

“Each child, in each school, in each of our communities deserves to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.” ASCD’s Whole Child Initiative

Unifying Initiatives, p. 3

Workshop, p. 3

President’s Message, p. 5

Teachers Leadership
Conference, p.6

ASCD Northeast Conference in Maine Informed, Empowered, and Energized



Maine ASCD was one of five states hosting Northeast ASCD’s annual Conference on March 27. At Jeff’s Event Center in Brewer, Maine participants learned with Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey and from each other in an interactive day. With the day’s format and resources - new learning, reflection, interaction, and leadership opportunities for participants occurred.

Conference day features were a *first for Maine ASCD* in a few ways:

- . Presenters were streamed-in, live.
- . Maine’s site was connected to and heard from ASCD and four other states: Vermont, New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts.
- . The afternoon included an EdSpace Collaboration (similar to an Edcamp) where participants took the lead.

From their workspace at Health Sciences High and Middle College, a middle and high school in San Diego, California, Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey discussed engaging students in learning. The presentation was divided into three segments:

- . **Culture** - Fisher and Frey described five pillars of a positive, learning culture.
- . **Purposeful/Relevant Learning** - Let students know the purpose for their learning, not just the standards they will be learning.
- . **Structures** - Formative assessments and other scaffolds help students keep on track.

See **NE Conference**, PAGE 2



NE Conference, Cont. from Page 1

Following each segment, participants discussed prompts related to Fisher and Frey's comments. In addition, throughout the presentation, participants posed questions to Fisher and Frey. After lunch, Fisher and Frey



answered more questions and re-capped the morning.

Then Maine site's EdSpace Collaboration began. Discussion groups formed based on participants' suggestions and pre-determined topics. Discussion times for topics, formally, were 35 minutes. However, participants were invited to stay with a topic for as long or as briefly as they would like.

Collaboration topics were:

- . Restorative Practices
- . Close Reading
- . Fisher and Frey's *Five Pillars* as an umbrella for varied initiatives
- . Instruction Reform
- . School District Issues
- . Fisher and Frey's *Framework for Intentional and Targeted Teaching* (FIT) Templates
- . Book Study - *Better Learning through Structured Teaching*



Following the EdSpace Collaborations, a showcase took place in which Meg Boynton, First Grade teacher, Augusta Public Schools and Virginia Rebar, Superintendent, MSAD 13 were among participants from all five states sharing conference reflections streamed live to all the sites.

We thank ASCD organizers/trainers, Walter McKenzie and Krista Leh Rundell, Maine ASCD President, Mary Bellavance and Executive Director, Kimberly Emerson, representatives from five ASCD affiliate states, for their collaboration and planning, Maine ASCD Programs group for our site planning and logistics, our site technology leader, Dan Chuhta, conference day facilitators, Shelly Moody, Bill Zima and all who helped with facilitation, and most of all the conference participants - for making the conference a quality, professional learning day.

Someone Has to Light the Candle - *Unifying Initiatives*

By Virginia Rebar, Superintendent of Schools, MSAD#13/R.S.U. 83

It has been said that the human eye can see a lit candle in the dark that is shining up to a mile away. The problem is that someone has to light the candle.

The ASCD Northeast Conference in Maine with Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey really allowed for some new light to shine upon Maine's current "perfect storm" of reforms and provided a unifying structure for leaders to promote. For me, as superintendent of schools in a small rural district in Maine, the structure validated so much of what is already happening in our schools and tied a knot around all of the various initiatives underway bringing them together through a focus on creating a culture of achievement. Let me explain.

Fisher and Frey are consultants working with a multi-ethnic school in California called the Health and Sciences High School. The school has an 81% proficiency profile among the student population. In their book, *How to Create a Culture of Achievement*, also written by Ian Pumpian, they explain the importance of creating a culture in schools that is based upon **five pillars**, namely:

Welcome, Do No harm, Choice Words, It's Never Too Late to Learn, and Best School in the Universe.

As I listened to them describe each of the pillars, I immediately found a structural design that in one way or another linked to all of our many reform challenges while, at the same time, validated so much of what we are already doing in our district. As far as reforms go, we are faced with a *new teacher evaluation model, standard based curriculum, assessment, grade reporting, proficiency based diplomas, suicide prevention training, bullying prevention, dropout prevention, new state assessments*, and, in general, a call for more *academic rigor*, and gauging *proficiencies in nonacademic areas (Guiding Principles)*. The description of the *five pillars* collapsed the illusion that these reform efforts are or could be compartmental initiatives fractionalizing our focus. Truly, culture is created and maintained by all members and initiatives of the community.

Though contending the five pillars address so many reform challenges may seem overly simplistic, "the proof is in the pudding". The following will briefly link a pillar to a reform effort and sample "cultural" traits from our own school district that will be used to demonstrate the application of the five pillar cultural structural design.

Welcome – Every student is greeted every day by name - Standards Based Learning (heightened commitment to feeling of belonging and developing through learning).

Do No harm – Staff knows that rules do not teach students discipline, people do. We use restorative discipline and practices, behavior charts, self-contracts, and circles and work to demonstrate a "helping curriculum" through teacher example. This pillar supports efforts in anti-bullying efforts, suicide prevention, and dropout prevention.

Choice Words- We consciously apply the use of language that builds on other's sense of agency and identity. Agency is the belief in one's capacity to act upon the world and have a voice. This is

See **Light the Candle**, PAGE 4

Light the Candle, continued from P. 3

linked to the attributes of professionalism in the new teacher evaluation model, as well as all of the issues in the above category.

Never Too Late to Learn- We have embraced the publication, *Failure is not an Option* by Alan M. Blankstein and have had considerable book study work around this work and concept. We employ targeted teaching and much data review through regular PLC meetings focused on RTI process steps. This pillar is directly related to *Standards Based Learning* and *Proficiency Based Diplomas*.

Best School in the Universe-This is not to say that only one school can be the best school in the universe. This is not about competing. This is about internal accountability. This is about creating a mindset of growth for students and staff and adopting a system to continually improve. We make our efficacy agenda public. We have been faced with low student scores in the past. Yet, we have just been named as one of the top progressing high schools in the state. Janette Kirk, ESEA Director, has communicated that we are recognized as among the highest 15% of Title One schools with the greatest level of progress over three years. In addition, our Title One Improvement Coach, Steve Cottrell wrote an unprecedented letter of commendation to our elementary staff on our work to improve student scores. This pillar is definitely linked to all of the reform efforts facing us as mindful and reflective educators.

The candle has been lit and the glow is ever present as we look at the reform challenges facing us through unifying lenses, as much as possible. This is especially true if we wish to provide a necessary foundation to incorporate the new practices and philosophies, while maintaining effective fundamentals already in place.

CHALLENGE through CHOICE

MSAD 13 workshop in collaboration with Maine ASCD
Wednesday, May 13, 2015
Featuring ASCD author MIKE ANDERSON

This interactive workshop includes participants' collaboration and addresses initiatives such as:

Differentiated Learning, Student Empowerment, Student Achievement and Growth. Proficiency Learning

When: Wed. May 13, 2015
Lunch 11:30 (included in fee)
Workshop 12:30-3:00

Where: Valley High School, 110 Meadow
Street Bingham, Maine

Cost: \$15
Pay at door with check payable to
MSAD 13.

President's Message

President Mary Bellavance:

I hope this spring finds you well and able to enjoy the warmer temperatures. For many of us, this time of year also brings hectic testing schedules and countless end of the year tasks. With these distractions, it is important to take time to reflect and remember the necessity of keeping our focus on the whole child.

The importance of meeting our students' social-emotional, academic, and health needs cannot be underestimated. Maine ASCD continues to support and advance **ASCD's Whole Child Initiative**.
[\(Whole Child Initiative\)](#)

On behalf of your students, I encourage you to think carefully about the Whole Child tenets in your daily work and conversations with colleagues, families, community members and policymakers.

ASCD Whole Child Tenets

- Each student enters school **healthy** and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
 - Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally **safe** for students and adults.
- Each student is actively **engaged** in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is **supported** by qualified, caring adults.
- Each student is **challenged** academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.

Let's work together and take action to fully prepare our students for college, career, and citizenship. Thank you for the many ways you make a difference in the lives of your students each day!



Maine ASCD Board Members' Activities

The 70th ASCD Annual Conference took place March 21-23, 2015 in Houston, Texas. The conference theme was *Challenging Convention: Leading Disruptive Innovations*.

President Mary Bellavance and Past President Peter Lancia co-presented *Realizing the Transformative Effect of Instructional Coaching* to a group of teachers, coaches, school and district leaders at the conference. Mary also facilitated a session titled, *Getting to the Heart of Learning by Integrating the Habits of Mind*.

See **Activities**, PAGE 6



Activities, Continued

Maine ASCD Board member, Karen MacDonald, is helping to plan

Elevating & Celebrating Effective Teaching and Teachers (ECET²)
CONFERENCE:

Connect, Collaborate and Celebrate: Developing Teacher Leaders in Maine

which will be:
August 6-7 at Colby College.

Maine ASCD 2014-15 Board of Directors

Mary Bellavance, *President*
Carlene Iverson, *Past President*
Lee Anna Stirling, *Vice President*
Shannon Shanning, *Secretary*
Kim Sampietro, *Treasurer*
Leigh Alley
Daniel Chuhta
Mary Giard
Karen MacDonald
Shelly Moody
Virginia Rebar
Meghan Southworth, Maine Dept. of
Education Liaison
Kimberly Emerson, *Executive Director*

Maine ASCD News

News from your school or district? Others will learn and get inspiration from your school or district's events and accomplishments. E-mail articles to Lee Anna Stirling at leemandu@earthlink.net or lstirling@une.edu with **Maine ASCD News** in the subject line.

Your feedback and suggestions for *newsletter topics* also are welcome.

Editor/Design: Lee Anna Stirling

Associate Editor: Virginia Rebar

Visit *Maine ASCD's web site* at maineascd.org to learn more about Maine ASCD activities, how to become a member, and other opportunities for involvement.

