

DECEMBER 2007 New Milford High School Monthly Report

Compiled by Eric Sheninger

1. Observations

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Observed by</u>
Jane Swartz	Orchestra	11/27/07	0	Eric Sheninger
Joe Andolino	Band	11/28/07	0	Eric Sheninger
Kerr Lockhart	English	11/27, 11/28, 11/29	3	Louis Manuppelli
Jamie Bruno	English	12/4, 12/5, 12/6	3	Louis Manuppelli
Alex Ivchencko	Computer	12/6/07	2	Louis Manuppelli
Virginia Henandez	Related Art	12/6/07	2	Louis Manuppelli

Summaries: All Mid-Year evaluations for non-tenured staff were completed by 12/7/07.

2. Guest lecturers

- This year's Mock trial Team, advised by Mr. Tusa, is made up of approximately 30 students, boys and girls, grades 9-12. Of these, only ten are allowed by league rules to compete at any one particular time. Competitions, judged by two attorneys, will take place at the Bergen County Court House starting in early January. To prepare for the competitions students meet weekly or biweekly with Mr. Keith Bachmann, a local attorney and resident of New Milford. Mr. Bachmann has coached the team in matters of law and courtroom practices for the past 5 years – his help has been and continues to be an invaluable asset to the team.
- On November 21, Ms. Burten's sister, Harriet Loeb, addressed her 12th grade Resource English class. Harriet is a writer for the National Weather Bureau. She is responsible for the publication of a newsletter that circulates throughout the entire Bureau. She has published many manuals and has created/maintained several government websites. She worked at the EEOC under Clarence Thomas before moving to the NWB. She spoke about the writing process but was quickly sidetracked to discussing the fact that she is deaf and the training of her "hearing dog". The questions were especially poignant as to the changes in modifications for students with disabilities and the high school experience of my sister. When the period was over, her 4th period American history class came in and they asked her to stay, which she graciously offered to do. Again, they talked about the changes in education and legislation for the disabled, (American Disability Act) which Harriet was a participant. Of course, they were just as interested in Cody, her dog. It was an eye-opening experience for many of our students to see what can be accomplished with hard work and determination.

3. Innovations:

- Mr. Coviello has fully implemented inquiry-based learning strategies in all of his classes by having students complete monthly projects to augment their regular curriculum. These projects are research based and require the students to collaborate in order to solve problems and synthesize solutions. Cooperative and autonomous learning is fostered on a daily basis due to these activities. There has been an observable improvement in presentation, research, and writing skills, as well as in all other areas involving the communicative arts. All of these inquiry based projects have involved students producing such products as films and PowerPoint presentations concerning their regular topics of study.
- Many teachers are working collaboratively to foster interdisciplinary connections. Ms. Tambuscio (Special Ed./Holocaust) and Mr. Devereaux (Biology) are working on a lesson for 9th grade biology on Bio ethics which will include the Holocaust – the Eugenics Movement and other aspects of bio ethics and Nazi Ideology. This will work out nicely

because NIGHT, Elie Wiesel's memoir of his experiences in Auschwitz, is taught in 9th grade. Ms. Tambuscio has been working with Ms. Schlamp (English) who is teaching it and she is doing a great job make it a meaningful experience for the students. The science connection will add to what is already being done!

- Students in Ms. Vicari's 9th grade Computer Applications are working on a project in conjunction with the Math Department. Students will use a bag of M&M's to complete the following in their math classes (the actual assignment is attached as well):
 1. Estimate and record the quantity of each color and the total number of candies in your bag
 2. Guess the percentage of total that each color comprises and record in a chart
 3. Open bag and record actual data

In computer Applications class the students will then complete the following tasks using Microsoft Excel:

1. Create a table of data
2. Construct a bar graph
3. Calculate mean, median, mode, and range
4. Create a pie chart to show percentages

As well as:

1. Write a summary in Microsoft Word
 2. Print a cover page using clip art and word art
 3. Use the Internet to research actual percentages for the item being used (bag of M&M's)
- In Mr. Lockhart's Freshman and Junior English classes, students in the high school's computer labs had the opportunity to open an essay they had previously submitted in rough draft form, review the teacher's comments, rewrite them accordingly (with all the changes being tracked by the computer), and send them back to the teacher for further review. Although security considerations bar this procedure on the school's own servers, Mr. Lockhart opened two separate Google Mail accounts, one for the students, one for the teacher. Google offers a very large amount—practically unlimited—of server room for storing documents, permitting material to be sent back and forth between student and teacher in order to facilitate the teaching of the process of revision and rewriting, so essential to developing higher-order (not to mention college-level) writing skills.
 - Ms. Lyons (Spanish), Ms. Mitchell (Special Ed.), and Ms. Hernandez (Art) are currently having the Spanish I and art classes' work together to make piñatas and donate toys to the Big Brother Big Sister Club in Paterson. The Big Brother Big Sister Club is an after-school organization with children from ages 5-13. This year, the club has received no money to provide the children with Christmas presents. A few students will be selected to make a trip to deliver the piñatas and toys to the children after school. This activity and trip combines the cultural aspect of Mexican piñatas and allows the students to give back to those less fortunate.
 - Period 3 juniors kicked off the first "2 on 2" Volleyball tournament to rave reviews while period 7 seniors proved that keeping your feet on the ground may not be all its cracked up to be as they were seen climbing to the ceilings in the old gym while participating in Project Adventure.
 - International Foods class is having a cookie bake-off to end their cookie unit. Culinary Arts is having a Gingerbread House competition.
 - Mr Devereaux constructed a photosynthesis demonstration to investigate if different wavelengths of light affect the growth of plants. Using plastic drinking cups covered with different colors of cellophane to permit only specific wavelengths to penetrate, the plant growth was measured regularly over a two week period. The clear cellophane covered plant growth was a close tie with the red covered plant. Blue covers were significantly worse, and

the green cover was the poorest. The conclusions drawn supported their hypothesis that plant growth is indeed affected by different wavelengths of light.

4. Student honors:

- An induction ceremony for the Music and Art Honory Society took place on 11/29. The following students were inducted in the Tri-M Music Honor society: Shannon Astillero, Angenille Barredo, Jacqueline Colucci, Nathalie Equia, Charlotte Fisher, Michelle Franco, Estefany Giron, David Gongon, Kimberly Hendricks, Brian Hirt, Lijin Joy, Michael Kontomanolis, Arthur Lipata, Jessica Marciano, Marisa McCann, Vanessa Rappa, Paul Robalino, Jonell Robles, Chelsea Saniel, Jonathan Silva, Melanie Tuazon, Hannah Faye Zarate. The following students were inducted into the Art Honor Society: Angenille Barredo, Ashley Dembeck, Christian Hincapie, Matthew Kaprelian, Judy Koo, Jennifer-Rose Montecillo, Judy Koo, Paul Robalino, Hannah Faye Zarate. It was a wonderful evening highlighted by student music performances and a PowerPoint presentation of artwork created by the inductees.
- Junior A.J. Scoppa was named to the 1st Team All-County Football Team as a running back. This season A.J. rushed for 1,971 yards and scored 24 touchdowns and was crowned the Bergen County scoring champion with 150 points. In his three year career, A.J. has rushed for 3848 yards and scored 41 touchdowns.

5. Field trips

- Mrs. De Poto's and Mr. Coviello's 12th Grade English classes recently went to a viewing of the new movie *Beowulf* at the Edgewater Cinema. This field trip was a culminating activity to the study of the epic Anglo-Saxon poem that is part of the British literature survey in 12th grade. The film was created in 3-D format which enhanced the action and suspense; all students agreed that this was a worthwhile enactment of the one of the greatest poems in English literature.
- The Band, under the direction of Mr. Andolino, went to Borough Hall to play at the Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony on Sunday, December 9th.
- Ms. DePoto's 12th grade English class viewed the 2004 Best Foreign Language Film of the Golden Globe Awards, *Osama* on Dec. 7 in the newly refurbished Media Room 110 (in-school field trip). This film, directed by Afghan Siddiq Barmak, poignantly explores the role of women under Taliban rule and will provide students with further discussion to accompany their reading and study of *The Kite Runner* by Khaleed Hosseini.
- On December 4th Mrs. Bettini's Advanced Art Lab students and Art Honor Society Members viewed works of art on display in a statewide juried show. They took a walking field trip to the Marcella Geltman Gallery at the Art Center of Northern New Jersey on Center Street in New Milford. Christian Hincapie's artwork was on exhibition. The art director Ruth Miller gave the students a tour of the facilities. They saw the printmaking studio, the stone sculpture and painting studios. Ruth Miller offered Christian Hincapie a full scholarship for the art course of his choice and encouraged him to enter work in a South American Artist Exhibition at NJ PAC called Iberian Diaspora, to be held in March. Judy Koo was encouraged to enter her work in a Korean show with the help of Mary Yim Kliauga. Angenille Barredo whose interest is in figure drawing and fashion was offered a partial scholarship for a life drawing class. Mathew Kaprielian who is interested in set design was offered a partial scholarship to take a stone sculpture class. The director was impressed with the quality of our students work and is eagerly awaiting an invitation to see the annual high school art exhibition. She also commented on how respectful and well behaved our students were. The exhibition can be viewed until December 13th. Call for the times. (201) 599-2992.

- French and some Honor's History students will visit Quebec and Montreal in April. Before they go they will learn in class the history and culture of French Canada through folk songs and modern pop songs in addition to poems like Evangeline and other readings. This trip will also involve a "mini exchange visit" to a French school. Students will exchange letters and e mails before meeting each other. We will spend the day in their school and hopefully share evening activities at a French Canadian Sugar Shack. In late April, when the French Canadians come to visit New York City we will hopefully meet with them for lunch in New York City as we did two years ago.

6. Professional Development:

- Mr. Coviello gave a professional development workshop concerning assistive technology. The workshop focused on augmenting classroom instruction with affective assistive and available universal technologies in order to create a classroom environment that is universally accessible to all learners regardless of ability level. Some of the assistive technology software has already been applied to computer lab 240 where all teachers and students may gain access to these programs.
- On November 15, Mr. Lockhart attended training by the NJ DOE Office of Evaluation and Assessment at the Hackensack Office, where he was trained as a holistic scorer for HSPA SRA Reading and Writing, and is qualified to turn-key other school district staff members at the request of the Superintendent.
- Ms. Keesing attended the November BELS meeting which featured a presentation about podcasting, a Web 2.0 technology that she hopes to utilize here. She also attended one day of the annual New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) conference. Of the programs she attended, the two best were titled: "The Culture of Collaboration: Building Instructional Partnerships for Student Learning" and "Grade 13: Are Your Students Ready for College?"
- Mr Baker and Dr Asa-Awuku attended a workshop orientation about Project Lead the Way. This initiative is designed to attract students to an engineering career and form strategic partnerships between middle schools, high schools, universities and colleges. Starting with the Middle School, students can take five courses of 9-weeks each as part of their regular studies that would introduce them to engineering based ideas. In high school, one specific foundation course would be taken in sequence each year to further develop the student's ability to solve and design engineering issues. The senior year offers choices for them to take as well as a culminating project. Training of teachers for each of these courses occurs during separate 10-day summer programs at Rowan University. Schools would need to have the proper equipment and software for most of these courses to be implemented into the middle and high school curricula, but grants are available to assist with the expenses. Teachers can be trained as the course grows. Exposing our students to an engineering discipline will better prepare them for their university level engineering courses.

7. Facilities

8. Guidance

- On Wednesday, December 12th an admissions representative from Bergen Community College will be coming to New Milford High School to provide our 12th grade students with an On-Site Decision Day. Interested students have been provided with application packets that will be reviewed by an admissions counselor during individual appointments on that day. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions and leave school with a college acceptance!
- In October, the 10th and 11th grade students took part in the PSAT testing. The results will be distributed to students on Friday, December 7th. The Guidance Department will give a

power point presentation provided by the College Board explaining the results and how to use the scores in the post high school planning process. The students will receive a detailed score report showing each right/wrong answer and their original test booklet. These materials will assist students in planning their SAT preparation and help them to identify what areas they will need to strengthen their skills.

- On Wednesday, November 28th, the Guidance Department held their annual Financial Aid Workshop. Kimber Decker, Vice President of Nelnet Campus Solutions, was our speaker. The night was very well attended by about 100 parents and students. Attendees gained valuable knowledge about the financial aid process. Mr. Decker reviewed each item on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, answered questions pertaining to specific individual's situations, and provided essential information about the ins and outs of the financial aid process.

9. Other

- The NMHS Drama Club, The Opening Knights, successfully executed their fall production of The Hostage. This production involved the participation of over one hundred and fifty students school wide and generated enough revenue to fund next year's fall show. The Opening Knights are also excited to announce that they will be running a Cabaret Fundraiser production on February 1st in the High School cafeteria. This will be the first of many annual winter productions to follow in the coming years. Both performing and technical crew members are extremely excited to participate in the Spring Musical Production of Thoroughly Modern Millie as well! Finally, many of the Opening Knights are co-directing, choreographing, and helping produce the Middle School musical as well.
- The NMHS winter concert on Thursday 12/13/07 will be a festive event highlighting all the performing groups in the music department. Some of the featured pieces include the Orchestra playing a Bach Prelude with senior member soloist Jesse Marciano. The Choral Ensemble will express it's "Acapella Christmas" cheerfully and the large Chorus will perform seasonal Holiday Selections. One particular song entitled "We are the Music Makers" will include NMHS music alumni to come back and join the group. The Band will come out "swinging" with "Kings of Swing", which is the "We Three Kings" traditional song with a 3/4 jazz feel. Following will be an ethnic tune "Hanukkah Holiday". The band will close with the dramatic rock version of "Ukrainian Bell Karol" in the style of the popular "Transiberian Orchestra". There is something in this program for everyone to enjoy this time of year.
- On November 15th Ms. Hubbard (S.A.C.) attended the awards luncheon for the Get It Together Seatbelt Challenge. New Milford high school was presented with a plaque for its participation in this challenge. Overall, our high school showed an increase in its seatbelt usage for both student drivers and passengers from the 1st to 2nd check. We will have one more unannounced seatbelt check some time in the spring to see how our students are doing.
- Students from Mrs. Hernandez's art classes helped set up a breath taking multi-cultural display in the Library. There are ornaments, masks, traditional dresses, instruments and lights from all over the world. Students in all of Mrs. Hernandez's art classes participated in the display. They made African spirits, Henna hand prints, and mini masks to hang on trees.
- The Community Service program concluded its annual Thanksgiving Food Drive in grand fashion. Food donated by our students and staff was delivered to the Center for Food Action in Hackensack – their comment: “Wow that’s a lot of food.” No sooner did we end one drive did we begin another – the Bear Hugs for the Holiday Program. This year bears will be donated to the *Bergen Record* who dispenses them to area hospitals and children hospitals in Iraq, Thanks to Lt. Colonel Farrel (former New Milford student – “85”).
- The New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education held their monthly meeting at New Milford High School on 12/4/07 in order to have the opportunity to experience a presentation by students who have participated in the NMHS Holocaust Study Tour

program. In attendance were 20 board members who are the Governor's appointees. Additionally, Dr. Aaron Graham, Bergen County Superintendent was in attendance. The Commission board was very impressed with our school's involvement in Holocaust and genocide education and the ability of our students to reflect upon an important experiential learning opportunity.

- Students in Mrs. Hernandez's media and sculpture class made masks of various cultures from around the world, such as African, Tibetan, Beijing Opera, Mardi Gras, Japanese, India, South America, etc. They are three-dimensional and are extremely decorative. Students used mixed media to decorate them. Some of the masks can be worn and some are meant to be hung as works of art. They turned out fantastic and will be on display in the hall show cases on the 2nd floor. The students are giving presentations on their masks and the cultures they come from. Mrs. Hernandez gave a sample presentation for the students to model on masks and the culture of India. There was art from India presented as well as music played while Mrs. Hernandez showed the students some traditional Indian dance moves. The students were also treated to Indian sweets and they made Henna designed ornaments. The students had a blast and learned at the same time!