

STONINGTON SCHOOL NEWS

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Digital Learning Environment at Stonington High School

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"The future belongs to a very different kind of person with a very different kind of mind-creators and empathizers, pattern recognizers, and meaning makers. These people-artists, inventors, designers, storytellers, caregivers, consolers, big picture thinkers-will now reap society's richest rewards and share its greatest joys." Daniel Pink

Traditional approaches to education are not adequate to meet the workforce needs of this century. At SHS we want to offer a dynamic and exemplary model for 21st century teaching and learning that prepares students to be knowledgeable participants in our ever-expanding technological society.

Through grant funding we are able to offer for the first time this year a course called *E Commerce/Entrepreneurship* (ECE) which utilizes a number of research-based strategies and techniques to engage students in the study of business and commerce while developing a variety of 21st century skills. Stonington, along with Region 7, Region 14, and Oxford are partnering as a consortium with Connecticut Career Choices Program on implementing this innovative course.

ECE develops student academic skills and 21st century skills through participation in the *E-Business Challenge*, a project-based assignment that engages and reinforces student learning by doing. Each school team is challenged to develop an innovative for-profit or not-for-profit e-business related to sustainable energy and/or environmental responsibility, and capable of receiving Internet-based electronic payment for its product or service.

Throughout the school year, students learn about e-technologies and Internet-based business development by being immersed in an online learning environment delivered through Moodle (an open-source learning management system). Working with teachers, student teams complete the curriculum, which includes web-based resources such as podcasts, video, and text, and assignments such as journal writing, blogs, inter-district discussions, team-only discussion forums, and an ePortfolio tool that allows them to capture evidence of skills and artifacts developed during the program.

During the *E Commerce/Entrepreneurship* course students

- investigate case studies of successful e-commerce entrepreneurs and case studies of companies who have taken steps to "go green";
- brainstorm and research ideas from a broad range of environmentally conscious e-commerce services and products;
- form mock companies, author a business plan, network with working professionals, and tackle the logistics of production and delivery;
- develop and refine their solutions, design marketing media, such as e-newsletters, jingles, and video commercials, to sell their solutions via the World Wide Web;
- launch a fully functional website, utilizing a range of Web-based technologies to set up, develop, and maintain a fully functioning online store.

Unlike virtual learning where the curriculum is delivered via the Internet by a "virtual" teacher, this course is delivered using a "blended learning" model – the use of an online instructional environment to support learning in a classroom setting. Because the role of the teacher in the ECE program is vital to the team's development and successful completion of the challenge, the program commits a full week to summer professional development, as well as providing consultant visits to

classrooms during the year and maintaining online and telephone support. Every teacher and their class is assigned a teaching "fellow," a colleague who is currently teaching the course and is familiar with the program design. Student teams are required to use the online learning system to post weekly reports to the teaching fellow in order to receive timely feedback on their ideas. Fellows also alert the ECE program manager of emerging needs and opportunities.

A third and equally vital component of the ECE program is the opportunity for experiential learning at daylong quarterly events held twice each fall and spring at corporate and academic locations across Connecticut. These structured working meetings introduce students to other students from a mix of urban, suburban, and rural schools in a meaningful context of collaborative inquiry with invited college faculty and members of the business community. Students break into facilitated working groups such as website, marketing, finance, product development and management, each led by an invited speaker and supported by ECE staff. After an intense morning of presentations and consultations, students present an update of their progress and field questions from their mentors and peers.

All three aspects of the program- -online learning, classroom experiences, experiential learning- -contribute to the team's preparation for the course's culminating activity. Participants compete for awards and recognition as they present their ideas and projects to a panel of business professionals and higher-education faculty online and at the **Connecticut Student Innovation Expo** in Hartford, CT. Each team posts its business plan and multimedia marketing materials to a company Web site for online evaluation. Each creates an interactive exhibition booth at the Expo. Finally, students deliver a five-minute elevator pitch to demonstrate their innovative solutions.

The *E Commerce and Entrepreneurship* course demonstrates how students can improve their academic performance through the use of technology in a context that promotes diversity and collaboration. We plan to offer our students more opportunities to learn in a digital environment in the future.

References

Abstract for *E Commerce Entrepreneurship Career and Technical innovation Consortium Grant Proposal*
Pink, Daniel (2005). *A Whole New Mind*. New York: Riverhead Books.

Do you know what skills your child will need to be ready for Kindergarten in the fall of 2010 or 2011?



**Kindergarten Readiness Fair
Saturday, October 24th
Stonington High School
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**




Come learn about at-home activities to help build school readiness skills and speak with PreK & Kindergarten teachers about the skills that will help your child be successful in Kindergarten!

Bring your 3 & 4 year-olds and enjoy fun-filled activities such as story telling, arts and crafts, an obstacle course, fun with local heroes from Stonington's Fire & Police, other community members, snacks, and much more!

This event is sponsored by Stonington Public Schools, in cooperation with local community agencies.

OCTOBER 2009

SPS DISTRICT CALENDAR

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT
				1	2	3
4 	5 9-11am DMS PTO Coffee Social 6:00 SHS SEF mtg. 6:00 PMS SBIT mtg.	6 6:30 WBSS PTO mtg.	7 6:30 SHS SAT Prep.	8 9:00-11:00am SHS College Fair/College Rep Day 7:00 Central Office BOE mtg.	9 Professional Development Day- NO SCHOOL	10
11 Columbus Day Parade	12 Columbus Day- No School 	13 5:30 MMS SBIT mtg. 7:00 MMS PTO mtg. 6:30-9:30 pm SHS SAT Prep.	14 7:30-11:00 am SHS PSATS 11:30 WVSS SBIT mtg. 7:00 PMS PTO mtg.	15	16	17 
18	19 4:30 DMS SBIT mtg.	20 5:00 SHS SBIT mtg.	21	22	23 6:30-7:30pm PMS Soup-a- thon	24 Kindergarten Readiness Fair 10:00-12:00 SHS
PMS/MMS Washington, DC Trip 10/20-10/23						
25	26	27 Elementary Parent Conferences- Early Dismissal	28 Middle School Parent Conferences- Early Dismissal 5:00 WBSS SBIT 6:30-9:30pm SAT Prep	29 5-8pm MMS Family Book Night	30 WVSS Crazy Hair Day	31
MMS Book fair- 10/26-10/30						

It's apple season! After a fun family trip to the orchard to pick apples, here is a recipe for Awesome Apples from www.delish.com



Ingredients

- * 6 medium apples (Granny Smith apples work well)
- * 1/4 cup(s) softened butter
- * 1/2 cup(s) quick oats
- * 1/2 cup(s) brown sugar
- * 1 tablespoon(s) flour
- * 1 teaspoon(s) cinnamon
- * 1/2 cup(s) pecans
- * 1/2 cup(s) raisins



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Have you ever cored an apple? You'll need to core all six. Hold the apple on the cutting board, making sure you hold the sides of the apple, not the bottom. Push the corer into the top of the stem. My corer is kind of small, so I push it through three or four times to make a 1-inch hole. Put the cored apples in the greased baking dish.
2. Put the rest of the ingredients into the mixing bowl. Either mix it all together with the wooden spoon, or have fun and squish it together with your clean hands.
3. Fill the hollow apples with the oatmeal mixture. If you have extra of the mixture, pile it on top. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes.
4. Use your potholders to take the apples out of the oven, and let them cool before you eat them. I like to top each apple with a scoop of vanilla ice cream just before serving.