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NORTH COAST SHARED SERVICES ALLIANCE TO EXPAND REACH

With the passage of House Bill 153 and subsequent signing by Ohio Governor John Kasich, educational service centers now have an expanded role in coordinating regional shared services. This expanded role will now include not only educational entities but government and nonprofit agencies. The goal of the legislation is to further streamline services in an effort to reduce state budget woes.

Tom Rockwell, Ed.D, Superintendent of the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Lorain County, is simply not surprised. “Sustained budget cuts throughout the state require creative solutions. It’s a challenge. I am proud of

the exceptional team of committed, knowledgeable professionals working

with me in Lorain County. They have embraced this challenge and are helping to craft initiatives that will establish shared service opportunities throughout our region,” states Dr. Rockwell. “Unfortunately, there are currently no definitive models or guidelines to assist in developing these interagency shared services.”

This summer, the Educational Service Centers of Lorain, Cuyahoga and Medina counties created the North Coast Shared Services Alliance (NCSSA). NCSSA expanded education-related services and enhanced opportunities for districts in the region. The alliance formation began with identifying key services, programs and products unique to each ESC and making them available to school districts throughout the tri-county area.

Dr. Rockwell says the North Coast Shared Services Alliance established the beginnings of a shared service model. “It has generated a good dialogue between the three educational service centers; it challenged us to identify the best and most unique services offered by each ESC.” He believes the collaboration by the ESCs may help state lawmakers as they expand shared services to government and nonprofit agencies.

“I look at shared services in two lights,” explains Dr. Rockwell philosophically. “First, what we did with Cuyahoga and Medina ESCs was voluntary. Our services will not only be delivered more cost-



Tom Rockwell, Ed.D, Superintendent of the Educational Service Center of Lorain County.

UPCOMING EVENT

CURRICULUM MAPPING: THE GLOBAL CLASSROOM OF THE FUTURE

Presenter: Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs

Dates: May 16-18, 2012

Location: Sawmill Creek Resort
400 Sawmill Creek
Huron, Ohio 44839

Registration:

ONLINE: at www.curriculum21.com
(for credit card or purchase order)

FAX: 914.921.0164

MAIL: Send registration and check or P.O. to: Curriculum Designers,
26 Allendale Drive, Rye, NY, 10580

Registration includes continental breakfast and lunch each day. A block of rooms have been reserved at Sawmill Creek Resort, 400 Sawmill Creek Drive, Huron/Sandusky, Oh 44839. To reserve a room call 800.729.6466 or register online at www.sawmillcreek.com.

Early bird discounts are available if your enrollment is paid by January 6, 2012. Cancellations received in writing via fax on or before May 1 will be honored and refunded minus a \$25 processing fee. No refunds will be given after May 1, 2012.

The cost to attend all three days is \$645 per person, \$450 to attend the two-day conference, or \$225 to attend the one-day post conference only.

See Page 2 for more information.

NORTH COAST SHARED SERVICES ALLIANCE TO EXPAND REACH

effectively but ultimately enhance and support education. For example, Medina ESC's nursing service has been in Lorain County to provide professional development to comply with a new state law that requires training for any person who dispenses medication to students. On the other hand, Dave Miller, Director of Technology at NORT2H, is providing professional development throughout our tri-county region and beyond."

As regional shared service providers, the tri-county ESCs bring people together and establish links with and for school districts to share costs, resources, personnel and funding opportunities as a major core function of the organizations, adds the experienced superintendent.

With the cuts in the ESC budgets as well as governmental agencies, it makes sense for all these entities to look for opportunities for shared services. "I'm glad the state is focusing on ways to improve service delivery and reduce costs," Dr. Rockwell insists. "I am confident with the extreme bank of talent that exists among the three ESCs, that creative solutions will be developed to achieve the goal of sharing services."

One idea that has been suggested is that an ESC might create a single payroll office that could also service the payroll needs of governmental agencies throughout the county. "Typically people resist change. If it had not been for this new legislative directive from the state, we wouldn't be having these discussions. That has been a real positive. Obviously, we cannot do business the way we always have – which means we need to look at hiring people who are willing to change and adapt with the times."

The state understands the need to develop shared service models and is providing a grant to assist in the effort. The grant is for \$250,000 a year for two years to fund the design, implementation and delivery of a shared services pilot project. In an effort to be considered for this funding, the NCSSA's three ESCs partnered again to submit a Request for Proposal.

"We took a different approach from the other state ESC's in their written proposals. Rather than request the grant for a single pilot project, our ESCs will begin with a needs assessment to identify common threads among each of the partnering organizations. "I think our chances are pretty good to receive this grant," Dr. Rockwell says. "Jennifer Dodd, Cuyahoga ESC, was key in developing the model and writing the grant. The NCSSA grant would provide innovative solutions and replicable models in creating needs-based and high-return shared service projects across the region in education, social services, government and business. It would also address challenges and barriers such as culture change, staff transition, staffing levels, planning and training for implementation and monitoring, pricing models, technology needs, central and regional location of services, current and future span of control, and organization-wide perceptions. All this will be achieved, one step at a time." ☺

CURRICULUM MAPPING: THE GLOBAL CLASSROOM OF THE FUTURE



The Lorain County Educational Service Center/State Support Team Region 2 is excited to host another three-day conference on Curriculum Mapping on May 16-18th at Sawmill Creek, in Huron/Sandusky, Ohio. Internationally renowned author, presenter and Curriculum Mapping guru Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs will be the keynote speaker.

Based on Dr. Jacobs best-selling book, Curriculum 21: Essential Education in a Changing World, participants will examine practical tools to upgrade the curriculum to include future-oriented activities and assessments aligned to the core maps. Administrators, teachers and support personnel are encouraged to attend this conference.

"Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs is THE mapping GURU," states Moira Erwine, Senior Director of School Improvement and Professional Development at the Lorain ESC/SST 2. Joining Dr. Jacobs on May 16 and 17 will be Ann Johnson and Jeanne Tribuzzi. Conference participants will learn how to carry out the successful and field-tested Four Phase Model of Mapping of the Core (MTTC) Process. In addition, participants will learn strategies they can use with staff to help them use the Four Phase Model to implement MTTC in their schools.

While May 16 and 17 is the actual conference, May 18 serves as a one-day post conference to encourage leadership teams to participate in a practical hands-on session in designing their implementation plan.

"Each state is looking at how to take the information on the common core standards and put their own twist on it so they have model curriculum to implement the core," says Erwine. "Curriculum Mapping is a collaborative design and interactive process that needs to become an integral part of a district's infrastructure. To achieve that end, come to this conference."

See front page for conference details. ☺

L-R Moira Erwine, Senior Director of School Improvement and Professional Development at the Lorain ESC/SST 2 and Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs.



LORAIN COUNTY YOUNG AUTHORS' CONFERENCE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

When Sarah Freeman heard her written words being read aloud to an audience of 900 third through sixth graders last spring, she felt like she could fly.

“When we went up onstage and when they were reading part of my book, it felt like the sky was falling. I could feel it in my heart. It was crazy,” remembers Sarah, 12, of North Ridgeville, who had composed a Civil-War era fiction piece, “One Girl, One War.”

That meant she was the fifth-grade winner for Best in Show at the Lorain County Young Authors' Conference, which had just created yet another unforgettable moment for yet another young writer.

That tradition has held strong for decades, as the Lorain County Young Authors' Conference celebrates 30 years of recognizing the creative efforts of students in grades three through sixth throughout Lorain County.

The conference is one of the largest of its kind in the country, with more than 3,000 students from throughout Lorain County participating each year. About 900 students are selected to attend the spring conference and display their books at Lorain County Community College. In addition, one or two

published authors are contracted by the ESC Gifted Consortium to present and share their journeys as writers to the students.

“This is really the highlight of my job description,” says Mary Lou Kaminski, Gifted Supervisor at the Lorain County Educational Service Center. “I love working on it and coordinating it because it is such an exciting day for the kids. Looking out at those 900 faces, they are so enthralled. It's just thrilling to have it all come together and recognizing those kids.”

Kaminski is in her third year of coordinating the event and gives credit for the program's success to her predecessors, including longtime



coordinator Rondell Belt and Jean Rounds, who was instrumental in creating the event.

Rounds is delighted that the ESC's gifted coordinators have continued the program through the years.

“Each year, it's exciting, and I am just amazed by the talent,” Rounds says. “It's so exciting to see it grow and be invited each year and to view the students' books and interact with the students and teachers.” The Rocky River resident, a retired teacher and principal, is a member of the Rocky River Board of Education.

Rounds says the program began when gifted education teachers and classroom teachers thought it would be great to have a consortium for students throughout Lorain County where they could share their work. Rounds was gifted education coordinator at the Lorain County Board of Education at the time. She was able to secure a grant from Stocker Center – which has hosted the conference for each of its 30 years – and a Martha Holding Jennings Grant for the program, which began with about 150 students. Additional funding has been generously provided through grants from the Community Foundation of Lorain County and a grant from the ESC Endowment Fund. Also, since 1993, the National Association of College Stores in Oberlin has helped to fund the Lorain County Young Authors' Conference.

“Because our mission involves providing education for people who work in college stores, to better serve their student customers, this is a natural ‘cause’ for us,” says Cindy Thompson, Director of Association and Volunteer Relations for NACS.

“I've been fortunate to be able to work with them since 1993 and see firsthand how excited these kids are about the opportunity to attend,” Thompson says. “I know from my niece Julie, one of the participating teachers from Amherst, that the experience was especially wonderful for one of her students who had been struggling, and who has made huge strides in her own reading by participating.”

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“EACH YEAR, IT'S EXCITING, AND I AM JUST AMAZED BY THE TALENT,” ROUNDS SAYS. “IT'S SO EXCITING TO SEE IT GROW AND BE INVITED EACH YEAR AND TO VIEW THE STUDENTS' BOOKS AND INTERACT WITH THE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.”





Briana Holtzman, a fourth grader from Avon Heritage and award winner for illustrations in her book "The Last Chance."

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LORAIN COUNTY YOUNG AUTHORS' CONFERENCE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

Teachers volunteer their students to participate, and then escort students through the process of writing, creatively binding and illustrating their books. "It is a year-long process for us and for the teachers," Kaminski says, "and it's all worth it in the end."

Sarah Freeman, now a sixth grader, was born with a love of writing, but a certain teacher was a great encouragement. "It was really my gifted teacher, Mrs. (Cathy) Fischer," she says. "She really inspired me to write. I entered Young Authors in third grade for the first time. She just inspired me to put the book together."

"The inspiration comes from the teachers," Kaminski says, "and if the students are going to continue to write, it's because teachers are encouraging them and teaching them that writing is valuable to creative expression."

As is illustrating.

Briana Holtzman, 10, won as a fourth grader from Avon Heritage for best illustrations in her book, "The Last Chance." She filled about every other page of the book with pictures, mostly of one of her loves, horses.

"I really liked it, because it was the first time I ever did it, and I've always loved to draw," Brianna says. "I was very surprised (when I won). It felt really good."

North Ridgeville's Kyle Baker, 13, won last year as a sixth grader for his book, "In or Out," the story of a troubled boy who is mistreated by his mother and finds a friend and success in life through music.

"Writing helps you express your feelings, and it's just fun to write about things that can happen in the real world as well," he says. Kyle also participated in Young Authors as a fifth grader.

"I think it's good to have because it gets every kid to use their mind and their writing skills, and you get to see how creative your mind is, how large your imagination is," he says.

The two-day conference includes an evening Open House for families, where students' books are artfully displayed and students can meet guest authors. The next day, the guest authors speak and interact with the students, followed by the awards ceremony, where the best writers and illustrators from each grade level are announced. The works are judged by experienced writers and illustrators.

The 2012 conference is May 14 and 15 and features three guests:

- **Ridley Pearson**, *New York Times* best-selling author, who will present to grades five and six.
- **Marilyn Sadler**, author of the "P.J. Funnybunny" series, the "Alistair" series and many other titles, who will present to grades three and four.
- **Tom Batiuk**, "Funky Winkerbean" cartoonist, who was the first author to present at the Young Authors' Conference and who will be back to commemorate the event's 30th year. ☺

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SOUTH CENTRAL SCORES O.S.U. MATH COACHES

South Central math scores are expected to rise thanks to a Race to the Top \$500,000 innovative grant the school district received to implement a Math Coaches Program district-wide. The Math Coaching Program (MCP), offered through Ohio State University, will provide long-term, high-quality, classroom-embedded professional development for teachers in the buildings where coaches are employed.

Moira Erwine, Senior Director of School Improvement and Professional Development for the ESCLC/Region 2 State Support Team, explains, “In the spring of 2011, there was an opportunity for a Race to the Top innovative grant. I knew that math coaches were being successfully used at other school districts within Ohio, but they have not been utilized with Race to the Top. Ben Chaffee, Superintendent of South Central Local Schools, and I applied for the grant for use in implementing the Math Coaching Program after looking at data that indicated concern for South Central’s math achievement.”

The MCP coaching approach is grounded in the concept of the coach and teacher teaming to improve student learning of mathematics. Coaches bring an expertise from their own professional development experiences to assist teachers in the use of inquiry, guided discovery, and problem-based, student-

centered mathematics instruction, as well as in teacher-professional learning of mathematics content for teaching.

According to Erwine, the ultimate goal of the Math Coaches is to improve student achievement in mathematics. “The MCP-endorsed instructional strategies are not an experiment. These strategies are research-based, reform-based teaching methodologies that are already known to help students better learn, understand and apply mathematics,” she says enthusiastically.

“A majority of the grant will be used to offset the cost of my two math coaches that were formerly teachers in my district,” explains Chaffee. “The O.S.U. MCP requires these coaches be previously employed in our district because of their familiarity with the culture and staff. This is a good thing. The O.S.U. coaches then provide the professional development to my coaches. O.S.U. coaches serve as liaison mentors to assist my coaches from a distance.”

The MCP is currently working with more than 50 schools across Ohio, most of which are mathematically low-performing urban and rural schools. MCP is funded from multiple sources with additional sources pending. The initial and primary funder is the Ohio Department of Education. ODE funding is awarded with the understanding that the MCP will follow research-based guidelines for effective professional development and instruction-based program content and instruction on state and national mathematics standards.

The program pursues multiple objectives in those schools:

- Improving student achievement
- Strengthening teacher and coach mathematics content knowledge
- Strengthening teacher and coach knowledge in mathematics pedagogy

MCP TEACHING APPROACH

The MCP instructional approach is curriculum independent because the approach allows the pedagogy to focus on the critical features of instruction. Regardless of the curriculum, MCP teachers are expected to include in their pedagogy the following activities:

- Posing a problem or frame an activity
- Allowing students to work freely, circulating to monitor, encourage, and strategically guide students
- Questioning students to probe thinking and to evoke deeper understanding

THE MATH COACHING PROGRAM
(MCP), OFFERED THROUGH OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY, WILL PROVIDE LONG-TERM,
HIGH-QUALITY, CLASSROOM-EMBEDDED
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
TEACHERS IN THE BUILDINGS WHERE
COACHES ARE EMPLOYED.





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SOUTH CENTRAL SCORES O.S.U. MATH COACHES

- Encouraging students to develop multiple representations and identify mathematical connections
- Encouraging students to communicate reasoning and justification for their work
- Facilitating discussions about student solutions and problem-solving strategies
- Documenting the on-going assessment throughout the lesson
- Grounding instructional strategies for the next lesson on assessment

Making a problem a better problem may mean making the problem more open-ended, not easily solved algorithmically, or involving more rigorous content. It might also mean designing the problem to encourage multiple solution strategies or to differentiate for different levels of learners.

“Our math teachers have really bought into it and love it. We are doing K-12 with all our math teachers including intervention specialists. The ultimate goal is to increase the level of rigor in our math program in the schools as well as increase our math scores,” Chaffee says. “We are looking to elevate our talented and gifted students as well. The Educational Service Center of Lorain County and Moira Erwine’s assistance has been phenomenal. I appreciate Moira’s insight and constant drive for improvement. She is an awesome critical friend. She is a good fit for us – well liked and valued by our staff.”

One thing is certain, with Math Coaches in place, students at South Central have scored big! ☺

INNOVATIVE SOFTWARE PROGRAM CLICKS WITH YOUNG VISUAL LEARNERS

Students and teachers are raving about VizZle, an interactive software program designed for children with autism and other visual learners.

The web-based software is being used at the Lorain County Early Learning Center in LaGrange, a preschool for typically developing and special needs children ages 3 to 5. VizZle allows teachers to quickly create customized academic tasks and activities that students can engage in via computers, smartboards and mobile tablets, such as iPads.

“Within VizZle there are a lot of different lessons you can create,” says Jill Henes, an intervention specialist at the Early Learning Center. “You can create matching boards, stories, sorting boards and picture schedules. You can create games that they can take turns playing, like a social game with a peer, and you can make it adaptable to any ability level.”

This is the second year that VizZle has been used at the Early Learning Center, where five teachers now have VizZle licenses.

“It’s been a fantastic tool,” says Henes, who has been using the program for two years. “It is so easy to use as a teacher. You can create a lesson in five minutes and adapt it to meet the needs of all of your students. There are not too many things out there that are so quick and functional and that you can put into place the same day.”

The software, which was developed by teachers, is produced by Monarch Teaching Technologies Inc. of Shaker Heights, an offshoot of the Monarch School of Autism, says Jennifer Heim, Autism/Low Incidence/Assistive Technology Consultant at the Educational Service Center of Lorain County/State Support Team 2.

Monarch introduced VizZle to the general market in 2009. The subscription service is based on annual licensing and provides users access to lessons in a shared library; customization and creation tools; IEP (Individualized Education Plan) goal data tracking; a collection of images, videos and audio; and six VizZle Players, which can be accessed from any computer with an internet connection, according to www.monarchtt.com.





Perhaps best of all, Henes says, “My students love it.”

“All the teachers that have VizZle love the fact that they have access to that extra resource in the classroom,” says Heim, a VizZle certified trainer. “They’re seeing students able to engage in activities on the computer that they wouldn’t be able to engage in otherwise. They have access to visual lessons that are more effective and that channel to their students’ learning style.”

Teachers are finding VizZle’s built-in data collection and IEP goal data tracking features to be helpful in planning their curriculum.

“That allows us to track how things are going and to adjust things as needed,” Heim says. “For example, within books, we can embed comprehension questions to check the comprehension of what is being read to students or what they are reading.”

The program also can be a time saver.

“VizZle has a shared library of about 4,500 lessons that teachers across the country have made, so there’s a lot less planning that teachers have to do,” Heim says. “It makes it a much more efficient way to meet student needs. There is other software available where teachers can make similar activities, but the platform that VizZle uses makes it much easier to import pictures and make it customized for students.”

VizZle is highly interactive; for example, correct answers are rewarded with immediate visual and auditory feedback, such as clapping hands or a cascade of colorful confetti.

The software can be used for small group, large group, or one-on-one instruction, Henes notes. Another capability of the web-based software is that lessons can be opened and practiced at home via a feature called VizZleGram, Henes adds.

Furthermore, she says, students are also learning how to utilize technology, a must in today’s tech culture.

“IT’S BEEN A FANTASTIC TOOL,” SAYS HENES, WHO HAS BEEN USING THE PROGRAM FOR TWO YEARS. “IT IS SO EASY TO USE AS A TEACHER.”



Jennifer Heim, a VizZle certified trainer

Another advantage is that once students are in a VizZle lesson, they cannot navigate to other areas, as they can with other software, she adds.

Perhaps best of all, Henes says, “My students love it. They look forward to the lessons and activities on VizZle every day. Because of the way that the program is built, it is so easy for them to use and it is so easy for them to manipulate.”

“MY STUDENTS LOVE IT. THEY LOOK FORWARD TO THE LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES ON VIZZLE EVERY DAY.”



21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE EXAMINES WHERE TECHNOLOGY SHAPES LEARNING

“We put far too little emphasis on what students need for the future. We’re in a new context or an environmental ‘VOCA’ - volatility, uncertainty, chaos and ambiguity,” keynote speaker Marc Prensky told more than 180 participants at the 21st Century Technology Conference on November 11 at Lorain Community College Spitzer Center in Elyria.

“Shadow a student for a day. They want to be trusted, respected and heard. They want to express their opinions, make decisions, and connect with their peers around the world. They want to cooperate and compete with each other. They want what they learn to be relevant.” Prensky said.

“Technology will become one trillion times more powerful than it is today,” he insisted.

Prensky has created more than 50 software games for learning, including the world’s first fast-action videogame-based training tools and world-wide, multi-player, multi-team on-line competitions. He has taught at all levels and has been featured in articles in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, appeared on CNN, MSNBC, PBS, and the BBC, and was named as one of training’s top 10 “visionaries” by *Training* magazine. He holds graduate degrees from Yale (Teaching) and Harvard (MBA).

Today’s students represent the first generations to grow up with this new technology, having spent their entire lives using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and other toys and tools of the digital age. Today’s average college grads have spent less than 5,000 hours of their lives reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games (not to mention 20,000 hours watching TV). Computer games, email, the internet, cell phones and instant messaging are integral parts of their lives.



The bottom line, Prensky told conference attendees, “By giving students old tools, we are actually harming them.”

The revolutionary educator suggests such statements as these by today’s students offer insight into the problem:

“In olden days, you had to memorize phone numbers.”

“If I lose my cell phone, I’d lose half my brain.”

Prensky warns that banning new technologies – cell phones, ipads, touch pads, etc. – is counter-productive. “Every turned off device is a turned off kid,” he insists.

“Our students require the latest and best ways to network, communicate, present, understand and learn,” encourages Prensky. “Just introducing the technology is not enough. We must change how we teach and what we teach.”

The enthusiastic lecturer, author and software creator says what is currently being taught in schools ignores the future and that “much of the core standards comes from the 18th century.”

“Change has to happen in each classroom. That is where the focus of change has to be, everyday,” he stated, resulting in nods across the LCC grand ballroom.



Students participated in a discussion with those attending the 21st Century Technology Conference.

Prensky used the term 'noun' to describe tools used, like Powerpoint, iTouch, Wikipedia, Twitter, iPads and email. He said the 'verb' to describe the presenting, communicating, learning. "The verbs in education should not change, but the nouns change rapidly," Prensky describes. For example instead of books and blackboards, teachers are using videos and electronic boards.

According to the animated keynote speaker, teachers need to ask what are the key verbs we want to focus on teaching. Next, teachers must ask, "Are we using the best nouns to teach them the skills?"

He encouraged the crowd that they must be ready and flexible enough to move to new nouns as they appear – "and they will be appearing and disappearing rapidly."

"We should strive for digital wisdom – how we use the tools to make us wiser," encouraged Prensky. "I believe in a pedagogy called 'partnering' where we share the work differently than we have in the past. The best way is students teaching themselves. Teachers need to change into a 21st century tool, too. They need to be more of a coach, guide and partner rather than a lecturer, controller and ruler. Technology's role is to support this pedagogy."

"Our students are rockets. Let them use technology to take off," Prensky said. "That makes our teachers rocket scientists."

"Don't waste your time learning how to use the new technology," he suggested. "The students can do it. Most already know and can teach the others. Peer-to-peer teaching is a huge resource we do not utilize efficiently."

Another tool Prensky suggested teachers use is "flipping" the classroom - putting a lecture online or as a podcast and letting the students watch it the night before. Class time can then be used to work with the students to solve problems.

"Students hate lectures, busy work, and worksheets. We should respect what students like – respect their passions. Learning comes from passion, not discipline." He suggested teachers should ask every student what they are passionate about, write it down, and let these passions guide the lessons. "If we did this, our education will be light years ahead. It's about making it real. Relevant is nice, but not enough. It's our job to make things real."

As conference attendees dispersed to go to the breakout sessions, David Miller, Senior Director of Technology & Innovation, at NORT²H, said, "Prensky was right on with his address today. One thing he said that stood out for me was that, as teachers, we think we need to know how to use the technology. He said the technology professionals in the classrooms today are actually the students."

NORT²H researches the 21st century technology and assists in the collective purchase, training and maintenance of the equipment. "We are trying to find the right technology for the right teacher," Miller explained.

"We're often referred to as the 'Technology Evangelists,'" laughed Miller. "The NORT²H consortium helps districts identify technology needs, select products and services, and provides professional development, like this conference today, to improve student learning." NORT²H does not receive funding from the State of Ohio. A membership fee funds their services.

Breakout sessions included The Power of Wordpress, Professional Learning Networks, Teachscape, Apps for Special Education, Working in the Cloud and many more. Guests were also able to visit vendor booths to see and hear about some innovative technology available for the classroom. ☺

"TEACHERS NEED TO CHANGE INTO A 21ST CENTURY TOOL, TOO. THEY NEED TO BE MORE OF A COACH, GUIDE AND PARTNER RATHER THAN A LECTURER, CONTROLLER AND RULER. TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IS TO SUPPORT THIS PEDAGOGY."

MARC PRENSKY



Keynote speaker Marc Prensky

LORAIN ESC WELCOMES NEW STAFF

Graham Henderson

Program Director for the Lorain County Academy

His educational achievements are impressive:

- Associate of Arts in Elementary Education, Lorain Community College, Elyria, Ohio
- Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio
- Master of Arts in Education, Curriculum & Instruction, Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio
- Elementary Administration Certificate, Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio



Graham Henderson's work experience speaks to his passion, having dedicated his entire life to the education of children, teens and adults.

In his most recent position as Director of the Magnet Schools Assistance Grant for Lorain City Schools, Henderson supervised the implementation of the \$12,000,000 Federal MSAP Magnet Grant and redesigned four elementary and two middle schools into specialized magnet schools. Prior to this work, he served as Director of School Leadership for the Lorain City School District, where he interviewed and hired building administrators for the district's elementary, middle and high school and evaluated and supervised building administrators in those schools. As Director of High Schools in the Lorain City School District, the education professional oversaw the implementation of the district's small schools initiative.

Earlier in his career, Henderson served as principal at Lincoln, Palm and Hawthorn Elementary Schools. "These were the districts' lowest-performing elementary schools. At each school, performance was about 50% below the state requirement," says Henderson.

Henderson was also assistant principal at Hawthorne Elementary School, coordinator at Jumpstart Alternative School in Lorain City Schools, and a teacher at Lorain Middle School, Irving Middle and Elementary Schools, and Lakeview Elementary School.

"I have been in education my entire life. Today, I feel the rigor is more intense. Everything must be aligned with state standards, which is a good thing. Teachers must all be highly qualified with high standards across the board. The high-stakes testing has made the biggest change," says Henderson.

"The intention is to raise the standards. All children can learn – but some students learn best in different settings and at different rates. As long as we have yearly progress and growth, that's what matters," explains the experienced educator.

"At Lorain County Academy, the teachers make learning enjoyable. I like the creativity here – from developing a product to seeing it through from logo development, pricing, and marketing. In a typical setting, we wouldn't be able to do that. Another time our students went fishing where science, math, and orienteering were taught through reviewing pounds and ounces, the use of a compass and looking at water temperatures."

The consummate educator continues to list innovative projects used to teach students: reading the book, *The Wright Sister*, while studying gliders, prop airplanes and rockets in their reading and math studies; making jewelry using Dichroic Glass, first used to protect the suits worn by astronauts in space; and building lean-tos in the woods.

"We have a great staff willing to do different things," Henderson explains enthusiastically. "They really work well together, and I enjoy it. Everything you do, you can create a lesson around it. Though these kids are not functioning in the typical classroom, we are finding ways to help them learn and achieve. It's a lot of fun and very rewarding."

Sarah Walker

Director of Special Education & Family Services, SST 2

Sarah Walker received a Bachelor of Science in Education from Ohio University and a few years later returned to school, earning a Master of Education Administration from Cleveland State University.

Prior to accepting the position as Director of Special Education & Family Services with Lorain County ESC/Region 2 SST, Walker was employed at Keystone Local Schools as their Special Education Supervisor. In this capacity, among a host of other responsibilities, the dynamic young woman:

- Managed and allocated IDEA-B grants and ARRA IDEA-B funds
- Facilitated the development and implementation of grade-level functional learning units for students with multiple disabilities, which resulted in the return of several students from out-of-district placement
- Facilitated professional development opportunities for staff with regard to co-teaching, non-violent crisis intervention, and Wilson Reading System
- Improved achievement outcomes for students with special needs as measured by the Ohio Achievement Assessment
- Promoted a collaborative professional environment for staff members working as co-teaching teams in order to improve educational outcomes for students with special needs
- Participated in the Ohio Longitudinal Transition Survey

Walker's passion for education is contagious as you talk with her about the challenges and rewards of working with children with developmental disabilities.



"I've been involved with special education in some form or another my entire life – either as a sibling, an educator and now as a parent. I've experienced special education from both sides, professional and personal. As such, I think my experiences have given me a unique perspective into the dynamics of the IEP team. I can understand the complexities of balancing the needs of the child with the opportunities available within a district as well as the emotional roller coaster a parent can experience as they try to navigate the legal, educational and often medical needs of their son or daughter," Walker says.

"My goal within this position is to create a culture of collaboration and support within our region, both for the districts as well as the parents," explains Walker. "Our ultimate goal is improving the outcomes for all our students, particularly those with special needs. The only way to accomplish that is through all parties working together. I'd like to develop a database of programs, so districts can use one another as resources to provide the most comprehensive services for each student within the least restrictive environment. If one district is implementing a program and seeing success, then I would like to put them in contact with other districts that may be interested or have a need for that program. Again, our focus is collaboration. Even though our region is large, we all have the same goals for our students."

Carissa Crytzer

Gifted Supervisor, Lorain ESC

"I really enjoy working at the ESC. I especially like working with the teachers and helping to direct their classroom instruction. My goal in this position is to create new programs to facilitate all ages of gifted and talented students throughout Lorain County. I am currently working on coordinating three new programs to implement into our schools," Carissa Crytzer, Gifted Supervisor at the Lorain ESC, states.



The motivated teacher earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education at Hiram College; Master of Science in Gifted Education from Bowling Green State University; and a Master of Science in School Leadership at the University of Akron. She has a five-year Early Childhood Licensure for Ohio, Gifted Education Certified, and holds a Reading Endorsement for Ohio.

She comes to the Lorain ESC by way of Brunswick City Schools where she served as the fifth-grade gifted education teacher. In this position, Crytzer taught various children ages 9 - 11 with I.Q.'s ranging from 130 to 150. In addition to administering and scoring diagnostics tests on students in math, reading and writing, she also administered and scored Dibels tests on students throughout the year while conducting progress monitoring to certain students, along with a host of other responsibilities.

A few shining achievements include creating and implementing written education plans for all fifth-grade gifted students and developing engaging visual, auditory and kinesthetic lessons using a variety of mediums to reach all learners. Crytzer also implemented and coordinated the school-wide after-school activities, Video Announcement Club and Destination Imagination. Crytzer was awarded a district-wide grant to implement building an OAA Science Prep assembly and workshop in 2010.

Prior to this work, Crytzer taught second and third grade gifted education at Brunswick City Schools; K-1 Gifted Education at Greater Cleveland Gifted Academy; and worked as a first grade teacher at Hope Academy Cathedral in Cleveland.

Ruth Weible

Secretary

Ruth Weible, secretary in the Gifted department at the Lorain County ESC, earned a B.A. in English from Cleveland State University and recently received her Technical Writing certification through the continuing education program in Business & Management at CSU.



Her skill sets are impressive: Microsoft Office Suite 2007, Word (mail merge), Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Outlook; social media, blogger; Visio 2000 Professional; Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional; internet and intranet website management and extensive use of office equipment.

Ruth is active in her community and serves on the Lakewood Public Library Foundation Board of Trustees where she currently serves on a committee to bring Public Art to Lakewood. "I thoroughly enjoy working in the educational environment. Everyone in this organization is terrific to work with and very accepting of new ideas, new initiatives and any process that enriches the programs we offer and the students we serve. It's so positive here every day."

E. Andreas Johansson

Educational Technology Integration Consultant

Andreas Johansson, Educational Technology Integration Consultant, NORT2H, earned a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Kent State University. His previous work experience includes serving as a teacher at Nardon High School in Macedonia, Ohio and Fairless Middle School in Navarre, Ohio. He currently teaches a summer workshop titled, "Technology in the Classroom: A Practical Approach," at Kent State University.

WebQuests, blogs, pod-casts, multi-media, mapping projects, and online inquiry learning are a few of his proficiencies.

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THERE'S NO SUBSTITUTE FOR GOOD SUBSTITUTES

ESCLC PROGRAM OFFERS INVALUABLE TRAINING TO SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Did you know that an entire year of a student's K-12 education is taught by substitute teachers? Or that 90 percent of districts nationwide spend less than four hours training their substitutes?

That research is one reason why the Lorain County Educational Service Center is emphasizing its Substitute/Paraprofessional Training Program, now in its second year. This invaluable program also features a new online training option.

"We are conducting sub training to ensure our students continue to learn in the absence of their classroom teacher," explains Moira Erwine, Senior Director of School Improvement and Professional Development for the ESCLC/Region 2 State Support Team, serving 27 school districts in Lorain, Erie and Huron counties.

Most school districts host an orientation for their substitute teachers, where topics such as payroll information, background/fingerprinting requests, discipline referral forms and codes of conduct are covered, Erwine notes.

But when, she asks, do they learn about the real-world experiences of the classroom, such as how to manage a class, managing behavior, special education, and how to implement teachers' lesson plans?

"Sub training provides these people who have not had any formal training with the skills necessary to manage their classroom, to understand special education, and realize the legal aspects of the job," Erwine explains.

The ESCLC's substitute training program includes a full day of face-to-face training, or, if preferred, 8 to 10 hours of self-paced online training. A required half-day follow-up allows for networking and a deeper understanding of the strategies taught in class or online. A new component this year is the mandatory online assessment to receive an online Sub Diploma through the Utah State University Substitute Training Division. Participants are provided with a copy of the Substitute Teacher Handbook to prepare for the rigorous assessment.

Moreover, Erwine also offers substitutes additional opportunities through a "Menu of Choices" that includes topics such as 21st century technology, English language learners, preschool and school-age literacy, and child development.

Training is imperative because so many substitutes do not have a background in education.

Substitutes are often stay-at-home mothers, people interested in becoming teachers, child care workers, retired industrial workers, military, or unemployed professionals needing flexible hours to pursue other employment while earning income, Erwine says.

Ted Schmidt, 61, became a substitute teacher after retiring from Ford Motor Co.

"Although I had a degree, I had no experience or training in education," says the North Olmsted resident, who decided to enroll in the ESCLC's training program.

"The Substitute Teacher Training Course that was offered by ESCLC proved to be extremely beneficial to me," Schmidt continues. "I especially found the classroom management and teaching strategies sessions to be very helpful. I also learned a great deal of information that I will be able to use in my assignments.

"I definitely feel more prepared for class after taking this course," he says.

The next training session is scheduled for Jan. 3, with the follow-up session scheduled for Feb. 3. Registration is due by Dec. 16. Registration for the in-person session is \$100, and the online substitute training registration fee is \$80.

In addition, a self-paced, three- to four-hour online paraprofessional training program is available, which provides participants with training in the areas of behavior management, learning styles, legal aspects of the job, special education, and the role of a paraprofessional. After completion of a final assessment, participants can receive a Certificate of Assessment. The online paraprofessional training registration fee is \$40.

It's a small price to pay compared to the potential cost of having unprepared substitute teachers.

Studies have shown that 56 percent of school districts never have a face-to-face interview with substitute candidates, and that having 10 days of someone other than the regular classroom teacher will have a negative impact on student achievement, Erwine notes.

"It's our goal to have our subs trained and up to speed, so the kids in our schools can continue learning every day," she says.

To register, visit www.loraincountyesc.org or contact Pam Gamble at 440-324-5777, Ext. 1113. ☺



SPELLING BEE BUZZ IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

It's getting to be the time of year for bees – spelling bees, that is.

In January and February, participating schools throughout Lorain County will choose their star seventh- and eighth-grade spellers for the 29th Educational Service Center of Lorain County/Elyria Chronicle-Telegram Spelling Bee. The Champion Speller will go on to the 85th Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. at the end of May, as did last year's Chronicle-Telegram/ESCLC Spelling Champion, Matthew Cecil of Amherst.

Now 14 and in high school, Matthew first competed in ESCLC's spelling competitions as a fourth grader. "They challenge kids to do things on their own that they're not being pushed to do," Matthew says. "I think the whole organization is great."

Jim Hartline, ESCLC's Projects Coordinator, administers the spelling bee competitions. "It's one of the few things where kids enjoy competing on an academic level," Hartline says. "This is a great thing for education."

Hartline cites these benefits of participating in a spelling bee:

- It helps students improve their spelling and calls attention to this important language arts skill
- It increases student vocabularies, thereby improving reading and writing in all disciplines/courses of study and research
- It enhances communication and presentation skills, whether speaking or writing, in both digital and analog formats
- It develops students' abilities to present themselves before an audience, intelligently and with confidence
- It teaches the application of language arts concepts and strategies, and it develops correct English-usage habits that will help students all their lives in their professional and personal endeavors

Participation in the grades 7 and 8 competition is open to students in all public, private, parochial and home schools in the Chronicle-Telegram readership area. The number of spellers allowed to enter from each school is based on the combined seventh- and eighth-grade enrollments of their respective schools. Twenty-nine schools are registered to compete in the upcoming 2012 competitions.

The Chronicle-Telegram/ESCLC Spelling Bee is organized into two preliminary bees:

- West Division Schools (as far west as Sandusky) on March 2 at Amherst Junior High School
- East Division Schools (as far east as Avon Lake) on March 9 at Sheffield Middle School

The top 16 spellers from each division compete for the championship at the Regional Bee Finals on March 16 at Midview West Elementary School.

There is no cost for schools to compete, Hartline notes. A number of financial sponsors cover expenses, including the cost to send the champion speller and an advisor, who is usually a parent, to Washington D.C.

"The bees are a popular attraction," Hartline says. "There is a lot of interest shown by the schools' parents and communities. We usually have about 100 to 200 parents, friends and relatives attend each bee."

Such a crowd can spell trouble for some spellers.

Often, Hartline says, "The spellers are scared to death. Getting up to a microphone with 200 people looking at you is tough. At the same time, there are super spellers with super confidence. We have kids that are really confident, and this is a piece of cake for them."

Matthew, who won the West Bee two years in a row in addition to being last year's champion, experienced both sides. "At first when you go up there, it can be pretty bad; but as it goes on, especially if you've had one before, it's a lot easier and you can focus more on how you're doing than how you feel," Matthew says. "The more comfortable you are, the better you will be able to perform."

The ESC brings in WEOL radio personality Bruce Van Dyke as Pronouncer for the bees, and Soundwaves Recording Co. provides high-quality playbacks of participants' spelling when a spelling review is needed.

Each participating school has a Spelling-Team Advisor who coaches their spellers, accesses word lists, registers their school for competition at www.spellingbee.com and facilitates their students' participation in the bees.

"The bees start off with easy words," Hartline says, "using third/fourth-grade level words such as edge, knife, scissors, museum and region. They then move up to harder words such as parallel, knapsack and credenza. Toward the end, the words are along the lines of junco, tchotchke, batik and escargot."

Matthew took home last year's championship trophy with Bolshevik.

"Some kids have a lot of natural talent; they have a knack for spelling or a photographic memory," Hartline says. "Other kids work and work. But they all look forward to it each year."

That's one reason why Hartline has developed an appreciation for the competitions.

"When I was a kid, I was a rotten speller," Hartline adds. "I seldom got through the first round and I had to sit and watch others continue." ☺





“It allows a different layer of instruction.”

IPADS – THE “IT” TECHNOLOGY

Ever since its rollout in 2010, Apple’s iPad has shown ever-increasing potential for revolutionizing education. Enthusiasm for the technology is likewise gaining ground.

“I’ve been helping teachers to implement technology into the classroom through this ESC for 10 years,” says Dave Miller, Senior Director of Technology and Innovation at NORT2H. “I’ve seen more people excited about this than anything else.”

WHY IS THE IPAD THE “IT” TECHNOLOGY?

- The operating system for the touchscreen device is simple to use and very intuitive. “The best part about the iPad is the first time, four-year-olds pick them up, they know what to do,” says Andreas Johansson, Consultant for Educational Technology Integration at the ESC.
- iPads are portable, can run a full day on a battery, and have no boot time. “If a PC takes a minute to load up for every school period, you’ve lost two days of instruction for a year,” Miller notes.
- iPads are fun to use. For example, Miller’s young daughter enjoys educational applications, such as one that teaches her to trace letters. “She chooses to spend time on apps like that,” he says. “That says a lot about the design and the apps that are out there.”

The enthusiasm is shared by children, teachers, and increasingly, by parents.

“As a teacher, I can put any app on there, and it gives me so many directions to go and so many resources I can utilize,” Miller says. “About 425,000 apps are currently available in the iTunes store. There are some really great apps that students have access to.”

In addition, Johansson says, teachers can use the iPad to track students’ skills and to practice and reinforce learning. “It allows a different layer of instruction,” he says.

“The iPad is a great response device,” adds Miller. “For example, students can vote or respond to an instructor’s question. It’s a great way to get immediate feedback from students.”

For parents, it can be difficult to see the value in other technologies in the classroom, such as the smartboard, Miller notes.

“But with the iPad, so many parents have one, and they just get it,” he says. “I think as we move forward, you are going to see more and more parents seeing the value in this device. They ‘get’ how having their kids carry an iPad vs. having that heavy backpack makes sense at school.”

Special education has led the way in bringing iPads into the classroom, Miller notes. Educators are finding that the iPad and its applications can be effectively used to target specific students’ needs. In addition, many of these applications can be had at a fraction of the cost of other equipment. For example, a device that enables nonverbal students to be able to communicate can cost a district up to \$8,000, Miller explains.

Comparatively, a roughly \$500 iPad equipped with a \$189 Proloquo2Go app performs essentially the same tasks. The iPad has the ability to perform text-to-speech, has a magnifying glass, has black and white screen options for visually impaired students, and so on, Miller adds.

“So not only can you replace the core functions of some of the much more expensive devices out there, but it’s also not as bulky, it’s very portable, and it is a lot cooler than those other devices would be,” he says.

Though special education is where many schools have found an initial starting point for the iPad so far, Miller says, “We really believe that the most potential is around changing instruction in the classroom.

“Where appropriate, teachers would be able to instruct using 21st-century skills,” he says. “They can blog, podcast, access wikis, and use the iPad to become content creators.”



“IT BECOMES A VERY LOGICAL SOLUTION. IT’S AFFORDABLE, IT HAS ALL THOSE FEATURES TO MEET DIFFERENT STUDENTS’ NEEDS, THE BATTERY LIFE IS THERE, IT’S VERY INTUITIVE,” MILLER SAYS.

Though the iPad is gaining ground in schools locally, that’s not to say they will be replacing the textbooks in kids’ backpacks in the imminent future. “I would say we are in the pilot phase,” Miller says.

Though Apple does offer schools discounted prices, grants and other funding are limited, and few schools have

the resources to deploy the technology. “One that has is the Vermilion School District, which supplied an iPod Touch for every K-5 student in 2010-11,” Miller says. Students in grades 6-12 received MacBooks. The iPod Touch and iPad are essentially the same device, Miller explains, except the iPad is larger and easier to use. More recently, the North Olmsted School District acquired a grant toward the purchase of 220 iPads.

More commonly, however, schools have perhaps 10 or 15 shared devices that are used by special-needs students or that can be checked out of the media center, Miller says. In school districts where there are efforts to incorporate one-to-one technology – or the idea that each student has a device – or BYOD (bring your own device) initiatives, the iPad is becoming the device of choice.

“It becomes a very logical solution. It’s affordable, it has all those features to meet different students’ needs, the battery life is there and, it’s very intuitive,” Miller says.

But regardless of how many students and teachers have access to iPads, the technology is only as good as its use, Johansson cautions. “It’s what you do with it,” he says. “If you embrace the technology and are teaching differently, learning can grow by leaps and bounds. Otherwise, it’s just another paperweight.” ©





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LORAIN ESC WELCOMES NEW STAFF *(continued from page 11)*

“I really enjoy working at the ESC due to the new level of challenges it provides and the active work environment. Every day is different, much like in the classroom, but I’m able to reach more students through my role at the ESC, indirectly through the people I work with and train. Furthermore, working at the ESC allows me to focus on what’s really important to me - increasing the technical and digital literacy skills of teachers in the classroom, and helping develop much-needed skills in truly blending curriculum, technology, and pedagogy in an effective manner,” Johansson states. ☺



New employee
E. Andreas Johansson



To be removed from the mailing list, please contact Debbie at Shannon@escl.org.

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