

# ConVal Corner

by Dr. Richard A. Bergeron

April and May signal spring and spring signals change. The weather changes, energy levels change, and in schools, this seasonal period marks a surge in performance and excitement in learning throughout the District. The focus of this month's article is directed toward student learning and the deserved recognition of outstanding performance. So, join me on this virtual visitation experience as we touch base and celebrate the ConVal community.

Our elementary schools are true beehives of activity. Visitors will note large data walls near the front offices. These data walls serve as public notice that collected and analyzed data is a core, prioritized skill in mathematics. We apply the skill of data analysis using real information gathered by our Administrators, teachers, and students. Another thing that becomes evident in our elementary schools is the visibility of grade-level expectations (GLE). Our classroom instruction is aligned to our State Curriculum Frameworks documents (available for viewing at: <http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/curriculum/CurriculumFrameworks/CurriculumFrameworks.htm>) Each framework includes skill sets of learning objectives divided by grade level – the GLEs. All ConVal students will have access to instruction based on an agreed upon set of standards. Standards are statements about what students should know and be able to do, what they might be asked to do to give evidence of learning, and how well they should be expected to know or do it.

Dublin, Pierce, and Greenfield are elementary schools leading the way to clearly align our curricula scope and sequence with grade-level learning expectations. Antrim Elementary School celebrated All Kinds of Minds at their annual Literacy Night with over 200 students, family, and community members attending. Dublin Consolidated hosted a very successful interactive reading evening with students and parents. The session reinforced positive reading strategies exercised in our classrooms. Every child received a new book to read! Frankestown is hard at work in a collaborative venture with the Frankestown News. Many of our young authors are experiencing the thrill of publication.

The Arts are embedded throughout our schools. Antrim students thoroughly enjoyed an African Drum performance. Greenfield is engaging the NHDI dance and movement residency. Our fifth annual SMS dinner theater presentation of "Anne of Green Gables" was a huge success. Temple is beginning a special integrated project with the Temple Pony Farm. Boo MacDaniel has invited Temple Elementary to join in the town's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.

Our middle schools have a great deal to be proud of regarding students and staff. Dorene Decibus at SMS was named the Rotary Teacher of the Year. Dorene has also been nominated as a New Hampshire Teacher of the Year. As you tour SMS, you will note an exciting new instructional tool taking hold in our classes. SMART Board Technology allows the interactive connection between students and applied technology learning opportunities.

Great Brook School congratulates Jakob Rupp as the Geography Bee winner this year. As a fifth grader, Jakob ably represented GBS at the State Competition. From the back window of our virtual visit limousine, we see successful author's teas, and the exceptional Harris Center residencies creating connections with nature.

We will conclude our celebration caravan at ConVal High School. Greg Morris' Math Team won the State Championship and is being honored before the State Senate before competing in the New England competition. At our last Board meeting, the Math Team gave me a beautiful Team Medal that I continue to wear with honor and pride. Congratulations are also extended to Alex McGrath who won the New Hampshire Statesmanship Award from the House of Representatives. I had the moving experience of joining a reading of stories written by Ms. Moller's Writers Workshop. The tears and smiles these writers created by their abilities to take a risk and share private feelings will stay with me forever.

Please join me in honoring our ConVal teachers on National Teachers Day, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008. We all owe a teacher of the past or the present. Please write a note, make a call, and share a memory with the most important people (next to you) in your children's lives. Our dedicated faculty needs and deserves to hear that their spectacular work is appreciated.