

MAR 28 2008

**YORK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
ALTERNATIVE PLAN**

**APPROVED
BY THE
YORK SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MARCH 19, 2008**

**Submitted to the Maine Department of Education
March 26, 2008**

REC'D MAR 28 2008

ALTERNATIVE PLAN SUBMITTAL SHEET

School Administrative Unit Submitting Alternative Plan:

- York School Department

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Date Plan Submitted by SAU: March 26, 2008

The intent to submit an alternative plan has been approved by the Commissioner in the approval of the Notice of Intent?

YES NO

(If NO, please explain.)

The York School Department and Wells Ogunquit CSD submitted a Reorganization Plan dated November 27, 2007 to the Department of Education. The Reorganization Plan made clear that the RPC had encountered a number of significant barriers to the formation of a new RSU and thus the Plan was incomplete. The Commissioner responded to the submission by letter dated December 14, 2007 requesting that the RPC continue working on the Reorganization Plan.

On January 8, 2008, the Chair of the York School Committee submitted a letter to Commissioner Gendron informing her that the York School Department intended to submit an alternative plan. Commissioner Gendron responded by letter on January 30, 2008 indicating her willingness to review an alternative plan for York. (See letters in Exhibit A).

Alternative Plan Cover Sheet

(Please attach Alternative Plan as Exhibit A)

Plan Requirements				
Item	Complete	In Progress	Not Yet Started	Need Assistance ¹
Plan addresses how the SAU will reorganize administrative functions, duties and noninstructional personnel so that projected expenditures of RSU in fiscal 2008-2009 for the following areas will not have an adverse impact on the instructional program.				
system administration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
special education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
facilities and maintenance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan addresses how cost savings will be achieved in fiscal 2008-2009 for the above four areas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parameters for Plan Development				
Enrollment meets requirements (2,500 except where circumstances justify an exception)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When viewed in conjunction with surrounding proposed units, may not result in one or more municipalities being denied the option to join an RSU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Includes at least one publicly supported high school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consistent with policies set forth in section 1451	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No displacement of teachers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No displacement of students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No closures of schools existing or operating during school year immediately preceding reorganization, except as permitted under section 1512	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative Agreements				
			Yes	No
Does your plan currently include information/documentation on collaborative agreements? <i>(not required, but encouraged)</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ Please explain what assistance you need to complete this portion of your plan, and state from whom you need assistance, on the next page.

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EXHIBITS:

- Exhibit A – MDOE Financial Template and York Calculations
- Exhibit B – Letter from Regional Planning Committee
- Exhibit C – Letters Regarding Filing of Alternative Plan
- Exhibit D – School Committee Minutes – 3/19/08
- Exhibit E – York Public Schools Five-Year Educational Strategic Plan, 2005-10
- Exhibit F – York School Department Vision, Mission and Expectations
- Exhibit G – Profiles of York Schools
- Exhibit H – Curriculum Connection Newsletter
- Exhibit I – The Education Connection Newsletter
- Exhibit J – York Education Foundation Grants
- Exhibit K – Letters of Support

A. Executive Summary

The York School Department demonstrated due diligence and good faith in carrying out its obligations under the consolidation law to explore the feasibility of consolidating with other area school units, first with the Kittery School Department and then with the Wells-Ogunquit CSD. The Regional Planning Committee formed by York and Wells-Ogunquit determined that there were several very significant financial barriers to consolidation and that costs would shift unfairly to York.

The York School Committee believes that the York School Department qualifies for an exception to the 2,500 student requirement based on the following criteria in the consolidation law:

- Economics:
 - 1) Consolidation would result in a significant and unfair cost shift to York taxpayers;
 - 2) The York School Department is already an efficient school system and there are numerous initiatives under way to control and reduce costs; and
 - 3) York voters have consistently supported the school budget.
- Other unique circumstances:
 - 1) York students are consistently high achieving and there are numerous innovative and effective education programs in place in the schools;
 - 2) York engages in numerous collaborations with the Town government other school units and outside organizations to provide programming for students and teachers that are important to preserve;
 - 3) The York schools enjoy an unusually high level of support from townspeople and this Plan demonstrates that the school system will remain sustainable as an independent unit.

B. Due Diligence in Complying with the School Consolidation Law

In the spring of 2007, when potential consolidation partners were first being reviewed, the Maine Department of Education encouraged the York School Department to explore the possibility of consolidating with the Kittery School Department. Accordingly, officials from Kittery and York held discussions and did a preliminary analysis to determine the viability of the two towns forming an RPC and filing a Notice of Intent. Ultimately, the York School Committee decided that Kittery was not the best match due to educational philosophy, curriculum and finances.

At that point, officials from the York School Department and Wells-Ogunquit CSD met to explore the viability of consolidating their school units. A Notice of Intent was filed in August, 2007 and approved by Commissioner Gendron. An RPC was formed with broad representation from all three communities. Assistance was provided to the RPC from two Maine Department of Education facilitators, Walter McIntire and David Wiggins. Four subcommittees of the RPC were charged with studying specific aspects of consolidation: Finance, Governance, Property/Debt and Policy/Contracts/Transportation. The RPC met five times as a full committee to review the progress of the subcommittee and to prepare a Reorganization Plan, which was approved by both school committees.

The Reorganization Plan was submitted to Commissioner Gendron on November 27, 2007. The Plan clearly demonstrated due diligence and the good faith efforts of the RPC and the school committees to develop a consolidation plan. However, as documented in the Plan, significant barriers to consolidation of these two school units were identified. The most important is that consolidation would result in a severe cost shifting from Wells and Ogunquit to York as demonstrated by the financial template provided by the Maine Department of

Education and confirmed in York's own financial calculations (see **Exhibit A**). In the short time frame allowed for submitting consolidation plans, the RPC was unable to identify any appreciable savings from forming the new RSU. Further, the RPC calculated that many costs would likely increase, at least in the first two to three years of consolidation (see letter from RPC in **Exhibit B**).

When officials in York and Wells-Ogunquit were able to review the Commissioner's responses to the reorganization and alternative plans submitted by other school units in December 2007, they learned that several plans had received preliminary approval that did not meet the 2,500 student threshold or qualify for the "efficient, high performing district" exception. After reviewing the plans submitted by these school units, officials in York and Wells-Ogunquit concluded that they could make compelling cases for why they should remain autonomous school units as well. Therefore, by letter dated January 8, 2008 York School Committee Chair Marilyn Zotos informed Commissioner Gendron that the School Committee intended to file an Alternative Plan. In her letter of January 30th, Commissioner Gendron stated that she would be willing to review an Alternative Plan for York. (See letters in **Exhibit C**.)

The Alternative Plan York is submitting herewith demonstrates that York is entitled to an exception based on economics, and other unique considerations including efficiency of the current school system; a high level of student achievement at all grade levels; strong and innovative educational programs; a high-level of support from the community for the schools; and the long-term sustainability of the York School Department.

In preparing this Alternative Plan, York School officials consulted with Ray Poulin and Norm Higgins from the Maine Department of Education, legal counsel from Drummond Woodsum & MacMahon, Town officials and State legislators. The Alternative Plan was discussed at a public hearing on March 19, 2008 and there was strong community support voiced for submitting an Alternative Plan. Following the public review, the School Committee voted to

withdraw from the configuration in the Reorganization Plan submitted on November 27, 2007 and to submit this Alternative Plan. (See **Exhibit D**).

C. York's Case for an Exception to the 2,500 Student Requirement

York should be granted an exception to the 2,500-student requirement based on the following factors identified in the consolidation law:

1. Economics;
2. Other unique circumstances.

Each of these factors will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

1. **Economics**

a. **The proposed RSU would shift costs to York.**

As noted in Section A above and in the Reorganization Plan submitted by the York School Department and Wells-Ogunquit CSD, a merger of the two school units would result in a severe cost-shifting from Wells and Ogunquit to York estimated at \$1,267,771 in the first year. (See **Exhibit B**).

Of this amount, \$857,518 is due to the shift in additional local contribution from Wells-Ogunquit to York under the consolidation law's cost-sharing formula. The formula requires that York assume 58% of the cost due to the distribution of enrollment. The other \$410,253 is due to the shift in EPS allocations. Even if there were a change in the consolidation law to allow other cost-sharing options based on valuation or other factors, thus lessening or eliminating the \$857,518 cost shift, York would still have to deal with the EPS allocation shift of \$410,253. For consolidation to be cost-neutral for York, this \$410,253 would need to be shifted to Wells and Ogunquit. Although it is conceivable that Wells-Ogunquit might agree to assume a greater contribution in year one, the EPS cost shifting problem would continue in later years because the new RSU would allocate costs according to the distribution of student enrollment among the towns. Thus, York would

continue to assume a greater cost than it currently does to educate its own students as an independent school unit.

Another complication is that the \$410,253 figure may actually turn out to be higher, because the calculation was made based on 95% EPS allocation, not 100%. Any potential savings from consolidation of system administration would be radically offset by the very formidable losses for York. These reasons alone are enough to justify the conclusion that consolidation of these two school units is not a viable, sustainable solution from the financial standpoint and that voter support is uncertain at best. However, there is another very significant financial barrier to consolidation as well.

Based on Wells-Ogunquit CSD's audited financial statements for the period ending June 30, 2006, there was a negative fund balance of \$2,271,905. Eighty-two percent of this amount (\$1,843,358) was for teacher salaries for the months of July and August. This operating deficit would need to be eliminated before the school units could be consolidated, otherwise the new RSU would begin with a \$2.2 million dollar deficit, of which York would be forced to assume 58%. This would be patently unfair because this money was spent to pay teacher salaries in Wells-Ogunquit prior to the formation of the RSU. One solution is for Wells-Ogunquit to pay off this deficit before the RSU becomes operational, but it does not have the reserves to do so. Therefore, the only options would be to raise this amount in taxes or generate an operating surplus to offset the deficit. This last option would likely take years to accomplish. This is an intractable barrier to consolidation.

The RPC spent many hours grappling with all of these financial barriers, which is reflected in the RPC Team minutes quoted below.

“Considerable time was spent trying to devise a formula that would reallocate costs back to member SAUs in a manner which will more accurately allocate unique costs of operation to the underlying district which created them. Since the per pupil costs of operation in the WOCSD are approximately 13%

higher than York at the present time, the RPC feels it is unfair for the taxpayers of York to shoulder a larger tax burden than would normally otherwise exist, were it not for the reallocation of expenses throughout the RSU district based upon proportional student census required under the new law.”

In the end, the RPC concluded that consolidation would be very disadvantageous for York from the financial perspective.

Finally, local school units have just recently received their ED 281 subsidy printouts which indicate that both York and Wells-Ogunquit are slated for very significant cuts in their subsidy amounts (\$928,615 for York and \$730,212 for Wells-Ogunquit). This new development poses yet another financial barrier to consolidating the two school units.

b. The York School Department is already an efficient school unit.

The York School Department, Town officials and York voters have consistently demonstrated a commitment to having a school system that provides an excellent education and high student achievement at a cost that is affordable for local taxpayers.

York’s Home Rule Charter requires that the School Department prepare a line item budget that is reviewed by the Town’s Budget Committee and then subject to voter approval at the Budget Referendum. Thus, voters have the opportunity to vote by referendum on specific line items in the budget. The transparency of the school budget approval process in York acts as a powerful motivator for school officials to seek efficiency and cut costs where possible. The Charter does not allow transfer of funds between budget lines.

The Town’s Tax Task Force has established an annual cap for both the school and municipal budgets. Both the York School Committee and the Selectmen have made a commitment to honor these caps. The School Department’s budget has been at or below this cap every year:

	2006	2007	2008	2009
School Budget	4.8%	5.4%	4.16%	3.6%
Task Force Cap	6.4%	5.4%	4.7%	4.2%

Unlike in many other towns, York voters consistently approve the School Department's budget, demonstrating both strong support of taxpayers for their local schools and the long-term sustainability of the schools as an autonomous school unit. The York School Department has demonstrated a strong commitment to strategic planning, including systematic analysis and attention to budget issues, and outreach to state and town officials and citizens on school costs and budgeting. (See **Exhibit E**, York Public Schools Five-Year Educational Strategic Plan, 2005-2010.)

Please see Section D of this Plan for a detailed discussion of the efficiencies York has achieved in various operational areas as well as plans for future cost-saving initiatives.

2. **Other Unique Considerations**

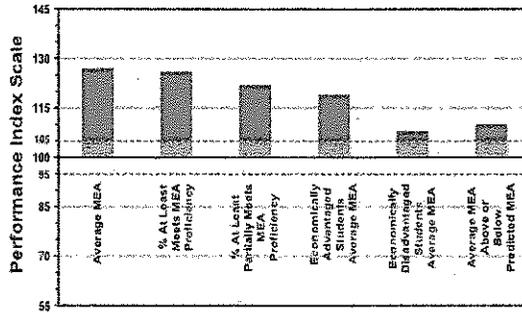
Please see the profiles of York Schools in **Exhibit G**.

a. **York students consistently sustain high achievement levels.**

York students consistently perform above State averages at all grade levels tested on the MEAs and the MHSA. Indeed, in the May 2007 Silvernail study, *The Identification of Higher and Lower Performing Maine Schools: Profiles and Characteristics*, York's Coastal Ridge Elementary School was identified as a higher performing school on all six indicators chosen by Dr. Silvernail as shown in Dr. Silvernail's chart below.

Coastal Ridge Elementary Results

Performance Category: Higher Performing



Six Performance Indexes

Note: Based on multiple years of data (2002-05)

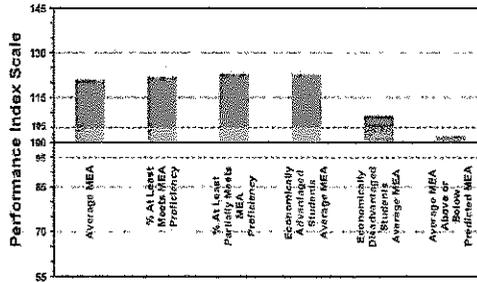
Center for Educational Policy,
Applied Research and Evaluation

University of Southern Maine
2007

York Middle School and York High School easily met five of the six indicators as shown in Dr. Silvernail's graphs below.

York Middle School Results

Performance Category: Neither Higher nor Lower Performing

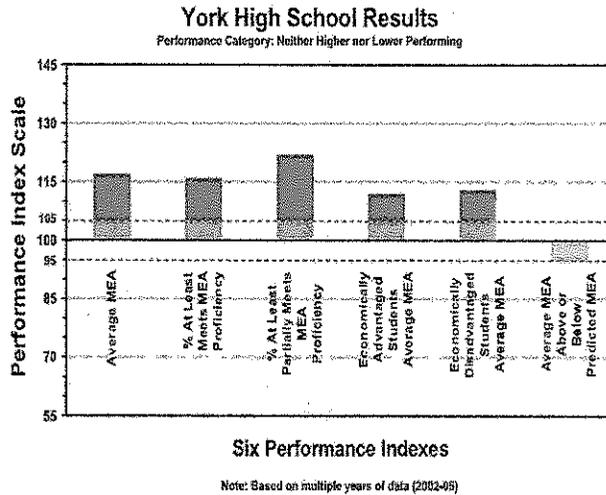


Six Performance Indexes

Note: Based on multiple years of data (2002-06)

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Applied Research and Evaluation

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2007



Center for Education Policy,
Applied Research and Evaluation

University of Southern Maine
2007

Dr. Silvernail’s sixth indicator is a subjective “value-added” measure based on a school’s “expected” average MEA score given a certain set of student and community characteristics (percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch, percentage of households with at least one member with a bachelor’s degree, and for upper grades, the average MEA score in earlier grades). Dr. Silvernail emphasizes in his report that his “performance data alone does not provide answers to all the complexities of schooling. The data should be used as a conversation starter, not as summary judgments about any particular school. To that end, school staff should conduct further analysis of their performance data and school characteristics” [emphasis in original].

Further analysis of Dr. Silvernail’s study led to the discovery that only two other middle schools in addition to York Middle School failed to be identified as higher performing schools based on the sixth indicator alone. At the high school level, only six other schools besides York High School missed being identified as higher performing based on the sixth “value-added” indicator. While Coastal Ridge met all criteria in the Silvernail study, there were only two elementary schools in Maine that did not make the higher performing category based solely on

the sixth indicator. While the small number of schools impacted by the weight of this “value-added” indicator are small, the consequences for them are great when it comes to the school consolidation law. In York’s case, this value-added indicator is not a good fit for measuring accurately the expected performance of our students. **It is extremely important to recognize the review of the student achievement data indicates that York students outperform some of the school districts which were identified as high performing on levels of academic performance.**

York’s unique demographics are a possible factor in skewing the results on Dr. Silvernail’s “value-added” indicator because many of the wealthier, well-educated residents are older and do not have children in the schools. Extrapolating the 2000 U.S. Census data to 2008 and given a relatively stable population, the median age of York residents could be as high as 51. In 2004, York’s Comprehensive Plan Inventory & Analysis used the 2000 census data to determine that:

“The median age of York residents is 43 years old. Compared to the County and the State, York’s median age is noticeably older. York’s population is aging. In 1990 the percent of people 65 and over was 14.6% of the total. In 2000 the percent of people 65 and over was 17.0%. nationally there was a slight decline, so York’s trend is unique. York’s age distribution is significantly different than county, state and national patterns, York’s population is skewed towards an older mix of people, with higher percentages of people 40 and older. Younger age groups are proportionately reduced, especially in the 20 to 35 year old age groups.”

In 2000, 70% of residents were born out of state (York Comprehensive Plan, 2005) and many of these are professionals who have retired to York. This is reflected in the 37.6% of residents who have a B.A. or higher, compared to 22.9%

for Maine (2000 U.S. Census). Thus, Dr. Silvernail's choice of the "value-added" indicator for education attainment levels of the parents of students currently enrolled in the York Schools is based in reality upon the educational level of residents who took part in the 2000 census and now have an average age of 51.

In taking Dr. Silvernail's advice to engage in conversations about the meaning of the performance indices, when one looks at other important indicators of student achievement than the ones he chose, one finds that York's students are engaged and achieving at high levels.

- York's daily student attendance for 2006-2007 was higher than the state average and many schools designated as "higher performing" in his study.
- The dropout rate in York is among the lowest in the State (29th out of 138 in 2005-2006).
- All York schools consistently make AYP under NCLB.
- The number of students going on to post-secondary education has increased dramatically in the past five years as illustrated by the following chart.

YORK STUDENTS
POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT

	Class of 2003	Class of 2004	Class of 2005	Class of 2006	Class of 2007
Number of graduates	120	140	165	143	163
Number and Percent of Graduates indicating an Intent to Enroll in Postsecondary Study (4-yr, 2-yr or certificate)	70%	67%	83%	77%	82%
Number and Percent of Graduates actually enrolling (from fall survey)	71%	64%	78%	82%	87%

Finally, Dr. Silvernail's study only included MEA data from 2003 to 2005. The following chart demonstrates that York students have continued to improve their performance and outpace students in most other Maine schools from 2005 to 2007.

York MHSA/MEA Data Analysis 2005-2007*

#Schools with less than 10 students not included.
 **John Bapst and MSSM, as they have admissions criteria, not included.

Year/Grade	Subject	York Scaled Score	State Scaled Score	Number of districts with statistically significant higher scores	Number of districts tested
Grade 11 2006-2007	Math	1146	1140	4 #**	133
Grade 11 2005-2006	Math	485	444	6 #**	133
Grade 11 2006-2007	Reading	1145	1141	6 #**	133
Grade 11 2005-2006	Reading	480	443	9 #**	133
Grade 11 2006-2007	Writing	1147	1141	4 #**	133
Grade 11 2005-2006	Writing	479	435	7 #**	133

York MEA Data Analysis 2005-2007

* Schools with less than 10 students not included.

	Subject	York Scaled Score	State Scaled Score	Number of districts with statistically significant higher scores	Number of districts tested
Grade 8 2006-2007	Math	850	842	8 *	215
Grade 8 2005-2006	Math	852	840	2 *	215
Grade 8 2006-2007	Reading	849	847	17 *	215
Grade 8 2005-2006	Reading	850	845	14 *	215
Grade 8 2006-2007	Science	850	847	21 *	215
Grade 8 2005-2006	Science	852	846	8 *	215
Grade 8 2006-2007	Writing	838	836	23 *	215
Grade 7 2006-2007	Math	752	742	3 *	215
Grade 7 2005-2006	Math	746	740	11 *	214

Grade 7 2006-2007	Reading	754	748	4 *	215
Grade 7 2005-2006	Reading	746	745	26 *	214
Grade 6 2006-2007	Math	653	643	3 *	218
Grade 6 2005-2006	Math	645	641	17 *	212
Grade 6 2006-2007	Reading	651	646	7 *	218
Grade 6 2005-2006	Reading	645	644	27 *	212
Grade 5 2006-2007	Math	552	546	9 *	221
Grade 5 2005-2006	Math	553	543	4 *	217
Grade 5 2006-2007	Reading	545	544	31 *	221
Grade 5 2005-2006	Reading	546	544	17 *	217
Grade 5 2006-2007	Writing	543	541	13 *	221
Grade 4 2006-2007	Math	453	445	2 *	219
Grade 4 2005-2006	Math	451	444	4 *	219
Grade 4 2006-2007	Reading	450	445	3 *	219
Grade 4 2005-2006	Reading	448	444	9 *	229
Grade 4 2006-2007	Science	449	444	2 *	218
Grade 4 2005-2006	Science	449	444	7 *	223
Grade 3 2006-2007	Math	355	347	3 *	219
Grade 3 2005-2006	Math	350	344	9 *	216
Grade 3 2006-2007	Reading	349	345	2 *	219
Grade 3 2005-2006	Reading	348	345	8 *	216

* This chart was compiled by York's Curriculum Coordinator with input from MDOE and Dr. Silvernail.

Therefore, by numerous measures, it is clear that York schools are strong and that its students perform at higher levels than students in most other Maine school units.

Further, Dr. Gordon Donaldson at the University of Maine, issued a report in February 2008 entitled "*School Quality and Cost: What Difference Does the District Make?*" Using Dr. Silvernail's data regarding higher and lower performing districts, Dr. Donaldson sought to determine whether the organizational structure of the district correlated to educational quality. Dr. Donaldson concluded that municipal school systems tended to have more higher performing schools and fewer lower performing schools than expected. While both Dr. Donaldson and Dr. Silvernail note that the data in the May 2007 study must be used with caution, Dr. Donaldson does say that the data tend to indicate that municipal school committees and administrative structures favor more consistently high student performance. This analysis bolsters York's assertion that the best way to ensure continuing the strong performance of York schools and students is to maintain autonomy as a municipal school unit.

b. Strategic planning supports excellent education.

The York School Department has also demonstrated its commitment to achieving educational excellence through strategic planning. York's strategic planning process is purposeful, comprehensive and geared toward results. York has engaged in an educational strategic planning process since 2001. In 2005, the School Department received a grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation to gather input from community leaders, parents, students and educators on the York School Department's Vision, Mission and Expectations (see **Exhibit F**). These important foundational statements helped to guide school officials in preparing the five-year educational strategic plan (see **Exhibit E**). The strategic plan articulates detailed action steps with timelines and success measures in five strands: standards and assessment; learning experiences; school, family and community partnerships; high performance leadership; and public

engagement. The strategic plan is evaluated and revised annually and is a vital tool in improving leadership, school programs, student achievement, and connecting the schools to the broader community.

c. Curriculum aligned with Learning Results.

York's teachers and administrators have worked diligently to create an integrated K-12 curriculum aligned to the Maine Learning Results. The curriculum, vision statements for each content area, and scope and sequence are available on-line, in K-8 curriculum brochures and high school course syllabi. The School Department has implemented a Curriculum Review and Revision Cycle to ensure that needed curriculum and instruction changes are made in a timely manner. Decisions on curriculum materials and programming are carefully made using data to analyze educational effectiveness.

d. Effective assessments at all grade levels.

York has been committed to implementing meaningful, integrated assessments at all grade levels. From kindergarten phonetic awareness rating scales to common high school level content area assessments, teachers are using a wide variety of tools to measure individual student growth and provide data to make informed decisions about instructional practices. Technology is increasingly used to document and monitor student progress.

By the 2008-2009 school year, students in grades three through nine will be participating in NWEA MAP assessments to further assist teachers in implementing academic goal setting and effective differentiation strategies with their students.

e. Added high level classes at the high school.

At the high school, the number of AP classes offered has increased from five in 2006-2007 to nine this year, with a tenth course anticipated in 2008-2009. In addition, students have access to 40 honors courses and 11 advanced course offerings this year. In addition, students take a variety of challenging courses on-line through the Virtual High School (VHS).

f. NEASC accreditation.

All of York's schools are participating in the accreditation process with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). By committing to a period of extended reflection, the completion of self-study documents that illustrate alignment to NEASC's holistic and rigorous standards, and visits from a team of peer reviewers from throughout New England, the staff of York schools have scrutinized their own practices and welcomed the feedback and insights of outside experts.

While most Maine high schools seek NEASC accreditation, it is far rarer for elementary and middle schools to do so. Currently, only five middle schools and 12 elementary schools in Maine have been awarded NEASC accreditation. York's two elementary schools are completing their NEASC self-study documents in preparation for on-site visits in the Spring of 2008 and 2009. York Middle School is beginning the accreditation process with an expected on-site visit in the Spring of 2010.

g. Full-day kindergarten instituted with no increase in positions.

This year, York instituted a full-day kindergarten program, which greatly improves the educational readiness of our youngest students. Through careful planning, this was accomplished without adding any new positions to the School Department.

h. Innovative programs and collaborations.

York students and staff are involved in numerous exciting and innovative programs and collaborations with the Town businesses and other educational institutions. Among them are the following:

1. With the financial support of the MELMAC Foundation, York is making great strides in increasing student enrollment in post-secondary education. York is working in partnership with York County Community College (YCCC) and Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) to raise student aspirations.

York has:

- Instituted dual enrollment courses on the high school campus.
- Sent students to YCCC for a College Success Management course.
- Instituted a required Career Quest job shadow experience for all juniors.
- Offered on-site admissions, post-graduation follow-up counseling for undecided students and instituted an innovative scholarship program that provides a free course at YCCC for any student who attends a spring evening session, completes the FAFSA application and is accepted by YCCC.

The efficacy of these initiatives is reflected in the rising post-secondary enrollment figures as shown in the post-secondary enrollment chart in Section 2.a of this Plan.

2. Service learning aligned with the curriculum has become an integral part of York's educational program in all four schools, with support from the State of Maine, KIDS Consortium and the Learn and Serve America grant program. In May 2006, Governor Baldacci recognized the York Rotary for their support of the School Department's Learn and Serve initiative. In 2007, Commissioner Gendron honored York's Learn and Serve Coordinator, Charles Ek, for his efforts in dropout prevention.

3. York students are taking advantage of distance learning opportunities through Virtual High School and the high school is also exploring the feasibility of implementing the International Baccalaureate program.

4. York High School has undertaken a restructuring initiative based on the instructional model of "Whatever it Takes".

5. The York High School Leadership Team has dramatically altered the decision making process and enhanced a sense of shared responsibility for student success from the custodians to the administrators. The Leadership Team includes student representatives as well.

6. Students have been connected with Town agencies in collecting real data used by the Town. From searching for salamander eggs to using GIS to map

a woodland preserve, students are applying their learning to meaningful real-life situations.

7. At the middle school, the “Big Blocks” literacy program has been implemented to increase student achievement in this important area.

8. An in-district autism program has been instituted at the elementary level to address the needs of this growing population of students.

i. Sustained and effective commitment to professional development.

York has a strong and sustained commitment to professional development, both within the district and in collaboration with other districts and educational organizations. **Exhibit H** contains an example of York’s *Curriculum Connection* newsletter, which describes many of the exciting staff development initiatives and teacher accomplishments.

- Vertical K-12 curriculum teams meet regularly to review and update the curriculum and pinpoint staff development needs.
- York has a comprehensive teacher supervision and evaluation system based on the Skillful Teacher instructional model and concepts, which promotes action research, mentoring and goal setting. Administrators have received extensive training in conducting effective evaluations. In the past two years, York has added electronically-based teacher observation systems that are teacher-specific and used to generate reports and analyze data about classroom instruction and practices.
- All teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities and receive extensive professional development in differentiation and using data effectively to support student instruction and individual student needs.
- Teacher leadership is promoted in a variety of ways, from the K-12 curriculum teams, to school level leadership roles, to the district-wide leadership team.

- All teachers have their own laptop computers.
- All teachers in York are expected to take the 40-hour Skillful Teacher course.
- A wide variety of courses and workshops are offered for teachers on-site each year, including a weekend format Master's Degree in Literacy from Lesley University.
- A primary level Response to Intervention program will be piloted in 2008-2009.
- Strong partners for York in providing exceptional professional development opportunities include the University of Southern Maine Professional Development Center, the University of New Hampshire, Fitchburg State College and Lesley University.
- Since 1999, York has participated in a regional school partnership that now includes Sanford, Wells, Kittery, MSAD #35, MSAD #51, MSAD #60 and MSAD #57. Teachers meet regularly to share planned professional development, participate in summer institutes and evening "Dine and Discuss" events.
- Administrators and teachers serve in a variety of capacities in numerous professional and community organizations.

j. Collaborations with Town government.

The York School Department and the town of York have a long-standing collaborative relationship. This relationship recognizes the importance of both entities working toward a common goal of providing services to our community in an efficient and economical fashion.

The Town Manager and the Superintendent of Schools formally meet monthly as well as communicate regularly regarding issues of importance to the schools and the Town. This relationship is built on the belief that the school and town entities are strong when both are working together toward a common goal. This positive relationship can be demonstrated in a number of ways.

An example of this relationship can be seen in the commitment of the Town of York to provide all of the external maintenance of the school grounds in all schools. This includes all aspects from lawn-mowing in the summer to plowing the snow in the school parking lots in the winter. All athletic fields are maintained by the Town and the Town prepares the recreational areas for school and community use. A part of this reciprocal arrangement, the school allows the use of all fields and buildings by the Town recreation program at no cost to the town. This arrangement has had the impact of lowering the cost of building use and field maintenance to the taxpayer.

A second example in the commitment of the Town and schools to work together in the development and approval of the Ten Year Capital Plan. Through a collaborative effort, representatives of the three elected boards in town, School Committee, Selectmen and Budget Committee meet for the purpose of developing a comprehensive Capital Plan. This plan serves as the planning tool for decisions regarding proposing capital projects to the voters. The voters of York are asked to approve the capital plan during the budget approval referendum in May.

There is ongoing communication among elected officials of Town boards including the School Committee, Selectmen and the Budget Committee. These three elected boards are responsible for the overall governance of the Town and the positive relationship among these boards is critical for promoting the well-being of the Town of York.

The Town/school relationship is strong and collaboration is an ongoing commitment.

k. Collaborations with the community.

The York schools play a rich and meaningful role in the lives of York citizens and the surrounding region.

- The York Community Resources Coordinator has developed a very strong volunteer program in the York schools. In 2006-2007 alone, over 900 volunteers worked 28,185 documented hours, including parents,

community members, and student mentors. Many of these volunteers are senior citizens who do not have children in the schools, but nevertheless show strong support for the local schools and education. Last year, senior citizens clocked an impressive 3,850 hours of volunteer time in the schools.

- In 2006-2007, 200 businesses supported and participated in the Career Quest Program at York High School.
- York partners with the Kittery Trading Post Outdoor Academy, a regional, nonprofit organization dedicated to outdoor education, recreation and service learning as well as with the KEYS of Promise, which brings several area towns together to promote health and wellness through grant-funded initiatives.
- The schools sponsor parenting and literacy classes in all four schools as well as weekend family activities.
- The York schools partner with the York Library to offer many literacy and educational activities for families and children of all ages throughout the year. The Library also provides valuable meeting space for professional development during the school day.
- Town and local agencies mentor students during their service learning projects. Community members and organizations also provide numerous speakers and educational programs for the schools throughout the year.
- The York School Department publishes a newsletter entitled *The Education Connection* which provides information about the schools to the community. (See **Exhibit I**).

I. Sustainability of the district.

To a significant degree, life in York revolves around its schools and education. Students are excited to go to school, parents are welcomed into the schools, and many citizens and businesses volunteer their time and resources to help even when they do not have children in the schools themselves. The Strategic Plan makes it clear that school officials understand that the viability of

the schools is directly linked to their ability to effectively communicate with town officials and taxpayers and involve them in the schools, and thus “public engagement” is one of the five key priority areas addressed in the Strategic Plan.

One obvious measure of the viability of the schools and community support is what happens at budget time. Under York’s Home Rule Charter, citizens have the opportunity to scrutinize as many as 24 separate expenditure lines of the proposed budget through referendum vote (including separate votes for any new positions the School Department is requesting). Citizens in York consistently approve the school budget. It is clear that the taxpayers in York are proud of the quality of their schools and believe they are getting good value for their tax money. The school budget has come in under the Town Tax Task Force’s suggested cap every year. This demonstrates the vigilance of school officials in seeking efficiencies and being mindful of the tax burden on local residents.

Data available from the U.S. Census, the Maine State Planning Office and York’s Comprehensive Plan clearly show that the Town of York will continue to grow and prosper for the foreseeable future – assuring the sustainability of the schools. York County’s economy and population continue to grow at a higher rate than the rest of the State, and York itself outpaces the rest of York County in both regards. York citizens work in a wide variety of occupations and businesses, stretching south to Boston and north to Portland. The schools enjoy strong support from its large senior citizen community, which tends to be highly educated and thus value education.

Another clear indicator of community support is the York Education Foundation Founded in 2005, YEF is an independent, nonprofit organization of community volunteers that raises money to support innovative programs in the York schools. In the past three years, YEF has distributed approximately \$50,000 in grant money to York teachers and programs and immeasurably enriched the education of our students. **(See Exhibit J).**

York is justifiably proud of its schools and its citizens have invested monumental time, money and effort to create the exceptional learning environment that students benefit from today. That pride is illustrated by the letters of support attached as **Exhibit K** of this Plan. This support is broad-based, coming from all demographic groups in the Town.

D. Initiatives for System Efficiencies and Cost Savings

The highest priority of school officials in York is to deliver a consistently excellent educational program at the most economical cost possible. School officials are diligent in seeking ways to achieve efficiency in all areas of operations without sacrificing quality. The following sections describe some of the recent successful initiatives undertaken by the York School Department in the areas of system administration, transportation, special education and facilities and maintenance.

1. System Administration.

Prior to the Maine Department of Education's new chart of accounts being implemented, there was no statewide consistency in how particular expenditures were classified. Once York's expenditures for Fiscal Year 2007 were properly classified, its system administration costs comprised 3.41% of total expenditures, which was below the State average of 3.72%. For Fiscal Year 2008, system administration costs are going down to 3.2% of total expenditures, and for Fiscal Year 2009, these expenses are anticipated to decline to at least 3.19% and further savings are always being explored.

York has a unique and efficient central office structure. There is a Superintendent and an Assistant to the Superintendent, who are supported by two secretaries. In addition to traditional secretarial functions, one of the secretaries is responsible for some bookkeeping functions and spends approximately 25% of her time taking care of telephone calls regarding student transportation issues. The central office staff also includes a payroll clerk and an accounts payable clerk.

The Superintendent and Assistant to the Superintendent perform all duties that in most districts of York's size are performed by a business manager, a transportation manager and facilities manager.

The business office has recently upgraded its financial software to improve efficiencies in budget monitoring and development as well as instituting paperless payroll and employee benefits systems.

The York School Department and the Kittery School Department are sharing the services of a Food Service Director this year. This initiative has been successful and it is likely that it will continue next year.

Cost saving initiatives:

- School department positions will be reduced by 2.8 positions in Fiscal Year 2009.
- The York School Department and the Town have explored the possibility of combining some functions and/or facilities in the past, and there are plans to continue exploring opportunities to further reduce system administration costs through collaborations with the Town.
- Central office job responsibilities are being reviewed to ensure that they are allocated to the proper line in the chart of accounts.
- Electronic reporting of hours worked in lieu of timecards as well as remote purchase orders are being developed to enhance efficiency.
- Collaboration with the Town regarding capital projects.

2. Special Education.

The special education staff have worked hard to achieve efficiencies while still providing all mandated services for students. York's identification rate is lower than the EPS level at 14% of the total student population, and programming is appropriate as shown by the Maine Department of Education approval on February 1, 2007. Special education students in York consistently make AYP.

York has developed appropriate programming to maximize keeping students in the local schools rather than in expensive out-of-district placements. York also collaborates with other school districts to share service costs whenever possible. Examples include sharing the services of a teacher of the deaf and pooling transportation for students in out-of-district placements.

In 2007-2008, costs have been reduced by leaving non-essential special education positions vacant and training regular classroom teachers so that they can meet more individual student needs without requiring special education referrals.

Cost saving initiatives:

Anticipated Fiscal Year 2009 reductions include:

- Reduce .4 FTE special education administrator \$26,284
- Reduce .3 FTE social worker \$14,984
- Reduce 1 FTE ed tech \$18,919

Further reductions in special education staff are planned for Fiscal Year 2010.

3. Transportation.

York's 2007 fiscal year percentage for transportation was 4.32% of expenditures, compared with the State average of 5.42%. Similarly, York's per pupil expenditure was \$502.17, below the State average of \$530.45.

York contracts for student transportation with Ledgemere Transportation, a division of Student Transportation of America. The negotiated contract is based on a per bus bid, thereby insulating the School Department from inflationary increases of fuel, wages and insurance. Ledgemere also provides student transportation for the Wells-Ogunquit CSD and one maintenance facility serves both school units, thus reducing costs.

In 2005, York contracted with Pupil Transportation Consultants, LLC to incorporate routing software to maximize efficiency of bus stops and to reduce mileage and fuel usage.

York does not have a transportation manager. Instead, the Assistant to the Superintendent manages the transportation program.

Cost saving initiatives:

- Review co-curricular, extracurricular and field trips with a goal of combining trips to reduce costs.
- Continue process of combining bus stops where student safety permits.
- Review the possibility of using the Town's fuel tanks since Ledgemere Transportation does not have storage tanks in York.
- Consider subcontracting transportation to Sanford Regional Vocational Education, thus eliminating the one school bus the Town owns.

4. Facilities and Maintenance.

York's Fiscal Year 2007 percentage for facilities and maintenance was 9.31% of expenditures, compared with the State average of 12.10%. Similarly, York's per pupil expenditure was \$1,110, below the State average of \$1,184.83.

York operates a total of four schools and the Superintendent's Office, which is housed in a commercial building. The School Department has been aggressive in seeking efficiencies and cost savings for facilities and maintenance, while at the same time ensuring that long-term maintenance is not deferred.

- The Superintendent and Assistant to the Superintendent share responsibility for facilities and maintenance instead of having a separate manager.
- All school building construction has been funded by local taxpayers rather than the State.
- The Town's Recreation Department takes care of external building maintenance and fields in exchange for use of school facilities for its programs.

- The School Department participates in fuel oil bids with the Town of York and the York Water and Sewer District. Currently, the fixed bid price for fuel oil is \$2.00 per gallon, among the lowest in the state.
- In 2004, the School Department made comprehensive facility energy efficiency improvements which have produced significant cost savings totaling approximately \$260,084 in today's dollars:
 - Fuel oil use has dropped 36% from Fiscal Year 2004 to Fiscal Year 2007 (177,638 gallons to 113,331 gallons), for an estimated savings of \$192,291 in today's costs.
 - Electricity use has been reduced 18% from Fiscal Year 2004 to Fiscal Year 2007 (2,993,465 kWh to 2,444,312 kWh), for an estimated \$67,793 in today's costs.

Cost saving initiatives:

- Continue to develop five-year maintenance projects using the State's Capital Asset Management software.
- Replace 35-year old boiler in fiscal year 2009 at Village Elementary School to improve energy efficiency.

E. Conclusion

The York School Committee believes this request for approval of an Alternative Plan to school consolidation is warranted and meets the criteria set forth in the consolidation law. The School Committee is committed to maintaining an effective and efficient school system that provides quality programs and supports exemplary student achievement. Further, the School Committee believes the quality education program provided to our students is sustainable within our community. The School Committee would be pleased to answer any questions or to submit any other information that Commissioner Gendron deems necessary to assist in approving this Alternative Plan.

EXHIBITS:

Exhibit A – MDOE Financial Template and York Calculations

Exhibit B – Letter from Regional Planning Committee

Exhibit C – Letters Regarding Filing of Alternative Plan

Exhibit D – School Committee Minutes – 3/19/08

Exhibit E – York Public Schools Five-Year Educational Strategic Plan, 2005-10

Exhibit F – York School Department Vision, Mission and Expectations

Exhibit G – Profiles of York Schools

Exhibit H – *Curriculum Connection* Newsletter

Exhibit I – *The Education Connection* Newsletter

Exhibit J – York Education Foundation Grants

Exhibit K – Letters of Support

Financial Template - Step by Step

Date request completed: 8/18

Date request received: 8/17/07
 School Administrative Units: York and Well-Ogunquit CSD
 Superintendents: Henry Scipione, Ed McDonough

If you make any changes or additions to this template, please email the revised template to: suzan.beaudoin@maine.gov and jim.riser@maine.gov

Please note:

- o This template is based on 2007-08 funding year information and assumes no changes in students, valuations, mill rate, etc.
- o If the reorganization of school administrative units had occurred during the 2007-08, it is likely that some funds would have been allocated differently resulting in a lower mill expectation in Step 6. An estimate of these reallocated funds could lower the mill expectation to as low as 7.14 mills resulting in lower local contributions.
- o For 2008-09 funding, many factors will change – pupil counts, valuations, and total State dollars. Currently, an additional \$43 million dollars has been appropriated for 2008-09 Funding – this and other factors will result in a lower mill expectation – perhaps as low as 6.80 mills.
- o Step 9 allows for adjustments to the local additional amount, additional cost for choice students, balance forward (undesignated prior year balances), local nutrition costs and local only debt if applicable. Currently, an example of \$1,000,000 has been placed in Column 2 for additional local share.
- o Once a combined RSU budget has been developed, changes may impact the additional local share – especially any reductions in local administrative costs.
- o Any amount in the blue shaded boxes can be changed and will result in a recalculation of the template. I encourage you to contact me regarding any changes and would be happy to assist you in these changes.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (207) 624-6790 or suzan.beaudoin@maine.gov

Suzan Beaudoin

Step 1 Add together allocations for "Adjusted Total Operating Allocation" and "Other Subsidizable Costs" (excluding Debt Service) (ED 281 Line 40):

Operating & Other Subs.	
ED 281 Line 40	
	17,109,030
	13,472,990
	30,582,020

York
 Wells-Ogunquit CSD
 New RSU Operating & Other Subsidizable Allocation =

Step 2 Determine percentage of pupils (ED 281 Line 21 K-8 plus 9-12 municipal school units OR Section D for SADs / CSDs):

Note: K-8 pupils includes 4-year old and early childhood students

	Subsidizable Pupils	Percentage	Percentage within SAD/CSD
York	2,012.0	58.30%	96.63%
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	1,390.5	40.29%	3.37%
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	48.5	1.41%	
New RSU Pupils =	3,451.0	100.00%	

Step 3 Determine new Regional EPS Allocations (Step 1 distributed by percentage of pupils in Step 2):

	Percentage of Pupils (from Step 2)	RSU Allocations Total
York	58.30%	17,829,318
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	40.29%	12,321,496
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	1.41%	431,206
New RSU Oper. & Othr Subs. Alloc. =	100.00%	30,582,020

Financial Template - Step by Step

Date request received: 8/17/07

Date request completed:

Step 4 Determine assignment of Debt Service Allocations:

A. Units with Debt Service

York

Wells-Ogunquit CSD

New RSU Debt Service Allocation =

Debt Service ED 281 Line 48	
	310,293
	0
	310,293

B. Distribute SAD or CSD Debt Service Allocations:

Percentage
within SAD/CSD
(from Step 2)

96.63%

3.37%

RSU Allocations
Debt Service
(from Step 4 A.)

310,293

0

0

310,293

Step 5 Combine new RSU Allocations and Debt Service Allocations (Step 3 and Step 4):

RSU Allocations
Operating &
Other Subs.
(from Step 2)

17,829,318 +

12,321,496 +

431,206 +

30,582,020

RSU Allocations
Debt Service
(from Step 4 B.)

310,293

0

0

310,293

RSU Allocations
Total

18,139,610

12,321,496

431,206

30,892,312

York

Wells-Ogunquit CSD

Wells-Ogunquit CSD

New RSU Debt Service Allocation =

Step 6 Calculate maximum local share per mill expectation:

2006

State Valuation
(ED 281 Section D)

3,433,350,000

2,309,200,000

1,210,300,000

6,952,850,000

Times

Mill Expectation

7.44

25,544,124

17,180,448

9,004,632

51,729,204.00

Minimum

2.00
Mills

6,866,700

4,618,400

2,420,600

York

Wells-Ogunquit CSD

Wells-Ogunquit CSD

New RSU

Financial Template - Step by Step

Date request received: 8/17/07

Date request completed:

Step 7 Calculate maximum local contribution:

	2006 State Valuation Times Mill Expectation (from Step 6)	But not great than RSU Allocations Total (from Step 5)	Equals Required Local Contribution	Mill Rate	Percentage of Local Contribution	Private & Special Law Adjusted Local Contribution	Mill Rate	Adjusted Required Local Contribution
York	25,544,124	18,139,610	18,139,610	5.28	58.72%	18,139,610	5.28	18,139,610
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	17,180,448	12,321,496	12,321,496	5.34	39.89%	9,684,359	4.19	9,684,359
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	9,004,632	431,206	431,206	0.36	1.39%	3,068,344	2.54	3,068,344
New RSU	51,729,204	30,892,312	30,892,312		100.00%	30,892,312		30,892,312
								0

Step 8 Calculate State contribution:

RSU Allocations Total (Step 5)	30,892,312
Less Local Contribution (Step 7)	30,892,312
Equal State Contribution	0
Adjustment Min. Spec. Ed.	4,370,532
Adjusted State Contribution	4,370,532

Step 9

A. Adjust Local contribution for Minimum Spec. Ed. Adjustment:

	(1) Percentage of Local Contribution (Step 7)	(2) Distribution of Min. Spec. Ed. Adjustment (Step 8)	(3) Adjusted Required Local Contribution (Step 7)	(4) Adjusted Required Local Contribution (Col. 3 less Col. 2)
York	58.72%	2,566,376	18,139,610	15,573,234
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	31.35%	1,370,162	9,684,359	8,314,197
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	9.93%	433,994	3,068,344	2,634,350
New RSU =	100.00%	4,370,532	30,892,312	26,521,780

Step 9

B. Possible adjustments and additions to required Local Contribution:

	(1) Adjusted Required Local Contribution (Step 7)	(2) Additional Local Share excluding amounts in Cols. (3), (4), (5) & (6)	(3) PLUS Assessment for Choice Students (Assigned)	(4) LESS Balance Forward (Assigned)	(5) PLUS Nutrition (Assigned)	(6) PLUS Local Only Debt - ftd
York	15,573,234	9,520,384			1,933,274	
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	8,314,197	5,590,369			1,482,564	
Wells-Ogunquit CSD	2,634,350	2,984,640			449,115	
New RSU =	26,521,780	9,520,384	0	0	3,864,953	0

If Column (2) has already been adjusted by a unit's balance forward then Column (4)

8/18/07

Equals Required Local Mill Rate	Adjusted Percentage of Local Contribution
5.28	58.72%
4.19	31.35%
2.54	9.93%
	<u>100.00%</u>

(7)
TOTAL

Local Shares	23,096,877
	12,781,401
	<u>4,028,839</u>
	39,907,117

York School Department
Impact of York, Wells - Ogunquit RSU

York School Department

	York 2008 Budget	York-Wells Ogunquit RSU Budget	Increase (Decrease) in Amount to be Raised
Total Operating Allocation Costs	\$17,109,029.99 ¹	\$17,829,318.00 ²	
Debt Service Allocation (CRES)	<u>\$310,292.50</u> ¹	<u>\$310,293.00</u> ²	
Total Essential Programs & Services Allocation	\$17,419,322.49 ¹	\$18,139,611.00 ²	\$720,288.51
Less: State Subsidy	<u>(\$2,256,340.80)</u>	<u>(\$2,566,376.00)</u> ²	<u>(\$310,035.20)</u>
Essential Programs & Services	\$15,162,981.69	\$15,573,235.00	
Plus: Additional Appropriation	<u>\$4,732,851.00</u> ²	<u>\$5,590,369.00</u> ²	<u>\$857,518.00</u>
Amount to Be Raised Locally (Less Debt Service)	\$19,895,832.69	\$21,163,604.00	\$1,267,771.31
Additional Amount York Must Raise from Taxes for New RSU			\$1,267,771.31
Percent of Total Amount Raised (\$36,042.18)	55.20%	58.72%	3.52%

Wells - Ogunquit CSD

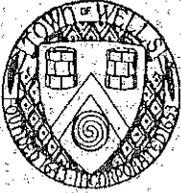
	Wells- Ogunquit Budget	York-Wells Ogunquit RSU Budget	Increase (Decrease) in Amount to be Raised
Total Operating Allocation Costs	\$13,472,989.82 ¹	\$12,752,702.00 ²	
Debt Service Allocation	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	
Total Essential Programs & Services Allocation	\$13,472,989.82 ¹	\$12,752,702.00 ²	(\$720,287.82)
Less: State Subsidy	<u>(\$2,114,191.33)</u> ¹	<u>(\$1,804,156.00)</u> ²	<u>\$310,035.33</u>
Essential Programs & Services	\$11,358,798.49	\$10,948,546.00	
Plus: Additional Appropriation	<u>\$4,787,533.00</u> ²	<u>\$3,930,014.00</u> ²	<u>(\$857,519.00)</u>
Amount to Be Raised Locally (Less Debt Service)	\$16,146,331.49	\$14,878,560.00	(\$1,267,771.49)
Reduction in Amount of Taxes to be Raised by Wells - Ogunquit for New RSU			(\$1,267,771.49)
Percent of Total Amount Raised (\$36,042.18)	44.80%	41.28%	-3.52%
Total Amount to be Raised from Taxes York & Wells-Ogunquit	\$36,042,164.18	\$36,042,164.00	
3.25% x \$36,042,164.18 =	\$1,268,684.18		

¹ State of Maine DOE ED 281

² State of Maine DOE Financial Template

York - Wells Ogunquit
Impact of Financial Template

1. Shift in EPS Allocation (steps 1 & 3) based on percentage of pupils (step 2)				
ESP Allocation From Step 1.				Increase
York	\$ 17,109,030	EPS Allocation From Step 3.	\$ 17,829,318	(Decrease)
Wells - Ogunquit CSD	\$ 13,472,990		\$ 12,752,702	720,288
	\$ 30,582,020		\$ 30,582,020	(720,288)
This will increase York's EPS Allocation with no impact on the Additional Appropriation				
2. Reallocation of Minimum State Subsidy (steps 8 & 9)				
	Current	Percent of		
York	\$ 2,256,341	Local Cont.		
Wells - Ogunquit CSD	\$ 2,114,191	58.72%	\$ 2,566,376	\$ (310,035)
	\$ 4,370,532	41.28%	1,804,156	310,035
		100.00%	4,370,532	
3. Reallocation of Additional Appropriation Step 9.				
	Current	Percent of		
York	\$ 4,732,851	Local Cont.		
Wells - Ogunquit CSD	\$ 4,787,533	58.72%	\$ 5,590,369	\$ 857,518
	\$ 9,520,384	41.28%	3,930,015	(857,518)
		100.00%	9,520,384	
The reallocation the York / Wells, Ogunquit Additional Appropriation				
Impact on York			\$	1,267,771
Impact on Wells - Ogunquit			\$	(1,267,771)
Outstanding Obligations of New RSU				
Wells - Ogunquit - Accrual of Teacher Salaries as of June 30, 2006			\$	1,843,358



WELLS-OGUNQUIT
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



P.O. Box 578, 1332 Post Road, Wells, Maine 04090
TEL (207) 646-8331 * FAX (207) 646-0314 * TDD (207) 646-7892
<http://wocsd.org>

EDWARD R. McDONOUGH
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

KAREN ROPES
SPECIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR

IRA O. WALTZ
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

SCOTT J. SMITH
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCE

March 14, 2008

RECEIVED
MAR 18 2008
BY: _____

Commissioner Susan Gendron
Maine Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0023

Dear Commissioner Gendron:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Wells-Ogunquit and York Reorganization Planning Committee (RPC) in support of our decision to recommend submittal of an alternative plan by each school district. As you may already know, on January 10, 2008, the Wells-Ogunquit and York RPC voted this recommendation unanimously. We worked diligently to explore school consolidation under the spirit and intent of the law; however, despite our best efforts, we determined that in light of the economic barriers and our inability to substantiate cost savings that our districts would be better served by filing an alternative plan.

As chairman of the Wells-Ogunquit and York Reorganization Planning Committee, I urge your approval of our submittals so that each district may proceed with the challenges that lie ahead in achieving the cost saving measures expected under alternative plans to consolidation.

Sincerely,

Damon Russell,
Wells-Ogunquit and York RPC Chair

Cc: Superintendent Henry Scipione (York)
Superintendent Edward McDonough (Wells-Ogunquit)



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

RECEIVED
MAR 24 2008

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

BY: _____

January 30, 2008

Marilyn Zotos, Chair
York School Committee
469 U.S. Route One
York, Maine 03909

Dear Ms. Zotos:

Thank you for your letter dated January 25, 2008 informing me of the York School Department's intent to file an alternative plan in place of continued work on your reorganization plan with the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District.

While I am willing to review documentation you may submit in support of such a filing, it is important to understand the conditions that must be met in order to qualify for an exception to the 2,500 student minimum found in the law.

Public Law 2007, Chapter 240, Section 1461(3)(B) indicates that RSUs must have at least 2,500 students "except where circumstances...justify an exception." Those circumstances are specified and include geography, demographics, economics, transportation, population density, or "other unique circumstances."

Please include the following with your submission:

- Explain the course of action you have taken toward meeting due diligence as required in P.L. 2007, Chapter 240, Section XXXX-36(6)(A)(7).
- Clearly state your exception(s) and provide evidence as to justify this as required in P.L. 2007, Chapter 240, Section 1461(3)(B).
- Describe the basis for such a change in filing status and/or RSU partners.

To clarify this further, I encourage you and your legal counsel to review the full language of the law, found at:

<http://www.maine.gov/education/supportingschools/reorglaw.html>.

I encourage you to contact Ray Poulin and Norm Higgins of our Reorganization Team for more information and to further consult on this issue. They may be reached at 624-6802.

Sincerely,



Susan A. Gendron
Commissioner of Education

cc: Senator Peter Bowman
Representative Windol Weaver
Representative Dawn Hill
Damon Russell, RPC Chair
Henry Scipione, Superintendent, York School Department
Edward McDonough, Superintendent, Wells-Ogunquit CSD
David Johnson, Wells-Ogunquit School Committee Chair



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

March 7, 2008

Dear Superintendent/RPC Chair:

As you know, revisions to Reorganization Plans are due by March 28, 2008. I appreciate the effort and leadership that you are providing during this uncertain time.

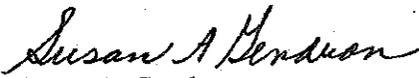
I would like to offer an option to reorganization planning committees (RPC) who have not taken any formal action (i.e. votes to add, delete or change) on their reorganization plans since the last submission. The RPC chair may write a letter to the Department of Education indicating such; no vote by the member school administrative unit (SAU) boards is required for this submission.

If there has been formal action (i.e. votes to add, delete or change) taken on any part of your reorganization plan since the last submission, each SAU represented in the plan must conduct a SAU board vote on the revised plan before submitting it to the Department of Education by March 28, 2008.

I hope you find this option alleviates some of the pressure on you, your school board members, and reorganization planning committee members as you move forward with this work.

I encourage you to contact Ray Poulin and Norm Higgins of our Reorganization Team for more information and to further consult on this issue. They may be reached at 624-6802.

Sincerely,


Susan A. Gendron
Commissioner of Education

YORK SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 19, 2008/7 p.m./York Public Library

Members Present: Chair Zotos, Coffenberry, Merrill
Members Absent: Vice-Chair Fitzgerald, D'Aquila
Also Present: Superintendent Scipione; Asst. to Supt. Amoroso; Curriculum
Coordinator Minard; Special Education Director Beetz; Student
Representative McCrory.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. Chair Zotos encouraged public comment and use of the e-mail informational system offered by the school. Introductions were made and members were reminded of their duties as outlined by Maine State statute.

2. There was no public comment.

3. Member Coffenberry moved to approve the minutes of March 5 and March 13, 2008 as presented; member Merrill seconded the motion and it carried 3-0.

4. Member Merrill moved to approve the following bills and payrolls: the March 6th payroll of \$695,836.05; and the March 13th accounts payable of \$125,948.38. Member Coffenberry seconded the motion and it carried 3-0.

5. Member Merrill commended those students who spoke during the March 18th Budget Committee meeting. A large showing of York students attended that session to express their views on a comment made recently by a Budget Committee member regarding student involvement in the school music program. Member Merrill remarked that she is one of York's senior residents, and stated that she hoped that community members would join her in support of the music instructional program. Chair Zotos thanked the students for their articulate and respectful approach to the situation. She also thanked Budget Committee members for their review of the budget; she added that each town committee has the best interest of York in mind.

Chair Zotos praised York High School student and hockey player Dan Powers, who was featured during this evening's "Varsity Club" on channel six television in Portland. She cited him as an excellent representative from his school, who credited his teammates and teachers with his success.

6. Upcoming meetings and events were reviewed.

7. Superintendent Scipione gave a PowerPoint presentation of York's draft alternative plan to consolidation being submitted to the Maine Department of Education. Once finalized, the plan will be posted on the York School Department's website. Assistance in its compilation came from central office school administrators, with Drummond Woodsum used as a resource. Chair Zotos pointed out that after exhaustive research the Reorganization Planning Committee, comprised of citizens from York and Wells-Ogunquit, had arrived at the conclusion that consolidation between the two communities was not a cost-effective measure.

Member Coffenberry moved to approve the withdrawal of the York Schools on the Wells-Ogunquit/York RPC Committee; member Merrill seconded the motion and it carried 3-0.

Member Coffenberry moved to approve the submittal of the York School Department's Alternative Plan to Consolidation to the Maine Department of Education. Member Merrill seconded the motion and it carried 3-0.

8. Curriculum Coordinator Minard and Special Education Director Beetz presented a summary of state, federal and independent FY08 grants awarded to the York Schools. It was noted that grant money is becoming increasingly more challenging to obtain due to dwindling funds and

application indicators that take York out of contention. With 2007 grant monies flat funded and ten percent lost in 2008, it is unknown what will be available in 2009.

9. Superintendent Scipione reported on his recent trip to the annual ASCD Conference, held this year in New Orleans. Joining him were Curriculum Coordinator Minard and Director of Information Technology Martin, and they presented a workshop entitled "Town, Teams, and Technology".

10. The NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) Visiting Team concluded its accreditation site visit to Village Elementary School on March 12th with a luncheon prepared by parents. Their reports will be submitted to the team's chair for compilation into one single document. The report will then be submitted to Principal Dealy for factual editing and subsequently forwarded to the Elementary Commission for recommendation to the Board of Directors.

11. The Superintendent informed members that Middle School teacher Ellen Rothwell will be going out on maternity leave pending the birth of her first child.

12. Assistant Amoroso distributed sample pages from the budget book provided to the community and explained that language changes from 2008 are a result of a state law passed which dictates that schools must have eleven specific articles used as cost center summaries. This language will replace that formerly required by the York Home Rule Charter. School Committee members were asked to review the new language and provide their feedback to the Chair, who will then forward comments/suggestions to the Superintendent's Office.

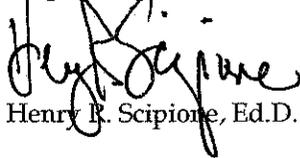
Members were given results of both Budget and School Committee preference votes. Assistant Amoroso noted that Budget Committee members had reconsidered their vote on the high school music instructional space on March 18th, with the final tally changing from 5 yes, 2 no to 5 yes, 1 no and 1 abstention.

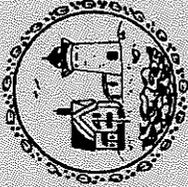
School Committee members also received from bond counsel sample wording for capital project articles. This wording must be presented to voters as a statement of fact, rather than advocating for the projects.

13. Member Coffenberry moved to adopt the following policies as presented: JKAA-R - Procedures on Therapeutic Restraint; JRA - Student Education Records and Information; JRA-E - Annual Notice of Student Education Records and Information Rights; JRA-R - Student Education Records and Information Administrative Procedure. Member Merrill seconded the motion and it carried 3-0.

14. At 9:14 p.m. member Coffenberry moved to adjourn the meeting; member Merrill seconded the motion and it carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,


Henry R. Scipione, Ed.D.



**YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FIVE-YEAR EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN
2005-2010**

Adopted September 2007

"Ready for the Future"

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

For information regarding the Strategic Plan please contact:

Henry R. Scipione, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
James Amoroso, Assistant to the Superintendent
Maryann Minard, Ph.D., Curriculum Coordinator
Jean Beetz, Special Education Director

at
469 U.S. Rte. 1
York, ME 03909
(207) 363-3403

Village Elementary School 124 York Street York, ME 03909	Ruth Dealy, Principal	(207) 363-4870
Coastal Ridge Elementary School 1 Coastal Ridge Drive York, ME 03909	Sean Murphy, Principal	(207) 363-1800
York Middle School 30 Organug Road York, ME 03909	Stephen Bishop, Principal	(207) 363-4214
York High School 1 Robert Stevens Drive York, ME 03909	Robert Stevens, Principal	(207) 363-3621



YORK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
York, Maine
Vision, Mission, and Expectations

VISION

As the tides of the ocean and the strength of the mountain shape our community, the York Schools' commitment to educational excellence and individual achievement shapes the future of each student.

MISSION

The mission of York Schools is to educate, inspire and challenge all learners to be ethical citizens who will make a difference in a changing and complex world.

EXPECTATIONS

Students

Our students achieve success through challenging and individualized learning experiences that promote active involvement and require personal responsibility.

York students will leave school:

- clear and effective communicators
- self-directed and life-long learners
- creative and practical problem solvers
- responsible and involved citizens
- collaborative and quality workers
- integrative and informed thinkers

Teachers

Our teachers assure high quality learning experiences through preparation, instruction, collaboration and professional growth.

Schools

Our schools foster student achievement, creativity and responsibility within a safe and respectful community of learners.

Community

Our schools and community share the responsibility for educational excellence through a mutual commitment to student success and for the direction of the York Schools.

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strands	Strand 1 Standards & Assessment	Strand 2 Learning Experiences	Strand 3 School, Parent & Community Partnerships	Strand 4 High Performance Leadership	Strand 5 Public Engagement
	High performance goals and targets for all students and comprehensive assessment indicators to measure progress.	Quality curriculum, instructional methods and professional development tied to high performance goals and targets. Incorporate technologies and school-to-work systems.	Programming coordinated to support student learning including parent, business, support agency and community organization connections.	Effective and efficient organization management and governance of teaching and learning resources.	Sustained public support for high performance goals and targets with policies and practices to achieve them. Provide opportunities for continual public dialogue.
Year 1 2005-2006	Revise ELA, Health & Physical Education Curriculum	Monitor and expand Horizons Program at YMS	Implement student led conferences K-8	Pilot Supervision & Evaluation Program for support staff	Conduct community-wide process of creation and dissemination of vision, mission, and belief statements
	Implement changes to K-12 Math Curriculum	Expand the use of data analysis for instruction with staff	Promote student/parent/teacher/ goal-setting 9-12	Develop Supervision & Evaluation Program for administrators	Expand use of technology for public/parent/internal communication
	Revise, implement and monitor CLAS to align with state requirements	Continue partnership efforts with YCCC, SMCC, & YHS and explore other opportunities	Fully implement student/parent/teacher goal setting K-8	Continue to fully implement faculty Supervision & Evaluation	Communicate state and federal mandate and policies regarding graduation, CLAS and NCLB to community
	Revise graduation policy as per state mandate	Continue implementing Alternative Education Program 7-12 and explore Alternative Ed Program 5-6	Pilot job-shadowing at YHS	Continue to promote teacher leadership opportunities	Seek community support for expanded programming including extended day, Family Literacy, Foreign Language & Horizons
	Continue implementation of K-12 Six Traits Writing program	Refine TEAMS curriculum at YHS	Strengthen parent/ community partnerships at each school	Communicate the expectation of Inclusionary Practice at all levels	Establish a district financial technology plan
	Provide professional development for staff in data management	Establish plan for Grade 2 consolidation		Continue to use A-Team meetings to develop instructional leadership	Implement Internet safety program
	Act on recommendation for FLES Program K-6	Fully develop ESL plan and connection to Adult Education			Involve community in long-range planning for budget that reflects state-mandated programs
	Implement revised 7-12 Foreign Language Curriculum				

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strands	Strand 1 Standards & Assessment	Strand 2 Learning Experiences	Strand 3 School, Parent & Community Partnerships	Strand 4 High Performance Leadership	Strand 5 Public Engagement
Year 1 2005-2006 continued	<p>Continue implementing PowerSchool & data collection through MEDMS and the data management plan</p> <p>Expand and monitor effectiveness of expanded Alternative Ed Program 7-12</p> <p>Begin NEASC self-study process at VES</p> <p>Redesign elementary literacy instructional model</p>	<p>Communicate expectation of full staff training in Skillful Teacher & Differentiation & Inclusionary practices</p> <p>Expand efforts to regionalize programs and services</p> <p>Support math curriculum changes at YMS</p> <p>Act on recommendations for full day kindergarten programming</p> <p>Expand summer remedial programming</p> <p>Expand Fundamental Skills program at YMS</p>	<p>Continue to use Tobacco funds to create policy & impact practice</p> <p>Evaluate impact of changes to School Nutrition Program</p> <p>Expand partnership with YCCC, SMCC & YHS</p> <p>Strengthen relationship with York business community</p>	<p>Utilize DOE software for facilities management</p> <p>Continue to support budget development with Tax Relief Task Force model</p> <p>Develop policies as required by changes in state mandates</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive integrated technology plan</p> <p>Monitor implementation of LDI and GPA to York</p>	<p>Educate community and develop support to establish the need for an expanded performing arts facility at YHS</p> <p>Develop marketing plan for voter approval</p> <p>Inform public of state and federal requirements and impact on existing resources</p> <p>Promote community involvement in the K-12 accreditation process</p> <p>Involve and educate community regarding substance abuse and intervention programs</p> <p>Establish external and internal communication regarding budget process, Tax Relief Task Force and state funding</p>

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strands	Strand 1 Standards & Assessment		Strand 2 Learning Experiences		Strand 3 School, Parent & Community Partnerships		Strand 4 High Performance Leadership		Strand 5 Public Engagement		
	Year 1 2005-2006 continued	Participate in state's review of CLAS implementation	Investigate ways to increase AP offerings at YHS, train staff and monitor curriculum and student achievement	Address science programming needs at YHS	Complete syllabi for all YHS courses	Explore Learning Lab options at YMS	Continue efforts to expand student enrollment in the Vo-Tech Programs	Explore expanding Pre-K offerings	Assess current practices in teaching writing / study skills and make recommendations	Adopt Wellness Policy to enhance emotional/social well-being	
					Evaluate Learning Labs Pilot at YHS	Evaluate Expanded Fundamental Skills Program at YHS	Explore Learning Lab options at YMS	Investigate feasibility of pre-Labor Day student start date	Support entry plan and efforts of the Director of Technology		
					Promote community-wide dialogue in support of <i>Spentis Done Right</i>	Expand Service Learning Initiatives K-12	Advocate for higher education opportunities for all students	Investigate feasibility of pre-Labor Day student start date	Evaluate effectiveness of early release / late start calendar changes		
					Strengthen School/Municipal partnership through liaison with Town Manager	Advocate for higher education opportunities for all students	Advocate at the state level for clarity in MLR and CLAS requirements				
					Continue to strengthen schoolcommunity efforts to support diversity and global and ethical citizenship	Continue to strengthen schoolcommunity efforts to support diversity and global and ethical citizenship	Promote expectations of reflective practice to improve instruction				
					Assess current practices in teaching writing / study skills and make recommendations	Assess current practices in teaching writing / study skills and make recommendations	Develop comprehensive program to meet the needs of students with Autism				
					Adopt Wellness Policy to enhance emotional/social well-being	Adopt Wellness Policy to enhance emotional/social well-being	Establish formal plan for security / crisis interventions				
							Examine administrative leadership structure at YHS				

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strands	Strand 1 Standards & Assessment	Strand 2 Learning Experiences	Strand 3 School, Parent & Community Partnerships	Strand 4 High Performance Leadership	Strand 5 Public Engagement
Year 2 2006-2007	Revise Social Studies & Science Curriculum	Implement revisions to TEAMS Program	Pilot and evaluate student- led conferences 5-12	Continue to promote teacher leadership opportunities	Continue to communicate about MLR and graduation requirements
	Pilot CLAS portfolios	Evaluate Learning Labs at YHS & implement at YMS	Evaluate goal setting 5-8	Evaluate effectiveness of 7- 12 Technology Ed. Program	Involve the School Committee in long- range budget planning
	Implement revisions to ELA curriculum	Evaluate effectiveness of programs for students with emotional disabilities K-12	Pilot and evaluate goal- setting 9-12	Implement revised Supervision and Evaluation System for support staff	Involve community in NEASC self- study process
	Monitor and revise CLAS	Monitor consolidation of Grade 2	Evaluate effectiveness of student-led conferences K-4	Implement revised Supervision and Evaluation System for administrators	Continue to promote community-based substance abuse intervention
	Develop plan for senior exhibitions	Pilot writing and study skills programs at YMS	Develop recommendations RE: trimester evaluation study	Implement expanded program for students with Autism	Seek community support for FLES and Horizons programs, extended day Kindergarten and Family Literacy program
	Develop a plan for standards-based reporting	Implement anti-bullying and student safety curriculum	Implement job shadowing for all juniors at YHS	Evaluate crisis/security plans	Assess community support for Summer program
	Evaluate revised Foreign Language Program 7-12	Expand, evaluate and maintain program expectations for Horizons students at YMS	Continue support for partnerships with higher educational institutions	Continue to implement Teacher Supervision/Evaluation process	Seek funding for Student Assistance Counselor at YHS
	Monitor implementation of changes to math curriculum K-12	Implement Parenting Ed. Program	Increase and monitor student enrollment in post- secondary education	Develop recommendations for administrative leadership model at YHS	Provide community education RE: TABOR impact
	Provide professional development in Data Management		Collaborate with community members to promote diversity	Investigate International Baccalaureate (IB) programing	
	Pilot CLAS data collection system		Increase community education about <i>Sports Done Right</i>	Support new Horizons staff at Elen and YMS	
			Promote Adult Ed., Voc Tech connection, Cert. Nurses Aide	Develop plan for addressing grant funding reductions (Title I, MELMAC, Service Lrng.)	
				Explore space options for extended day kindergarten	

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strands	Strand 1 Standards & Assessments	Strand 2 Learning Experiences	Strand 3 School, Parent & Community Partnerships	Strand 4 High Performance Leadership	Strand 5 Public Engagement
Year 2 2006-2007 continued	Expand PowerSchool use at YMS and Elementary Implement K-4 Literacy Inst. Model Finalize syllabi at YHS Pilot NWEA Provide mentor training	Expand Family Literacy experiences Create Prof. Learning Communities K-12 Expand higher ed enrollment for YHS students	Promote YEF efforts and grant submissions Promote wellness as a community initiative Promote collaboration with municipal leaders	Develop plan for Pandemic Flu response Monitor compliance with chemical and safety regs, pesticides Support a doption of fair Teacher Negotiated Agreement Improve system for securing all school buildings Monitor implementation of new IDEA regs	Promote community support for Auditorium-Performing Arts Center at YHS Promote community dialogue energy efficiency measures
	Complete alignment of Technology to National Standards Complete NEASC self-study at VES Begin NEASC self-study at CRES			Promote expectation for K-4 communication Work with municipal leaders to develop long range town/school capital plan Examine feasibility and community support for Ogunquit students attending York	

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

<i>Strands</i>	<i>Strand 1 Standards & Assessment</i>	<i>Strand 2 Learning Experiences</i>	<i>Strand 3 School, Parent & Community Partnerships</i>	<i>Strand 4 High Performance Leadership</i>	<i>Strand 5 Public Engagement</i>
<i>Year 2 2006-2007 continued</i>	Evaluate effectiveness of Six Trails Program K-12 Implement changes to Health/ Physical Education Curriculum Monitor effectiveness of PowerSchool and MEDMS System Implement changes to science program offerings at YHS Monitor effectiveness of Alternative Education Program 7-12	Provide ongoing training in Skillful Teacher, Differentiation, & Inclusionary Practices Develop student plans for Horizons Program at YHS Monitor Fundamental Skills Program 5-12 Expand Service Learning Initiative Evaluate need for Skillful Teacher, Differentiation and Inclusionary Practice offerings	Involve and educate community regarding substance abuse and intervention programs Evaluate impact of regionalization efforts	Monitor delivery of services for 504 students Promote inclusionary practices K-12 Maintain expectation of A-Team as instructional leaders Implement a district technology plan Sustain expectations of reflective practice for teachers Monitor compliance with Fed and state legislative mandates	

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strands	Strand 1 Standards & Assessment		Strand 2 Learning Experiences		Strand 3 School, Family & Community Partnerships		Strand 4 High Performance Leadership		Strand 5 Public Engagement						
	Year 3 2007-2008	Pilot Senior exhibitions	Expand AP offerings at YHS, train staff and monitor effectiveness	Monitor changes to Comprehensive Local Assessment System	Implement K-6 FLES Program	Continue to monitor full staff use of PowerSchool & Data Collection system	Review & revise Career Prep, VPA, Foreign Language Curriculum	Implement changes to Science & Social Studies Curriculum	Host NEASC accreditation on-site visit at YES and complete self study @ CRES	Pilot standards-based reporting	Monitor effectiveness of AP offerings at YHS	Evaluate Alternative Ed Program 7-12 for possible modifications	Monitor revisions to ELA curriculum including Literacy model	Continue to train staff in data management and analysis	
		Make changes to YHS & YMS Learning Lab structure as needed	Increase AP offerings at YHS	Implement changes to program for students with emotional disabilities as needed	Implement changes in 7-12 Tech. Ed. Program	Implement YHS Horizons Program	Continue K-12 commitment to Service Learning	Expand professional development in data management and analysis	Evaluate effectiveness of consolidated grade 2	Implement writing and study skills program @ YMS	Monitor effectiveness of AP offerings	Strengthen regionalization efforts	Implement student led conferences 5-12	Act on recommendations from Trimester evaluation study	Continue to support Wellness as community initiative
		Implement revisions to Crisis/Security Plan	Continue to implement Supervision & Evaluation process for support staff	Continue to implement Supervision & Evaluation process for administrators	Continue to promote teacher leadership	Evaluate effectiveness of changes to school-based structures (teams, depts., curriculum groups)	Continue to implement a district technology plan	Evaluate effectiveness of Autism program	Evaluate Teacher Supervision/Evaluation process	Promote expectation for K-4 communication	Evaluate effectiveness of district technology plan	Evaluate effectiveness of Autism program	Evaluate Teacher Supervision/Evaluation process	Promote expectation for K-4 communication	Implement revisions to services for 504 students
		Involve community in long-range planning to support initiatives & ^{regularized programs}	Involve community in NEASC on-site visit and recommendation review	Continue to promote need for Performing Arts Facility	Involve and educate community regarding substance abuse and intervention programs	Involve community in long-range planning for budget that reflects state-mandated programs	Determine community support for IB programming	Continue to promote funding for professional development							

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strands	Strand 1 Standards & Assessments	Strand 2 Learning Experiences	Strand 3 School, Family & Community Partnerships	Strand 4 High Performance Leadership	Strand 5 Public Engagement
Year 3 2007-2008 continued	Implement CLAS portfolio system Expand NWEA implementation Continue to expand mentor training Design assessment measures for technology standards Implement expanded AP programming @ YHS Monitor effectiveness of YHS science program Implement changes to Alt. Ed. Programs 7-12	Continue anti-bullying and student safety initiatives Continue with parenting education efforts Continue to support Family Literacy experiences Continue to promote Prof. Learning Communities K-12 Monitor higher ed expanded enrollments		Make changes to 7-12 Tech Ed program Act on recommendation for Leadership model at YHS Address funding for grant reductions to programs Monitor response to Pandemic Flu Monitor compliance with chemical and safety regs Implement plan for securing all school buildings Monitor the implementation of K-12 Technology Plan Work with municipal leaders to develop long range capital plan	

YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strands	Strand 1 Standards & Assessment	Strand 2 Learning Experiences	Strand 3 School, Family & Community Partnerships	Strand 4 High Performance Leadership	Strand 5 Public Engagement
Year 5 2009-2010	Implement Standards-Based reporting	Monitor changes to Alternative Education Program	Monitor student led conferences 5-12	Implement changes to support staff Supervision and Evaluation	Continue to promote need for Performing Arts Facility
	Continue to monitor AP offerings at YHS	Monitor Learning Labs @ YHS and YMS	Implement Trimester study recommendations	Implement changes to Supervision and Evaluation System for administrators	Provide status report on implementation of NEASC recommendations
	Implement Senior exhibitions	Revise programming for students with emotional disabilities		Address funding for grant reductions to programs	Continue to support community-based substance abuse prevention
	Review and revise ELA, Health & PE curriculum	Monitor YHS Horizons program		Monitor implementation of school-based structures study groups (teams, departments, curriculum, groups)	Involve community in long-range planning for budget that reflects effective programming
	Support staff in data management and analysis	Expand professional development in data management and analysis		Monitor response to Pandemic Flu	
	Monitor FLES Program	Continue with parenting ed efforts		Monitor program for students with Autism	
	Host NEASC accreditation on-site visit @ YMS; complete self-study at YHS	Monitor higher ed expanded enrollments		Promote expectation for K-4 communication	
	Expand implementation of CLAS portfolios			Monitor leadership model @ YHS	
	Fully implement NWEA				
	Fully implement Technology assessment measures				
	Act on recommendations of NEASC visit at CRES				

2007-2008 York School Department
Priorities

Goal – School Consolidation

Activity	By Whom	Timeline	Success measures
Create the Reorganization Planning Committee	School Committee	September 19, 2007	RPC Identified
Develop Plan for New School Unit with RPC	RPC H. Scipione	November 21, 2007	Plan Document Created
Present Plan to School Committee	RPC	November 21, 2007	School Committee Agenda
Determine Timeline for Public Vote	School Committee	November 21, 2007	Decision of the School Committee
Present Approved Plan to DOE	School Committee	December 1, 2007	Plan Forwarded to DOE
Create Community Communication Plan	H. Scipione	January 16, 2008	School Committee Approves Plan
Implement Community Presentations of Options	School Committee and Administrators	January-June 2008	Meetings and Communications Completed
Public Vote			

Goal – Professional Learning Communities

Activity	By Whom	Timeline	Success measures
School teams attend DuFour conference	Principals	Sept. 13-14, 2007	Conference attendance as reported by principals
PLC groups organized at each building, calendar of meetings established	Principals	Sept. 2007	PLC lists, Meeting dates, Monthly meetings held
PLCs hold monthly meetings	Principals	On-going	Minutes submitted to principals
K-12 Leadership Team attends ASCD conference	Curriculum Coordinator	Nov. 29, 2007	Conference attendance

2007-2008 York School Department
Priorities

Goal – Data Collection and Analysis

Activity	By Whom	Timeline	Success measures
Excel or Power School collection system created to record CLAS data	Data Manager	October, 2007	System created and distributed to teachers
PLCs meet to analyze MEA data	Principals	Oct. 5, 2007	PLC reports to faculty, principal reports to Curriculum A Team
NWEA data analysis training for teachers	Curriculum Coordinator, Data Manager, Tech Integrators	On-going	Data analysis tools of NWEA used by teachers in PLCs
Review of CLAS assessments	Curriculum Coordinator	January, 2008	Updated CLAS Blueprint
Curriculum Review and Revision reflects PLC findings and revised MLRs	Curriculum Coordinator	August 2008	Curriculum revisions completed

Goal - Update York School Department Long – Range Technology Plan

Activity	By Whom	Timeline	Success measures
Form local technology teacher/leader groups (K-4, 5-8, 9-12)	Technology Director/Integration Specialists	September 2007	Groups have met. Reps from each grade level, specialists, SPEC, etc.
Review current plan	Local groups	September 2007	All group members will have read plan and discussed it
Itemize components and affix draft responsibilities	Teacher/leader members	Oct/Nov. 2007	Responsibilities assigned
Review initial draft with full K-12 Tech Team	Technology Director/Integration Specialists	Jan/Feb. 2008	Jan. 30 early release – full group meets
Present draft to A-Team	Technology Director	Feb. 2008	A-Team provides feedback

2007-2008 York School Department
Priorities

Final draft to full K-12 Tech Team	Technology Director	May 2008	Plan finalized
Final plan presented to A-Team and School Committee for endorsement	Technology Director	End of May 2008	Plan itemizes strategies for technology integration over the next three years
Plan submitted to state	Technology Director	June 2008	Plan approved by state

Goal – Music Instructional Space, York High School

Activity	By Whom	Timeline	Success measures
Reconvene the YHS Building Committee	School Committee	September 2007	Scheduled Meeting of Building Committee
Review Current Plans with Architect	YHS Building Committee	October-November 2007	Plan Consistent or Revised
Make Recommendation to School Committee	YHS Building Committee	December 5, 2007	School Committee Agenda
Determine Budgetary Action	School Committee	December 5, 2007	Action of School Committee
Create Community Communication Plan	YHS Building Committee	January 2008	School Committee Approves Plan
Implement Community Presentations	YHS Building Committee, School Committee, and Administrators	January-May 2008	Meetings and Communications Completed



YORK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
York, Maine
Vision, Mission, and Expectations

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Community

Our schools and community share the responsibility for educational excellence through a mutual commitment to student success and for the direction of the York Schools.

YORK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT SCHOOLS PROFILES

YORK HIGH SCHOOL

1 Robert Stevens Drive. York, ME 03909

York High School is a four year public school serving exclusively the Town of York. YHS is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services. Built in 1977, York High School is set on 72 acres of land one-quarter mile from the Atlantic Ocean. The school currently has a population of approximately 642 students. York High School enjoys a reputation for excellence in both its academic and extra-curricular programs. YHS offers 40 Honors courses, 11 Advanced Placement courses and the option of online courses through Virtual High School. Last year 87% of the graduating class went on to post secondary education with the remaining 13% joining the military or entering the work force.

YORK MIDDLE SCHOOL

30 Organug Rd., York, ME 03909

York Middle School comprises grades 5-8. Approximately 614 students are organized into seven teams: two teams each for grades 5 and 6 and three teams for grades 7 and 8. The 7-8 teams are two year teams. Class sizes vary from year to year, but range from 20 to 24. In addition to the basic subjects of English, Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies, the curriculum includes Art, General Music, Chorus, Band, P.E., Industrial Technology, Home Economics, Literature, French, and German. The instructional program is supported by a library, two computer labs, support staff which includes computer technology, special education, gifted/talented, guidance and health. Co-curricular offerings include theatre, band, chorus, soccer, tennis, field hockey, cross country, track, basketball, softball, and baseball.

COASTAL RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1 Coastal Ridge Drive, York, ME 03909

Coastal Ridge Elementary School, built in 1991 and located on Ridge Road in York, is a 2-4 school with a student population of approximately 347. Class sizes vary from 19-23 students per class. Recognized as a STAR school by the Maine Department of Education, based on student performance on the Maine Educational Assessments, Coastal Ridge offers a personalized educational experience for all students through diverse offerings. The instructional program emphasizes thematic and process teaching, experiential and inquiry-based learning, problem-solving through observation, experimentation, questioning, and creative thinking. The integrated curriculum is enhanced by such programs as: the library media services, computer assisted instruction, cooperative learning, conflict resolution practices, special education, gifted & talented, guidance, art, music and physical education. The staff and student body enjoy tremendous support from parents and citizens of York through a very active Parent Advisory Team and a growing number of volunteers and mentors, comprised of high school students, parents, grandparents and community members. Participation is high in the various after school enrichment classes and extra curricular activities made available to the CRES student.

VILLAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

124 York St., York, ME 03909

The Village Elementary School serves approximately 331 K-2 children in a bright and cheerful setting that is centrally located in York's historic district. Our mission is to help children develop the knowledge, basic skills and problem-solving strategies to become globally-aware, life-long learners. We teach respect for others and emphasize the need for dedication to causes greater than ourselves. To celebrate our diverse talents and needs, we provide training in technology, integrated arts programming, a research-based curriculum and a full range of special services in a child-centered environment which enables both groups and individuals to be successful. Progress toward becoming a community of learners is evident in the public recognition of our students' academic, artistic and altruistic achievements. Village Elementary is also part of a school district which enjoys tremendous volunteer and financial support from the parents, senior citizens and businesses of York.

The Education Connection

Linking the York School Department to the Community

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York Resident

Volume 8, Number 1

School Consolidation

by Dr. Henry R. Scipione, Superintendent of Schools

Perhaps the most significant decision the voters of York will make regarding the future of education in our community is one regarding school consolidation. You have most likely read a great deal about school consolidation and you, like many of us, are trying to understand the impact of a potential school consolidation with Wells/Ogunquit to determine if this consolidation is in the best interest of our students and our community.

The school board and the administration have been heavily involved in these discussions and we are diligently trying to understand the impact of a possible consolidated school system on our students and our community. As required by law, a Reorganization Planning Committee (RPC) has been established and is meeting regularly to create a plan for a potential Wells/Ogunquit and York School district merger. The RPC is comprised of four people from each of the three communities. This group is charged with the task of developing a plan for a new regional school unit that would combine the school districts of Wells/Ogunquit and York into a single regional school unit. The RPC must submit a proposal to the Maine

Department of Education by December 1, 2007. After approval by the Maine Department of Education the voters of each community will have the opportunity to either approve or reject this proposal. The new law requires that each community with less than 2500 students submit a plan. The law also requires that this plan be presented to the voters for approval or rejection. As I talk with community members about the school consolidation law, the most often repeated question is "This is only about money... what about our kids?" The concerns being voiced express the sentiment that the impact on the education of our students is not being considered in the law that requires school consolidation. There is concern about losing the quality of educational programming and opportunity if York chooses to consolidate

with Wells/Ogunquit or any other community. Are these concerns legitimate? Will York risk losing the community-based school system we currently have if we combine with Wells/Ogunquit?

You, the voters, will have to decide if consolidation is right for York students. As you consider the decision to consolidate I ask that you ask yourself the fundamental question of whether school consolidation improves the educational opportunity currently provided to the students of York. Your answer should dictate how you vote on this question.

Once the plan that the RPC is currently developing is complete, there will be a series of forums offered in our community to learn about the proposal. I urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to become educated about this critical question.



Dr. Henry R. Scipione, Ed.D.

If you have any questions about this issue, please feel free to contact me at hscipione@yorkschools.org or 363-3403. More information will follow.

Dr. Henry R. Scipione
Superintendent of Schools

York Receives a Great Report Card

by Maryann Minard, Ph.D., Curriculum Coordinator

York School Department has recently completed the District Report Card. The report, required by the No Child Left Behind Act, includes information about student achievement, highly qualified teacher status and other measures of the York school system's effectiveness. The report card in its entirety is available on-line at www.yorkschools.org and contains the following highlights:

enrollments of YHS graduates have increased 20%. 98.2% of York High School juniors participated in the Spring 2007 SAT, while the state participation rate was 95%. 8% of York students currently participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch program, with the State average 28.05%.

York Schools were served by over 900 volunteers during the 2006-2007 school year, who dedicated 28,185 hours to the York Schools. This includes 700 parent volunteers, 90 grandparent/community volunteers, and 90 mentors in addition to 200 businesses supporting and participating in the Career Quest program at York High School.

Title I provided services to 95 students in the area of reading remediation in 2006-2007. Reading Recovery served 29 students in an intensive one-on-one early intervention, tutorial model for first grade students during 2006-2007. 296 students received Special Education under IEPs (Individual Education Plans).



(L to r) Camden Morse, Ryan Thurlow and Joey Slusher benefit from a high quality education in the town of York. (Photo by Eileen Braut)

34 students currently receive services under Section 504 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)

117 York educators have obtained Master's degrees or above, while 66 teachers possess Bachelor's degrees. Teachers required to meet Highly Qualified status under the No Child Left Behind statute include 100% of York High School faculty, 94.6% of York Middle School faculty, 100% of Coastal Ridge Elementary School faculty and 100% of Village Elementary School faculty. All teachers still working toward Highly Qualified status are guided by action plans.

York students collectively exceeded the state average in all subject areas on the Maine Educational Assessments (MEAs).

York students in grades 2, 3, 6, and 9 participated in computer-based assessments in Reading, English Language usage and Mathematics in 2006 - 2007. On these

Measures of Academic Progress assessments, York students' average scores exceeded the national average in all subject areas tested at all grade levels.

Students in Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 met the Annual Yearly Progress targets as defined by NCLB in 2007. These include scores based on whole school

population ethnicity (Black, Native American/Alaskan, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic), students with identified disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and students who are economically disadvantaged.



No Child LEFT BEHIND

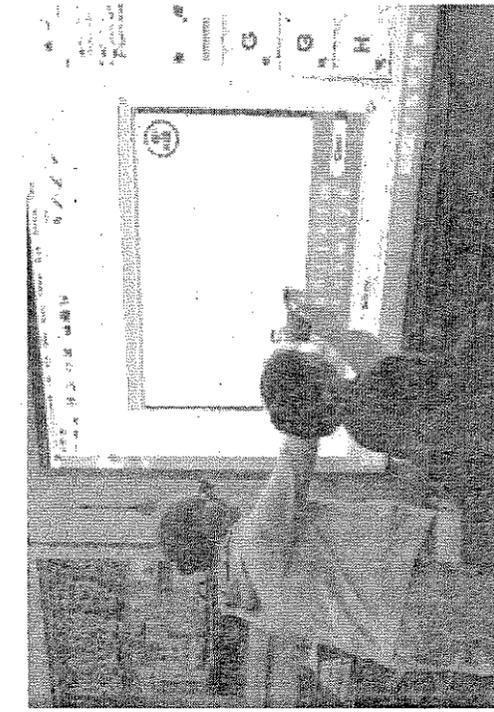
95.8% of the students in the Class of 2007 graduated with York High School diplomas.

87% of York students in the Class of 2007 have enrolled in post-secondary education, an increase from the 82% of students who indicated their intent to do so. Since 2001, actual post-secondary

2 Village Elementary School

Technology: Tools for a New Generation

by Beth McKenna, second grade teacher & member of the K-4 technology committee



Second grade teacher Beth McKenna works with a student on the SmartBoard.

It is not always easy to find a calendar is filled with reserved time to use the computer lab at blocks of time when classroom Village Elementary School. The teachers are bringing their

Under our former schedule, classes were only held for 50-minute blocks once a week, but with special projects, waiting a week to return meant that by the time the project was finished, students had forgotten what it was all about. These projects necessitated a look at how computer time was scheduled, and a change in the way teachers thought about the use of the computer lab. The computer could no longer be just another subject, but it had to be a tool to be used in all subjects.

With the new Open Lab concept, teachers now sign up for the times that they need. These can be long blocks for big projects, or short blocks for kindergartners just learning

how to use the school's computers. The Open Lab concept also allows art, music and PE teachers to take advantage of the lab's SMART Board for special lessons that are enhanced by artwork from museums, or displays of healthy foods. The Open Lab concept helps students to see the computer not as a special curriculum area, but as a tool for learning in all areas. Students are now using the computer as part of lessons in math, science, social studies, language arts, music, physical education and art.

Another innovation in technology at Village is helping students to see that the computer is a tool with many uses. With the addition of Smart Boards in several first and second grade classrooms, the *continued on pg. 6*

Contemplate the Autistic Frame of Mind

by Barbara Lowery, Autism Teacher



Autism teacher Barbara Lowery works with one of her students.

As the autism teacher for the York School Department, I am often approached with various questions in an effort to comprehend the struggle for those who deal with it. There

of the task to where I feel competent. I may need more practice to master the tasks than other kids.

3. A lot of my resistant behaviors come from sensory discomfort. I may need to sit closer to you, I don't understand what you are saying because there are too many noises "in between."

4. Provide me a break to allow for self-regulation before I need it. Allow me a place to go when I feel overwhelmed.

5. Tell me what you want me to do in the positive rather than the imperative. Don't make me guess or figure out what I should do.

6. Keep your expectations reasonable.

7. Help me transition between activities. It takes me a little longer to move from one activity to the next.

8. Don't make a bad situation worse. You can help me get over my anger more quickly by not responding with inflammatory behavior of your own.

9. Criticize gently. Remember that I will react as much, if not more, to the qualities of your voice rather than to the actual words.

10. Offer real choices. Don't ask a yes or no question unless you are willing to accept no for an answer.

are many complexities surrounding this disorder and an article by specialist Ellen Notbohm will help people gain a better understanding of how a child with autism experiences the world. Here is an excerpt from her article, featuring ten points written from the perspective of an autistic child.

1. Behavior is a form of communication. All behaviors occur for a reason. It tells you even when my words can't, how I perceive what is happening around me.

2. I may not know or understand the rules. Stick with me through enough repetitions

Fostering a Healthy Attitude

by Meg Worthing, Counselor & Ruth Dealy, Principal

I think I can, I know I can, and you can too! Students at Village Elementary School begin each day by repeating this motto. It represents our belief about what our school community hopes York's youngest students will realize and accomplish while they are at Village Elementary School. This child-friendly statement allows students to express the Mission and Expectations of Village Elementary School and the Vision of the York School Department that all students pursue educational excellence and individual achievement.



Kindergartners Brianna Baker, Molly Rohrer and William MacLean recite the Village school motto.

hands-on experiences that demonstrate an understanding of child development and foster a respect for multiple learning styles. These learning experiences empower students to become creative problem solvers and active and self-directed learners.

I know I can.... Our expectations for Village Elementary School as a learning environment are that it will provide experiences that are developmentally appropriate for primary-aged students and, in turn, support and promote their growth and development. Our staff, who are dedicated life-long learners, provide a

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Positive School Climate Taught

by Kathy Welch, Counselor

Julie stops by the counselor's office to say that she is feeling bad because girls are telling rumors about her. Michael tells his teacher he was called a name that was not nice. At recess Eileen is told she cannot play in the soccer game because the game is for boys only. For our school to be a safe place for each and every student, where put-downs, gossip and rumors are never heard, where teasing is not

allowed and bullying does not happen, and where all children are included, we must all work together. School climate is the key factor that determines whether young people will be bullied or not.

On the classroom level we look to the Responsive Classroom philosophy to promote responsible and ethical behavior. The Responsive Classroom approach is based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. The approach, therefore,

consists of classroom practices for deliberately helping children build academic and social-emotional competencies. Classroom teachers gather as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm-up for the day ahead. At the beginning of school each year, students create classroom rules to help the class take ownership of their behavior. Staff consistently respond to misbehavior in ways that allow children to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity. These principles set the stage for developing a

Accreditation In Progress

by Sean Murphy, Principal

Coastal Ridge Elementary School (CRES) is beginning a two-year process of becoming accredited through the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEAS&C). The process involves three steps: a period of self-study, a visit from a peer review team, and finally a follow-up plan. This is an opportunity to measure the school against standards of excellence and to gauge areas for commendation and those in need of improvement.

The first eighteen months consist of collecting specific data regarding curriculum, instruction, assessment, as well

The accreditation process allows administrators, teachers, and support staff to reflect on its program, to celebrate its strengths, and to hold itself to the highest standards in determining areas of need. The process is extensive and requires considerable effort on the part of faculty and staff from whom much is already demanded. Additionally, it requires humility from those who give their all to recognize that there is always room for improvement when children's success is at stake.

(L to r) Abigail Barnes, Emma Ford, Olivia Phillips and Victoria Long working diligently on their anti-bullying pledges. (Photo by Kathy Welch)



positive school climate while promoting respect for all.

Some of the school-wide practices that contribute to the positive climate of a safe school began this year with a visit from Sammy Snail and Lesley Smith presenting "The Peaceable Kingdom" - a conflict resolution assembly. This puppet show introduced how to solve problems by using CAPS: C-cool off and count down, A-agree to work it out and see it through, P-point of view, active listening and "I" statements, and S-solve it fair.

In September, every third grade student participated in a Bullying Prevention Workshop. The workshop provided students with the knowledge and skills to identify bullying behaviors, recognize the negative impact of bullying, and intervene when they see bullying

in their classroom or in their school. Through a series of interactive lessons, students recognized the impact of put-downs and stereotypes, and also built empathy for the targets of bullying. The workshop used the acclaimed children's book, *Say Something*, by Peggy Moss to discuss the emotional impact of bullying and what students can do to prevent it. The students were amazing in their ability to come up with helpful, safe, and skillful responses to teasing and bullying. The students ended their session by making a pledge to take action against bullying. All pledge cards are on display in the foyer to the gym.

In late September, 40 fourth grade students attended the Elementary Student Leaders Project at Mount Agamenticus Lodge. The Student Leaders

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York River Spurs Student Learning

by Charlotte Pierce, fourth grade teacher & Beth Walter, local scientist and parent

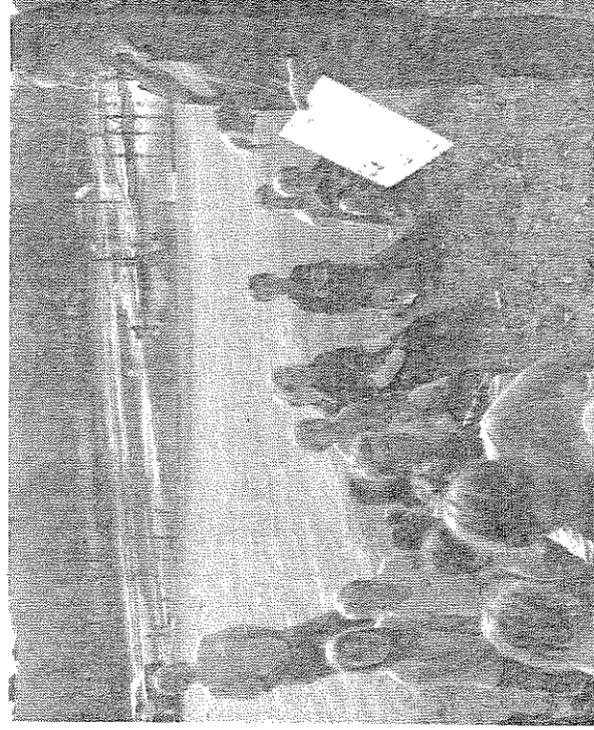
This year the fourth grade classes of Mrs. Burke, Mrs. Peterson, Mrs. Kaknes and Mrs. Pierce are piloting The York River Project (YRP), a curriculum designed to teach students about the York River by integrating science, social studies, math, art, language arts, and technology. Throughout the year students will learn about the history, geology and aesthetic qualities of the River, watershed dynamics, ecology, environmental pollution and local, state and federal environmental regulations. The project was designed to enhance the current fourth grade curriculum.

This project was made possible by a generous grant from the York Education

Foundation. The grant provides for Mrs. Beth Walter, a local scientist, to teach lessons and direct activities throughout this school year. The grant also provides the opportunity to bring in other local experts (i.e. ecologists, artists, Old York Historical Society (OYHS), Kittery Trading Post Outdoor Academy, lobstermen, and Town Hall employees) to share with students their knowledge and experiences. Students will be taking field trips to the river where they will make observations and predictions, collect and analyze water quality samples, and conduct habitat studies. These data and observations will be uploaded to a GIS database and be

accessible to other students and the community. Students will be working with area artists to learn the techniques of watercolor and landscape paintings and will have the opportunity to create their own art projects.

The project "Kick Off" took place on September 18 with the students signing a pledge to "Respect, Protect and Enjoy" the York River. This event was followed by a unit on the water cycle, in which they learned where the water in the York River comes from and how it cycles through our environment. Students were amazed to learn that the water we use today was the same water created when the earth



Ann Poubeau, from Old York Historical Society, teaching the history of Steedman Woods to fourth graders as local scientist Beth Walter looks on. (Photo by Charlotte Pierce)

was formed 4.6 billion years ago. They were asked to imagine a water drop's journey through time and will be writing

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York Middle School

Schoolwide Culture of Literacy

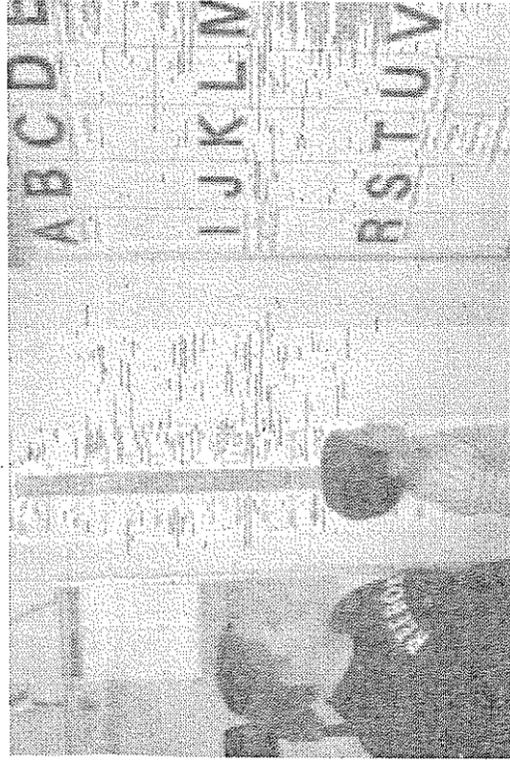
by Andy Geranis, fifth grade Language Arts teacher



Sixth grade student Nick Darby checks out a book in the new "Books We Love" section of the library. (Photo by Stephen Bishop)

It's a Matter of Semantics

by Stephen Bishop, Principal



Janson Henson and Keelan Hynes review the word wall. (Photo by Stephen Bishop)

Late last school year, the Language Arts teachers at York Middle School adopted a new format for teaching reading and writing to students in all grades. Teachers researched many new

at York Middle School has come together in an effort to strengthen the "culture of literacy" that permeates our school. Several initiatives have been undertaken.

Our school library has been re-conceptualized as a reading room. Many of the tables and chairs have been replaced with a wide variety of comfortable seating. Teachers have committed to use the reading room for student reading and read-alouds as much as for research and "study hall" time.

Additionally, classroom teachers have begun to explore the possibilities of the Reading Workshop. "Books We Love" sections have made their way into many classrooms. Displays featuring teachers as readers

"Mrs. Applebee! Mrs. Applebee! This book is sooo good! I love it!"

Those are words that every teacher loves to hear. Often, those words mean that a student has found "the book." The book we all remember so well; the book that, for the first time, transported us to another world. That student has taken a giant step towards becoming a skilled, passionate and habitual reader.

As teachers, we work hard every day trying to provide opportunities for our students to become passionate about reading. To that end, the staff

ways to teach the complex pieces that go into helping students learn the skills and knowledge associated with Language Arts. At the conclusion of their research, teachers adopted the Big Blocks Model of teaching Language Arts. This model presents a multi-method way to teach writing, working with words and both guided and self-selected reading. Teachers then added another component to their instruction: speaking and listening.

This fall, teachers will put their major focus on the "working with words" component. Working with words consists of teaching students how to expand their vocabulary, spell correctly, decode longer and more complex words, use prefixes and suffixes and therefore increase the repertoire of words they have available when

reading and writing. If you walk into any fifth grade classroom you will see a word wall. These word walls help students learn to spell new words they can use in their writing. Teachers spent several hours working with Professor Ruth Wharton McDonald from the University of New Hampshire to ask questions and obtain more information about helping students enhance their vocabularies.

A supporting initiative began this fall in the form of changing the culture of reading at the middle school. The creation of a reading room, book talks, enhanced classroom libraries and field trips to the York Public Library will support the larger work being done by Language Arts teachers. Students will continue to improve their skills in Language Arts with the ultimate goal of creating stronger readers and writers.

Cogger's Corner: a Fun Recess Alternative

by Stephen Bishop, Principal



There are a number of games for students to play. They get a chance to challenge each other in a variety of games from foosball and ping-pong to chess and Trivial Pursuit. This venue provides an alternative to spending recess outside on our black top and playing fields. While going outside to get fresh

Students at York Middle School will have another option when they take a break at recess. School Resource Officer Scott Cogger has transformed the old band and music room that, until now, has been used for storage into a fun place for students to

York es lo mejor!

by *Jeremie Sirois, Vice Principal*

Each year the world language teachers at York High School produce a series of events to promote enthusiasm for languages around the world.

This is an annual event and teachers take great pride in showing their passion for the language and country they teach their students about.

Throughout the week, international music is played during the passing time between classes. Prizes are given to the students who correctly guess the language and musical artist

that is played. This is a fun and effective way to bring about awareness of the different languages and cultures around the world.

During world language week, it is not uncommon to smell the wonderful aroma of French crepes or traditional German delicacies as you walk through the halls of the school. A big part of the festivities is the school spirit shown by students. Native costumes are worn and large, colorful posters are exhibited throughout the halls of the school with the

phrase "York is the best" written in different languages. The flags of France, Germany, and Spain are hung and the different languages are spoken within the language department throughout the day.

The foreign language teachers often bring in world language speakers that discuss the cultures of the countries they represent. World language week is an exciting and upbeat week for the staff and students alike, and a vibrant learning tool for all concerned.



Camree Thompson and Adam Ehrenborg wait for some delicious French crepes served by their teacher Madame Stevens. (Photo by Megan Reid)

New Measure of Music

by *Rob Westerberg, Choral Director*

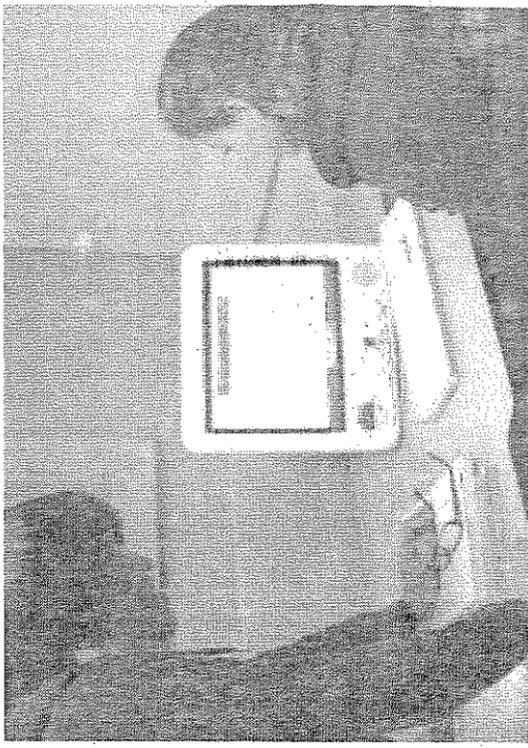
The York High School (YHS) Music Department has implemented a landmark assessment tool called "SmartMusic." Two designated computers have been set aside for music students to utilize this interactive practice tool that provides students with new opportunities to develop musical skills while being fully engaged in the process.

Chorus and Band students, for example, will log in to see assignments that have been uploaded for them. They will perform the music in front of them on the screen and then see the notes that were correct in green, the notes that were incorrect in red (indicating the notes they played or sang

instead), along with a recording of what they just performed. Consequently, they will self-analyze what went well, what didn't and redo the assessment as many times as they wish to improve it. When they are done, they then "submit" that assessment to the online teacher grade book where a separate grade on tone and articulation can also be assessed. These will then be on permanent record as a recordable mp3 file. Actual excerpts from concert literature may also be assessed, as well as thousands of pre-loaded solo songs containing accompaniments. This new music software is perfect to

help prepare students for college auditions or recitals.

SmartMusic promises to be an extraordinarily powerful pedagogical tool for York's music students. But perhaps one of the best features is that a download onto any home computer is available for \$25 as long as the student is associated with the YHS Music program. For more information on this and other music department initiatives, click on the Music Department link on www.yorkschoools.org/yhs and e-mail either Mr. Westerberg or Mr. Sovetsky.



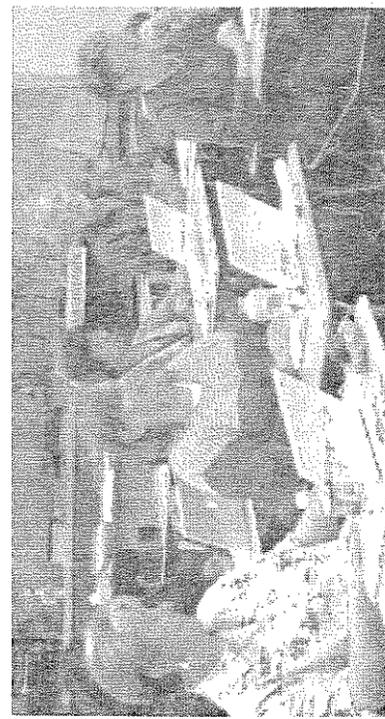
Andrew Hirst and Kelsey Ray investigate the new interactive music software available at the high school. (Photo by Gelsey Hubbard)

Laptops for Teachers Have Arrived

by *Bryan Thompson, Technology Integrator*

The state's successful Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) laptop program was extended this summer from the middle school to include all high school teachers statewide. In September, York High School (YHS) received a delivery of 70 brand new Apple MacBook as part of the program. While YHS teachers have been effectively using district-owned

Benefits of the MLTI program are numerous: participation in annual statewide systems upgrades, professional development aimed at fostering better technology integration, and the addition of five laptop carts for student use made available by the PC laptops turned in by teachers.



(L to r) High school teachers Lisa Phoenix, Leslie Pettigrew, Alice O'Connor, Gary Phipps and Becky Hembree during a training session on their new laptops. (Photo by Megan Reid)

Promoting Books to Young Readers

by *Adrienne Kerman, Library/Media Services Secretary*



Books on display at Coastal Ridge for young readers to enjoy. (Photo by Nadine Donnell)

"A primary goal of the Library Media Program in the York schools is to foster literacy and a love of reading," says Elizabeth Reisz, Coordinator of Library/Media Services. This can be a challenge in a time when reports highlight a decline in literacy among children, particularly teens and young adults. The Library/Media Services staff has responded by working to create environments that encourage students to sit and read.

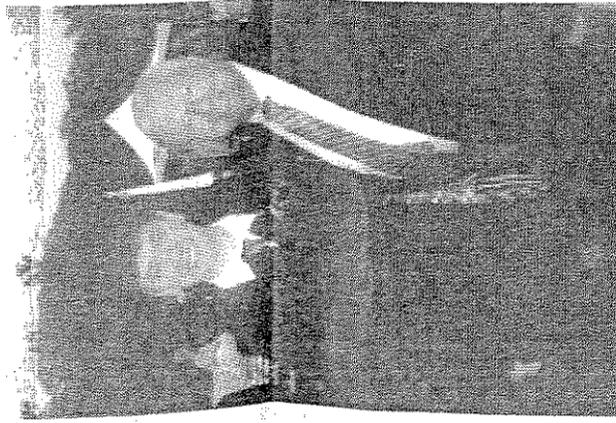
At Village Elementary, promoting reading to those who can't yet read "is all about

marketing," says Glenna Rowan, VES Library Ed Tech. It can be difficult for the young ones to read spine labels and a daunting task for them to find a book on the shelves. To address this, the library staff strives to present the books in more visually and physically effective ways. "We take the most popular fiction series like *Magic Tree House* and *Rainbow Fairies* and put them in decorated bins, so students have the entire series at their fingertips to flip through and explore" says Rowan.

Staff at Coastal Ridge Elementary make reading fun by "promoting the books that keep the student interested," reflects Nadine Donnell, CRES Library Ed Tech. For example, the *Geronimo Stilton* series, where pages are a combination of text, cartoon characters and pictures, is a visually appealing alternative to text only as readers advance from simple early readers to more advanced chapter books. Other popular series are *Dragon Slayer's Academy*, *Kati Kazoo*, and *Shredderman*, a well-received weekly installment read-a-loud that motivated students to want to read other titles in the series on their own.

Make a Difference: Become a Mentor in the York Schools

by *Melanie Ladd, Community Resources Coordinator*



York High School mentee Brent Johnson and mentor Don MacAulay celebrate Graduation 2007! (Photo by the Chapman family)

Mentors play an important role in the lives of many students in the York Schools. Each fall, the York Schools' Mentor Program is busy placing mentors with students in grades K-12 and offering opportunities for mentors to spend time with students throughout the school year. Students welcome the benefit of receiving individual attention from a caring community member and creating a friendship that continues throughout their education.

Student Brent Johnson and mentor Don MacAulay began working together when Brent was in elementary school and they continued to meet through his graduation last spring. His

mentor provided guidance and support, as well as academic encouragement during his college search in his senior year.

We are currently recruiting mentors this fall and invite you to join us in this educational partnership. Mentoring York's young people can be an enjoyable and fulfilling experience – the connection often leads to one of the most dynamic relationships you will ever encounter! For more information on becoming a mentor in the York schools, please call Melanie Ladd, community programs coordinator at 351-3016.

"Mentoring York's young people can be an enjoyable and fulfilling experience - the connection often leads to one of the most dynamic relationships you will ever encounter!"

The Education Connection

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High School Principal: Robert Stevens

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Community Resources Coordinator: Melanie Ladd

Library/Media Services Coordinator: Elizabeth Crawford Reisz

Nutrition Program Director: Doris Demers

Director of Technology: Gregg Martin

Technology from pg. 2

computer as a tool is even extending beyond the lab. It is not uncommon to see students manipulating numbers on a math grid, or to see them writing stories on the classroom Smart Boards. SmartBoards allow teachers to connect their computers to a screen in the room. Things that could be done on a computer are now being projected on an

interactive screen that all children can view at once. Students can't wait for their turn to write on the wall, or use their finger as a mouse to manipulate objects on the screen.

The students at Village may be the youngest students in the district, but they are quickly becoming as technologically advanced as the older children in the district.

Marketing literacy has taken other forms from decorated halls with pictures of staff and students holding books they recommend, to reorganizing fiction titles according to genre to make it easier for students to find books that interest them.

"Everyone – students and staff – is encouraged to always have a book in hand. You will find many students at all grade levels spending their study hall time reading a class-assigned book or one self-selected when they come to the library," said Forbush.

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Harvest Lunch Day in the York Schools

by Doris Demers, Nutrition Program Director

Recently, York students celebrated Maine Harvest Lunch Day. All four schools featured a lunch with locally grown Maine produce. The special menu consisted of whole wheat pizza topped with fresh grown veggies, corn on the cob, fresh tossed salad, crunchy apples and Maine milk. Students at most schools helped with the preparation by husking the corn for their meal. The local producers that provided the veggies were Bill Connolly, Zach's Farm and High Pine Gardens. These farmers produce and sell locally in York. Students are also enjoying local foods like fresh tomatoes and potatoes that have been grown exclusively for our school nutrition program this year.

Here are some interesting facts about locally grown foods: produce in the average grocery store travels nearly 1,500 miles. Even though broccoli is likely grown very close to the average home, it travels an average of 1,800 miles. Buying local produce direct from farmers puts 80 to 90 cents of every dollar spent into the farmer's pockets. Only 3.5 cents of every dollar goes into the farmer's pocket from produce bought at grocery stores. Shopping for produce at the local farmers market at the Chamber of Commerce from June to October is a great way to support the local farmers!



High school students enjoy helping out on Maine harvest lunch day. (L to r bottom row) Sheila Connolly, Kacey Coffenberry, Charlie Sayward, Chrissy Keroack and Alex Brennan. (L to r top row) Patrick Seaward, Cory Gallant, Cam Rodrigues and Jimmy Kennedy.

School Climate

from pg. 3.

Project was a full-day, highly interactive workshop facilitated by exceptional individuals from The Center for Prevention of Hate Violence in Portland. The workshop focused on teaching students about the negative emotional impact of degrading language and harassment in school. It helped students develop practical skills for intervening in low-key ways when other students use degrading language. The goal of this workshop was to provide participants with both the information and the skills needed to make Coastal Ridge Elementary School physically and emotionally safe for all students.

This marks the third year of our Civil Rights Team and second year of the Action Teams for third and fourth graders. The Civil Rights Team Project and the Action Teams are school-based prevention programs designed to combat hate, violence, prejudice,

harassment, and bias in schools. At CRES our focus is on issues of school safety, teasing and bullying, and social difficulty. All CRES students have a role in promoting and encouraging respectful behavior in our classrooms, hallways, playground, lunchroom and bus.

All CRES students have a role in promoting and encouraging respectful behavior in our classrooms, hallways, playground, lunchroom and bus.

Over 60 students have volunteered a portion of their lunch/recess or after-school hours to work on this mission: a safe environment for all students.

School climate is created by the attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms that underlie the instructional practices and the operation of a school. The trainers from The Center for Prevention of Hate Violence, Lesley Smith and her puppet, Sammy, all complimented CRES's feeling of genuine respect and positive climate. We believe Coastal Ridge Elementary is a school that is safe for all students.



Please join us for....

The dedication of the
Coastal Ridge Elementary School Library

to

Jane A. Stephenson
Coastal Ridge Principal

Thursday, December 6
At 5:00 pm
1 Coastal Ridge Drive
York, Maine

Literacy has always been her passion.
As principal of Coastal Ridge from 1991-2007 and
throughout her career as an educator
"She always put children first."

Reception Immediately following



Welcome Katie! to York Adult Ed



Katie Schindler, above, is the new Adult Basic Education (ABE) Coordinator for York Adult and Community Education. As ABE Coordinator, Katie is responsible for the GED and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs. Katie also oversees the Families Together family literacy program for the York School Department. (Photo by Andrea Winslow)

York River

from pg. 3

predictions and observations as they watched their grass seeds sprout. This week the project focused on geology and the ice age. Students learned how the last ice age shaped the landscape of current-day Maine and was responsible for providing York with the abundant natural resources (timber, hay, clay, gravel etc.) that allowed the earliest settlers to prosper. This unit is being followed up with a trip to Steedman Woods where the OYHS will present a program developed specifically for this project depicting life along the York River in the 1700's.

The YRP will conclude with a public exhibit at the York Public Library where student work and research will be on display. We hope that you will make time to attend this exhibit and question the students on the need to "Respect and Protect" so that all can enjoy the York River.

Attitude

from pg. 2

quality educational environment that models best practices and promotes positive relationship building that ensure that our students are active and confident learners. Students demonstrate their best effort to achieve mastery of academic and social goals through which they learn to be integrative and informed thinkers and clear and effective communicators.

And, you can too!... Village Elementary School is a caring school community that values empathy, respect and responsibility. We lay the foundation to educate, inspire and challenge all students in York to be ethical citizens who will make a difference in a changing and complex world. This is the promise of the York School Department and it begins at Village Elementary School.

"There's no harder job than being a parent. Nothing else touches so much of a person so deeply or so unpredictably and there's no training for it. As the pace of life accelerates, as media influences intensify, and as the future grows less predictable, parents and teachers find it harder to raise children of character and competence, ...to resist negative influences in the surrounding culture, ...to foster strength and resilience in children." These words captured the message that Dr. Robert Evans delivered to the full York faculty on the afternoon of September 26 and repeated to an audience of 122 parents and community members later that evening.

Dr. Evans is a clinical and organizational psychologist and the Executive Director of the Human Relations Service in Wellesley, Massachusetts. He is the author of *The Human Side of Change* and *Family Matters: How Schools Can Cope with the Crisis in Childrearing* and has served in schools for over 30 years.

Dr. Evans encouraged the audience to address problems faced by parents and schools by bringing the concerns to the broader community. He stated that seeking strategies to foster healthy and successful parenting helps to recognize the need for core values that are shared by home and school. With rapidly changing cultural and economic trends, families are more fragile than ever before in history. Dr. Evans said that the message York schools must send to parents is clear: "To help your children grow up to be successful people and good citizens...we need you to help us help them succeed by joining us as models of values and behavior."

Evans also was clear that children must experience the joy of success, but that parents and teachers must recognize and value the impact that coping with struggles can have in helping children learn to be strong and independent adults. Rather than attempting to smooth out every "bump in the road" that children experience, assisting them in learning from mistakes and challenges will reap greater rewards for children. "Be certain," he said

to parents and teachers, "to prepare the child for the path of life, rather than trying to prepare the path of life for the child."

In order to continue the conversations about how the community can come together to discuss core values and share successful strategies for the home/school partnership, the Families Together program, under the direction of Katie Schindler, is hosting a series of evening events. At the elementary level, adults are invited to attend Thursday evening parenting sessions that include dinner and activities for children from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.. Parenting sessions are based on the ten priorities for parents outlined in the book *The Biggest Job We'll Ever Have* by Laura and Malcolm Gauld. Remaining parenting session dates include January 10, February 28, March 13 and April 10, 2008. For parents of high school and middle school children, a Saturday session is planned for February 2 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. that includes activities for students and parents, while another session for parents of high school and middle school students is slated for April 28 at York Middle School.

With a commitment to helping families enjoy quality, outdoor activities in a non-competitive setting, the Families Together Program, in conjunction with the Kittery Trading Post Outdoor Academy (KODA), offers Saturday morning events for children of all ages and their families. A Wildlife Fair at Mount Agamenticus brought over 80 participants who learned about raptors, reptiles and mammals on a beautiful fall morning. A February 9 event will give participants an opportunity to enjoy snowshoeing, and a fishing date in spring will round out the offerings for family outdoor fun. KODA Executive Director Charlie Ek plans and directs the events with support from the Families Together program.

Family Literacy evenings for elementary-aged students and their parents include dinner and "Parent and Children Together" (PACT) Time. Remaining dates for literacy evenings are November 29, December 13, 2007 and January 24 and March 27, 2008. For pre-

schoolers and their parents, a series of Wednesday morning sessions with books, songs and creative activities are held at Village Elementary School.

The Families Together Program, supported in part by grant-funding from the York Rotary and a Learn and Serve America Civic Mission grant, will host a year end celebration on Thursday, May 8, 2008 that is open to all community members. To learn more about Families Together, please contact Katie Schindler at 363-4870.

As Robert Evans said on September 26, children benefit from interactions with adults who are like Mr. Rogers, of television fame. Mr. Rogers' focus, according to Evans, "was not on making a child better, or making them produce or achieve anything... he was consistently relaxed, patient and joyful." Families Together establishes time and a structure for adults and children of all ages to interact, learn and enjoy the experience of sharing in a community setting. The York School Department encourages parents and community members to join us for any or all of these Families Together events, and recognizes that parents and educators working together for the benefit of our children is, indeed, "the biggest job we'll ever have."

*"Be certain to
prepare the
child for the
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path of life for
the child."*



THE CURRICULUM CONNECTION

YORK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
SEPTEMBER 2007, VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

Henry R. Scipione, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Maryann Minard, Ph.D.
Curriculum Coordinator



CRES TEACHER ATTENDS INTERNATIONAL SPACE ACADEMY

**SKILLFUL TEACHER
COURSE TO BE HELD
JANUARY TO MAY 2008**

Coastal Ridge Elementary School fourth grade teacher Deb Bradburn attended the International Space Academy held at the United States Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama from July 20th - 29th. As part of the Teacher of the Year Program, Deb was selected to represent the state of Maine. She was joined by teacher representatives from 23 other countries including Australia, South Korea, China, Russia, Costa Rica, and Portugal. For nine days Deb took on the role of an astronaut. "Feeling the pressure of G-force or the gyroscope simulators left me with a very nauseous feeling that lasted for weeks, but my memories of these nine days will linger a lot longer," she explained. The Space Academy included

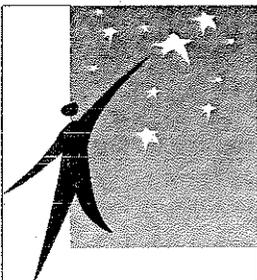


**CRES Teacher Deb
Bradburn poses at
NASA's Space Academy
with team leaders Dan
Oates and Dusty Smith**

classes and trainings that dealt with the history of the Space Program, Rocketry, Hydroponics, Aviation Challenges, and Space Simulators. Deb was introduced to five of the original German rocket scientists, as well as Christa McAuliffe's mother, Grace Corrigan, and Story Musgrave, one of NASA's most experienced astronauts. Deb was designated as the commander of two simulated flight missions, the Discovery and the Endeavor.

At the conclusion of the program, Deb received special recognition as the recipient of the *Right Stuff Medal*. This award, Deb explained, is given to the one class member who demonstrates both physical and mental aptitude as a potential NASA space program participant. She was presented with a NASA 25th anniversary ring; Delta Airlines tickets for two to fly anywhere in the US, Mexico, or the Caribbean; and a scholarship for a York student to attend NASA Space Camp. Deb, who was also honored this year with the Presidential Award for her mathematics teaching, stated "The greatest gift I received was having the opportunity to watch other educators from around the world share their passion for teaching and learning as well as grow both professionally and personally. It reminded me of what a very special profession teaching is! My hope is that I can bring all that I have learned back into the classroom with me and share with my colleagues an adventure of a lifetime."

Research for Better Teaching instructor Jim Warnock will teach a second-semester graduate level course in Understanding Teaching 1 – The Skillful Teacher with MSAD #35 (Marshwood) hosting the sessions. Exact times and locations are still being finalized. The full-day course dates are: January 15, February 6, March 12, April 4, May 14 and May 29, 2008. Two of these dates are early release dates to minimize the impact on student instruction. Educators have the option of choosing graduate credit though Fitchburg State College or earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs) through the University of Southern Maine. Either credit option is acceptable for recertification purposes. The Skillful Teacher, York's instructional model, focuses on pedagogy and core beliefs about teaching and learning. The Skillful Teacher is also a key component of York's supervision and evaluation system, and the school system has committed resources to enable all staff to be fully trained in this model. Registration will be limited to 12 teachers per school, so if you have not yet taken Skillful Teacher, please consider saving the dates for this course. On-line registration for this course is currently taking place through the York School Department website.





EXCEPTIONALITIES COURSE TO HAVE TWO FINAL CLASSES

Follow-up dates for the final two classes of the Exceptionalities course with Jane Spencer Sears have been set for Friday, September 28th and Thursday, October 18th. Please be sure to inform your building administrators that you will need substitute coverage for those days. Please note that all classes will be held at the York Public Library from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The library donates the use of the facility, saving York Schools the expense of having to rent classroom space. Library staff requests that teachers carpool and park only in the side lot to allow library patrons access to parking. Morning coffee and goodies are provided; lunch is on your own.

“Families Together” program Seeks to Engage Parents in Dialogue about *The Biggest Job We’ll Ever Have*

The York School Department’s “Families Together” Literacy Program offers parents the opportunity to participate in a transformational, internationally acclaimed educational program that is changing lives and learning. The program’s focus is to reconnect education with core values, “The Ten Priorities,” which were established at the Hyde School to support literacy development. The goal is to empower parents as a child’s primary teacher and to help find balance within the family between academic achievement and character development. Katie Schindler has been named the Families Together Coordinator for this program. During the academic year, parenting classes will be offered to investigate each of “The Ten Priorities.” The series will include a forum for parenting matters, ideas for being a positive role model, and practice time to develop and reinforce the skills presented. There are ses-

sions designed for the elementary level, and combined sessions for middle and high school levels. York faculty members Meg Worthing and Kathy Welch will facilitate the elementary sessions. York educators Wendy Gilday, Cyndy Dow and Gina Brodsky will conduct sessions designed for middle and high school parents. All York instructors have been trained in the “Ten Priorities” and the principles of “The Biggest Job We’ll Ever Have” through a grant-funded initiative. The principle of mandatory fun provided the impetus for including outdoor recreation in the program. The idea is to provide additional time for families to connect with each other in a structured environment. Families have been invited to participate in outdoor activities, sponsored by the Kittery Trading Post Outdoor Academy, to play and learn together and to reinforce the concepts learned in the classroom. The Outdoor Recreation Program will be offered four Saturday mornings this year and will include a variety of engaging outdoor activities

and education about the importance of good nutrition and physical fitness. York High School students who are members of Team Nutrition, led by Nutrition Services Director Doris Demers are providing the nutrition component of the program. The Saturday morning sessions are open to all ages. An additional component of this comprehensive program is the Wednesday Reading Group which meets Wednesday mornings from 10:30 to 11:15 at the Village Elementary School. This program is specifically geared to pre-school and kindergarten-aged children and their parents. A kick-off event on September 26th will bring Dr. Robert Evans, author of *Family Matters* back to York for presentations to faculty and families. Following a two-hour in-service presentation from 1:00 to 3:00 at York High School for the full faculty and staff, Dr. Evans will speak to parents and community members from 7:00 to 8:30 about the importance of shared values between



Charlie Ek receives a recognition award in Augusta for his KODA efforts.

KODA REACHES OUT TO YORK EDUCATORS AND KIDS

The Kittery Trading Post Outdoor Academy (KODA) provides a valuable resource to area teachers. With a commitment to outdoor recreation, service learning and environmental education, KODA Executive Director Charlie Ek has taught classes including snowshoeing, orienteering, GIS systems and ecology to classes at all levels. Investigate KODA’s website at www.kodaacademy.org to see what KODA can do to enrich your instruction. Funds are available through service learning or other grant sources for transportation to KODA related experiences for classes. For more information, contact your K-12 Service Learning Building representatives, your K-12 Health and Phys Ed Team members, or your K-12 Science Team members.

home and school. Mark your calendars and please work to promote attendance at this event by parents and community members.



K-12 TEAM MEETING SCHEDULES SET FOR 2007-2008

K-12 Curriculum Team meeting dates, including K-12 Technology, Service Learning and K-12 Leadership Teams are now posted on the First Class Conference sites. Agendas will be posted on the calendar. The monthly schedule is posted below for your reference.

K-12 Team Meetings for the 2007-2008 School Year

Month	Leadership Team	Service Learning Team	ELA Team	Math Team	Science Team	Social Studies Team	VPA Team	Health & PE Team	Career Prep Team	Foreign Language Team
	Monday	Tuesday	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Thursday	Thursday	Tuesday	Monday	Monday
September	9/24/07	9/11/07	9/10/07		9/27/07				9/17/07	
October	10/29/07			10/2/07		10/11/07	10/25/07	10/9/07		10/1/07
November		11/6/07	11/5/07	11/27/07					11/19/07	
December	12/3/07				12/13/07	12/6/07		12/4/07		12/10/07
January	1/7/08	1/8/08	1/14/08	1/22/08		1/31/08	1/17/08	1/29/07	1/28/08	
February	2/4/08				2/28/08					2/11/08
March	3/10/08	3/11/08	3/3/08	3/18/08			3/20/08		3/24/08	
April	4/7/08				4/17/08	4/10/08		4/1/08		4/14/08
May	5/12/08	5/20/08	5/5/08	5/27/08	5/29/08	5/22/08	5/15/08		5/19/08	
June								6/3/08		6/2/08

TECHNOLOGY MINI-COURSE OFFERINGS



Martha Borden
York Middle School
Technology Integrator

MENU OF OPTIONS

COMING SOON!

Keep checking the
school news sites for
details.

YORK HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS EXPAND COURSE OFFERINGS THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It was a busy summer for York High School teachers who agreed to take part in training that will permit expanded numbers of courses to be offered at the high school. Science teachers Paul Semprini and Don Watters traveled to Castine, Maine where Paul took the AP Chemistry course, while Don studied AP Biology. Matt and Amy Rosenberg studied AP English at St. Johnsbury, Vermont, while Steve Freeman stayed closer to home at St. Joseph's College in

Windham preparing for the AP European History course. Doug Charamut studied AP Statistics at Bates College in Lewiston, and Kevin Beatty, the York High School Career counselor, took initial training in Virtual High School. Doug Charamut summed up the summer professional development when he said, "It was very enjoyable and I'm looking forward to using the materials in my upcoming course."



York Horizons Program Teachers Attend UCONN Confratute 2007

This summer, Michele Freitag, Horizons teacher at Coastal Ridge and Village Elementary Schools, along with Robert Carbone, Horizons teacher at York Middle School, attended the 30th annual Confratute 2007 at the UCONN campus in Storrs Connecticut from July 9 to July 13. Confratute is sponsored jointly by the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development and the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut. The main focus of this year's conference was differentiating and enrichment opportunities for all students. They were given the opportunity to

study under famed gifted education pioneers Joseph Renzulli and Sally Reis. Confratute provides educators from around the world the opportunity to meet and share experiences along with providing training conducted by noted educators in the field. The five-day conference ran from 8:00 in the morning to 5:00 with keynote speakers and presenters. During the evenings additional keynote speakers and informal gatherings gave the participants the opportunity to hear the latest ideas on gifted education from experts and

colleagues as well.

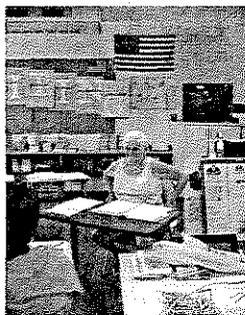
"Confratute was amazing - by far one of the best professional development opportunities I have experienced. Every presenter was knowledgeable, engaging, and accessible. They made themselves available both in and out of class to help you. The whole week was designed to treat educators as the true professionals they are - from the interesting keynotes, to the top-notch presenters, to the recreational activities, to the great food. There was a balance of education and fun. One great aspect was the amount of choice you had - there were so many different sessions offered that it was easy to find one in an area in

which you were interested. I came away with a much clearer understanding of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model, many practical strategies and tools for implementation, and several new professional friends," stated Michele. Both teachers came back with a better understanding of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model that serves as the basis for the York School Department's Horizons Program. They also gathered invaluable information about differentiation and enrichment strategies that will be used to further refine and improve the program this year.

DIFFERENTIATION MINI-COURSES

Donna Lee will teach a mini-course in York on Differentiation of Instruction. Three two-hour sessions will carry six contact hours of recertification credit for staff members who participate in this course. The mini-course meetings will be held at the York Middle School from 3:15 until 5:15. Course dates are Monday, October 15th; Monday, October 22nd; and Monday, October 29th. On-line registration is currently taking place. Participants will gain an understanding of the basics of differentiation and explore practical strategies necessary for implementing it in the regular classroom. Differentiation sessions will:

1. Introduce the rationale for Differentiated Instruction in the regular classroom to include: the role of the teacher, the learning environment, parent involvement, student preparation for Differentiation and strategies for classroom management.
2. Discuss methods and techniques for planning lessons by: student readiness, student interests and learning styles.
3. Compare, contrast, investigate and examine ways to differentiate by content, process and product.



Differentiation
Instructor
Donna Lee.

GRADUATE COURSES IN LITERACY OFFERED ON-SITE IN 2007-2008

The York School Department and the University of Maine Orono are pleased to announce two new graduate courses offered on-site in York during the 2007-2008 school year. Literacy Specialist Ann Constantine attended an intensive summer training session at UMO and is the instructor for both courses. The courses are designed for K-6 educators, special educators and reading specialists. For this two-course sequence, tuition will be paid in advance for York participants eligible for the professional development through their contractual agreement.

ERL 590 - Interventions for Struggling Learners - will be held on Tuesdays at Village Elementary School from 3:15 to 6:00 with some early release time used for classes, subject to participant and instructor agreement. The first class is scheduled for September 18th. ERL 590 - Advanced Practicum in Intervention - will begin in January, 2008. Times and dates will be determined with instructor and participant input. Additional information is available from your school principal. On-line registration is currently taking place.



NEW TEACHER MINI-COURSE SLATED FOR FOUR SESSIONS

A mini-course for all new York teachers will provide 10 hours of contact time to explore a variety of topics including special education and 504 regulations, technology integration, curriculum and assessment, and teacher certification. These hours may be applied to recertification credit. This course is designed to support new teachers with information and interaction time with their colleagues and it is expected that all new teachers will attend these five two-hour after-school sessions from 3:15 to 5:15 at the York School Department Central Office. Classes will be held on Thursday, September 20th; Thursday, October 18th; Tuesday, November 6th; Thursday, January 24th; and Thursday, March 27th. On-line registration is currently taking place.

SERVICE LEARNING

York begins year two of a three-year grant through the Learn and Serve America Grant to implement Service Learning K-12. Last year, nineteen service learning projects involved students at all levels in identifying real issues on a community, state, national or global level and taking actions that help to create solutions and make a difference. K-8 curriculum maps have identified logical places for service learning inclusion in adopted curriculum, and pilot projects are being developed in several grade levels. Charlie Ek, Executive Director of the Kittery Trading Post Outdoor Academy, will head the K-12 Service Learning Team this year. He will be assisted by building representatives Christine Caprio, YHS Alternative Education teacher; Andy Geranis of YMS, Patty Raitto of CRES and Jen Moody of VES in spearheading efforts to expand Service Learning Programs in all schools. Fall Dine and Discuss training sessions are planned, with assistance in completing the Service Learning applications available at the sessions. If you have questions or ideas about possible projects, please see your building representative to join the Learn and Serve movement in York.

SUMMER INSTITUTE COURSES PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INSPIRATION FOR EDUCATORS

The York School Department held its seventh Summer Institute, Monday, June 25th through Thursday June 28, 2007 at York High School. Seventy-one York staff members were joined by educators from points as distant as Arizona, Montana and Ohio. Eleven courses, ranging from mathematics methods to special education law, were offered during the professional development workshop. Courses were taught by York teachers, University of Maine and UNH instructors and contracted instructors. Bringing summer professional development opportunities directly to the York staff permitted ease of access and allowed teachers to enjoy time for sustained learning in a relaxed and

collegial environment. The Summer Institute included two featured keynote speakers. On Monday, June 25th Dr. Alan November captivated the audience with his presentation on global communication and the role of technology in defining the future. Explore his website at www.novemberlearning.com to investigate resources and information that will be useful in the classroom. On Thursday, June 28th, Bob Sprankle, a Wells technology educator presented his efforts to incorporate podcasts and blogging into his instruction. His website, www.bobsprankle.com also includes inspiration and suggestions for integrating technol-

ogy into classroom instruction. Based on the positive post-course surveys completed by participants, the Eighth Summer Institute is planned for Monday, June 23rd through Thursday, June 27th, 2008. Save the dates for four days of learning, fun and inspiration.



York High School teachers get off to a good start at the opening breakfast of the Summer Institute.



MIDDLE LEVEL LITERACY MODEL DEFINED AND SUPPORTED THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FOLLOW-UP DATES SET FOR SPECIAL ED LAW

During the 2006-2007 school year, middle school literacy teachers have been involved in redefining the components of the 5-8 Literacy Instructional Model. The group has decided to proceed with full implementation of a literacy block model that uses the Big Blocks framework. Like the K-4 Literacy model which

follows a block format, the Big Block instructional model includes:

- ◆ Word Work
- ◆ Guided Reading
- ◆ Writing
- ◆ Self- Selected Reading

Review of research and attendance at workshops and conferences in literacy during the 2006-2007 school year led to the YMS decision to adopt

the framework. During the 2007-2008 school year, professional development to supporting teachers as they implement the Word Work block of the new model will be provided. This effort on the part of YMS literacy teachers mirrors the work accomplished by elementary educators to revise the literacy instructional model.

Teachers who participated in the Summer Institute Special Education Law course with USM adjunct instructor Michael Opuda will have two full day follow-up sessions on Thursday, October 4th and Friday, October 5th. Both sessions will be held at the York Public Library from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please be certain to park only on the sides of the library building, permitting library patrons to have access to the closer top parking lot. Please be certain to arrange substitute coverage as needed with your building administrators. Morning coffee and goodies are provided; lunch is on your own.

"Teaching to Your Strengths"

Presented by the Center for School Success of West Lebanon, NH.

Oyster River High School Auditorium

Monday, September 24th, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Admission: Complimentary

We each have a learning profile made up of strengths and weaknesses. The choices we make reflect the natural tendency to do things we are good at, and to AVOID those things we aren't as good at. These decisions affect the students in our classes, the people in our families, and our co-workers. Whether you are an educator, school administrator, clinician or parent, you will find "Teaching to Your Strengths" engaging. This complimentary presentation will provide information on how to identify your unique learning strengths and weaknesses and ways to capitalize on your strengths and areas of interest.

The evening speaker is Diana Watson, M.Ed., Center for School Success (CSS)

Director of Professional Development. Diana earned her BA and M.Ed. from the University of New Hampshire, and she is an educator with over a decade of classroom teaching experience in early elementary grades. Since 2001, her work has expanded to include teacher training. As part of the Center for School Success staff, Ms. Watson delivers professional development courses throughout the year and supports implementation by working in schools directly with teachers.

How will "Teaching to Your Strengths" enhance your student or profession? You will:

- *Become more aware of your own strengths and how they affect the decisions you make.
- *Learn how your particular combination of strengths and weaknesses, in combination with your skill and knowledge can be used to positively influence your teaching practice.
- *Consider ways to maximize your strengths, and bypass/overcome areas of relative weakness.
- *Learn about the programs offered by the

Center for School Success (CSS) based on the groundbreaking work of Dr. Mel Levine, founder of the All Kinds of Minds Institute. CSS offers learning assessments for students (grades 2-college) and professional development for educators and clinicians.

National statistics report that one out of seven people have some sort of learning "disability". However, if you consider that everyone has a unique combination of learning strengths and weaknesses, then those statistics would easily read that seven out of seven have a learning difference.

Eligible teachers will receive 1.5 professional development hours for attendance!

As attendance is limited for the "Teaching to Your Strengths" workshop, please call either Gorman Insurance Services in Somersworth, NH at (1-800-678-3431) or the Center for School Success in West Lebanon, NH at (603) 298-6700 to pre-register your seat.

YORK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

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York Education Foundation

[Home](#)[Our Mission](#)[Grant Info](#)[Contact Us](#)

Supported Projects for the 2007-08 School Year

In its third year of providing funds directly to York educators, the York Education Foundation was able to award over \$21,000 for six teacher grants. Here is a summary of these initiatives.

- 1. Downloadable Audio Books -** \$2,700 to Michele Adams, YHS Librarian. This grant will enable the entire student and staff community at YHS to have access to downloadable audio books by purchasing the download subscription and a limited number of MP3 players. It is the intention of the applicant to promote increased literature experiences for students who may not otherwise read complete texts. It will be used during instructional time and used for pleasure reading opportunities.

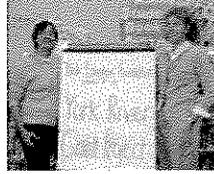
- 2. Living Language Lab -** \$1,200 to Stephanie Carbonneau, YMS French teacher. This grant will enable the World Language Department to purchase a class set of recording headsets to be used in conjunction with interactive language software. This equipment allows for the recording component of the software to be more effectively utilized in a classroom setting.

- 3. Understanding the Community Around Us: Protecting the Natural**

Resources of the York River

- \$7,883 to Charlotte Pierce, CRES 4th grade teacher. This grant will support the work to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum that introduces 4th grade to the historical, ecological, and scientific importance of the York River.

Students will participate in units of study



on the history, geology, and aesthetic qualities of the river, watershed dynamics, estuarine ecology, environmental pollution, and local, state and federal regulations developed to protect the environment. This project uses a wide variety of materials and provides for both in-class and on-site learning opportunities.

4. **Future Tradesmen of York** - \$6,400 to Mike Little, YHS Custodian. This grant will support the development of an after-school program focused on exposing students to the fundamentals of basic home repair, manual craftsmanship, and machine safety.

Through community-based projects, students will



gain the skills necessary to enjoy a successful business operation, including bookkeeping, billing, advertising, and project planning. Critical elements of this proposed program are a student-mentor partnership as the program grows and a community network of resources for information and referrals.

5. **Improving Literacy through the Reading Workshop** - \$1,600.00 to Margot Simonds,

YMS 5th grade teacher. This grant allows for the purchase of trade books central to the newly adopted reading instruction model in Grade 5. Professional development workshops and educational texts have lead the Grade 5 teams to implement The Reading Workshop program.

6. **Literacy Team Recording Projects** - \$1889 to Paula Dickinson, VES Reading Recovery specialist. This grant allows for the purchase of a computer and recording equipment to support the assessment of reading recovery literacy students. Individual student recordings will be used to develop reading fluency, comprehension, and additional reading strategies through self-assessing with a reading instructor. A second component to this proposal includes a professional development element where Reading Recovery instructors, as part of their program, share recorded lessons for peer-observation feedback.

Supported Projects for the 2006-07 School Year

In it's second year of providing funds directly to York educators, the York Education Foundation was able to award over \$20,000 for seven teacher grants. Here is a summary of these initiatives.

1. **History in our Hands** - \$3,500 to Lisa Graziano, 8th-grade Social Studies. Granted to create a

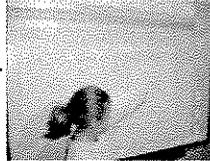


classroom/school museum of American Material Culture from

the Civil War era to the present day. Funds will be used to acquire a collection of cultural artifacts and to construct secure display cabinets in the alcoves of the middle school library entrance. A representative from each of the five 8th-grade classes will serve on a decision-making team called the "Artifact Acquisition Team" that will, with teacher guidance, make final decisions about the acquisitions and write purchase orders. Artifacts will be purchased from various sources, and additional donations from the community will be solicited. Link to newspaper article, [Grant helps teacher make history tangible for kids](#).

2. **"SMART" Boards for Smart Kids** - \$5,359 to Deb Bradburn and Michael Harris, 4th grade. Granted for the purchase of two [SMART Board interactive whiteboards](#).

The purpose of the SMART boards is to bring hands-on learning to the 4th grade classrooms. The large, interactive whiteboards will be used to manipulate computer material and to engage students in active learning. A child's finger can become the mouse as it touches the whiteboard to select icons, navigate websites, and move images. The goal is to utilize the SMART boards in math, science, social studies, and language arts curriculums. All 4th-grade teachers will use the boards in their classrooms after training from a SMART Technologies representative



3. **Nature's Classroom at VES** - \$6,000 to Pam Audet, 2nd grade. Granted to create an outdoor classroom of bushes,

flowers, birdhouses, and handicap-accessible paths at VES. This space would enhance the science K-2 curriculum, creative writing and art. All second grade students and staff will be involved in creating and designing this natural habitat. Reinforcing the town's partnership mission, school employees, students, parents, and community members will work together to implement the design.

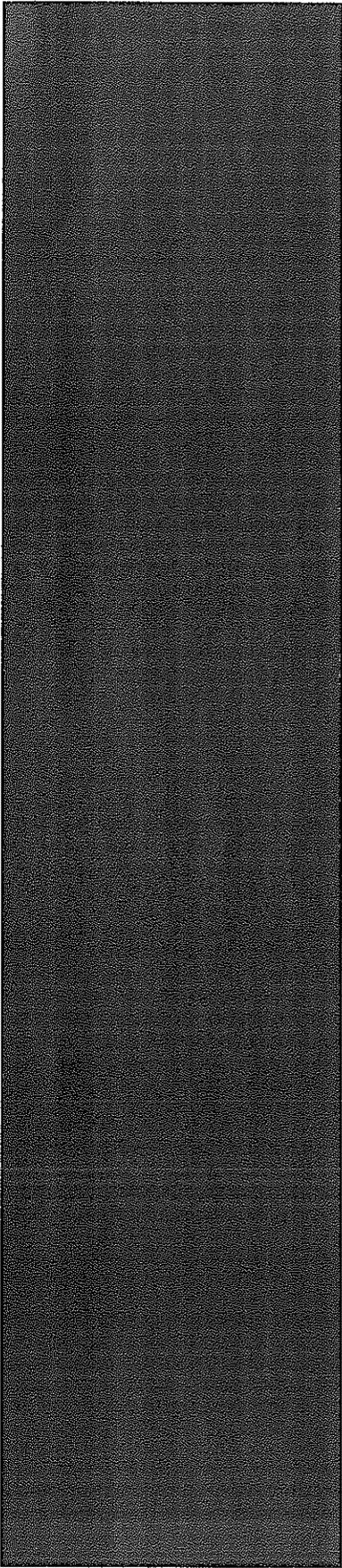
4. **Ready, Set, Go!** - \$1,520 to Elizabeth Crawford Reisz and Ruth Dealy to expand a program offered to all children entering kindergarten and their parents with an emphasis on emergent literacy and school transition issues. YEF's grant covers books and supplies for this program.

5. **Palm Handhelds** - \$800 to Teri Green to purchase 8 Palm Z22 Handhelds for the kindergarten teachers. Granted to enable each teacher to record the assessment and progress of each student. The data collected can be organized by active learning data sheets. Student portfolios can be created, organized, and shared electronically for support staff and parent teacher conferences.



6. **Lindamood Bell (LiPS)/Seeing Stars Learning Processes Workshop** - \$1,705 to Jean Beetz, Special Ed Director and Susan Macri, Assistant Special Ed Director. Granted to incorporate a "multisensory phonemic awareness program" into the





current literacy and special education teaching instruction. The grant allows one special ed instructor to be sent to the LiPS workshop and for the purchase of a LiPS classroom kit to be used in instruction. Additional district special ed, classroom, and speech teachers can be trained in aspects of the program to benefit all children in "phonological processing."

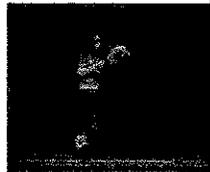
- 7. **Math Game Kits** - \$1,800 to Julie Crafts, Amber Bergeron, and Julie Twomey, 1st grade. Granted to purchase Math Game supplies and storage systems so that all 1st-grade teachers can easily integrate the activities into classrooms during math lessons.

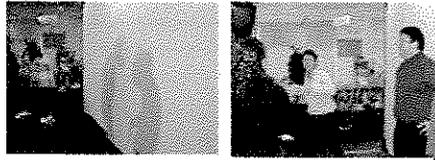


Supported Projects for the 2005-06 School Year

The York Education Foundation awarded its first round of grants, totaling more than \$7,500, to fund new and innovative educational projects for the 2005-06 school year. These included:

- **A matinee performance for all second-graders by theater artist Leland Faulkner**, combining Japanese art forms, mime, shadow theater, illusion, improvisation, and folk tales to produce an imaginative performance.

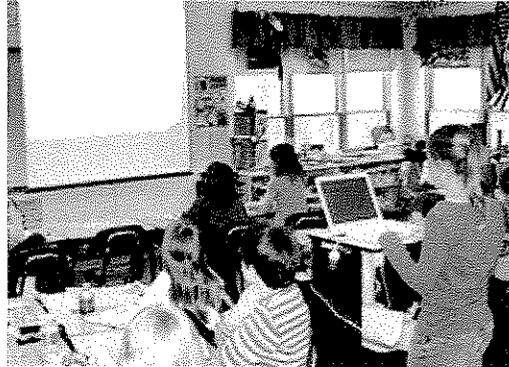




[Click for larger images.]

Faulkner also conducted workshops for teachers to help them bring concepts from the performance into their classrooms for student projects. The grant application was filed by Terry Smith, an educational technologist for second grade students. Read the complete [York Weekly article](#).

- **A technology cart for the fourth grade**, submitted by teacher Michael Harris.



The cart includes a laptop with wireless connection along with a LCD projector to bring all the resources available from the Internet into each fourth-grade classroom at Coastal Ridge Elementary School. Read the [Portsmouth Herald article](#).

YORK VILLAGE - For three days at the beginning of this month, 52 York Middle School students enrolled in Stephanie Carbonneau's French classes put their studies into practice with a journey to Quebec.

"Un Voyage a Quebec," as the three-day cultural expedition was called, was funded in part by a grant from the York Education Foundation, which supports teacher initiatives that could not otherwise be funded

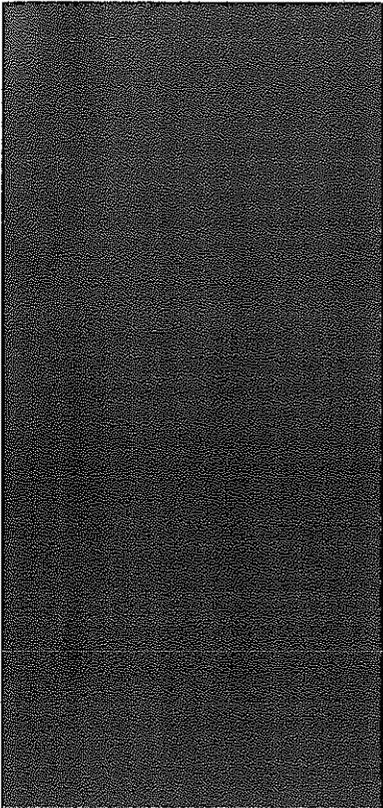
through the regular school budgets.

Read the rest of the story, [Scrapbooks help students remember trip to Quebec.](#)

- **Supplemental funds for an eighth-grade cultural excursion to Quebec City**, submitted by York Middle School French teacher, Stephanie Carbonneau. Most of the grant will be used for a scholarship fund for eligible students in the French class. From the [York Weekly](#) article:
- **A total of 36 pedometers to be purchased as part of a "Wellness Group" for third-grade students** at Coastal Ridge Elementary School. Aimed at students who are not falling into the healthy fitness zones, this program was designed by physical education teacher Eileen Brault. Pedometers are only a part of the effort, which will help show students that regular physical activity can improve fitness levels in cardiovascular and muscular endurance and flexibility. Students will be assisted in healthy food selections and begin to take charge of their own fitness.

Read about [related activities](#) to improve student fitness at Coastal Ridge Elementary School.

- **Support for a family literacy/school readiness program targeted at children between the ages of two and five and their parents**, submitted by by Beth Knight. Materials for this project include books for participating families to build an at-home library, take-home story bags filled with books, and related activities and parent resource guides. The program includes one hour a week for children and their families to improve



family literacy and school readiness.

- **A fifth-grade program on finances**, submitted by Andy Geranis. Geranis has adapted a program designed to teach his homeroom students about careers, salaries, checking accounts, the stock market, renting vs. owning a home, paying taxes, and choosing to spend, invest, or save what they have earned.

If you have a question about YEF, please feel free to contact any director or send an email to info@yorkeducationfoundation.org.

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123rd Legislature
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Senate District 1

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RECEIVED
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March 5, 2008

Commissioner Susan Gendron
Maine Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

BY:-----

Dear Commissioner Gendron,

I write this letter in support of the York School Department and the Wells/Ogunquit CSD submittal of an Alternative Plan to school consolidation. I have been following this process closely as the work of the Regional Planning Committee and the School Committees has progressed. It is evident that both communities worked diligently to explore school consolidation and to create a single Regional School Unit. The work of the combined Regional Planning Committee was lengthy and thorough and, in spite of their efforts, they deemed that consolidation would not result in cost savings to both communities.

The financial burden of the consolidation would lie with the community of York. Based on the financial analysis of the impact of consolidation, it is evident that the York taxpayers would assume a greater cost for educating their K-12 students under a consolidated system than they would if they remained a municipal school system.

Given the exceptions set forth in the consolidation law, I fully endorse the Alternative Plans presented by York and Wells/Ogunquit and urge you to approve their plans thus allowing each school district to proceed with achieving the cost saving measures expected under Alternative Plans to school consolidation.

Sincerely,



Senator Peter Bowman
Maine Senate District 1

Cc: Supt. Scipione (York)
Supt. McDonough (Wells-Ogunquit)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

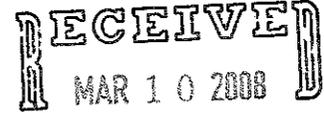
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Windol C. Weaver

4 Weavers Way
York, ME 03909

Residence: (207) 363-4641

Fax: (207) 363-6593



March 6, 2008

BY:.....

Susan Gendron, Commissioner of Education
Maine Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Dear Commissioner Gendron:

The intent of this communication is to express my strong support for York School Department's alternative plan to school consolidation. Based upon the extensive work and findings of the Reorganizational Planning Committee, as well as my own discussions with school officials, it is clear to me that a school union with Wells-Ogunquit is not in the best interest of students in either district. Moreover, if the two districts were to merge, York would be forced to absorb the added financial impact; thus, requiring York's taxpayers to expend more than they currently do for the education of their children.

York's alternative plan has my full endorsement. I urge your approval of its content under the exceptions outlined in the school consolidation law.

Sincerely,

Windol C. Weaver
State Representative

c: Dr. Henry R. Scipione, Superintendent, York School Department



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Code Enforcement
(207)363-1002

Planning
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Assessor
(207)363-1005

Police Department
(207)363-1031

Dispatch
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York Beach Fire
Department
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York Village Fire
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Recreation
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www.yorkmaine.org

March 10, 2008

Commissioner Susan Gendron
Maine Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Dear Commissioner Gendron:

The York Board of Selectmen wishes to be on record in strong support of the Alternative Plan being submitted by the York School Department. We have closely monitored the work of the York and Wells-Ogunquit reorganizational planning committee through the involvement of York Selectman, Dwight Bardwell. We firmly believe that school consolidation is not a viable solution for York students or the York community. As overseers of the Town of York, we do not want to have a situation created that would force our taxpayers to take on the added financial costs that would result from such a merger. The York taxpayers have supported our schools in the past, are proud of our school system and are committed to providing the educational system for York within our community.

For these reasons, we urge you to approve York's Alternative Plan under the exceptions contained in the school consolidation law.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Estes, Chairman
York Board of Selectmen