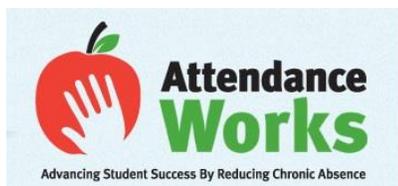


The Nugget



News from the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools office
August 2013 *Holly Hermansen, Superintendent*



September is:
Attendance Awareness Month

Help plan Attendance Awareness Month activities at your school. See article below:
Good Attendance Essential to Academic Success

News & Notes

Back to School: Changes and Challenges

Holly Hermansen

Nevada County Superintendent of Schools

Welcome Back!

As I do each year at this time, I reviewed prior back to school articles. It's always interesting to get a picture of what we were facing as we came back to school in past years. As you can imagine, the last five years consisted of replaying over and over a pretty dreary message regarding the state of school budgets. In one of the articles I was looking forward to a school year that started with a more optimistic outlook. I believe that this is that year.

It is going to be a good year! While there are still significant fiscal issues that our school districts are facing, there is also a sense of optimism and hope that we are starting to see some level of improvements. Even though the school districts in Nevada County are not receiving significant increases in funding, there is a plan in place with the approval of the governor's budget that at least allows a respite from the cuts

and a partial restoration of lost funding. I believe that the optimism we are seeing at the start of this year is due to finally seeing some relief from the devastating cuts of the last five years.

This year is certain to be one filled with change and challenges. We could call it the year for new acronyms: LCFF (Local Control Funding Formula), LCAP (Local Control Accountability Plan), CCSS (Common Core State Standards), SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) among many more.

The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) is a revised system for education funding in California. Districts are funded at a base rate with enhancements for certain student demographics including English Language Learners, low income and foster youth. The LCFF is intended to be phased in over eight years, restoring each district back to at least their funding levels in 2007-2008. The LCFF replaces most state categorical programs, and the funding allocated will be largely unrestricted but will be subject to comprehensive accountability requirements. Federally mandated programs such as special education stay outside of the formula.

Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, districts must develop a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). The

local school goals for the LCAP need to be based on the state priority areas that have been identified. These areas include parent involvement, appropriately assigned teachers, pupil engagement, school climate, school facilities and more. The LCAP is intended to provide transparency and accountability and must disclose how funds will be spent to provide high quality educational programs. The State Board of Education must develop regulations and a template by March 31st, 2014.

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is a nationwide initiative to establish a single set of standards for K-12 education in English language arts and mathematics to ensure college and career readiness. These standards describe what students should know and be able to do in each subject and at each grade level. The California State Board of Education adopted the CCSS in 2010. Nevada County Superintendent of Schools office has been providing training to introduce the standards to teachers over the last year in grade level groupings and additional trainings this summer to help prepare teachers for implementation. There is still a great deal of work that needs to be done in this area as we move toward full implementation. With the transition to the CCSS we will see major changes in the coming years in accountability measures, with the current state accountability program becoming mostly obsolete. Field testing of the new computer-based assessments that will be aligned to the CCSS is scheduled across the state with full implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessment program by spring of 2015.

We step into this school year with a great deal of changes and challenges, but also with a sense of optimism and hope. I wish you the best of all years, and thank you for your continued dedication to education and the students in Nevada County.

Good Attendance Essential to Academic Success: Foster Attendance Awareness the Month of September

By Judy Nielsen & Attendance Works staff
Nugget Editor

The NCSOS office and the Nevada County Board of Education have joined a nationwide effort to celebrate Attendance Awareness Month in September. They have pledged to raise awareness about the value of regular school attendance, with a focus on reducing chronic absenteeism in the new school year. Chronic absence is described as missing 10% of the school year, or about 18 days, for any reason, excused or unexcused. Too often chronic absence remains a hidden problem because schools track average daily attendance and truancy only. Studies consistently illustrate that chronic absence is an early warning indicator that a student will drop out of high school.

Attendance Works is a national and state initiative that promotes awareness of the important role that school attendance plays in achieving academic success. Go to www.attendanceworks.org for online tools, resources,

webinars and up-to-date information on attendance research and news. Their free downloadable tracking program aims to partner with families and community agencies to collect data and track students who are chronically absent. During Attendance Awareness Month we ask school leaders, community advocates, parents, and students to act upon critical first steps to help stem chronic absenteeism in your school. Begin now to build a habit and a culture of regular attendance; use data to monitor when chronic absence is a problem; and, identify and solve barriers to get children to school to achieve better outcomes for all students.

Setting the Stage: Respond to Bullying at School Start

By Sharyn Turner MA, R.N.

Coordinator of School Health

Olweus Bullying Prevention Trainer

It is unlikely you will observe a bullying incident first hand at the beginning of a school year, but it is important to acknowledge that students rarely bully victims in front of an adult. Few bullying incidents are reported by students. But it is a given fact that children ARE being bullied in Nevada County Schools (For those districts that participated in the yearly Olweus Survey June, 2013, your principal should have your school's results now for review.)



What Educators Can Do to Address Bullying:

- Lead by example, not by force.
- Establish a code of conduct in the classroom.
- Know how to intervene when necessary. An additional article, "A Direct Response to an Observed Bullying Incident", complete with a downloadable chart, can be found on the NCSOS website at <http://nevco.org/responsetobullying/>.
- Encourage students to report.
- Acknowledge positive behaviors.
- Reduce hotspots/minimize opportunities for bullying.
- Teach social skills that students are lacking.
- Build on children's strengths.
- Understand parent's perspectives and provide resources for parents of children that bully or have been bullied.
- Maintain a warm and inviting classroom and participate in classroom meetings.

The beginning of the year is a great time to review your districts bullying policies and discipline procedures. In June, 2013, NCSOS revised the county's bullying policies. If you would like a copy of that updated policy for your district review, contact Samie (swhite@nevco.k12.ca.us).

Trainings • Field Trips • Opportunities for All

Trainings

Hold the Date: Series of Six Early Childhood Education Workshops

A series of six Early Childhood Education workshops will be offered monthly on Wednesdays from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at NCSOS beginning October 9, 2013. The first topic is ‘Using the Environment to Engage Children’. Early Childhood Education and care providers should take advantage of this valuable opportunity. A light dinner will be provided and a possible stipend offered. Full details and schedule will appear in the September edition of *the Nugget*. To RSVP for the October 9 workshop contact First 5 Nevada County at 265-0611 x223.

Field Trips



Music in the Mountains

The *Young Composers Program* consists of Sat. classes and private lessons throughout the school year, culminating with a concert of original student compositions. 5th - 12th grade students are invited to apply by the Sept. 6 deadline. Go to www.musicinthemountains.org to download application.

These MIM Educational Programs are FREE to Nevada County Schools:

- * Peers Performing 4 Peers
- * Music Live
- * Classics 4 Kids
- * Take Five for Music (Brummitt-Taylor Classical Music Listening Program renamed)

Education Director Mark Vance
265.6173 x202

Student Matinee at Center for the Arts: Tomás and the Library Lady

This production by Childsplay, Inc. of Tempe, Arizona, is the inspirational story of Mexican-American author and educator Tomás Rivera. Mr. Rivera is a child of migrant workers who became the first minority chancellor in the UC system. This event takes place on Sept. 24 at 7 p.m. for families. The student matinee time is TBD based on response. Best for grades K-6. For more info or to make reservations contact Pamela Roberts, Educ. Outreach, at 274-8384 x18 or proberts@thecenterforthearts.org

Opportunities for All

Call for ‘Gallery of Student Art’

Each school year the NCSOS office ramp/hallway is graced with student artwork that rotates on a monthly basis. Although it is called the ‘Gallery of Student Art’, this year any employee of the educational arena can submit a request to display personal artwork. There are nine timeframes available. If you or your class would like this opportunity to exhibit contact Judy Nielsen at judy@nevco.k12.ca.us or call 478-6400 x208.

Greetings from the Altar Show

The 16th annual Altar Show takes place Nov. 9-17, with set-up taking place Nov. 6-8. Any individual, a whole classroom, or organization can be an Altarista. Each altar, considered Installation Art, honors an idea or loved one. Attend one of two orientations taking place Sept. 10 at 6 p.m. or Oct. 12 at 3 p.m. For more info

and the application go to www.thealtarshow.org.

CPR & First Aid Training

CPR & First Aid classes are held at NCSOS in the Houser Room. This series of trainings take place Aug. 29, Sept. 5 & 7, and Oct. 5 & 10. Thursday classes take place 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. Saturday classes take place 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Reservations are first come, first serve. The \$30 fee must be prepaid to reserve a spot in the class. For further information call 478-6400 x201 or register on-line at www.nevco.org/register.

Mud Hut at ASiF Studio Offers Student Workshops

There is a full menu of programs for student ceramic classes. Take your class to the studio or a ceramics teacher can come to your site. For more info go to www.asifstudios.com or call Artist Denise Wey at 477-7843.

Finding Funding: Tip of the Month

DonorsChoose.org: This funding organization supports amazing educators who work so hard to expose their students to the world around them and to help teachers bring their ideas to life. Through DonorsChoose.org, anyone can be connected to a specific teacher in a specific school with a specific idea about a project for students. Their motto is ‘You ask. They choose.’ Visit www.DonorsChoose.org for more info.

*If you have received funding or services from one of our Finding Funding tips we’d love to hear about it and share with our readers! Contact **Nugget** Editor Judy Nielsen at judy@nevco.k12.ca.us.*

Quick Reference Calendar...

Calendar events have been highlighted in previous editions of ***The Nugget*** and are listed in chronological order. Back issues of ***The Nugget***, with additional information, can be found at www.nevco.org.

New GED® Test in 2014



Starting in 2014 there will be a new GED® test. The current version will expire at the end of 2013. Testers who have passed some but not all of the five GED® components will have to start over, as scores will also expire as part of the transition. If you know of someone who has already started the series of tests to obtain a GED®, they need encouragement to get to the finish by the end of 2013. These people have already accomplished so much.