

EPPING SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE NEWS

APRIL 2010

The mission of the Epping School District is to focus on the potential of every student and engage them to be passionate, confident learners who demonstrate competence and have strength of character to reach their highest aspirations and thoughtfully contribute to a diverse and changing world.

Welcome to the Epping School District Office News. Feedback is always welcome. Please contact Paula (pvangundy@sau14.org).

Last Day of School

As of this newsletter the last day of school for students is June 23 and for staff June 28. The 2009-2010 school year continued the challenging weather trend with four school day closings due to snow, wind, and flooding.

Thank You for Supporting Children and Families in Need

During winter vacation EMS Student Meghan Crocker passed away due to injuries from an automobile accident. The past few months have also been challenging for some of our most fragile children. Thank you for supporting children and families in their time of need. It is important to recognize that recent events have been difficult for you as well. Administration can direct you to an outside agency or can make arrangements for counseling services at school. Your well-being is important to us. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you need assistance.

2010-2011 School Calendar

The 2010-2011 school calendar has been approved by the School Board and submitted for NH Commissioner of Education approval. The District will continue with the hours-based calendar including 175 student days and 13 professional development days. The calendar is attached to this email and also can be found on the District website at www.sau14.org.

AYP Results

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results, based on the 2009 NECAP testing, were released on Wednesday. The prediction that most schools and districts would be “in need of improvement” is being realized. Of the 163 school districts, 60 districts made AYP, 100 districts did not, and 3 districts are awaiting results. Of the 473 schools, 133 made AYP in all areas, 323 schools did not make AYP in one or more areas, and 17 schools were designated small schools.

The Epping results are as follows.

1. EES made AYP in reading, but did not make AYP in mathematics (educational disability subgroup). As a result EES was designated a first year “school in need of improvement” in mathematics.

2. EMS made AYP in both reading and mathematics. EMS remained a third year “school in need of improvement” in mathematics. It takes two consecutive years of not making AYP to be designated a SINI and two consecutive years of making AYP to get out.
3. EHS did not make AYP in reading (economically disadvantaged subgroup), but did make AYP in mathematics.
4. Epping School District as a whole made AYP in both reading and mathematics.

It is important to remember that Epping has been focusing on reading and writing. Over the 5 years of testing for EES and EMS, reading proficiency has consistently increased from 60% to 78%. EHS over 3 years has seen an increase of 60% to 74%. The results show that our efforts have paid off.

It must be recognized that there are systemic issues as noted below when viewing the NH results.

1. Epping reading proficiency results do not always translate to AYP due to student subgroups. Students with educational disadvantages because of socioeconomic status, disability, or native language are tested using the same standards as students with no disadvantages.
2. Making AYP gets increasingly difficult each year. For example, the index targets have significantly increased from 2008 to 2009.
 - a. Elementary & middle schools – reading – 86 to 91 – 5 points
 - b. Elementary & middle schools – math – 82 to 88 – 6 points
 - c. High school – reading – 84 to 89 – 5 points
 - d. High school – math – 58 to 72 – 14 points
3. 100% proficiency is unrealistic for all student subgroups as evidenced by the increasing number of districts and schools designated as in need of improvement.
4. NH NECAP results do not translate to national results in which NH tests in the top 5 on the National Assessment Educational Progress (NAEP) test and this past year NH was one of only 4 states that improved in mathematics.

Where does the District go from here? We’re going to focus on the positives and control what we can control. District leadership is working on a three-year reform model and plan for the 2010-2011 school year building upon the work already done and focusing on the coordination of this work district-wide. We must also bring the same urgency to mathematics that has been so successful in improving our language scores.

On behalf of Epping Children, thank you for all you do!

School Principal Announcement

The Epping School Board is pleased to announce that Kyle Repucci has accepted the position of Epping Middle School and High School Principal beginning July 1, 2010.

Mr. Repucci brings unique experiences in both middle and high schools. He began his educational career in 2000 as a high school English teacher in Westwood, MA and continued to teach in Dover, NH. In 2006 he transitioned from teaching to school administration as the Dean of Students for Epping Middle School. Mr. Repucci holds a BA in English Literature/Secondary Education from Merrimack College and a ME in School Administration from the University of New Hampshire. Mr. Repucci and family live in East Rochester, New Hampshire.

Mr. Repucci intends to focus on community involvement and will begin the transition by meeting with school staff, parents, and community members to hear their concerns and ideas regarding the middle and high schools. Plans are underway to start this process, as well as to initiate the transition for the 2010-2011 school year.

The principal search was an intensive and inclusive process involving students, parents, community members, school staff, school administration, and school board members. Candidates interviewed with a district committee and two community sub-committee and indirectly with students as they provided school tours. The process was completed with an interview before the full school board. The District extends our appreciation to school students, parents, community members, staff, and administration for sharing their time and feedback throughout this process.

This is a wonderful opportunity for both Mr. Repucci and the Epping School Community. We know that you will all welcome and support Kyle in his new role as Principal of Epping Middle School and Epping High School.

Teacher Congratulations

Congratulations to Teachers Andy Fersch and Pat Weisberg. Andy was recently recognized by the New England League of Middle Schools as a Promising Practitioner. Pat will be recognized by the NH Association of Middle Level Education for her work on behalf of Epping Middle School in the area of community service.

School Budget Update

This year's school budget has been frozen to ensure that the District does not over expend as required by law. No further expenditures can be made from the general fund without approval of the District Office. Exceptions will be made for necessary purchases or other purchases with justification. Please contact Martha Williamson at mwilliamson@sau14.org with questions.

Next year's school budget was approved by a vote of 631 to 576. The teachers' agreement failed by a vote of 556 to 659. However, the voters did pass a special meeting for a renegotiated agreement by a vote of 631 to 572. Representatives from the school board and teachers have met and renegotiated a new agreement. Plans are underway to hold a special meeting. The cooperative planning article failed by a vote of 393 to 827.

Race to the Top Grant & Other Funding

Race to the Top is a competitive grant program under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The program is designed to provide more than \$4 billion to states with the purpose of school reform in standards and assessments, effective teachers and leaders, data systems, and struggling schools. The Epping School District submitted a proposal to participate in the New Hampshire grant proposal. The District was recently notified that NH was not selected as a Round 1 finalist.

Delaware and Tennessee were the only states to receive Race to the Top Grants in Round 1. Both states passed significant legislation in support of the Race to the Top reform areas and received state-wide buy-in for their reform plans from schools and unions. The NH Department of Education has reported that they are reviewing the feedback received from the US Department of Education and will

resubmit the grant for Round 2. The District will continue to support this initiative.

The NH Department of Education also released another funding option through another ARRA program entitled School Improvement Grant. SIG funds must also meet the four reform areas outlined in Race to the Top, but funds are guaranteed to each state with preference for struggling schools. The District has informed the state of our intention to participate funds permitting.

Regardless of the funding mechanism, the District has made the commitment to move forward with the reforms set out in our Race to the Top proposal. More information can be found on the NHDOE and Epping School District websites.

Draft K-12 Common Core State Standards

Draft K-12 Common Core State Standards have been developed by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The intent is to provide a clear consistent framework to prepare children for college and career. The standards are:

- Aligned with college and work expectations;
- Clear, understandable and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Evidence- and research-based.

The NH Department of Education has been reviewing these standards with the intent of supplying feedback. Standards can be viewed at <http://www.corestandards.org>. The Common Core State Standards are included in the standards part of Race to the Top and anticipated to be part of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act – Employee’s Children

Effective March 30, 2010 the new health care reform law now includes adult children (up to age 26) in the definition of a tax dependent for health plan purposes. Previous to this law if the child was not considered a qualified tax dependent, health coverage created imputed income taxable by the IRS. Questions may be directed to LGC Member Services at 800-852-3358 or memberservices@nhlgc.org.

ETV School Programming

Please let the ETV/Communication Coordinators know if you are planning a special student project/event. School Communication Coordinators are Cheryl MacLeay, Sue Thompson, and Eric Anderson.

Website

New information is being added throughout the school year. If you are planning a special event, please let the Website Coordinators know so that your event may be placed in the district/school calendar. School and district contacts are Cheryl MacLeay, Kyle Repucci, Jon Altbergs, and Paula VanGundy.

Personnel and professional development pages should be back in working order.

Go Green!

At the end of the school day please take a few minutes to turn lights out, turn off all computers and other electrical devices, and lock the classroom door. This practice will reduce our energy consumption and insure security of our computers and equipment and make for better functioning computers. Computers that run all night pull in dust causing computers to overheat. Also please help us in insuring the safety of students and staff by not propping open doors.

2010 IRS Mileage Rates

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2010, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be **50 cents per mile for business miles driven**. The new rates for business purposes are slightly lower than last year's. Last year the rate was 55 cents per mile. The mileage rates for 2010 reflect generally lower transportation costs compared to a year ago. Please calculate mileage to and from school when submitting mileage reimbursements.

Spring Vacation

The SAU will be closed the week of Spring Vacation, April 26th through April 30th. Limited staff will be working, but the building will not be open. If you need to get in touch with someone at the SAU, please email or leave a voice mail and we will get back to you. It might be Monday (May 3rd) or Tuesday (May 4th) before you receive a reply since some staff will not be working vacation week.

Have a safe and wonderful vacation!

