

# Curriculum Matters...

## Transformative Work by the Faculty and Students of SAU 21



Competency is defined as “a student’s ability to transfer knowledge and apply skills across content areas to organize his or her learning.” (Stack and Vander Els)

It has been a most productive first half of our year as faculty met and the K-8 schools began the SAU 21 competency journey toward building a competency culture. In our reflective practice, Winnacunnet High School faculty and administration has been incredibly helpful by sharing their wisdom and experiences regarding competency implementation and practices.

Brian Stack and Jonathan Vander Els, in *Breaking With Tradition: The Shift to Competency-Based Learning in PLCs at Work*, talk about the effectiveness of competencies to include “explicit measurable, and transferable learning objectives that empower students.” As an SAU, all five districts are collaborating to provide richness and excellence for our students. There is a focus to continually ask ourselves what a *21st Century Winnacunnet Graduate* looks like. This evolution is a guiding factor in our work to align best practices.

The Professional Learning Committee and Administrators have established an SAU 21 goal available on our website to guide components of our professional development:

“SAU 21 districts will develop a fully-aligned competency-based curriculum across disciplines by collaborating and communicating with stakeholders as measured by completed common assessments, rubrics, and reporting tools to advance student learning within a growth model by June, 2020.”

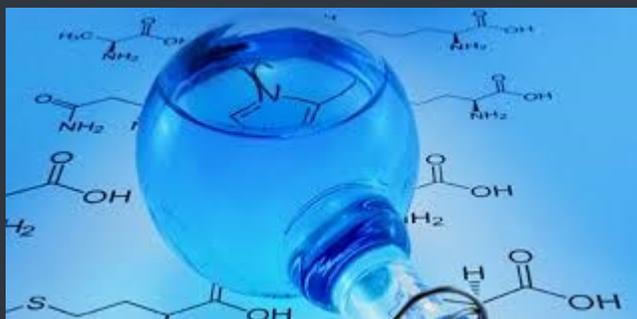
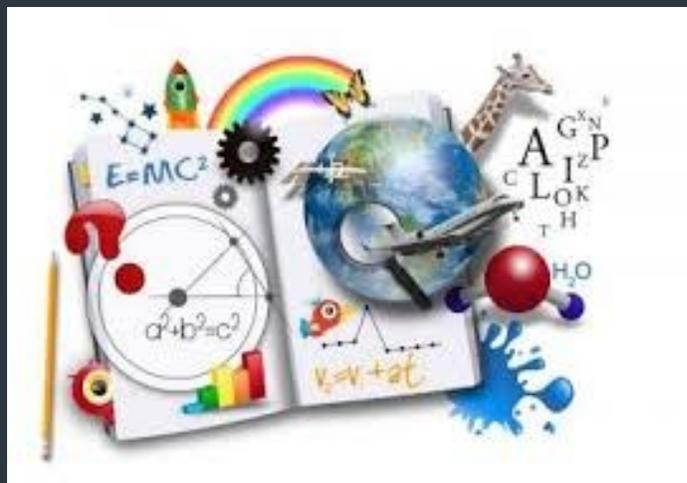
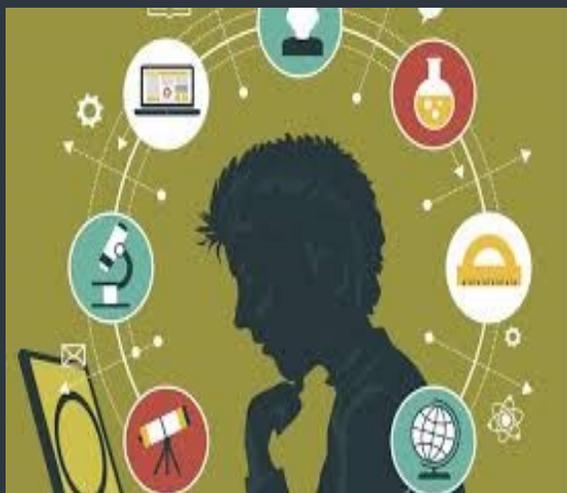
There is richness in the collaboration and bringing together of professionals from our six schools and from SAU 90 to work towards this goal. As our students continue to acquire knowledge, demonstrate skills, and synthesize information, they will be afforded opportunities to evaluate themselves with guidance and determine their readiness to move forward. It is our desire that all graduates will have the option to enter the workforce, go to college, or pursue their dreams to their fullest potential. This first issue of 2018 contains overviews submitted by Vertical Teams regarding their curriculum work and progress this fall.

The momentum continues to build as we focus on:

- ◆ Articulating and aligning what we are teaching our students
- ◆ How we assess if the students know the content we are teaching
- ◆ What we do when students need additional instruction and support
- ◆ How we challenge students to make the most growth
- ◆ Ways to best report student progress and provide rich feedback



# Science



In early November, Science teachers from across the SAU met to formally discuss and create a rubric for competencies to be used in science throughout the districts. During the time, participants discussed educational organization, including looking and revising instructional practices and structures, to include the role of students in determining what they need to learn.

Upon examination of the standards, there is a clear picture of what students need to know, understand and be able to do or demonstrate at the end of a school year. However, we also discussed the necessity to balance the developmental needs of students throughout the year and to determine outcomes that represent where students should be at each point in the instructional continuum.

The development of a rubric that clearly articulates skill acquisition throughout the year will help provide appropriate and timely feedback to students about their progress towards meeting competency. This organizes expectations for Next Generation Science Standards into reasonable learning goal segments. Students could meet at the end of each trimester to review their progress on our created rubric.

Students will continue to be assessed on their demonstrated skills. Next steps include developing and implementing shared documents such as lab report formats to be used throughout SAU 21 schools for consistency. These would be reviewed and calibrated to continue alignment with assessment practices.

Submitted by John Croteau  
Science Vertical Team Leader



## World Language

The World Language Vertical Team spent a recent professional development day reviewing current national and state standards for World Language with the goal of establishing common competencies for SAU 21 World Language Classes. Two documents were created. One document, designed with Winnacunnet language classes in mind, delineates the current department competencies of Read, Write, Speak and Listen into various indicators for each level of language (1-5), using the NHDOE English Language Arts Competencies as models. The competency of Write, for example, is broken down into writing narratives, writing informational texts, and writing opinions, with “I can” statements further indicating what students should be able to do at each level in that competency.

As only content in level 1 is taught at most sending schools, the second document outlines how the content in level 1 can be divided over a multi-year elementary or middle school curriculum. Following the NH World Language Standards as a guide, this document, using the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’ 5 C’s as competencies (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, Communities), provides indicators and “I can” statements within each competency for an elementary level and a middle school level. This structure allows for elementary and middle school teachers, whose World Language classes are often exploratory in nature and typically meet with less frequency during the year, to better adapt their curriculum to this format.

The World Language Vertical Team is hoping to meet again in the spring to continue this work. In the meantime, teachers who attended the meeting are planning to bring this work back to their colleagues to get further input on the matter. WHS teachers, as a part of their professional development this year, will be continuing to discuss and delineate the current department competencies, with the hope of bringing a more finalized document to the Vertical Team in the spring for additional input.

Submitted by Holly Davison



# Language Arts

The ELA vertical team has met twice so far this year, with the goal of three more work sessions before the end of the school year. The group is comprised of representation of teachers from across buildings, departments, and grade levels. After the first full day work session, the group came to consensus around the idea of using the NH DOE competency grid as we move ahead in our work towards competency based grading and reporting ([https://www.education.nh.gov/innovations/hs\\_redesign/competencies.htm](https://www.education.nh.gov/innovations/hs_redesign/competencies.htm)) We then met a second time to collaborate on the design of competency rubrics and to share any competency rubrics that we feel would inform our work together. Teachers were able to discuss any confusion, commonalities and questions with each other. The group discussed experiences they have had using multiple scoring methods.

WHS has been working at the revising of competency rubrics that they have been using and we took a look at samples together: reading, writing, research, speaking and listening. The WHS teachers present were able to share that the rubric for the research process has been fully revised and is waiting for approval. The whole group took a look at the research rubric and discussed the implication of using it across multiple grade levels and buildings. WHS teachers explained that they use it from freshman year until senior year for all levels of students, taking into consideration the developmental level and age of students.

The group decided to start by using the **research rubric** with students in their buildings. Each teacher will share the rubric informally with any teacher/grade level that they work with. For instance, if a team includes science teachers or social studies teachers, then they will share the rubric with them. The idea is to give the rubric a “dry run” with real students with research projects that are being done at the various locations/disciplines. When we get back together in January, we will share comments, applications, highlights, questions... with each other regarding the research rubric. How many grade levels can the rubric span? For instance, ...K-2, 3-4, 5-7,8-12? What needs to be adjusted? What works? The work we are doing is truly collaborative and we all benefit from the experience and knowledge of the varied perspectives in the group.

Submitted by Lauren deConstant- ELA Vertical Team Leader



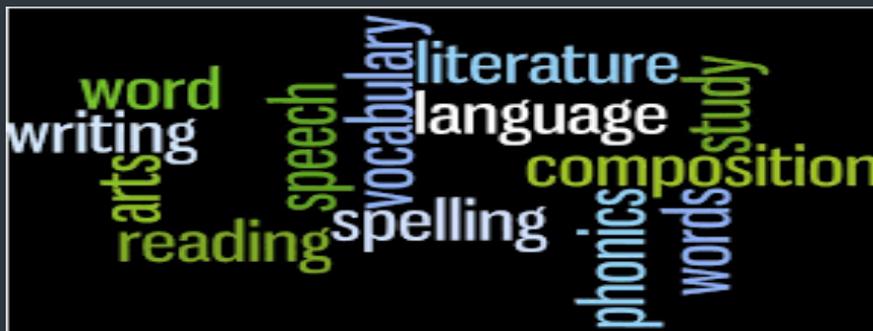
# Language Arts

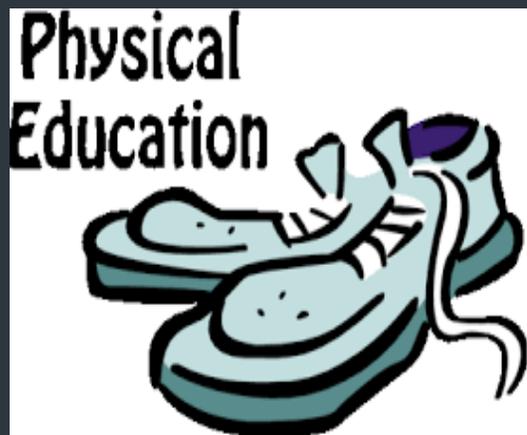
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## English Department Research Rubric

Research Competency: *Students will engage in research/inquiry to investigate topics and to analyze, integrate, and present information.*

	Advanced	Proficient	Sufficient	Beginning	No Evidence
<b>Planning research</b>  <i>topic and focus question</i>	Everything is done to earn a Proficient score, PLUS: <input type="checkbox"/> Focus question is attention grabbing	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus question shows some elements of original thought. The question is specific and relevant to the assignment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus question shows some elements of original thought, but the question is not specific and/or fully relevant to the assignment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus question is neither specific nor relevant to the assignment.	
<b>Gathering research</b>  <i>evaluating sources</i>	Everything is done to earn a Proficient score, PLUS: <input type="checkbox"/> Sources represent a spectrum of viewpoints. <input type="checkbox"/> MLA citations are flawless	<input type="checkbox"/> Sources are varied and accurate. <input type="checkbox"/> Sources prove to be credible. <input type="checkbox"/> Sources are properly cited in MLA format, with very few errors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some sources lack variety and accuracy. <input type="checkbox"/> Some sources are not credible. <input type="checkbox"/> Source citations may have minor errors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Sources are not varied or accurate. <input type="checkbox"/> Sources are not credible. <input type="checkbox"/> Sources are not cited correctly or not cited at all.	
<b>Evidence</b>  <i>collecting and paraphrasing information</i>	Everything is done to earn a Proficient score, PLUS: <input type="checkbox"/> Information gathered thoroughly explores topic with ample research. <input type="checkbox"/> Use of quotations is purposeful and meaningful.	<input type="checkbox"/> Information gathered is relevant. <input type="checkbox"/> Information collected is well paraphrased and is meaningful to the focus question.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some relevant information has been gathered. <input type="checkbox"/> Information collected is paraphrased, but the information is not meaningful to the focus question.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very little relevant information has been gathered. <input type="checkbox"/> Information collected is poorly paraphrased and not meaningful to the focus question.	
<b>Organizing research</b>  <i>synthesizing and presenting evidence</i>	Everything is done to earn a Proficient score, PLUS: <input type="checkbox"/> All content is presented with a logical progression of ideas and effective supporting evidence. <input type="checkbox"/> Format artfully communicates research findings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Information is organized. <input type="checkbox"/> Most content is presented clearly and concisely. <input type="checkbox"/> Format appropriately communicates research findings, as per the assignment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Information is somewhat organized. <input type="checkbox"/> Some content is presented clearly and concisely. <input type="checkbox"/> Format is somewhat appropriate to communicate research findings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Information is disorganized. <input type="checkbox"/> Very little content is presented clearly and concisely. <input type="checkbox"/> Format is not appropriate to communicate research findings.	



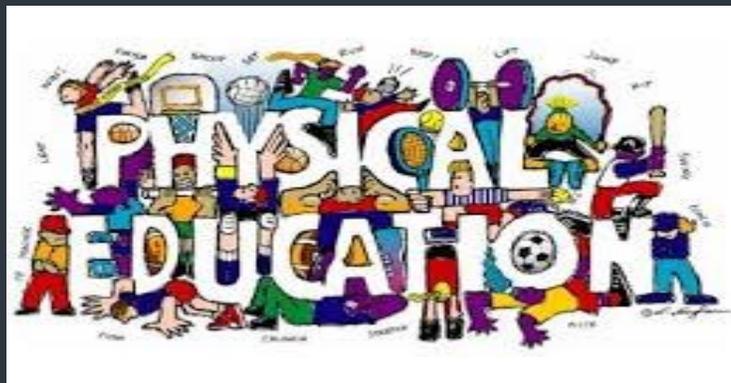


Curriculum Matters  
PE Health/ Wellness  
Vertical Team Report 2017

This fall six members of SAU #21 PE Health/Wellness vertical team met at Winnacunnet for a day long workshop. Representatives from Seabrook, Hampton, North Hampton and Winnacunnet were in attendance to work towards aligning curriculum and creating a frameworks template of all grades.

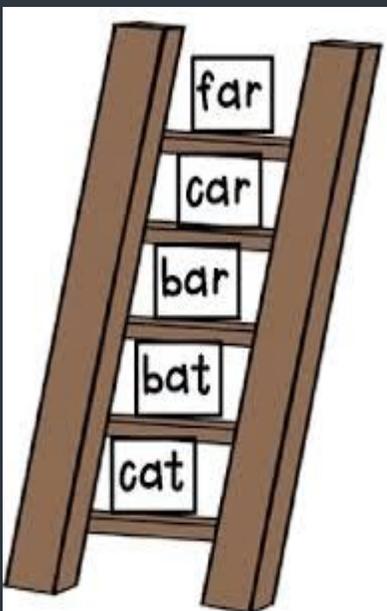
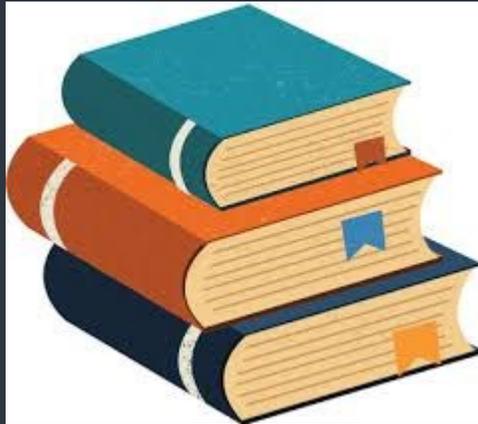
We reviewed the Portrait of an SAU #21 K-12 21st Century Graduate, and looked at the current WHS Model for competency based learning. We then broke up into Physical Education and Health/Wellness groups, and set out to align all the grades in each discipline. We were able to accomplish our goals during our day together, and created Google Doc files to continue to edit and share with each other. We enjoyed collaborating and we look forward to our next meeting.

Lorie Garand





# Reading Literacy

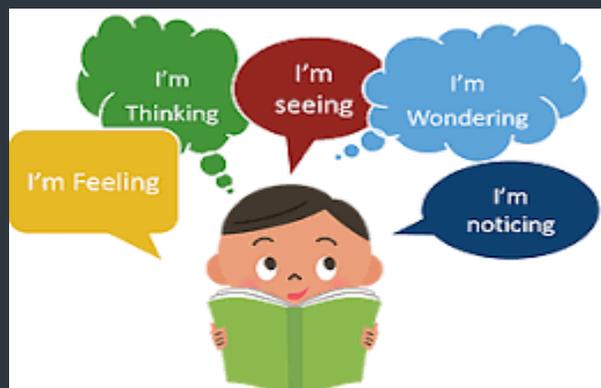


## **Curriculum Matters SAU 21 Literacy Specialists**

As Literacy Specialists serving the communities of Seabrook, South Hampton, Hampton Falls and North Hampton, we have realized that many children are coming to school lacking early literacy skills.

In order to support our mutual communities to address this challenge, the Literacy Specialists are partnering with Rockingham Community Action (RCA). Our initiative involves providing a literacy corner at Rockingham Community Action, located at 146 Lafayette Road Seabrook, NH 03874. The literacy corner is stocked with a variety of books that parents can take home to begin a home reading library.

We also have a variety of literacy resources in order to provide guidance to parents as to how they can foster a love of reading and develop essential early literacy skills at home. Many of these resources were purchased with funds provided by the Hampton Rotary Club as well as various other organizations such as the local PTAs and donations of both new and gently used books from our school communities. Our goal is to create an ongoing relationship with members of our communities and the future students of our schools.



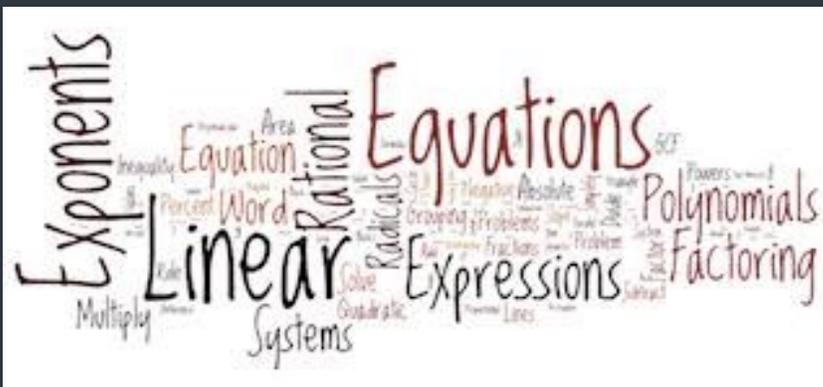
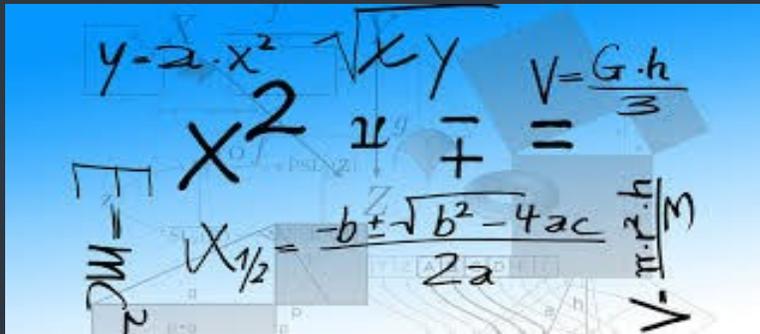


The Math Vertical Team voted to use the NH State Math Competencies for curriculum alignment. They then created: Kindergarten, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, and Eighth grade documents, and an Algebra 1 Competency Mapping Template in Excel formatted documents.

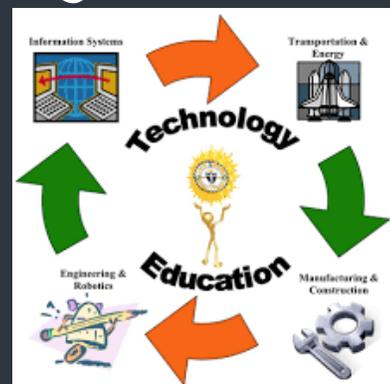
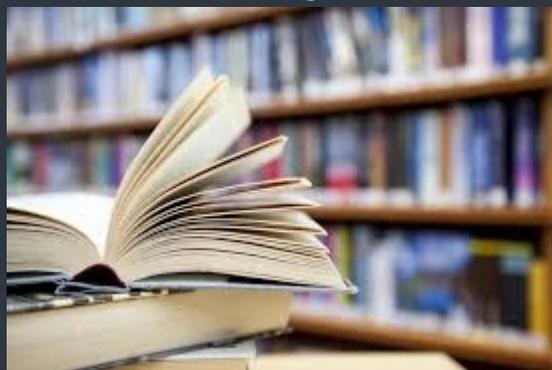
In addition, the team created Grades 1 and 2 Competency Templates in Word documents. A next step is to share the work we did with each of the schools and get feedback in order to revise the curriculum documents if necessary.

The team's next step is to bring student work, project ideas, or problems that address specific competencies to the Vertical Team for review. It is planned to set up an Algebra Team meeting to address common assessments and the placement process for the 2017-2018 school year for students at Winnacunnet High School. The team is considering a common book read *Breaking With Tradition: A Shift to Competency-Based Learning and PLCs at Work*.

In addition the team is considering whether or not to continue the study of Jo Boaler's work by offering a Part 2 of her classes. The team is thankful for this time and feel they are off to a strong start.



# Library Media and Tech Integrator



## Library Media/Tech Integrator Vertical Team

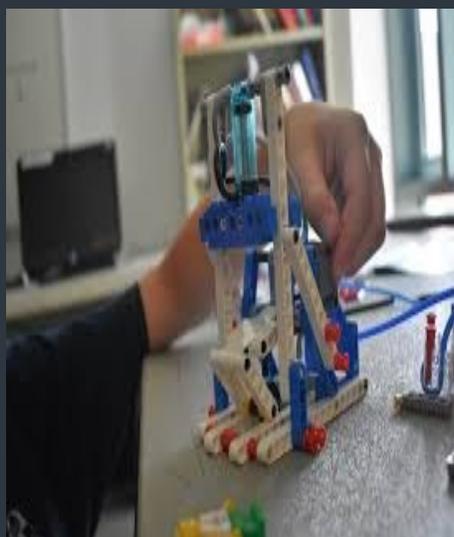
Media specialists and tech integrators from SAU 21 met to begin work on competency based learning and performance indicators. We had representatives from Winnacunnet, Hampton Falls, South Hampton and Seabrook from all grade levels.

All of our work is on shared documents for those unable to attend.

*The American Association of School Librarians Standards for the 21st-Century Learner and the International Society for Technology Education have provided the basis for the development of our competencies which will be soon be published on the SAU 21 website.*

Discussion will continue in April to further develop and align our district competencies to provide personalized learning for all of our SAU 21 students, as well as visions of future collaboration that would include development and enhancement of Makerspaces within our schools.

These competencies are the essential framework for developing skills for 21st century learners.





# Student Services SPED



Twenty-two special educators and administrators from South Hampton, Hampton Falls, Hampton, North Hampton, Winnacunnet, and Seabrook Middle and Elementary attended the first special education vertical team meeting on January 26, 2018. SAU 21 and SAU 90 were represented at this half-day meeting held in the Winnacunnet library to focus on competency-based learning and assessment as it pertains to students with disabilities. Dave Hobbs, WHS Curriculum Coordinator began the meeting with a presentation that set the stage for aligning competency-based learning across the levels and towns that comprise SAU 21 and SAU 90. The group shared current progress with regards to competencies at all schools and grade levels to get an understanding of vertical team strengths and gaps going forward.

The book Grading Exceptional and Struggling Learners by Jung and Guskey served as a guide for a whole group discussion around competency-based instruction and assessment for students who receive specialized instruction. Caroline Arakelian, Winnacunnet Director of Special Services, facilitated the mixed group activity to review the model proposed by these authors regarding grading based on modifications, appropriate expectations for students, and advising regular educators in the area of accommodations and modifications. Teams agreed that an inclusive grading model is most appropriate for students with disabilities given the philosophy of the districts as well as NH Special Education Rules and Regulations. The process that is currently underway involves first determining the adaptation needed for each grade level standard. For each adaptation, determine if an accommodation or a modification is needed. Teachers (regular and special education) establish the appropriate expectation for each area requiring modification followed by applying appropriate and equitable grading practices to the appropriate standard. Finally, special educators will clearly communicate the meaning of the grades to families.

The special education vertical team will meet on a regular basis to continue to approach the task of advising and modeling inclusive grading, assessing, teaching, and supporting students with disabilities given a competency-based learning model in SAU 21 and 90.





The Guidance Vertical Team met early this winter. They began with a good amount of the discussion focused on competency based learning. The team reviewed and shared the various school perspectives of competency implementation, and participants pondered information specific to their individual school. There was a particular emphasis on the impact for graduating WHS students. There will continue to be more discussion on this topic district-wide with the goal of working with an SAU consultant on competency based learning for strong alignment and consolidation of documents focused on our mission and vision. .

The team also reviewed the college process and recent information learned at the University of New Hampshire during a "mock" acceptance process, and how competency based learning and assessment impact applications in the acceptance process.

In continually preparing our students for life after high school, Winnacunnet High School is moving to an online course selection process. Leslie Dolleman, WHS Guidance Director shared and explained the new electronic course selection.

Other topics of discussion were:

- WHS Parent Night
- 504 Vertical Team
- Common Outside Agency Speakers
- Freshman Seminar
- Private School Process

Our goal is to continue to meet as a vertical team with the priority being the development of a K-12 Comprehensive Guidance Program that will be aligned with the American School Counselor Association. We looked forward to having the time to work together for the benefit of our students.

Submitted by Debra "Vas" Vasconcellos



The Music Vertical Team was thankful for the opportunity to have much needed face time with colleagues across SAU 21 and 90. We recognize the challenges that go into providing us with this opportunity, and we greatly value and appreciate every minute we get.

There were representatives from every grade level and almost every school present. The main discussion centered around curriculum and developing/aligning our competencies with the National Core Arts standards. We reviewed documents had been created a few years back by members of our team. This provided a chance to unpack, update and improve upon that work. A finalized document is anticipated for the end of the academic year.

We also had the opportunity to discuss a change in the All-SAU 21/90 concerts in March, the national "Music In Our Schools" month. We anticipate a high-quality, musical experience. This proposal has been reviewed in collaboration with Administrators and is moving forward. It entails an afternoon in-school/in-district field trip involving all 7th and 8th Grade Band and Chorus students to WHS, followed by an evening performance.



### Art Vertical Team Summary

What we talked about....

November 1, 2017

The art vertical team met today to create a masterpiece of SAU 21 Model Art Competencies. Our discussion centered around how much we value the freedom, individuality and non-cookie cutter art that our programs are founded on. During our time together we worked on how can we make the SAU 21 visual arts competency document relevant to our teaching while at the same time connecting to our National art competencies of Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting.

We greatly appreciated your efforts in giving us this time to connect and discuss.

Thanks so much

