posted to the Web so all you have to do is invite participants via e-mail to click a link to a Web-based questionnaire. Keep the questions to a minimum so that the survey can be completed in a few minutes. Be sure to send out your invitation at least twice; multiple e-mail blasts boost responses. You could also promote the survey on your Website.

Example of Survey tools:

Survey Said (<http://www.sureysaid.com/index.html>) is provided free to Teacher Centers for use in course evaluations or other survey applications. It is a server-based survey generator and analysis tool. Contact your network technology committee representative for assistance.

Formsite (<http://www.formsite.com/>) allows users to create surveys, registration forms, order forms, etc., using only Formsite.com. There is nothing to download and nothing to install. In just minutes you can have a form or survey up on the Internet collecting results. Basic accounts are free and offer five forms per account with 50 submissions per form a month.

Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>) offers a basic subscription that is free and includes all of the basic features of Survey/Monkey. It’s a great option for individuals, students and anyone who doesn’t need the advanced features of SurveyMonkey. Basic subscribers are limited to a total of 10 questions and 100 responses per survey.

Zoomerang (www.zoomerang.com) is a limited-feature trial version. ZoomerangzPro lets you ask up to 30 questions and collect up to 100 responses per survey. Results expire after 10 days. Ongoing membership is free.

Grants Available for Using Local Government Records in the Classroom

Grant funding is available from the New York State Archives for educational projects that use local government records. Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Programs to train teachers how to use local government records as teaching tools in the classroom
- Document teaching packets and accompanying teachers' guide
- Projects combining multimedia technology with local government records to enable educators, students and others to actively participate in the learning process
- School history and local history projects and publications (educational brochures, walking tours and exhibits).

To be eligible, applicants must be a New York State local government (e.g., public schools, teacher centers, BOCES, towns, villages, cities, counties, cooperative extensions, and more).

Grant applications must demonstrate how the project is related to the various strategies outlined in the State Education Department's learning standards. Projects that have the potential to develop long-term collaborative relationships among local governments, teachers and students are encouraged.

Applications may be submitted for up to \$75,000 for an individual project involving one local government or \$125,000 for cooperative projects involving two or more local governments. In the 2006/2007 grant cycle, the average grant award for educational projects using local government records was \$11,000.

Grant applications must be postmarked by February 1, 2008 for the grant period beginning July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2009.

For the grant guidelines and application forms visit www.archives.nysed.gov, click on *Grants and Awards*, and click on *Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund*; or call (518) 474-6926; e-mail archgrants@mail.nysed.gov; or write Grants Administration and Program Support, NYS Archives, 9A81 CEC, Albany, NY 12230.

After reviewing the guidelines, applicants are strongly urged to contact Julie Daniels at jdaniels@mail.nysed.gov, or at (518) 473-8495 to discuss project ideas and planning.

Interactive Teacher Calendar Terrific Teacher Ideas "Farr-Out Links To Learning"



PTC supports this service for our consortium schools.

Click on the link, <http://peconic.farroutlinks.net>, bookmark file (in pdf format). It's a terrific resource!

Here are a few of the ways teachers have used Farr-Out Links calendar in the past.

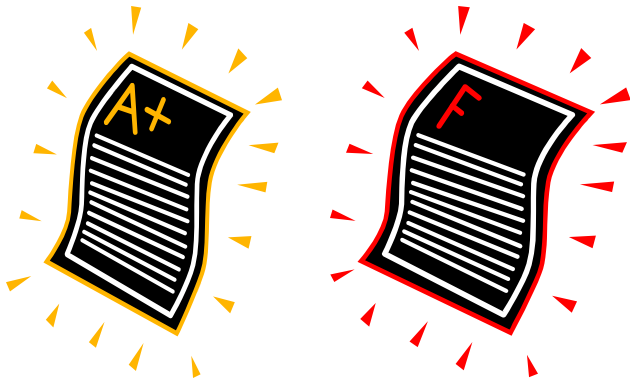
- * **Students become daily reporters during calendar time. Assign one day of the month to each student (or pair of students). Students use our calendar to research "their" day and report on one or two special events during the daily calendar time.**
- * **Following "big tests" some of our teachers use the food celebrations included on our calendar as focus for their classroom celebration.**
- * **Many teachers use our product as a "carrot" to reward students throughout the day by allowing them to explore the calendar during recess or as part of a learning center activity...our calendar is an excellent resource for inquiry based learning.**
- * **Teachers in ever curriculum area and grade level report that they use various sites found in our calendar to develop sponge activities throughout the year.**
- * **An entire school celebrated Poetry Month — Students wrote poems and published an online Poetry book.**
- * **Teachers frequently bookmark our bonus sites and use them for more in-depth units of study.**
- * **One teacher was thrilled to see that it was "Hot Cocoa Day," as her students were studying Switzerland — Her students sipped on Hot Swiss Cocoa as they worked on their Social Studies unit.**

Test Scores: Mixed Results

The average national ACT composite score rose to 21.2 in 2007, up from 21.1 in 2006. This marked the third score increase in the past five years.

SAT scores, meanwhile, declined. This year's average score in critical reading was 501, a 1-point decline compared to 2006. The average scores in mathematics and writing declined 3 points each from a year ago, bringing the scores to 515 and 494, respectively.

Both ACT and SAT reported that record numbers of students took the tests in 2007. The test-taking population also is increasingly diverse. For further information, visit www.act.org and www.collegeboard.com



Teens, 'Tweens, and Technology

According to a study released in August by the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and Grunwald Associates LLC, 96% of 9-to-17-year-old students with online access use social networking technologies such as chatting, text messaging, blogging, and visiting online communities. Further, students report that one of the most common topics of conversation is education.

Some key findings from the study include the following:

- Nearly 60% of online students report discussing education-related topics such as college or college planning, learning outside of school, and careers; nearly 50% say they talk specifically about schoolwork.
- Students report spending almost as much time using social network services and websites as they spend watching television.
- Nearly all (96%) school districts say that at least some of their teachers assign homework requiring Internet use.
- Nearly half of school districts report that their schools participate in online collaborative projects with other schools and in online pen pal or other international programs.

For further information about the study, visit the NSBA website at www.nsba.org.



(Cont. from page 5)

Education leaders and others are touting the increase as proof of the successes of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, which is due for reauthorization this year. A version of the law is currently under scrutiny in Congress, with lawmakers attempting to answer criticism of the law and make workable revisions.

Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings used the NAEP results as evidence that Administration's version of the law is working, despite the activity of Congressional committees to make changes. Spellings has urged Congress not to water down the effectiveness of NCLB.

"To those who would suggest that No Child Left Behind is not working, our nation's fourth- and eighth-graders and their teachers just proved the naysayers wrong," she said. "Math scores for fourth- and eighth-graders and the reading scores for fourth-graders are at historic highs and the biggest gains were made by African American and Hispanic students."

African American and Hispanic students' scores did rise in the latest round of tests. In the grade 4 reading tests, African American students increased three points as opposed to the overall increase of two points. Fourth grade Hispanic students' points increased by two, as did Asian students' points.

Lawmakers and educators consider NAEP scores a truer measure of how schools in various states are doing than state scores because, under NCLB, states may devise their own reading and math tests, and judge whether students are proficient in those areas.

Spellings admonished lawmakers against changing methods of measuring achievement under NCLB. She said, "Any efforts to weaken accountability would fly in the face of rising achievement."

Source: *Education Week*; www.ed.gov

What's Going On In Our Schools?

Amagansett School:

Fifth Grade

Fifth Grade students created dioramas. These shadow boxes hold pictures and objects that represent the student. After the box was created and decorated, each student wrote an essay describing how the box symbolizes who they are. These boxes are on display outside of their classroom.

Third Grade

Students in third grade practiced their writing skills by interviewing a classmate. Each student asked several questions to learn about their classmate. Once the questions were asked and answered, the children learned about each others likes and dislikes, age/birthday, places they have visited, hobbies and what they would like to be when they grow up. This was a fun activity for all!



Art...

Students in Liz Paris's Art classes have been very busy. The First Grade class has been learning about straight line Mondrian. By working with straight vertical and horizontal lines, the students create works of art that explored primary colors with white. They considered shapes and arrangements of color as they painted. The inspiration for their designs came from artist Piet Mondrian. Fourth grade art students have been learning about symmetry. The students used positive and negative shapes to create symmetrical pieces of art in black and white.



On display at the Amagansett Post Office are "Warm and Cool Colored Fish Paintings by students in third grade. In Liz Paris's art class, the students created a color study of warm and cool colors. A line drawing done freely across the paper allowed for many shapes which were filled in with a variety of hues. The students crated warm colored fish swimming in a sea of cool colors.



Aspen Trees

Liz Paris's fifth grade art students have been busy learning about aspen trees. The students used watercolor paint to create their own picture. The class used whisks of cardboard as a technique to make the tree trunk and dry brushes were used for the leaves and grass. The entire class created a wonderful fall poem about aspen trees as well. The beautiful display can be seen in the main entrance of the school.

Amagansett School (Continued):



Scientific Method

Students in Mr. Hancock's sixth grade class have been learning about the scientific method. The students have already completed several experiments in which they practiced the scientific method while learning about the properties of matter. The class teamed up with students in Ms. Blackburn's Kindergarten class to help hatch brine shrimp. The older and younger students worked together to carefully place brine shrimp eggs in small culture jars and add salt water. Students observed the eggs, measured the water temperature, and made predictions as to how long it would take for the eggs to hatch. Kindergartners will monitor the jars over the next few days and let their Sixth Grade lab partners know when the eggs hatch!



Kindergarten



Students in Kindergarten have been practicing using the lower case "c." The students found objects in the classroom that began with lower case c, read books about letter c, learned the sound the letter c makes and began writing the letter as well. In addition, the students welcomed a new classmate last week. The class was overjoyed with their new pet "Rocky" a Russian Tortoise. The children will learn to care for their new pet.



Field Trips

On Friday, October 12, the fourth grade class went on a field trip with Fourth Grade students from Montauk to the Second House Museum in Montauk. Second House, built 1797, is the oldest and most historic building still standing on Montauk. The students celebrated Samson Occum Day with presentations by the Young Blood Singers and Dancers that represented various Native American Nations. The students viewed traditional dance and styles of regalia, artifacts, and a drum group. In addition, they learned about the Shinnecock and other native people of Long Island.



Students in grades three through six traveled to the Montauk School to view the American String Quartet. This quartet is internationally recognized as one of the world's finest. They present complete quartets of Beethoven, Schubert, Schoenberg, Bartok and Mozart. Their innovative approach has won them a number of residencies over the years. The students were able to view a wonderful performance.



(Continued on p. 9)

What's Going On In Our Schools?

Amagansett School (Continued):

VTS TRS Training (visual thinking strategies)

September and October visual thinking strategies training to help students develop thinking skills, strengthen language and listening skills, build confidence.

Pre-K 4

The Pre-K 4 class welcomed fall with open arms! Each student created a leaf that explained what that student liked about fall. All the leaves are attached to a beautiful tree that can be seen outside their classroom on the bulletin board.

First Grade

Ms. Muthig's first grade class has been learning about the complements of ten in Math class. Using earthworms made from construction paper, each student illustrated an addition equation underneath the picture. Their mathematical masterpieces are hung on the bulletin board outside of their classroom

East Hampton Middle School:

Eighth Grade

Local author M.E. Kerr came to speak with 8th graders at East Hampton Middle School. Ms. Kerr spoke about her book Gentlehands, which the students were required to read for summer reading. The discussion covered many topics, from getting ideas for a book to the importance of names. Four lucky students went home with signed copies of Kerr's new book Someone Like Summer.

Montauk School:

The Runaway Snowman

The 3rd and 4th grades musical is about a jolly-looking snowman that can talk. Happy soon becomes a celebrity until she meets up with Freddy Fasttalk. Performance is Thursday, December 20th at 7:00 p.m. Every year, Montauk School does a Winter Play right before the Christmas break. Some 7th and 8th Grade students will make up the pit band.



Montauk School (Continued):

Mustang Mileage Club



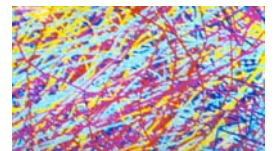
Recess at the Montauk Public School is an exciting time to be energetic and enjoy the fresh Montauk air. Students have had the option to be active on the playground or participate in a team sport activity. In addition to those activities and new to recess this month, 3rd and 4th grade students now have the opportunity to join the Mustang Mileage Club! Students are encouraged to walk or run as many laps as they want during recess every day. Participants set their own pace and are awarded prizes when they complete a certain number of laps. This fun fitness club offers the opportunity to participate in a non-competitive activity that positively affects overall wellness. Not only are student being active, they are also setting personal goals, and working toward accomplishing those goals. In addition, students have the opportunity to use fitness as a way to build relationships during their time exercising together. In conclusion, it is our hope that all Mustang Mileage participants realize the benefit from this fun activity as well as its contribution to creating a Healthy Montauk School! (J. Musser/J. Salmon)

ESL Unit Project

The Montauk ESL teachers and Ms. Foster, who is an elementary ESL teacher in Westhampton Beach, will collaboratively design an ESL unit project scheduled to begin in February 2008. Using a web-cam and a student/teacher designed website, students will participate in a distance learning project designed for all learners of both schools. Through Title III, the Consortium received monies which were used to purchase technology and training for its members. Members then share their ideas and work at an end of the year technology day. It serves as a support network for ESL teachers. (Mrs. Proctor/Mrs. Byrne)

Drip Paintings

Mr. Salzman's 4th grade art students took part in a drip painting - group project this September. The students were asked to drip paint onto a canvas as a representation of the classes' feelings and artistic expression. Correlating with this project was being able to understand abstract expressionism and learning about Jackson Pollack's drip technique. The students greatly enjoyed the project as they took advantage of the great fall weather and created masterpieces outside on the school grounds.



(Continued on p. 10)

What's Going On In Our Schools? (Cont.)

Montauk School (Continued):

Pre-Kindergarten

The new Pre-Kindergarten program at the Montauk Public School is off to a great start. With 28 students divided between two classrooms for a full day schedule, it has been an exciting experience so far for the teachers and the students. The curriculum is packed with wonderful, enriching activities that are allowing the students to explore their environment and develop gross and fine motor skills while at the same time developing valuable friendships.

Each month of school has a theme or themes. In September, the theme was "All About Me" and the students taught us all about themselves and their families. October brought us "Fire Prevention and Halloween." The students got to see the terrific Montauk Fire Department in action with all of their gear and equipment. They have become pros at STOP, DROP, AND ROLL. To prepare for Halloween, the students made all sorts of spooky and ghostly decorations for the classrooms. In science, they also explored the properties of a pumpkin, inside and out. A big Halloween party capped off a productive month. The students are learning about "Giving Thanks: in November and we are looking forward to our non-traditional Thanksgiving feast.

The Pre-K students are working very hard to learn all of their letters of the alphabet. Each week a new letter is introduced and the children get busy providing words for our word boards. Every week gets more and more fun as the students are quickly learning their letters. They get special worksheets that help them practice writing the featured letter.

The first year of the Pre-Kindergarten is going so quickly and the students are learning so much. We can't wait to observe the personal growth they have in the upcoming months.

Sixth Grade

On October 22, sixth graders from Montauk School participated in clamming, an analysis of clams (native vs. hatchery-reared) and scallop restoration(including free seeding), and storm water runoff evaluation of the Stepping Stones, Lake Montauk area.

The students of Todd Brunn's and Richard Larsen's classes are participating in a scientific study being conducted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County. Cornell's marine youth education and East Hampton Shellfish Hatchery are leading the project funded by the Ocean Fisheries & Habitat Partnership.

The Lake Montauk restoration project involved the entire sixth grade of Montauk School in a 12-session collaborative approach to restoration in which students learn about aquaculture, participate in the restoration of bay scallops, hard clams, and oysters to local waters. They will also identify and remove an invasive species recently found at one site and assist Citizen Science Initiative in their efforts to establish a national citizen monitoring network.

Curriculum and lesson plans have been developed by Cornell Cooperative Extension marine science educators who teach the Culture of Bivalves Curriculum to NYS learning standards. Posters, displays, and presentations created by students will be displayed for fellow students, parents, school staff and the general public visiting Montauk School.

The project is part of a large regional revitalization effort begun in 1989, to restore the bay scallop, hard clam, and eastern oysters to three formerly highly productive sites that are part of the Peconic Estuary, Lake Montauk, Napeague Harbor and Three Mile Harbor.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County is a non-profit educational agency dedicated to strengthening families and communities, enhancing and protecting the environment, and fostering countrywide economic development. Affiliated with Cornell University, Cornell Cooperative Extension of the Suffolk County is part of the state and national extension system that includes the land-grant universities and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. CCE's sites and program areas include Agriculture, Marine, 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, Suffolk County Farm and Education Center and Suffolk County Peconic Dunes.

Southampton High School:

International Festival

On November 16, 2007 Southampton High School held their 17th Annual International Feast. This event helps support the local food pantry and needy families within the community. All donations collected are utilized for these purposes. The International Feast comes at a time of year when we are grateful for all of the things that we have been given. This year the theater group *Squeaky Clean* is the entertainment for the day. (Mrs. Lee)



CONTINUED ↑

Continued on p. 11)

What's Going On In Our Schools? (Cont.)

Southampton High School (Continued):

Interactive Electronic White Boards are Hot!

If you have recently walked down the Southampton High School Science hallway, you may see the majority of the classrooms' lights off—but learning is definitely on! The science department teachers have been introduced to the SmartBoard and it has taken on like wild fire! Many teachers are converting their wordy lecture packets into exciting, interactive, visual presentations.

The SmartBoard is an interactive electronic white board combined with a computer and projector to become a large, touch-sensitive display in the classroom. By the way, SmartBoard is only one brand. Other interactive whiteboards include Numonics, E-beam, Ibid, Mimio, Tegrity and 3-M.

Educators have always used pictures to present technical information. However, it is most important today in our visually oriented age. Today's students are saturated with visual images everywhere. Teachers must compete for attention in this rich visual environment. Our teaching resources from traditional textbooks to the latest educational technologies contain a wealth of pictorial representations. In science education, these pictures may range from simple models of drawings and photographs to abstract diagrams and graphs. Presenting these pictures in the classroom has been difficult until now with the SmartBoard.

Impact on Learning

So, what are some of the things we're doing? Foremost, the interactions with the class as a whole are SmartBoard's paramount feature. The best component of the SmartBoard is the touchpad screen. Touch the board and you control the computer applications. Write and erase notes, draw diagrams, and save, print or e-mail these ideas. This helps focus attention, enhances the visual environment, motivates the students and looks to collaboration with the whole class. It improves the note taking, as now the words fly in on screen and animations included directly in the notes, come alive to clarify the concept being taught. Some of the things we do as a class include exploring the Internet together, creating a graphic organizer as review and printing it directly, brainstorming, web quests, recording science data and students producing multimedia presentations to share ideas. You can Take Virtual Field Trips, Ask an Expert and dissect a model frog. The classroom uses are endless and limited only by your own imagination. SmartBoard educational software enhances any lecture. The software complimenting the hardware includes lessons (solar system, weather, life cycle of a frog) designed by educators. You can find out more at <http://www.smarttech.com/education/k12scienceclass.asp>.

Impact on Teaching

So why are the teachers so ecstatic? The SmartBoard allows ease in the utilization of the Internet and videoconferencing, while boosting motivation and encouraging collaboration with peers. It enhances classroom dynamics and addresses specific learning needs and styles. The students' interest in the class has heightened. The SmartBoard has improved the effectiveness of lesson delivery. The students' performance on the assessments has risen. This all makes for a happy teacher. And the students benefit most from our new excitement.

Are You Ready to Become A(Smart)Board?

Now, one of the disadvantages to consider is the extra time (and we all know that time is not something that we have a lot of) to convert current lessons or to incorporate the teaching templates provided. However, your teaching will be rejuvenated. Many of the teachers would be glad to help you get started. Why not come and visit to see for yourself?

The SmartBoard has a great impact on learning and teaching. Some people think the science department teachers are mad. They have a fever. The fever is SmartBoards. And it is a fever you definitely want to catch!

Peconic Teacher Center is offering several fabulous technology mini-courses in the Spring. They are scheduled at times to fit everyone's needs. Look for them in our catalogue after holiday break.

National Board Certification

National Board Certification offers a way for teachers to take a new look at their teaching and is a proven path to professional growth. Comparable to established standards in other professions, National Board Certification is a highly regarded process created and evaluated by teachers for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

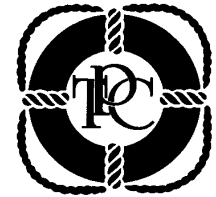
To learn more about the benefits of becoming a **National Board Certified Teacher**, please contact NBPTS, at **1-800-22TEACH** or visit **www.nbpts.org**.



Peconic Teacher Center

141 Narrow Lane • Southampton, NY 11968
(631) 591-4627 or (632) 591-4629; Fax: (631) 283-1905

Larrilee Jemiola.....Interim
Vicki Williams.....Administrative Assistant



Policy Board Members:

Amagansett UFSD - Marcie Angel
Business Industry (Dunkerley's) - Harold Wilson
East Hampton High School - Gail Ruber
East Hampton Middle School - Linda Cameron
East Hampton Elementary (JMMES) - Laura Hudson
Hampton Bays Elementary - Mary Beth Motz
Hampton Bays Elementary - Kathy Dayton
Hampton Bays Jr/Sr High School - Marilyn Wilson
Hampton Bays Jr/Sr High School - Jill Bross
Montauk UFSD - Judith Pfister

Our Lady of the Hamptons - Linda Robins
Ross School - Mariah Bruehl
Sag Harbor Elementary - Deanna Lattanzio
Sag Harbor (Pierson) - Diane Gaites
Southampton High School - John Turnbull
Southampton UFSD—Josephine DeVincenzi, Ed. D
Springs - Angela Jones
Stella Maris - Elizabeth Kirwan
Tuckahoe CSD - Justine Charos
Walden University - Margaret Colligan