



# Curriculum News

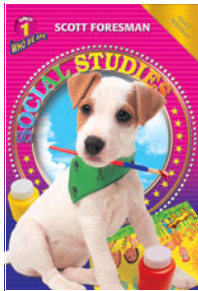


Northfield Community School  
2000 New Road, Northfield, NJ, 08225

Summer 2008 Volume 2, Issue 1

## K-3 Social Studies Materials Adoption!

K-3 Teachers reviewed Social Studies materials last May and June and selected two new series.



Kindergarten teachers selected **Scott Foresman Grade K— Here We Go (2008)**

Online Resources: <http://www.sfsocialstudies.com/k/index.html>

**Grades 1-3 selected TCI—Social Studies Alive (2009).**

TCI Online Resources:

<http://www.teachtc.com/resources/socialstudies.aspx>



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## Revised Math Curriculum is Here!

The first draft of the Mathematics Curriculum, grades K-8 is completed thanks to our curriculum committee, which was comprised of Lynne Martino (K), Pam Hennelly (1), Michelle Seals (2), Sadye Heenan (3), Sue Farr (4), Karen Casselman (5-8), Nick Corley (8). The curriculum is truly a working document and it will be implemented and revised as we go through the year. Everyone's input is needed to make this a useful resource. The curriculum is written in Understanding by Design format, with particular attention paid to the NJ Focus Areas. Key Understandings, Essential Questions and Performance tasks are emphasized for greater depth of knowledge and understanding.

The curriculum is available on the SharePoint and online at <http://ncs.district.googlepages.com/> and <http://curriculum-office.northfield.grouppfusion.net>.



## Needed: ILA Curriculum Committee

Developing and updating curriculum is an on-going process. This school year, we will begin revising ILA in UbD. The **ILA Writing Committee** will be selected this coming fall. The curriculum committee will explore new ways to write curriculum with essential

questions and key understandings in order to engage students in genuine inquiry. There will be 1.5 professional development days and approximately 30 hours (curriculum rate) devoted to this committee.

**Are you interested in being a writer?**



Send letter of interest to Dr. Richard Stepura and Dr. Carol Ferguson

(via email or mailbox).  
Quoted: "I hear and I forget. I see, and I remember. I do, and I understand.—Chinese Proverb

## Upcoming Events:

**Back to School Night:** MS—9/23; ES—K-2: 9/24; 3-4: 9/25

**3rd Annual Family Health and Fitness Day:** Feb. 7, 2009  
12pm-3pm

**MS Science Fair:** Feb. 11, 2009

**MS Visual Literacy Fair:** March 31, 2009

**MS Art Fair:** March 31, 2009

**ES Art Fair:** May, 19, 2009





## Healthy School Initiative in Review

### NCS is the Healthiest School in Atlantic County!

We entered the AtlantiCare's Healthiest School Contest in October 2007. After much work from the Healthy School Steering Committee, we scored a 100% in the pre and post assessment. We won the title of "Healthiest School in Atlantic County 2008", a plaque and \$5000! Thanks HSSC!!!!

#### Last year's events included:

- We held our first Family Day on September 24, 2007 – A Day to Eat Dinner with your Family.
- We have established a mileage club for grades K-4 and a Walk and Talk Club for 5-8.
- We have implemented a Rebel2 program where seventh-grade students learn and relay an anti-tobacco/alcohol/drug message. On April 11, 2008 seventh grade students and advisors lead a "Kick Butts" day in 7th Grade.
- We implemented Strengthening Families Program
- We have implemented Power of Choice Program with preteens. This program helps preteens develop life skills for making healthful eating and active living choices.
- We were recognized by The New York Jets Football Team, in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, as one of six schools in New Jersey that have made significant changes to improve their school nutrition environment. New York Jets wide receiver Charles M. Kuperus joined NJ Secretary of Agriculture in honoring us for winning the Eat

Right, Move More contest!

- We held our first "May Challenge" where teachers designed a Healthy event for each school. Mrs. Crooks' Ele-Unity Garden Project and Mrs. Nash's /Mrs. Willett's School Wide Line Dance were the winning entries.
- We held our 2nd Annual Family Health and Fitness Day on February 9, 2008.
- We hosted Flu Shots for Staff, held Wellness Day in October in-service, offered CPR training for staff on May 21 and 22.

#### We have integrated health and wellness into our curricula in the following ways:

- Participated in AtlantiCare's pilot Healthy Equation Program.
- Held a G.Y.M. (Great Young Minds) workshop that shows staff how to integrate physical activity into the curriculum.
- Art teachers entered several contests for staying healthy.
- We distributed a binder of activities for Daily Physical Activities.
- We have implemented and required MS students to participate in the President's Active Lifestyle Challenge.

And much more!!!! See our website for complete listing:  
<http://hsc.northfield.groupfusion.net/>

We Need You! Join the HSSC! **Interested in joining the Healthy School Steering Committee to plan this year's upcoming events and Staff Wellness Activities? Please do! Email Dr. Ferguson at [cferguson@ncs-nj.org](mailto:cferguson@ncs-nj.org)**



## Grants, Contests, and Special Events



**Best Buy Awards for Interactive te@ch Programs:** Value: Awards range from \$1,000-\$5,000, Deadline: October 12, 2008

The Best Buy te@ch program rewards schools for successful interactive programs they have launched with available technology. Winning te@ch programs focus on kids using technology to learn a standards-based curriculum, rather than on teaching students to use technology or educators using technology that children aren't able to use hands-on.

[http://www.bestbuyinc.com/community\\_relations/teach\\_awards.htm](http://www.bestbuyinc.com/community_relations/teach_awards.htm)

**Letters About Literature:** This is a national reading-writing contest. To enter, readers write a personal letter to an author explaining how that author's work changed the student's way of thinking about the world or themselves. <http://www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/letters.html> This comes with a full set of lesson plans (5) and support materials. Read this early, I encourage all ILA teachers, grade 4-8 to apply!!! Students win target grants and a trip to Washington, DC!

**NEA Learning and Leadership Grants:** The NEA Foundation gives learning and leadership grants for lesson study, study groups, or action research to groups or individuals. Grant funds range from \$2,000 to \$5,000. For more information go to: URL: <http://tinyurl.com/2ujzun> (next deadline is 10/15/08)

**Increase Your Green:** Organization: Do Something, Eligibility: Middle and high schools, Value: Four awards of \$500-\$1,500, Deadline: December 15, 2008

Participants must make concrete efforts towards reducing the environmental impact of their school during the eight week competition. All initiatives must be youth designed and led. A representative from each group must submit an online report of the school or club's actions to save energy, reduce waste and raise awareness during the competition.

Url: <http://www.dosomething.org/increaseyourgreen>

**Target Field Trip Grant:** Coming Soon. Mark your calendars. Put on your thinking caps. Make a list of what your class could do with one of 5,000 Field Trip Grants of up to \$800 each. Then check back between Sept. 2 and Nov. 1, 2008, to register and complete an application. Url: <http://tinyurl.com/j2pdw>

Please visit our website for more information! <http://curriculum-office.northfield.groupfusion.net>



# Summer Professional Development Opportunities



- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. **August 26— Study Island Refresher and Advanced Features. Presenter: K. Fields. 9-10:30am MS Computer Lab #1**  
For grades 3-8 general education teachers, BSI and Special Education Teachers. (not available as a paid workshop)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **August 26 – Integrate Pro Grade Book Refresher. Presenter: K. Fields. 10:30am-12pm MS Computer Lab #1**  
For all teachers in grades 3 –8 who want a refresher (not available as a paid workshop)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. **August 26 – OnCourse Lesson Planner, School Fusion, eBoards, numonics board, review of district software Refresher. Presenter: K. Jarrett. 12:30pm-2pm MS Computer Lab #1**  
For all teachers in grades 3 –8 who want a refresher (not available as a paid workshop)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. **\*\*August 27 – Introduction to Office 2007 and MythTV. Presenters: Sam DiMaria and Ted Fitzgerald. MS Lab #1.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ 8am-10am; \_\_\_\_\_ 10am-12pm; \_\_\_\_\_ 1pm-3pm

**(Repeated 9/3/07 12:30-2:30, those who take this summer workshop, work on rooms at this time)**

You've been using Microsoft Office for years now. What's in it for you to upgrade? Microsoft Office 2007 represents Microsoft's most significant enhancements to its suite of work-related applications yet, and this workshop will get you delving into the best that Microsoft Office has to offer. You'll also have ample opportunities to compare and contrast old versus new Office programs. You will learn how to navigate in the new interface and take advantage of the new features. In this workshop, participants will explore the new Office 2007 user interface for Word, Excel and PowerPoint and understand the various file formats and compatibility issues.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. **\*\*August 28– Introduction to the Mathematics Curriculum and Online Resources. Presenter: Carol Ferguson. Ph.D.**  
12:30pm-2:30pm. For all teachers in grades K-4: RM 701 and MS Computer Lab.

This workshop will review the new Mathematics Curriculum, written in UbD. In addition, participants will explore online tools - performance assessment, basic facts, journal writing and portfolio assessment, the online student edition with eTools, Home Activities for each chapter, online games, Discovery School Videos, test prep, more practice, examples, online journal, and we will look at Quick reference drop down menu with Joint Usage. Participants will walk away with many useful activities to use in their classroom!

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. **\*\*August 29 – Holistic Scoring and Strategies for NJ Ask Writing. Presenter: Michelle Barto, Ed.D.**

9:00am-12pm. RM 701

For grades 3-8. The workshop will be a hands on workshop on implementing the teaching of Writing Prompts and scoring them for New Jersey Ask. Strategies will be demonstrated, modeled, and practiced including how to raise scores on all writing tasks required on NJ ASK grades three through six. We will practice using lessons and models, work with scoring rubrics and break down strategies beginning at the kindergarten level to increase the successful writing experiences of students' performance on NJ ASK. Each teacher will also leave with many resources to guide them through a plan for success on the writing portion of the test.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. **\*\*October 1 (meeting 1). Instruction for All Students – Book Club: Presenter: Carol Ferguson.**

3:30pm- 5:00pm. All participants are given a copy of Instruction for All Students. For all teachers! 10 one-hour after-school paid sessions. The book is an excellent guide to lesson planning, planning for assessment, active class activities, thinking skills, etc. Instruction for All Students should inspire all teachers to become well diverse with strategies, techniques and resources that will definitely increase student achievement. Instruction for All Students begins with an overview of the initiatives that are in the news and influencing our thinking as we implement instructional programs that lead to the achievement of high standards by all students. An important goal of the workshop series is for participants to become comfortable with and build skills at using the standards-based planning process. Furthermore, in today's educational society where collaborating with others is an essential resource for increasing student achievement, Paula Rutherford has outlined excellent ideas that surely build and advance purpose-driven teams of educators.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. **\*\*October 2 and 16 – Project Read Story Form Literature Connection. Presenters: Fay Crooks and Michelle Seals.**  
3:30pm-5:00m, room 701, (This is a two-part workshop, you need to attend both dates). Participants receive teachers' guide. For grades K-4, BSI support in grades K-4, special education support in grades K-4; ESL

Project Read Story Form Literature Connection is direct concept instruction of reading comprehension using multi-sensory strategies and materials. It teaches a process of analyzing the underlying structure of expository and narrative writing and is presented in a sequential, dependent order of concepts and skills. This process transfers to other curriculum areas to give the student a level of language independence. The curriculum was designed primarily for grades 1 through adult learners.

**\*\*These are paid professional development workshops. Refresher workshops are not paid PD workshops, they are refreshers of materials previously covered. NOTE: Seats are limited and are on a first come, first served basis.**

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to serve on the Healthy School Steering/Employee Wellness Committee for the 2008-2009 school year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to serve on the Community of Caring Middle School Committee for the 2008-2009 school year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in serving on the ILA Curriculum Writing Committee and will forward a letter of interest to Dr. Stepura.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in serving on the ES ILA Textbook Review Committee and will forward a letter of interest to Dr. Stepura.

**Return Form to Carol Ferguson by August 20, 2008!!!**

Additional forms can be downloaded at <http://curriculum-office.northfield.groupfusion.net>



# Happenings



caring  
respect  
responsibility  
trust  
family



## Community of Caring Update

In June, MS teams set up bulletin boards with a special message for their

core value: **Caring, Family, Respect, Responsibility and Trust.** These boards will welcome back our MS students and get them psyched to implement Community of Caring. This summer, Lisa Harvey, Karen Batschelet and I (Carol Ferguson) went to a Community of Caring Conference where we created our 2008-2009 action plan for implementation! We certainly came away with a lot to share with the MS this fall. Some ideas that we will share are an introductory COC Video for Parents and Students, a Quantum Shift Video Contest for teachers and students, "Dog Poop Initiative," grade level activities and conferences and much more! If you are a MS Staff member and would like to **join our Community of Caring Committee** to plan cool things for faculty, students and parents in order to create a true Community of Caring, please fill out the bottom of the PD form on Page 3!

## NJ ASK Testing Update! Proficiency Rate Changed for Grades 5-8

The proficiency rate for MS will be raised - oh yes, and retroactively includes 2007-2008 scores, which is a year that the benchmarks were also raised! Previously a student would be deemed proficient if he/she answered 33-46%, now to be proficient (200) they have to answer 50% correct. The obvious result will be that there are less students proficient in grades 5-8, because of the change in how the state calculates proficiency. Grades 3 and 4 did not have changes to the proficiency calculation. All grades' AYP benchmarks (this is the % of students needed to pass in order to make AYP) were raised for 2007-2008 raised as outlined below.

LA - (6-8) - 66 to 76%  
Math (6-8) - 49 to 62%

LA (3-5) 75 to 82%  
Math (3-5) 62 to 73%

## 2008 Election Resources



**PBS 2008 Vote:** Election resources for ES, MS teachers. <http://www.pbs.org/teachers/vote2008>.

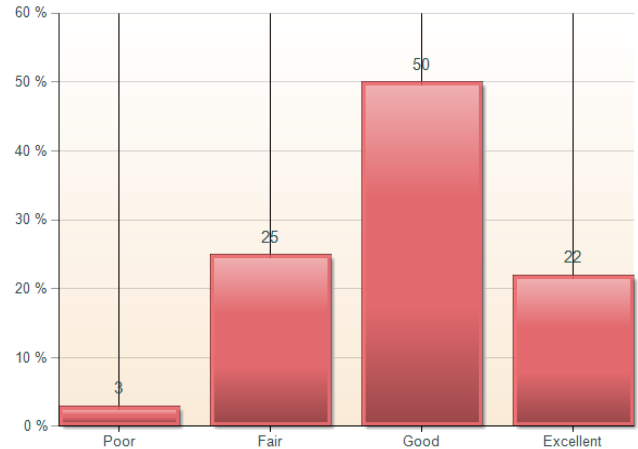
**CNN Election Center**—<http://www.cnn.com/Election2008>

**Election2008**

**C-Span Classroom**—<http://www.cspanclassroom.org/>

**Study Group Update:** Study groups will continue this year, on a team/content level. 68% of teachers surveyed preferred this. We will present our work at the October in-service. For Survey Results go to <http://curriculum-office.northfield.groupfusion.net>.

Rate your overall experience with working in your study group.



## Caught on the Web



**Motivation and Engagement for Readers K-12**

<http://tinyurl.com/5s3tfa>

**Using Technology to Increase Literacy:** Information on how to use blogs, movies, podcasts, comic books, wikis, and more best practices in integrating technology into the curriculum.

<http://tinyurl.com/6n7mxw>

**21ST Century Social Studies:**

[http://snipurl.com/p21skills\\_socstds](http://snipurl.com/p21skills_socstds)

**NCS Technology Resources**—contests, grants, state assessment resources, also—click on technology resources, lesson plans and more for: Lesson plans, online tools, quiz generator, grants and funding, games, subject area information for all core subjects, art, health, special ed and more.

<http://ncs.district.googlepages.com/home>

**NCS Curriculum Page**—updated weekly with the latest resources, current curriculum, testing information, teacher resources and more.

<http://curriculum-office.northfield.groupfusion.net>

**Collaborative Writing Resources**—Tech Learning "Web-based collaborative writing tools offer a simple means to generate text exercises, research reports, and writing assignments in a collaborative mode. The authors discuss how Google Docs, ThinkFree, Zoho Writer, and WriteBoard can jazz up any writing curriculum.

<http://tinyurl.com/6lwfgw>