

HARTLAND CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS CURRICULUM NEWSLETTER

April / May 2024



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April

- 5 Extended Day Tutoring Program Ends
- 8 Spring Testing Window Opens
- 10 County Cultivating Leaders (Cohort 3)
- 11 SEL County Steering Meeting
- 12 County Instructional Coaches Meeting
- 17 County Cultivating Leaders (Cohorts 1/2)
- 18 District Leadership Team Meeting
- 24 County Principal Networking
- 26 SAT/PSAT Testing Window Closes

May

- 2 County Multilingual Networking
- 7 County Asst. Principals Networking
- 15 County Cultivating Leaders (Cohort 3)
- 16 County Early Childhood Networking
- 22 County Cultivating Leaders (Cohorts 1/2)
- 24 Last Day of School 🕶️
- 31 Graduation 🎓

Importance of State Assessments

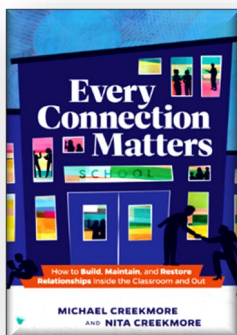
by Dave Minsker, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

State assessments are quickly approaching this month. As part of our student assessment system, these assessments are another important part of gaging where our students are at, and whether they have learned the standards expected at the various grade levels and content areas. Our assessment system includes our classroom formative assessments, benchmark assessments, district common assessments, and these state assessments. Every one of these is a snap shot of where our students are and drives our instruction for improvement. There are many important factors in preparing our students for these assessments that are critical if we expect student success and growth:

- ♦ Teaching and learning of the state standards in the content areas.
- ♦ Interventions for all students that target areas of weakness in the content areas.
- ♦ Student understanding of test taking strategies.
- ♦ Student motivation to ensure they are trying their best.
- ♦ Appropriate testing schedules to give students the best opportunities to be successful.

These all play a part in preparing our students for a successful spring assessment experience and should be a focus of our teachers, principals and support staff. These are assessments we should take seriously and help our students understand that they must give us their best effort so we can adequately understand where they are in their learning journey. We have all worked extremely hard to educate the students of Hartland Schools, and it is important that our students show us evidence of that work.

Thank you for giving terrific instruction throughout the year, maximizing student learning through our robust systems of support, and getting our students ready to attack these assessments with their best effort. In many ways, approaching these assessments is a mindset for our staff and students. Good luck with this year's testing and preparing our students to show what a Hartland education is all about.



Superintendent's Corner

by Chuck Hughes, Superintendent



Being a Superintendent requires continuously trying to establish positive working relationships with students, staff, parents, community members, business partners, legislators, and resource personnel. Finding ways to set aside the past in order to move forward may not always be easy, but well worth the challenge! Often, educational conversation leads to discussions about “relationship foundations.” This means that success in school, as both a student and educator, require attention to building the same positive relationships that I must focus on.

Michael Creekmore and Nita Creekmore published **Every Connection Matters: How to Build, Maintain, and Restore Relationships inside the Classroom and Out** (ASCD, 2024). The book covers the following relationship categories:

- ⇒ The School Relationship (All Stakeholders)
- ⇒ Teacher-to-Self Relationships (Self-Care and Awareness)
- ⇒ Teacher-to-Student Relationships
- ⇒ Teacher-to-Family Relationships
- ⇒ Teacher-to-Teacher Relationships
- ⇒ Teacher-to-Administrator Relationships
- ⇒ Teacher-to-Staff Relationships (Support Staff)

The authors share research regarding educator job related stress and depression, the effects of negative stress, and what they call “Sunday Scaries” or Sunday anxiety leading to a return to work on Monday. The fact is that educators must engage in self-care with attention to emotional, mental, and physical wellness which requires the development, and care toward positive relationships. Positive wellness building functions include: reducing time spent on social media (stop scrolling), surround ourselves with positive people (avoid toxic people), laugh every day, engage in learning something new, and setting healthy boundaries.

As for student to teacher relationships, the authors remind the reader to remember that every child needs someone that looks out for them. As educators, we must remember that we chose education as our careers because we “love kids, we love to teach, we love to see kids grow emotionally, intellectually, and socially, and we want to make a difference.” The fact is, “kids don’t learn from people they don’t like.”

What reminded me of Hartland Schools was the idea that our culture of success has been built on the idea that teams of teachers work hard to be effective. We do not accept “competition” as we embrace putting the good of the grade level, group, school, and district at the forefront of our efforts. I am extremely proud that we embrace reason, respect and responsibility as our foundational tenets and our students are benefitting from this on a regular basis.

This book is well worth reading, especially if you need a reminder that the challenge of building positive relationships is well worth the effort!

Quotes

Teachers “want to trust their leadership to keep the main thing - students first, along with teacher well-being.”

~ Michael Creekmore and Nita Creekmore

“We can improve our relationships with others by leaps and bounds if we become encouragers instead of critics.”

~ Joyce Meyer



A Moment of Science

by Colin Costello, District Science Coach

Crosscutting Concept (CCC) #5: Energy & Matter

This is the third in a series of how to make CCCs more explicit in our teaching. Writers of NGSS have made a [quick video](#) on just this topic because it is one third of the standards. CCCs are crucial lenses that offer unique perspectives on problems and phenomena that **content** and **science practices** alone do not lead us to a complete understanding of. One of the most important lenses to look through is **energy & matter**. It is the only CCC that is also a Disciplinary Core Idea (DCI) because of how ubiquitous the concepts are in science.

How does NGSS explain Energy & Matter as a CCC?

Energy & matter is treated differently by each science discipline, but conservation of **matter & energy** still applies. **Energy & matter** as a CCC is about remembering that all systems, phenomena, and designs must follow the conservation laws. It can also be used as a rule of thumb to help make sense of any problem because tracing **energy & matter**, knowing they cannot be created or destroyed, will lead us somewhere. Thinking about **energy & matter** also helps us decide what can and cannot happen because of conservation laws. Identifying and keeping track of all the **energy & matter** in a system is key to understanding of the world around us.

What does this look like with our students?

In elementary, NGSS asks students to identify **energy & matter**. Help students become aware of the different ways we see, talk about, and account for matter and energy. An example of this is when two balls collide or putting a room-temperature rock in warm water and then discussing questions like, “What parts are involved?”, “Where does energy come from?”, and “Where does energy go?” Here is an [example rubric](#) of how we can get students to develop models of this for plant growth and what [student samples](#) could look like.

In secondary, students identify **energy & matter** changes, but also define systems and connect scales (i.e. atomic scale changes compared to observable changes). Defining systems helps students track where **energy/matter** is coming from or entering. This means if mass increases in one system, matter must have entered from somewhere else. Connecting changes in **matter/energy** at different scales helps students deepen their understanding, like when they apply it to changes in states of matter during the water cycle, i.e. condensation on a cold soda can, or to regional weather patterns of precipitation as humid air moves into cooler and higher elevated regions. [Example](#) of how we can assess **energy & matter**, with a [key](#).

How are you using Energy & Matter in science to build understanding?

- As rules, to make sure students are always following conservation laws?
- As heuristics, to encourage students to trace matter & energy leading to good questions to investigate? For best results, add on **SEPs**, like modeling, along with core ideas (ex: chemical bonding). Just be sure to:
 - ⇒ Define boundaries & changes in closed and open systems to enable tracing of matter/energy
 - ⇒ Identify how matter & energy in phenomena are manifested i.e. Energy released as heat or matter gained as mass
 - ⇒ Connect models of matter/energy at different scales
- And don't forget [these great prompts/stems](#) to help address this from STEM teaching tools.

As we come to the end of this year and reflect on how it went, ponder how a thinking partner could help in that reflection. What areas might you want to grow your craft or focus in on next year? How could using a science coach support that? There are [a variety of ways to support](#) you as a professional. From short planning/reflecting conversations, to deep student centered coaching cycles, we all want to continue to improve our craft because we are growth-minded professionals, but what could that look like for you?



Math Matters

by Annette Macfarlane, District Math Coach

Wow! The end of the year is coming up quickly. Everyone is working hard to complete their units and prepare for state testing. PSAT and SAT are now digital; you can find the breakdown in my [help document](#). Make sure to reach out if you are looking for additional resources.

As we wrap up this school year, it's also time to start thinking about goals and strategies for next year. I encourage you to watch this fantastic TEDx talk by Greg Tang on "[Making Sense of Math](#)".

In his talk, Tang emphasizes the importance of building true numerical fluency and understanding in our students, rather than just rote memorization of facts and procedures. He makes a compelling case that when math makes sense to students conceptually, it sticks with them much better.

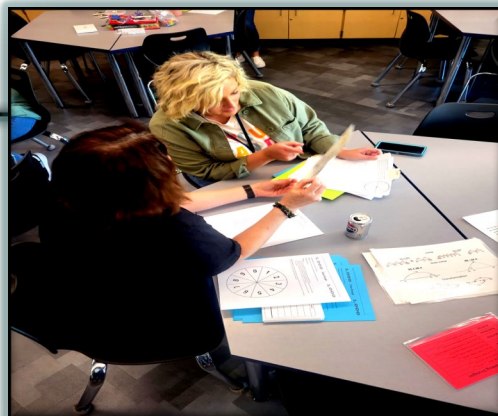
This idea aligns with the professional development session I held this past month at Round Elementary. We developed standard-based math games, but the key focus was on determining the specific strategy or concept you want students to practice through the game. A math game is not useful unless it is intentionally designed around building numerical sense and mastery of targeted skills.

Some other key takeaways from Tang's talk to consider for next year:

- Focus on helping students gain a deep, visual understanding of quantities and numerical relationships
- Use physical manipulatives and visual models to make math concepts concrete
- Teach mental math strategies to build numerical flexibility
- Make math engaging and fun through games, puzzles, and stories

As we plan ahead for the 2024-25 school year, let's prioritize approaches that foster numerical sense-making in our students. When math clicks conceptually, procedural fluency will follow. Our students will gain confidence, enjoyment, and long-lasting mastery.

Check out the [resources](#) on visually-rich math instruction if you'd like to explore these ideas further. Please share any other suggestions for making math make sense in your classroom! ~ **Annette**





The Lit Bit K-6

by Monique Alberts, District ELA Coach K-6

Happy Spring! Warmer weather is just around the corner, which means longer days, more sunshine, and happier students. This year for me has absolutely flown by. Maybe it was all the coaching cycles, or the work around the reading units at K-2, but I feel like I blinked and the school year is almost done. These last 8 weeks are always a sprint to the finish. As we begin to wrap up and wind down, please don't hesitate to reach out for support. The end of the year is actually the best time to try something new. Your routines and management systems are in place, so trying a new lesson or practice with students you know well, is much better than "switching it up" in August.



Shout out to my coaching cycle teachers these last couple of months! Rachel Hayes, Cortney Wood, Rachel Camilleri, Stacey French, Lori Clay, Betsy Bontekoe, and Whitney Engel. It has been so awesome to see your students grow and learn across 6 weeks. Data doesn't lie, and through our collaboration we really did make a difference in the lives of those students! And as a bonus, I got to learn and support some of the most amazing teachers.

Finally, at the end of each year I always review the pacing guides for each grade level. If I don't hear from a grade level then the pacing guide stays the same. However, if a grade level needs to talk pacing, then I am more than happy to do that with representatives from the different buildings or across a team (5th and 6th grades). So...if you have any pacing guide concerns please let me know by April 26th. This allows for us to have enough time to meet and talk as a team. I do take a lot of time before leaving each and every summer making sure the pacing guides are a useful tool, and I want them to be an accurate reflection of what is happening throughout the year. ~ Monique

Off The Charts!

Love this vocabulary tool from the 2nd grade reading unit "**Growing Knowledge Together**". In this unit, students are taking a deep dive of learning into different insects. As they learn about their insect, they collect words, making an "Insect Word Wall". Notice how they create an illustration and explain what the word means (using their own language). All great vocabulary work grounded in research!

Insect vocabulary wall

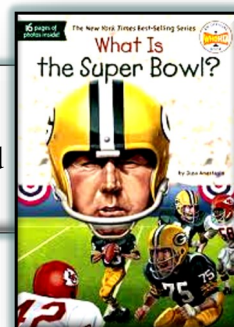
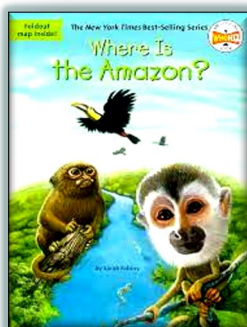
head - part of the insect with eyes, mouth, and antennae	thorax - its the middle part of an insect	abdomen - is like its belly
Ocelli - bonus eyes on some insects foreheads	antennae - 2 long bits poking out of an insect	mouthparts - special parts an insect eats through
exoskeleton - an outside skeleton; super hard; protects insect	Pollination - when an insect helps a plant make more babies	decomposers - insects help break down animal bodies and plant parts by eating them
detritivores - eat dead plants	bioluminescence - lights up part of body	entomologist - scientist who studies insects

Hot Reads!



This book is written like a diary from Mantis' point of view. While it is written to read like a story, it includes lots of facts about praying mantis'. After reading this book, you can't help but love this insect!

If you have not checked out the "Who is" or "Where is" series, many new titles and places have been added. You can find books for your sports addicts...



As well as books for your nature lovers...and variety of others in between!



Literary Lessons

by Sarah Demgen, District ELA Coach 7-12



THINGS WE SAY TODAY WHICH WE OWE TO SHAKESPEARE:

"KNOCK, KNOCK! WHO'S THERE?" "HEART OF GOLD"
"IN A PICKLE" "SET YOUR TEETH ON EDGE" "GOOD RIDDANCE"
"FAINT HEARTED" "SO-SO" "SEND HIM PACKING"
"LIE" "FIGHT FIRE" "BAITED" "COME WHAT MAY"
"LOW" "WITH FIRE" "BREATH" "THE GAME IS UP"
"WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE"
"NOT SLEPT" "FULL CIRCLE" "OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH"
"ONE WIN" "TRUTH" "TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING"
"WHAT'S DONE IS DONE" "NAKED" "BREAK THE ICE" "WILD CHASE"
"LAUGHING STOCK" "BREADED HIS LAST" "GOOSE"
"HEART OF HEARTS" "VANISH INTO THIN AIR" "CHASE"
"SEEN BETTER DAYS" "WAXES YOUR HAIR STAND ON END"
"DEAD AS A DOORNAIL" "FOR GOODNESS' SAKE" "LOVE IS BLIND"
"GREEN EYED MONSTER" "FAIR / FOUL" "OFF WITH HIS HEAD"
"THE WORLD IS MY OYSTER" "BRAVE NEW WORLD" "A SORRY SIGHT"
"BE ALL / END ALL" "A SORRY SIGHT"

Hello everyone! I always feel like time flies by once we come back to school after Spring Break. We are one week away from beginning our spring testing, and then after that, there are only weeks left of the school year.

April is a special month because it is the birthday (and death day) of my all-time favorite writer, **William Shakespeare**. I love that he wrote plays and sonnets that were meant to be enjoyed by everyone. If you ever want some tips on including a little of Shakespeare in any of your classes, let me know!

April is also **Poetry Month**, a time to celebrate the beauty of language through verse and rhyme. For middle and high school English classrooms, incorporating poetry can be both engaging and enriching. Try hosting a poetry slam where students can showcase their own work or favorite poems, or create a classroom poetry wall where students can share and display poems that resonate with them. To discover engaging poetry for your lessons, students can visit websites like Poetry Foundation (poetryfoundation.org) and Poets.org for a wide range of poems, resources, and inspiration. ~ Sarah

Mastering Standardized Tests: MSTEP, PSAT, SAT

As spring testing season approaches, it's important to acknowledge the hard work and dedication that all of you have put into preparing your students for the upcoming **MSTEP, PSAT, and SAT** exams.

Teachers, your commitment to guiding and supporting students through these standardized tests is commendable, and your efforts do not go unnoticed. Remember that success is not just about test scores, but also about the growth and progress each student makes along the way. In these final days before the exams, focus on instilling confidence in your students, reminding them to manage their time effectively, read questions carefully, and trust in the knowledge and skills they have already acquired. With your guidance and support, students can approach these tests with a positive mindset and perform to the best of their abilities. Thank you, teachers, for all that you do to empower your students on their testing journey!

Exploring Student Progress: Formative Assessments in English Classrooms

Formative assessments play a crucial role in evaluating student progress, and help gauge student understanding and tailor instruction to meet individual needs effectively. For instance, you can observe students engaging in writing tasks, and sit next to them and provide feedback in real-time to guide their progress. Assigning short writing prompts or reading reflections helps in analyzing student responses to gain insights into their comprehension and critical thinking skills.

Activities like exit tickets, where students **summarize** key concepts or **pose questions** at the end of a lesson, are great tools. You can use this information to guide a short reteach in the following day's lesson. Similarly, concept mapping exercises can help students **visually represent connections** between different themes or characters in a novel, demonstrating their grasp of literary concepts. All of these can support student growth and foster a dynamic learning environment in your English classrooms.

Common Assessments

As the year is wrapping up, please make sure you are planning time in your schedule to assess your students. The common assessments are in Illuminate, so you have the option to test digitally or physically on paper. Let me know what questions you have.

Also, take some time to reflect on how your students are performing on the common assessments and if there are changes we need to make for the coming school year. Now is the perfect time to reflect and make improvements for student achievement.

Technology

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Network
Admin /Tech

David Allward
Network Admin/
Tech

Stacie Motz
Data Collection/
Submission, and
Instructional Data
Coordinator

Scott Usher
Director of Technology

Dave Larson
Network Engineer

Cameron Montney
Network Admin /
Tech

**Ryan Fox /
Lucas Johnson**
System
Engineers/
LESA
Jen Grabowski
Help Desk

Server Migration

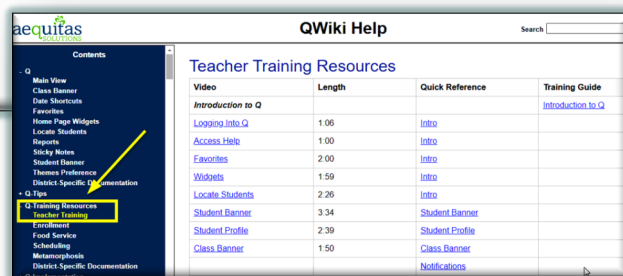
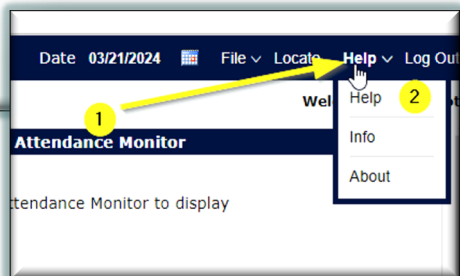
Part of the 2000 BOND was refreshing our server infrastructure. In December 2023, we purchased new server equipment intended to house our various virtual servers and data, and storage intended to house our recorded security video. Through the diligent efforts of our Technology Staff, I'm proud to announce that both sets of servers and storage are up and running.

Installing the server infrastructure is only half the project. The other half is migrating the data from the old servers to the new servers. I'm pleased to inform you that we have completed this migration. The entire process was planned and implemented by our Systems Engineers and Network Administrators. As a result of this excellent work, we were able to complete this migration with 100% server uptime.

The second part of the project will be to migrate security cameras to the new server storage. We have begun that work and plan to continue with little to no downtime with those systems as well.

MiStar Teacher Training Resources

Did you know that there are Teacher Training resources available in MISTAR? To access these videos and training materials, navigate to **Help | Help | Q Training Resources | Teacher Training**. There are several short instructional videos and training guides available covering a wide range of topics including How to Use Gradebook, Attendance, Reports and other features for Teachers.



Getting a GRASP on Goals with Illuminate

Did you know that you can **add calculations** and then apply **performance bands** to custom reports to Pre and Post test data in Illuminate? **Custom reports** can be created within an assessment to analyze data. This data can then be exported to Excel for use to create graphs and charts in either Google or Excel. Charts can also be created in your Illuminate custom report by navigating to the Charts Tab.

