

# KIDSRSU #2 (Kennebec Intra District Schools)

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HALLOWELL, ME  
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Dresden • Farmingdale • Hallowell • Monmouth • Richmond

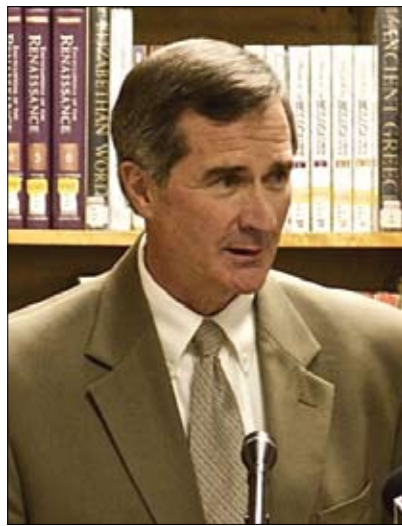
## Retirement is Just the Beginning for RSU #2 Superintendent

By: Katy Rushlau

While retirement has typically been an indication of reaching an end, for current RSU2 superintendent Donald L. Siviski, it is just the beginning of what is possibly becoming an educational reform.

Growing up in the Winslow area and then becoming a 36-year Wiscasset resident, Siviski began his career in public education as a math teacher at Pittsfield's Warsaw Junior High School in 1972. He joined the Wiscasset School department six years later, where he worked his way up to a position as principal before leaving in 1998. He began his career as a superintendent that year in SAD 68 and officially became part of SAD 16 as superintendent of Hall-Dale. SAD 16 joined the rest of the RSU 2 towns and combined into a district with Dresden, Richmond and Monmouth in 2009.

An alumnus of both University of Maine Orono and University of Maine at Farmington, Siviski continued his education throughout his career through summer training institutes with Harvard University. That was where he began to acquire knowledge of alternative methods of teaching and learning. During his years as an educator and superintendent, Siviski wondered why kids were grouped by age. He wondered why kids were set on different tracks with pre-determined careers, and wondered why curriculums often overlapped from year to year. Siviski reported, "Looking at differ-



Donald L. Siviski

ent classrooms I often wondered why teachers needed to teach the same lesson on the Mayflower over and over again." Educations were not consistent among the different classrooms and schools.

Siviski saw learning as something that was non-competitive. Coming to RSU 2, he wanted to make it known that there was indeed a problem with the way students were being educated. He believed that the learning should be centered on the student. He assisted in creating a new vision statement, new curriculums and rubrics and improvements for the district. If each teacher and school was on the same page with standards and curriculums, Siviski believed that students would thrive more.

His goal is to turn what is mediocre into something great. He hopes that education will soon in-

corporate kids moving at their own pace regardless of age, the development of 21st century skills and the use of technology. The current average proficiency of reading, writing and math in the State of Maine is 50%. Siviski's vision is to turnaround the learning of K-12 students. "The kids that ask 'why' are the real learners," he said in response to the problems within the educational system. "Students learn only what they need to learn. Learning out of need is something that must be improved."

Siviski is the backbone of what this RSU will accomplish to create a school system that will send kids out in the world with more than a few memorized facts. He has already brought so much to this district from a distinguished technology program, standardized grading systems and a vision that has inspired board members, families, teachers and students. "Learning is like driving a car," Siviski remarked. "If you are the passenger, you have no idea about the road you have just travelled while the driver is in control and doing multiple tasks at the same time. We need kids to get out of the passenger seat and drive their own education."

After his retirement in June 2011, Siviski plans to spend more time with his grandchildren. He also will work with the Department of Education to continue helping schools improve.

## Retiring Teachers in RSU #2



Kay Hockenberry

At the end of this school year, we say goodbye to one of our wonderful RSU #2 teachers. Kay Hockenberry will be retiring after 32 years of teaching at the Cottrell School. Over these years, Kay has touched the lives of over 600 families in Monmouth. We recognize and applaud her commitment to a profession that makes a difference each and every day in the life of children.

Barry Masterson from the Dresden Elementary School will be retiring after 30 years of teaching. Many a Hall-Dale Middle and High School student will come back to Dresden Elementary to see 'Mr. M.' Barry has had a long and productive career in our district. We thank him for his service to the children of Dresden and wish him the best in his retirement.



Barry Masterson



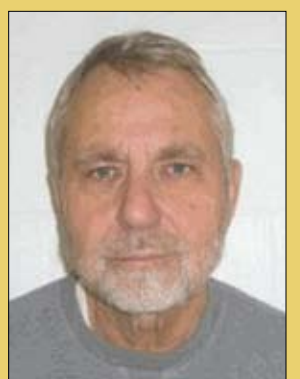
Pete Johnson

Pete Johnson has taught history at Hall-Dale High

School since the fall of 1992.....19 years. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he also has coached soccer as well as track and field.

When asked about what he will remember about Hall-Dale, Mr. Johnson replied "I've enjoyed seeing this place grow and develop the 'Hall-Dale' reputation. This is a creative and dynamic school where all of us are truly a family. As a faculty, we can be separate but stand united. I can honestly say this has been fun".

At Richmond, Michael Johnson has worked closely with students academically and athletically. His professional development activities include, attending Charting the Course 2001-2011, Beacon Teacher Training and serving on the initial New England Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation Team. Principal Fisk stated that Mr. Johnson is a life-long learner and continues to work collaboratively to find ways to teach and re-teach math to students



Michael Johnson

to prepare them for their career path.

## Welcome our New RSU #2 Superintendent

Greetings from California,

I am excited to join the team and families of Regional School Unit Two (RSU2). Upon speaking with kids, parents, staff, and community members throughout the RSU, it is clear I am coming to a great learning community that cares about the future of all children. I do however have one large fear about Maine, the weather. In addition to the feedback I will seek about how we can continually improve as a learning community, I may ask you for advice on maintaining my driveway, dealing with frozen windshield wipers, and how to acclimate to the thousands of leaves that will fall around our new home. I did live in Massachusetts as I completed my B.A. in Political Science & Economics at UMASS Lowell, but I am hearing the winters in Maine can be more arduous.

I am thankful to be a part of the RSU as it embarks on the journey of becoming truly standards-based, where proficiency / mastery of the content is not the hope, but rather the expectation and guarantee for all children. In my experience with Lindsay Unified School District and the performance-based system, we have seen a drastic increase in scores (45 points last year at Lindsay High School) and college acceptance notices. Equally important, we have seen great-



Virgel Hammonds with students from Lindsay High School. In the background are two of the academic wings and Lindsay 'L' on the foothills that line the school district.

er learner engagement, more rigorous instruction, strategic feedback and adjustments to instruction, empowered team members, and a sense of rejuvenation.

See New on page 7

## RSU #2 Central Office

Employees in the RSU #2 Central Office continue to provide services for the parents, students, and employees of the district. With a staff of 5.5 people the Central Office is responsible to the communities of Dresden, Farmingdale, Hallowell, Monmouth and Richmond as well as various Federal and State Agencies, including the Maine Department of Education. We also process payroll and manage benefits and contracts for upwards of 450 employees, including coaches and substitutes.

We recognize our fiscal responsibility to our communities in all our decisions. We strive to balance our funding from state, federal and taxpayer dollars, while maintaining a quality education in a safe and healthy environment for our students.

Some of the tasks that continue to be our responsibility are:

- Payroll for all RSU staff bi-weekly – Nearly all employees now have their paychecks electronically deposited, with a goal of reaching 100% of the employees by the end of this year

- Benefits coordinated for staff members
- Salary agreements/contracts issued for all personnel, including co and extra-curricular agreements
- Accounts payable for over 1000 active vendors on file
- Processing of over 1000 Laptop Protection Plan applications annually as well as the processing of invoices for laptop repairs
- Processing applications for open positions

- Processing public requests for use of our schools throughout the RSU

- Updating parents, staff and community members on board policy, board meetings/events and agendas/minutes by posting information to the website

To receive information via email, including Board agendas, please sign up for the RSU #2 mailing list. In order to do this please visit our website at [www.kidsrsu.org](http://www.kidsrsu.org) and on the right-hand side of the page enter your email address in the section entitled "Join the RSU2 News mailing list".

### RSU #2 Central Office

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Please visit the RSU website at

[www.kidsrsu.org](http://www.kidsrsu.org)

## The Vision of RSU #2

The vision of RSU #2 is to be a system of student-centered learning.

### Student-centered learning:

- Embraces student voice and choice through varied learning opportunities that occur year-round and take place inside, as well as outside of schools; project-based learning, internships, experiential learning, career technical education, peer learning, technology and apprenticeships.

- Shows students learn in a variety of environments, from a variety of sources, and at different paces based on individual learning needs.

- Presents opportunities for students to analyze and think critically, write and speak effectively, and collaboratively solve complex problems today and in the future.

- Includes the community and its resources as an important part of the learning process.

- Integrates a rigorous, focused curriculum with instruction and standards-linked assessments.

- Enables students to clearly understand what they should know and be able to do as a result of their learning.

- Incorporates demonstrations as well as traditional tests to measure when a student has mastered the skills and content, thus providing an accurate gauge of how well students are learning and when advancement to the next stage is appropriate.

- Develops in the learner a sense of self-worth, cultural awareness, and ethical and social responsibility.

- Ensures that students are able to set goals, manage time,

See Vision on page 3

# RSU #2 Buildings and Grounds



1973 multi-zone ventilator

We are making some very positive advances in the Buildings and Grounds Department in KIDS RSU #2. The constant focus is on accomplishing our goal of safe and healthy facilities for all students and staff in the district. This is being accomplished on many levels.

We are using more modern equipment in some of the facilities that never had the proper tools to efficiently and safely perform the required task. This has allowed us to work smarter and adopt methods that have decreased absenteeism and increased the amount of output on any given shift. The bar has been raised for cleanliness in many of the facilities. The increased level of cleaning has taken place with a decreased amount of various harsh chemicals used and the initiation of both green chemicals and procedures.

Since the inception of RSU #2 we have modified some of the operations and maintenance

staff schedules and duties. This has helped in the process of a large scope plan of action. We have focused on preventative maintenance, quick response time to equipment failures and less dependence on outside contractors. Our staff is now trained in basic heating and ventilation repair that allows them to correct problems with stock parts that we now can purchase at a reduced rate. This enables us to minimize downtime in classrooms and programming. We are maintaining safer buildings and grounds with this approach.

A large scale mechanical renovation will be taking place at Richmond Middle/High School this summer. RSU #2 has

been approved for Revolving Renovation funds for this project. A 38 year old multi-zone ventilator and some very old unit ventilators will be replaced. These current systems are well beyond their lifecycle replacement schedule. They are not automated

and very inefficient. Parts are no longer available for this equipment and it has often resulted in higher than normal CO 2 levels, frequent failures, and high repair cost.

Ventilation requirements have changed over the years and more data has become available showing that students are more alert and learn better when plenty of fresh air is introduced and lower CO 2 levels are maintained. These antiquated systems are being replaced with multiple energy recovery units. These are efficient ventilators that introduce adequate fresh air while capturing the heat from exhausted ventilation. They will be automated for efficiency and partial building occupancy when programming allows. The end result will be increased ventilation, the ability to better maintain consistent temperature control and create a more conducive atmosphere for student learning.

We are increasing our ability to monitor some

of the heating/ventilation systems remotely where building automation systems are available. Where they are not, we have installed software that will notify us of boiler failures and power outages either through our cell phones or our security monitoring contractors. This too has allowed us to address problems before any interruption to the school day. Fire alarm systems have been upgraded, security cameras have been installed and access to our schools is now controlled and monitored. These measures all contribute to our efforts toward safer schools.

The RSU #2 Operations and Maintenance Department is stronger as a whole than it ever was as individual towns functioning by themselves. We provide mutual aid in emergencies, have consolidated some of our bulk purchases and share our equipment and expertise as a group.

## Agriculture in the Classroom and Beyond

The Henry L Cottrell School has a long history of integrating local agriculture into classroom learning.

For this school year, HLC benefited from an "Agriculture in the Classroom" grant which allows us to expand the depth and diversity of our offerings to children. Each and every month the whole school has participated in sharing a local healthy snack. Offerings of these snacks have varied from local apples and cherry tomatoes, pesto grown in the school's greenhouse to pumpkins seeds grown in the school garden. The local Monmouth Garden Club visited the school and read to students in each classroom. Grant monies allowed the greenhouse to operate

until December of 2010 and to reopen in February of this year.

This spring, the Cottrell School will sponsor our annual plant sale. Each May, students organize and sell the vegetables, herbs and flowers grown throughout the spring in the greenhouse. The success of this project is credited to Joel Balano-Stott who works tirelessly to maintain the greenhouse and manage the planting, transplanting and marketing with the students.

During Monmouth Academy's Day of Caring, a group of high school students came to the Cottrell School to assist with the greenhouse maintenance. Students moved many yards of gravel into the green-

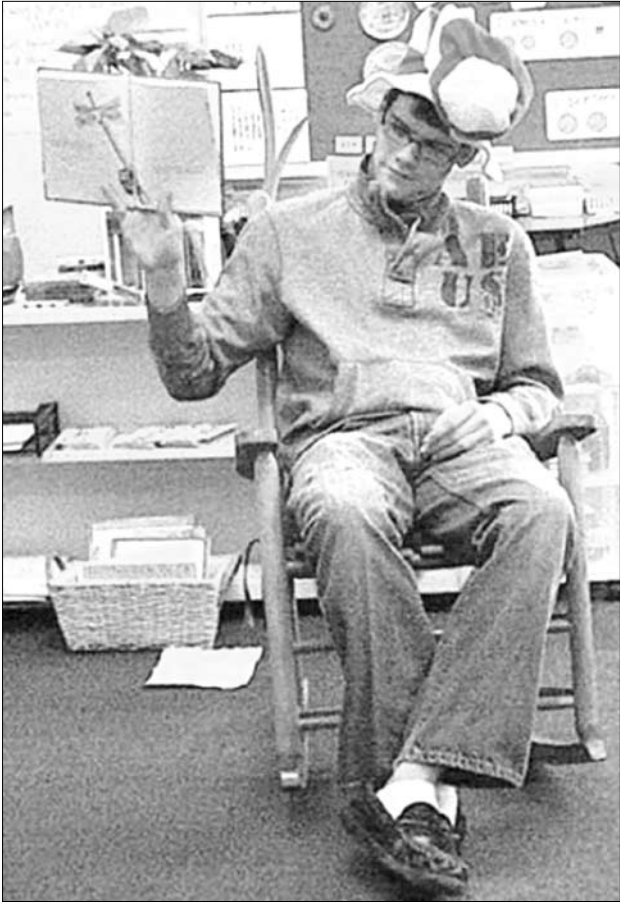
house to help with dust and weed control.

The Henry L. Cottrell School Greenhouse is a long time fixture at the school. As spring arrives, the greenhouse is filling with tender seedlings planted by the students that will be used to provide Mother's Day presents, donations to local food pantries and support town folks with the annual plant sale and May Faire at the local library. The local Boy and Girl Scouts have assisted in past years through community service to provide material and labor to assist with the upkeep and expansion of growing space in the greenhouse. Each and every child at HLC participates in planting and transplanting while

learning about the needs of plants and how they grow. The greenhouse has even provided gifts to the volunteers who give so many hours to the school.

Each spring, the Cottrell School sponsors a Farm Day as a celebration of local agriculture. During this event local farmers bring small animal, tractors, bees, worms and produce to present an outdoor display for our students. Also on this day, every student helps to plant our outside garden of pumpkins and flowers. The greenhouse assures our students maintain a strong connection to authentic learning about their community.

# Monmouth Academy Working As A Community of Learners



It is a powerful experience when students and staff take ownership in student learning and come together to help make the learning community around them better for all students. Recent events at Monmouth Academy are excellent examples of this work. The Monmouth Academy Civil Rights Team recently taught anti-bullying lessons to second and third grade classes at the Henry L. Cottrell Elementary School. These courageous students armed themselves with bullying books, balloons and a tutu to help illustrate how bullying can easily be discouraged if everyone possesses a little know how. "Whether it was a boy being teased for taking dance classes or balloons that needed to be deflated from a bully's insulting words and motives, everyone worked to find a way to

make the innocent victims feel better," stated Mrs. Heather Kupiec, Monmouth Academy Librarian. Learning to say something and not just stand by was the big message these high school students modeled and left for the younger children to practice. This team also fundraised to earn several anti-bullying picture books that they donated to the school's library. When the program concluded, it was evident that everyone stood a little bit taller and felt a little more confident after being assured that there IS plenty we all can do to STOP bullying in our schools!

On Friday, March 4, 2011 an enthusiastic group of Monmouth Academy students were invited to the Henry L. Cottrell Elementary School to take part in their month long celebration of reading. As in previous

years, they were asked to read Dr. Seuss books to all Kindergarten through third grade classes. The principal, Mrs. Deborah Emery greeted the "big kids" and enjoyed hearing their grown-up perception of "how small the building had become". Favorite Dr. Seuss books were chosen in the cheerfully decorated library and rooms were assigned. Some students even requested a classroom belonging to a former teacher. Many donned striped Dr. Seuss hats and all enjoyed the experience of modeling reading to such "little" and captivated listeners. Several classes got to enjoy snacking on popcorn while listening to the lyrical rhyming of "Hop on Pop" or using their imaginations as other Seuss characters came to life. It is not clear who gained or benefited the most from this wonderful sharing of books. Regardless, our school is certainly working toward all the places we can go together—"Oh, the Places You'll Go!"

Monmouth Academy special education staff members Keith Morang, Scott Wing and Brett Witherell, and Monmouth Middle School teacher Eric Palleschi got together last summer to develop a plan to utilize the technical education space

at Monmouth Academy. The plan is now starting to take shape and has drawn some interest. "It is giving a hands-on outlet for students while we prepare it to get ready for the entire school to use," shared Mr. Morang. "Kids are stopping by, showing interest, and asking in ways they can help." Some MA students have begun to complete small projects for the room and the school. A wall was built in January by Monmouth Buildings and Grounds staff to separate the student work space from storage space and students recently began to finish the project. "We taped, mudded, and sanded the wall," stated Tyler Guzman, Monmouth Academy senior. "We did a shelf for the art teacher, too. I like to help the school." Although it is reaping immediate benefits for Guzman and other students, the future appears even brighter. "There is real potential to provide kids an exciting opportunity for projects and hands-on learning," noted Morang. "There is also a lot of potential to help the school." With continued efforts like this the potential is great for the entire learning community."

# Monmouth Middle School

Just over two years ago the Monmouth school district merged with four other towns to become RSU #2. There were a lot of questions regarding what this merger would do to our schools. From an administrator's point of view there is no question to the benefits of this consolidation. One educational change RSU #2 has taken on is a dramatic change in the way we teach students to learn. Not every teacher or school is in the same place, but we do have the same message and are all moving toward student centered, standards based learning and following our district shared vision "to be a system of student-centered learning". Our students' educational needs have changed. What was OK for us is not OK for our children if we want them to be able to compete in a world that is changing faster than ever before. RSU #2 has recognized the need for change. Administrators and teachers have been challenged to re-examine how we teach, what we teach, and how our students of the 21st century learn. Our entire school unit made a commitment to this process during a three day workshop at the start of school. We all share the belief that this is what is best for our kids. Over half of Monmouth Middle School teachers have participated in Reinventing Schools Coalition training (RISC). A number of teachers who have not been trained will be participating in RISC training this spring. Many teachers have taken advanced RISC training. Our school and classrooms have developed shared visions, code of conducts, standard operating procedures which are all tools that give students voice and choice when it comes to their learning. This has not been an easy task and this process will take a number of years to complete. Classrooms are starting to change. A number of MMS teachers are implementing parts of this model and

students have been very enthusiastic about the changes to their learning. Staff is constantly planning, developing, checking and adjusting. When interviewing students they will tell you "that it is nice to know what you are going to learn before you start," "able to move at your own pace," "accomplish more," "we can redo work until we get it right," and "we have input into developing our own code of conduct".

Leveling for classes is another step that we are taking to move toward student centered, standards based learning. This year we started looking at leveling our math classes. Unlike homogeneous grouping of the past that many times locked students into certain groups that traveled together all day long, leveling has allowed students more flexibility within the classroom. By using many different types of assessments, students can be leveled with other students of similar ability. While working at their own pace, they are able to change levels once they have shown proficiency. Getting by with a C or D is no longer good enough. Grades 4-6 use rubrics to report student progress: 1 meaning "does not meet" standard, 2 "partially meets" standard, 3 "meets" the standard and 4 meaning "exceeds" the standard. This type of assessment gives a better view of student learning to the student, teacher and the family.

This consolidation has allowed the principal to move back to the role of an educational facilitator. Administrators no longer need to worry about building and grounds, roof projects, boilers, or who is going to plow us out after a snow storm. We don't have to arrange bussing for trips or put together every line of a budget. We still have a long way to go, but more time can be spent where it needs to be, looking at what is best for our middle school students.

# Richmond High School

## Successful Season

### ~ Middle School Lady Bobcats Basketball ~

#### Gary Carter, Athletic Director

The Richmond Middle School Girls basketball team recently wrapped up their inaugural season in the Busline League. The Lady Bobcats enjoyed a successful season as they finished up with a better than .500 record. The girls continued their success into the post-season as they made a run into the semi-final round only to be beaten by undefeated and eventual champs Great Salt Bay.

"I was very impressed with how much the kids improved," commented Coach and Fourth grade teacher Troy Kendrick. "They made great strides from the beginning of the season to the end."

### Up Front and Personal Valerie Jeffers ~ Foreign Language

During the month of January, Richmond students hosted foreign

speaking peers for a week. They were eleven girls from Bogota, Colombia. This was only half the group that traveled to Maine; Hall Dale High School volunteered to join us in this celebration of different cultures and hosted a dozen students. The Colombians came prepared to share their culture with us. They presented hands-on activities in the classrooms, including very skilled dancing lessons in Merengue and Salsa and staged a performance for the whole school, of traditional Colombian dances in full costume, with traditional music from the different parts of Columbia. One special feature of their visit was a Snow Day. They were thrilled to see snow for the first time! These students were very well received and some lasting friendships have been formed.

Currently, at Richmond High School we have an exchange student from Japan staying with one of our students for three weeks

and attending classes with her. We are also fortunate to have for the entire school year, two exchange students, one from Morocco and another from Portugal. These students, plus our German and Ukrainian exchange students last year, have all added to the cultural awareness of our own students. In May, a graduate education student from Angers, France is schedule to volunteer in our school, as well as in the middle and elementary schools for three weeks.

Through all of these experiences our students have had a wider and tangible glimpse of the world; we hope to offer similar experiences in the future. The benefits have been evident in the World Languages classroom and in other classrooms as well. The students understand more and more every day that language is the gateway to other cultures.

## VISION, from page 2

and demonstrate an effective work ethic.

Source: Community shared visioning meetings held April 29, October 7, 14, 21, 28, November 4, 2010 and Nellie Mae Education

## Foundation

Finalized: December 2, 2010 by the RSU2 Standards-Based Ad Hoc Sub-Committee of the School Board

Approved: January 5, 2011 by the RSU2 School Board

See Richmond on page 7

## CAFÉ In the Classroom at HDES

This year the 3rd grade team at HDES is using CAFE during our guided reading classes. CAFE is an acronym for Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency, and Expand vocabulary. This is a research-based approach to reading that allows students to set goals and work individually or in small, flexible groups to reach their goals. An integral part of this program is frequent assessment that takes place in one-on-one conferencing between teacher and student.

Each classroom has a menu board that is a visual reference of reading strategies that students use to set and meet their goals. These are strategies used regularly by active readers. Strategies are typically introduced to the whole class often through the use of picture books. The teacher models how to use the strategies and then students practice them while reading their self-selected (leveled) books. The menu board is updated by students after a modeling lesson and is used frequently throughout the year to help students remember strategies they have learned. After modeling a lesson the teacher meets with individual students to monitor their progress and set new goals. Students may meet in small groups based on their goals, for re-teaching or more practice of a particular strategy. The CAFE Book written by Gail Boushey

and Joan Moser offers record keeping and planning forms as well as a guide to launching the program. There are also detailed ready reference forms that outline how to model lessons. We have used these forms and tried making some of our own as this year has progressed. Implementing this program does not require any special materials, we use our classroom libraries of leveled books and the forms for tracking students progress. We have found that our students are more engaged in their learning and are reading more, even in spare time. Their tests scores have shown steady progress since the start of the year.

The boys and girls seem to enjoy this approach to guided reading as is reflected in their comments. "I like the strategies we use!" "The strategies we use will make us better readers." "I like that we get to choose the books we read." "I like to retell all kinds of books and I love to have free reading time." "I like CAFE because it helps me work on different reading skills." "I get to read for 20 minutes and work on a reading activity for 15 minutes." "You can pick your own books." "I like telling Mrs. Nott what my story is about using strategies." "I like CAFE because we get to read and on special days we get to play games."

## Student Leadership Institute

55 students from RSU2 recently spent a day with Rich DeLorenzo, co-founder of the Reinventing Schools Coalition. Mr. DeLorenzo shared his ideas on what school could be vs. what school is now. Two students from RSU2 helped facilitate this training. Students were intrigued with the possibilities of

more hands-on learning, more opportunities to get involved in learning opportunities in the community, and the ability to progress in class as soon as they achieve a standard. Due to the great amount of interest shown by students, we are currently planning another student leadership institute to be held this spring.

## Hello, Dolly

*Submitted by Molly Bishop,  
Science Teacher at RHS*

Ms. Bishop's biology classes are embarking on a webquest that will help students explore the ethical questions surrounding the Roslin Institutes cloning of Dolly, the sheep and genetic engineering. Throughout this process students working

in groups will develop a deep understanding of the differing perspectives, and draw their own conclusion about the social, economic and political effects of cloning of individuals, families and communities. Students will

*See Dolly on page 8*

# Monmouth Middle School Winter Olympics

During the week of February 14th - 18th the Monmouth Middle School celebrated the second annual Winter Olympics. Every class in grades 4 - 8 worked together to choose a country to represent in the upcoming events throughout the week. Each classroom researched the country they chose. Each classroom also created a poster and flag for their country that included many facts about the country and demonstrated the creativity in the students' work. Each classroom also created a sled that represented a symbol of their country. Each sled was judged on the use of a unique design, aerodynamics and a good representation of the country. The sled could only be made out of cardboard, duct tape and twine and was used in a final sled race at the end of the week.

The students at Monmouth Middle School showed a tremendous amount of team spirit, unity, and sportsmanship throughout the week. They challenged the other classes in their grade level with events including an obstacle course, snowman toss, bundle up relay, snow bucket brigade, and sled race. In their physical education classes during the week they participated in events to earn points for the final medal results. Each class earned a gold, silver or bronze medal for each event.

At the closing ceremonies the students entered the gym with their countries' flags waving and t-shirts of their countries' colors. It was a terrific week of authentic learning at Monmouth Middle School thanks to very



enthusiastic students and a great supportive staff.

In the words of many students at the end of the day "that was so much fun".

## On-going Professional Development At Hall-Dale Middle/High School

All staff in RSU #2 was fortunate to experience three full days of professional development prior to the start of the school year that focused on the RISC model of student centered teaching and learning. At Hall-Dale Middle/High School all of our early release days were dedicated to professional development that continued to provide our teachers with the necessary training to move forward on this initiative.

At HDMS/HS ten of our faculty members received additional training in implementing the RISC model. Known as Beacon Trained Teachers, these faculty mem-

bers have lead the way in sharing their expertise with colleagues. During our early release day on September 22 our Beacon teachers presented a series of workshops to the faculty that included the following topics:

- **Classroom Management Using RISC Tools** - guiding students towards a classroom structure that helps them define how best to move forward.
- **Taking Class Temperature** - Discuss and practice using instruments designed to quickly gauge student understanding.
- **Monitoring Your Code of Conduct** - Now that a Code of Conduct exists, how do you hold

students accountable to it?

- **PDCA's and How to Apply them to Projects**

- Changing your thinking from teacher created project ideas to student-centered ideas.

- Turning a Code of Conduct Into a Standard Operating Procedure
- Learn how to put the words on the wall into action.

During our early release day on January 14, while our focus did not change, our presentation was adjusted. Instead of presenting a variety of ideas and methodologies, our Beacon teachers facilitated Round Table Discussions with faculty members. Topics discussed included:

- Balanced Instructional Model

- Deadlines and due Dates

- Capacity Matrices/Rubrics

- Strategies to Engage Students

In December a group of students from HDMS/HS attended a RISC symposium and spent the day immersed in learning about student-centered learning. Many of those students spent the afternoon with the faculty during our March 16 professional development activities. They experienced a round Table discussion with 2 of our Beacon teachers and attended

*See Hall-Dale on page 5*

# Physical Education News

Submitted by Rob Deeves, P E Teacher K-6 in Richmond

One of the most challenging aspects of my job as an elementary and middle school P.E. teacher has always been how to successfully get 100% of my students to commit to jogging long distances (5 to 12 min. or more) in order to build aerobic capacity. Let's face it, jogging can be extremely boring and physically demanding, however, the cardiovascular benefits make it worth finding ways to motivate students.

I took the following idea from a physical education teacher at Lincoln Elementary School in Augusta and adjusted it to make it work for me. It is simply called the "Running Club" and it motivates young children to do something that is really hard.

Here is how it worked in Richmond; I created a "5 Minute Running Club" poster and placed it in a highly visible spot in the school for a couple days. Students were excited to hear more about this idea. In the physical education class, students were inspired to join the club and achieve the running goal. All students had to commit by signing the poster and running the established time designated for each class. Each time a stu-



dent came to the class one minute was added onto the goal until each class was running ten to twelve minutes at a time. The success rate for the students has been nearly 100%.

Each year Maine gets pounded with snow and cold. The winters are long and the kids stay inside for physical education classes. That is, however, until we dig the snowshoes out. In Richmond, we have access to one hundred acres of pristine trails, hills and valleys. A flexible K - 6 staff allows 1 hour long hiking blocks to insure that the students get an unhurried, fulfilling hik-



ing experience. It is great to see the reaction of many of these kids who really don't get a chance to explore the outdoors, much less explore in the middle of winter.

Currently the sixth grade students are en-

gaged in a physical fitness unit, designed to educate and engage students in a variety of life-long fitness activities. Activities include Tae Bo Series, parts of P90x, Dance Revolution and Running Club.

## Junior Builders!

Third graders at the Henry L. Cottrell School in Monmouth can now say they've built their first house and at the young age of just eight or nine! That's right! In their mathematics class, students were instructed to create any structure, out of their choice of material as long as it demonstrated proficiency in six specific mathematics standards. In addition to a McDonald's and a Hunt's Pizza, there were sixteen houses constructed! Prior to constructing their buildings the children were visited by their art teacher (Jet Price) who taught them how to sketch a 3-D building using a specific vantage point. A local residential builder (Nate Armstrong) answered questions and connected the geometry

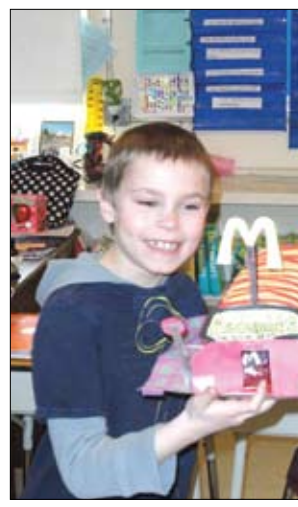


standards to his profession, fulfilling our goal of relating the learning to REAL LIFE.

The students were assessed on the standards during a teacher interview. Each child needed to identify obtuse angles, acute angles, right angles, lines of symmetry, perpendicular lines, and parallel lines to score a



three, which was meeting the standard. To exceed the standard, each child was expected to explain and define each geometric term after accurately identifying it. The students participated in creating a scoring rubric listing the specific standards to be mastered. Each student used the rubric to assess him/her-



self. A peer assessment and teacher assessment were part of the final grade. The children have unanimously voiced that they preferred the construction project versus a paper/pencil assessment. Student-centered learning truly is evident in this engaging project in the third grade classroom.

HALL-DALE, from page 4

the 'live feed' from Lindsay High School.

On March 16 we continued with additional Round Table Discussions that included:

• Management of a Classroom when so

many things are going on....

• Direct Instruction - How to incorporate deadlines/due dates.

• Students Developing PDCA's, Goal Setting and Moving Forward

• Capacity Matrices - The Basics

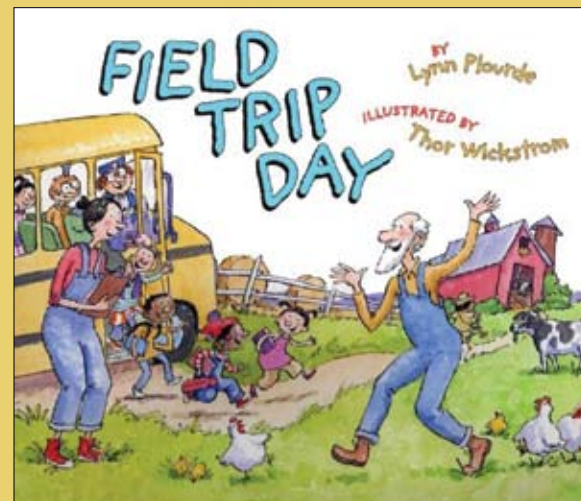
• Student Motivation - How is working 'at your own pace' translating to challenging and pushing students?

• Brain Storming Cross Curricular/Grade Projects

Following our Round Table Discussions the

full faculty was able to experience a live feed from a student-centered high school classroom in Lindsay, California. History teacher Frank Schiro allowed us to visit his classroom for nearly an hour and ask questions of he and his students.

## Maine Author to Visit Marcia Buker School in Maine



Maine children's book author Lynn Plourde will be visiting Marcia Buker School for a family literacy night in April. She will share several of her books interactively and turn one into a simple play acted out by the children. Our entire school community will participate in this tremendous opportunity.

Plourde has had twenty-four picture books published, including her newest "The Blizzard Wizard," "Field Trip Day," "Grandpappy Snippy Snappies," and "The Dump Man's Treasures," a Smithsonian Notable Book for Children. Her other books include "Pigs in the Mud in the Middle of the Rud," "Dino Pets," "A Mountain of Mit-



tens," and "Margaret Chase Smith: A Woman for President," a 2008 National Council for Social Studies Notable Book. Learning activities and bookmarks are available on her [www.lynnplourde.com](http://www.lynnplourde.com) website.

Plourde is a Skowhegan native who currently lives in Winthrop with her husband.

## Hall-Dale Sports

Submitted by Coach Terrill

The Hall-Dale High School Girls basketball team won the Class C State Championship on March 5th at the Bangor Auditorium. The Lady Bulldogs brought the gold ball home for the first time in 25 years and for just the third time in school history. They won the championship by beating the Eastern Maine champion Washington Academy Raiders 54-38. Junior Carylanne Wolfington scored a game-high 20 points, including a class C state championship record-tying four three-pointers. The Bulldogs tied the team record for most three-pointers made in a class C state championship game with six. Wolfington added eight rebounds and four steals in an all-around effort. Hall-Dale senior Taylor Massey scored 18 points in her final game in a Hall-Dale uniform to cap off an outstanding senior season.

As the team bus rolled back into Augusta it was met by a Hallowell police car, four fire trucks from Hallowell and Farm-

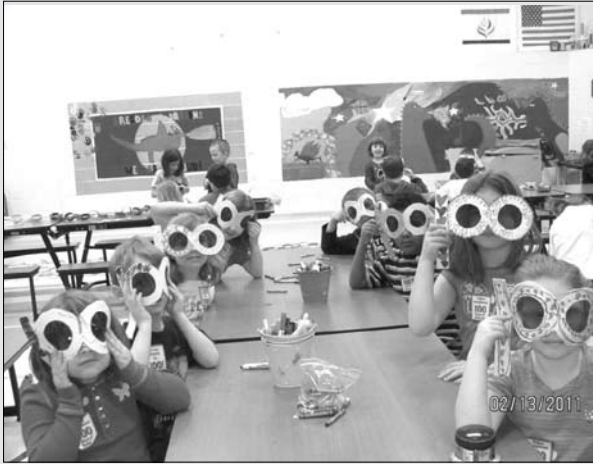
ingdale, a bus full of Hall-Dale students, and countless cars full of fans. The police car and fire trucks, with sirens blaring and lights flashing, led the team bus and impromptu parade through downtown Hallowell. People lined the streets and cheered on the newly crowned state champions. The parade continued to the High School, where the Boosters Club prepared a reception of family and friends.

The Hall-Dale student section, affectionately referred to as "The Dog Pound", regularly numbered over 100 members during home games throughout the season. During the tournament, the 'Dog Pound' was even more impressive, being voted the best student section of the tournament by MPBN and the Lewis-ton Sun Journal.

The 2010-2011 Hall-Dale girls basketball team finished their season with a 22-1 record. Their only loss of the season was a 42-40 loss to Jay. The Bulldogs outscored their

See Sports on page 6

# DES Celebrated 100 Days



On February 14, 2011, the Dresden Elementary Students celebrated 100 Days of Learning. Students worked in the cafeteria on special projects and cooperative learning activities throughout the one hundredth morning of school. What fun to share together as learners in the accomplishments of this landmark number of days.

Celebrating 100 days of school represents so much more than just having the school doors being open and teachers and students in rooms. These past one hundred days have included spelling words learned, math problem solved, stories written, books read, games played, paintings created and songs sung. In these past one hundred days, students have welcome new friends to Dresden Elementary School and said good-bye to others. Dresden Elementary School continues to be a school that focuses on what is important for all our students.

So far this school year, teachers have spent many hours learning as well. Teachers continually work together to refine the curriculum, and improve instructional opportunities for every child. As a staff, time has been spent looking at student data and making determinations about each child's learning so that our Dresden students continue to perform well in all areas. The week before vacation, teachers spent time reviewing the new shared vision for the district. For the past year, teachers, community members and students from the RSU have worked together to develop the vision for our ten district schools. The 'shared vision' will be the guiding statement to help us make decisions for the future of our schools. Here is a summary of the new RSU vision for our District Schools approved by the school board:

**"The Vision of RSU #2 is to be a system of student-centered learning."**



## Student-centered learning

- embraces student voice and gives students choice
- shows that students learn in a variety of environments and at different paces
- present opportunities for students to become problem solvers and critical thinkers
- includes the community and its resources
- integrates a rigorous curriculum in all learning
- enables students to know what they need to learn
- incorporates demonstrations of knowledge with traditional tests
- develops in learners a sense of self-worth
- ensures students know how to set goals and manage time

Throughout the spring, you will be invited to hear more about the shared vision for our schools. I hope you will attend whenever possible so that you can read the entire document and share in the exciting changes happening in our school. Recently, two first graders and their teacher Roberta Hart presented the shared vision to the Selectmen of Dresden.

The importance of recognizing our 100 Days of Learning is that we celebrate all that we have accomplished and also continually plan for the days ahead. Thanks for being part of our one hundred days of the 2010-11 school year. The support of our school families and the Dresden Community make the work so much more meaningful for our students.

# "It's the Right Thing to Do"

Submitted by Cindy Raymond, Seventh Grade Teacher at HDMS

Moving toward a more student-centered classroom has been my goal since the start of the school year. After a three day orientation of the RISC (Re-inventing Schools Coalition) model in August, I was compelled to do things differently in my language arts classes this year. I felt that it was the right thing to do. What teacher wouldn't want his or her students more engaged in their learning? What I had been noticing over the past years was that many students weren't very engaged in my classes and not really invested in their own learning, and thus, not producing the results that I was expecting from them.

The idea of a "student-centered" classroom would cause a paradigm shift in me and in my students, whom I had last year, for they were used to my traditional way of teaching the whole class the same thing and expecting students to be at the same place. In the beginning of this process, the students didn't quite trust that I would be offering them more "voice and choice" in the classroom. I believed that the process would work and that students would rise to the occasion. I had to give up control. My classroom learning environment had been based on a more authoritarian 1980's model of assertive discipline, where I set the rules for the class and expected compliance from students.

The RISC model is a tool for developing a more democratic and cooperative learning environment. In early September, all seventh graders met in cooperative groups, brainstormed, and voted on a Shared Vision which states: "We the people of the 7th grade need these things to further the learning process: to work at our own pace, to be able to eat during class, an appropriate classroom volume, to give and get respect, learning materials/ resources, access to help from teachers and peers."

What is a student-centered classroom? According to RISC, the student centered classroom allows students to move through levels of performance at their own pace, set goals, track their progress, conference with the teacher, help other students, and take responsibility for their own learning and learning environment." You might ask, as I did, how is this accomplished?

It definitely does not happen overnight. There has to be a commitment on the teacher's part to do this because it's in the best interest of our students. It takes time to change from the old way of doing things to a new, more engaging way where students take ownership of their learning. It takes mentoring from the Beacon teachers (teachers who have already implemented the RISC model and have had fur-

ther training). Without the help of our Beacon teachers (Libby Ladner, Sue Browne, Tim Soule, and Dan Crocker,) I would have never progressed as quickly and successfully as I have with my students. How do I know that it is a success? I am seeing the students as leaders and active learners in my classroom. They are invested, productive, collaborative, creative, and critical thinkers. (Reminds me of the Guiding Principles!) The students have surpassed my expectations! I knew they would rise to the challenge. It's the right thing to do.

## Students' Perspectives:

"I think that letting us pick our own projects, while still having deadlines and expectations, works really well and lets us feel more comfortable (not so stressed) doing our school work! I like that we work at our own pace but still have the help from the teacher that we need." Mari Smith, 7th grader at HDMS

"The thing I think that works best in student-centered learning in Language Arts Class is that we are able to choose our projects at anytime. The thing I like about student-centered learning is that we get to work at our own pace. We either get to challenge ourselves to what we are capable of or more, or we can stick to going at a nice and slow pace where we aren't behind the class or ahead of the

class. That is what I like about student-centered learning."

Thea Sweet, 7th grader at HDMS

"I personally love how class is working this year. I feel that I get my work done a lot faster and with better quality this year. That's what I like best about student-centered-learning!"

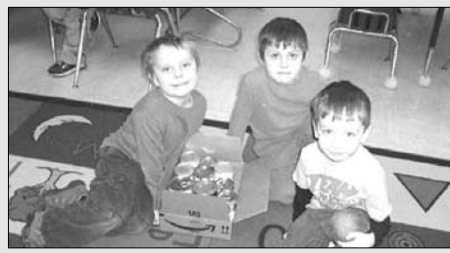
Haley Houdlette, 7th grader at HDMS

"I think that the teacher being available to anyone is what's working the best because everyone gets what they need. I like to be able to work at my own pace. In 6th grade, I had to do the same project as everyone else at the same time. I like being able to pick my project and if I want to work alone or in a group. Student-centered learning is the way to go!"

Josh Cowing, 7th grader at HDMS

"I think the thing that works best about student centered learning in LA is we all get to the final result, but we can do that however we want. One student can do a fable for a narrative and another can do a short story. I like that with student centered learning, we get to do the projects we want in the order we want. Previously we had to do a certain project, but maybe we could show our understanding better if we did a different project." Owen MacDonald, 7th grader at HDMS.

## Marcia Buker Students Donate Cans to Local Food Bank



To celebrate the 100th day of school this February, Marcia Buker students in kindergarten and fourth grade teamed up to collect 100 cans of food. Students used the cans for multiple math activities and then made a walking trip to the town garage to de-

liver the contributions. With the help of town employees, the food was then donated to the mobile unit of the Good Shepherd Food Bank. The students exceeded their goal of 100 cans, collecting a total of 230 items of food.

Classrooms partici-

pating in the food collection drive included the kindergarten rooms of Mrs. Cliffe, Mrs. Dorman, and Mrs. Merrill and the fourth grade classrooms of Mrs. Garriepy, Ms. Heath, and Mr. Kendrick.

## SPORTS, from page 5

opponents by an average of 14.3 points per game. Junior Carylanne Wolfington was named the MVC South Player of the Year for her outstanding season, which included averages of 13.7 points, 7.0 rebounds, and 4.7 steals per game. Senior Taylor Massey was elected to the MVC South first team all-star team, chosen to play in the McDonald's All-Star Game, and was awarded the Robin Colcord

award for the outstanding player/sportsperson of the Western Maine Class C Girls basketball tournament. Massey averaged 15.2 points, 7.2 rebounds, and 4.0 steals per game. Junior Kristina Buck was elected to the MVC South second team all-star team, and joined her mother Brenda (a member of the 1986 Hall-Dale girls state championship team) as a girls basketball state champion. Hall-Dale coach Brandon Terrill was awarded the MVC

South Coach of the Year award and was chosen by the Maine Association of Basketball Coaches as the Coach of the Year for Western Maine Class C girls. Hall-Dale won their second consecutive MVC Championship 49-41 over Livermore Falls. The Bulldogs won their Western Maine quarter-final game 59-30 over Georges Valley, their Western Maine semi-final game 45-36 over Traip Academy, and the Western Maine Championship 42-30 against

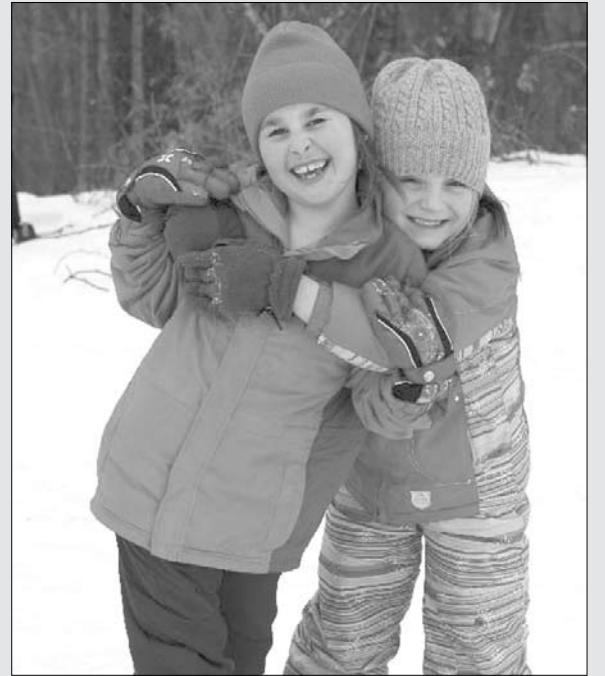
Livermore Falls. In addition to winning the MVC championship, Western Maine championship, and Class C State Championship, the Hall-Dale Girls basketball team was also awarded the Sportsmanship Award by the IAACBO, or Central Maine Board of Basketball Officials. This is the 4th varsity team at Hall-Dale High School in the past 3 years to be recognized by receiving sportsmanship awards.

# Graphic Arts, Graffiti and Teaching a Love for Words



Matt Demers a recent college graduate in Graphic Design visited Dresden Elementary School and inspired our Pre-K to 5th grade students with his art and ideas. He taught us monoprinting, painting techniques, color theory all centered around the alphabet and words. The students took off with his ideas and looked at words in a unique and curious way. The room was electric with excitement as students took a word meaningful to them and changed it into an art form. The results were fantastic and students who normally find the process of writing challenging loved this creative approach to using words. Matt will be coming again to Dresden's Art Celebration, March 24th to work with students, parents and grandparents so our community can be inspired by the written word and creative ideas.

## Henry L. Cottrell School Snowshoeing



Winter at the Henry L. Cottrell School is a time to get outside and enjoy the day. The second and third graders did just that on a beautiful sunny day in February. Two years ago the physical education classes received a MAHPERD (Maine Association of Health Physical Education Recreation and Dance) grant to help cover the cost of snowshoes for the school. With the help of matching funds and other donations from families of outgrown snowshoes the school received 30 pairs of snowshoes.

preprehensive while others were excited and overjoyed to tackle a new challenge. The second and third graders learned how to put on and take off their snowshoes, walk up and down hills, trudge through deep snow where "no one has gone before" and just simply experience the time walking in the snow with their friends. Some of the classes were able to find animal tracks in the snow and they worked together to identify who might have crossed their path.

For many second and third graders this was a new adventure for them. Having never been snowshoeing some students were ap-

By the end of the snowshoeing adventure all the students realized how fun and relatively easy snowshoeing and outdoor winter activities can be.

## RSU #2 Education Technology Updates

Submitted by John Armentrout, Director of Communications and Information Technology



This year has been as busy as ever for the communications and information technology department at RSU 2. Last year lots of effort was spent to update infrastructure in all locations, and that continues, most recently with a new installation of a VoIP phone system at Dresden which should be online by the time this goes to print.

There are a number of initia-

tives however that directly impact the teaching and learning that are worth noting in this edition of the news. The most notable perhaps is also the most taken for granted.

Last year many of our buildings were connected to the Internet with just a T1 Internet connection. This means that at best our connection would transfer at 1.5 Mbs (that's mega bits per second). Actual bandwidth speeds were lower. During the summer we were able to get all of our buildings connected to the new NetworkMaine fiber optic link which has done two significant things.

First, we've connected all the buildings using fiber optics to a high-speed network and most buildings are seeing actual speeds



of 40 Mbps or more. That's a significant increase. Second, these fiber connections are all directed back to a single router and firewall centrally located in the RSU which allows us to centralize more of our infrastructure and reduce redundancies. For example, all of our phone systems are tied together and calls can be made between RSU locations using direct extension using this new network.

We have also recently signed an agreement with Discovery Education to help provide video and other resources for science, math

See Updates on page 8

**RICHMOND, from page 3**

### Exchange Students Emerald McKinney, 14 Class of 2014 Richmond High School

Hosting exchange students was really awesome. They got the experience of a lifetime and so did I. I really miss them. They changed my life. During the past year, my family hosted two exchange students. Their names were Ulrike from Germany and Minori from Japan. Here is a little bit about them and what I learned from them.

With Ulrike, I learned to love what you've got before it's gone. Also I learned that Germany doesn't get as much snow as we do. That's funny. Uli (Ulrike's nickname) only stayed here for a school year, but it still hurt when she left. I became so attached to her. We both played softball, basketball, and gymnastics. We had many good times together. Now that she is gone I truly miss her because my siblings don't live at home anymore. She was so cool. Ulrike was very good at all sports. She was best at gymnastics. I always liked watching her

practice. She played basketball last year and it was her first year playing and she was so good at it. During softball season we used to practice together until the sun went down. We always had fun together and had so many things in common. She always made me want to get good grades like her. I wanted to do all the things she wanted to do. Sometimes I felt like saying, "Uli, I want to be as cool as you." She was like another big sister to me. When she left my cousin was in the hospital. Uli told me to be strong through this tough time in my life and even if it didn't seem like it; she was there, she would always be there for me. My cousin, Michelle died right after Uli left to go home. I miss Uli, but hopefully she will come back and visit. I will never forget her!

With Minori, I learned that it's never too late to wish for someone to comfort you. I know that Minori will always be there for me. Minori has twin brothers that are the same age as me. We were 14 turning 15. I learned a lot about her Japanese culture. One of the main thing is that they eat almost everything with chopsticks. Minori was so cool. She

had her own band and was the vocalist. I have heard some of her music and she was a very good singer. I liked listening to her sing (even though it's in Japanese). I really miss her but we still talk through Facebook. I actually learned a lot from Minori. She is one of the nicest people I have ever met. She got along with the people that she didn't even like. The thing that I liked the most about Minori is that she always knew how to make you feel good about yourself. I'm really going to miss that girl. I think that she should come back to visit. Also I'm going to miss how she never let anyone bother her.

I really miss both of these foreign exchange students so much. Everyone at school wanted to get to know them. I know that if I could trade places with one of them I would. It was hard when they left. Just a visit for a year or even as short as two and a half weeks you can get attached to a student from far away. I did with Minori and Uli. I really hope that Richmond High School has more exchange students come to the school. They helped me see the world.

**NEW, from page 1**  
nation throughout our community.

The RSU's mission to become "student centered" in all classrooms is commendable and matches the latest research on learning. Providing a voice and choice in how learning is conducted puts the child at the heart of the learning process. As professional educators, it is our responsibility to provide our children with the tools to access all of the content and to learn at high levels. Race, gender, socioeconomic level, language fluency, special needs, and other labels placed in education are not reasons for failure, but rather opportunities to experience more successes within our learning communities. In RSU2, I will provide all stakeholders (children, parents, and staff) with the tools to be successful each day with our future educators, engineers, chefs, civic

leaders, contractors, accountants or any professional goal our children desire to achieve.

I am a person who believes in human potential and I am an educator who firmly believes all children can learn, and learn at high levels. I also feel all stakeholders within the RSU must be partners in educating our children. The RSU and its communities have established a terrific foundation with which to build upon. My wife Amy and daughter Maya are excited to join the RSU team and the families that make up this great region. I look forward to meeting more people and developing the positive relationships that will allow us to provide our children with a quality education that will empower them to seek the unique futures they desire.

Looking for a good rake and snow blower,  
*Virgel Hammonds*

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*DOLLY, from page 4*

determine whether or not the Human Cloning Prohibition Act should be enacted and whether or not it should be expanded to all aspects of cloning? Will the scientific community act responsibly? Hello Dolly is a webquest project that

requires students to ask good questions, access current information, analyze the validity of sources, apply new knowledge to evaluate a current controversy, and reach consensus with peers. The final debate between students will be held on March 30, 2011.

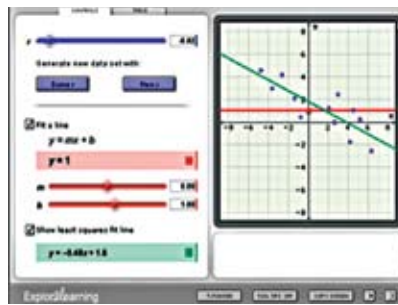
*Molly Bishop, teacher*



and social studies to all teachers and students in the RSU. This includes over 6 TB (terra bytes) of video data that is stored on our wide-area-network on a new high-speed server.

New this winter is a district-wide subscription to another online resource for teachers and students called [explorelearning.com](http://explorelearning.com) which publishes online "gizmos" that allow users to interact with controls to view, manipulate, experiment and explore simulations in math

and science. The impact of visualizing changes immediately in a graph when learning about slope or play with difference variables to illustrate and better understand the water cycle. It's so much better than using a paper textbook and helps explore our world using



inquiry based instruction right on their laptop, in the classroom or at home.

These things, along with additional classroom tools such as many more projectors, interactive whiteboards and Apple iPads with specialized educational software for elementary students are just some of the work we've gotten underway this year to help improve the educational experience here at RSU2. Thanks to all of the IT staff and teacher integrators for helping to make this all happen.

- John Armentrout, Director of Communications and Information Technology

## A Second Grade Classroom's Journey in Creating Standards-based Student-Centered Learning

By: Kim Kennedy, HDES Grade 2

As we embrace the end of trimester 2 and look ahead to spring, we continue to ask our students, and ourselves 'how are we doing?' It is a question that never goes unanswered. There is always room for improvement, skills to revisit, or opportunities to challenge oneself in new and exciting ways. So, what exactly is RISC? RISC (Re-Inventing Schools Coalition), is a group of people who have made it their mission to promote best practices in the world of education. They have landed here, upon the great state of Maine, and challenged us to ask ourselves one simple, but very complex question. What is best practice?

As an educator, I feel it has always been my responsibility to provide the best education possible, but I have never felt like I have secured a method that would allow me to reach every student and promote the highest degree of success. Over

the course of five different trainings, the RISC folks have helped me see that to achieve best practice, you must approach it like your students would, with curiosity and open-mindedness. It was then that I understood that learning doesn't necessarily start with the teacher, it starts with the student. This is what inspired my journey into the very first "steps" of creating a student-centered classroom.

All of the 2nd grade classrooms at HDES participated in a process to come up with one shared vision and one code of conduct for the grade level. It was the beginning of a long process to make sure students could truly live by these "rules" they had created for each other. Students are still checking and adjusting on a regular basis because they have learned that improving themselves is a continuous process. Students have also learned that "Fail-

ure is success if we learn from it." Therefore, failures are always accepted as long as we use it as a learning experience to improve ourselves.

Our school has embraced best practice when providing the best possible instructional opportunities in reading for our students. We provide the students with small-group instruction where teachers are able to focus on individual student needs for reading strategies, oral and written comprehension, and fluency. Our educators continuously study student reading data and make the necessary adjustments in lesson planning and reading group dynamics to promote success. This year we have formed a study group to look even further into best practices for reading. Our students have been educated in choosing books at their reading levels so they are aware of how they can practice their fluency

skills by reading easier texts, comprehension skills by reading on-level texts, or challenge their reading skills by reading a level or two above. Our students are more involved in reading by choosing books that they like to read. They look forward to S.S.R (sustained silent reading) or DEAR (drop everything and read), because it's THEIR time with a book THEY chose.

Teachers must continue to listen to our students every day. We are in the process of creating a system where we are most concerned about what students learned rather than what students were taught. This is a challenge I am willing to embrace because even though I am in the beginning stages of this educational transition, the evidence of student learning is all around me, providing me with the inspiration to do more, and it's an amazing feeling!

## RSU #2 Train the Trainer

We've had lots of teacher trainings during the past 18 months. These trainings are to help our teachers learn new teaching strategies so that our students' learning will increase. Many times, the facilitators of these trainings have come from as far away as Colorado, Alaska, and California! The good news is that 13 teachers from RSU2 recently learned how to facilitate some teacher trainings. Soon we will have a number of teachers so skilled in facilitation that they will lead some of our future training sessions!

### More Training

All administrators in RSU2 joined 35 other administrators from Maine for two days of in-depth training focused on second order change. What is second order change? Second order change im-



*Bette Manchester of the Maine International Center for Digital Learning shares a learning moment with an RSU2 elementary teacher at the recent "Train the Trainer" session.*

plies a fundamental break with past practices. It requires new knowledge and skills for successful implementation.

RSU2 is transitioning to a performance-based, student-centered school system. (see Vision Statement on the RSU2 website) One purpose of

this challenging change is to improve student learning. The second purpose for the change is to improve students' success rate in post high school work/school/service. For education to change, we are faced with the challenge of thinking of schools dif-

ferently. Our current model of school is 100 years old. Developing a model of "shared leadership" will strengthen our work toward student-centered learning. One element needed for success is administrators learning together to lead the change.