

STONINGTON SCHOOL NEWS

DECEMBER 2009

Stonington Public Schools/860-572-0506

ISSUE 4

"Metaprocesses in Action"

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"The idea that a single teacher, working alone, can know and do everything to meet the diverse learning needs of 30 students every day throughout the school year has rarely worked, and it certainly won't meet the needs of learners in years to come... Quality teaching is not an individual accomplishment; it is the result of a collaborative culture that empowers teachers to team up to improve student learning beyond what any of them can achieve alone."

Tom Carroll in "The Next Generation of Learning Teams" in Phi Delta Kappan.

One of the ways the district is moving to improve student learning is by looking at what students are being asked to do in the classroom and at home. This perspective of learning is being looked at through the lens of a district strategy known as the 'Metaprocesses'.

This approach involves analyses of seven areas of student behavior and teachers' actions that will deepen students understanding. The focus concerns what students are learning and how they will strategize to best grasp the given content in which they are engaged.

By looking at student work and instructional practices, the purpose of learning walks will be most purposeful to deepen the district's understanding of, and enhance our ability to see: innovation, communication, collaboration, inquiry, reasoning, metacognition and organization, as demonstrated by students. These key areas are the seven aspects of the Metaprocesses. The goal of this strategy is to have students become more aware of their own thinking. Students will be better able to determine how to locate the information they need to craft a response or determine whether their responses to learning makes sense in a real world, new age day.

Parents, in the prior two editions of the Stonington News, you read about the high school course offering known as E-Commerce. Also, you learned about the district's implementation of the instructional learning strategy known as Differentiated Instruction. E-Commerce is an example of how a student's understanding of how he or she learns aides in the successful formulation of a business solution, which is prominent in the plight of an entrepreneur's survival. The differentiated instruction allows for students to practice different learning styles. This also allows them to diversify their recognition of what the question at hand in the learning is asking. All of this ties into the Good Teaching Task Force's compilation of the Metaprocesses. This is the same task force, which brought Stonington its most prominent teaching and learning plan, (SLBW) "Students Learn Best When".

This past year, in "The Metaprocesses in Action," interested teachers joined Leanne Masterjoseph in visiting classrooms around our district. They looked at the work students were engaged in and tried to draw connections between what we saw and the seven Metaprocesses. This year the administrative team has begun this learning walk path, which will take them to all of the schools in district. The purpose of this activity is to deepen our understanding of the Metaprocesses and to enhance our ability to see these complex ideas in the course of student learning and engagement.

This year at Mystic Middle, the incorporation of at least one of the Metaprocesses by teachers into their professional goals has occurred. In many cases teachers are collaborating with members of the staff not in their teams creating a cross-pollination of practices and the assurance that the language of the Metaprocesses will be understood throughout the school. As a school, we will work to implement lessons and assignments which lead to students becoming more empowered, increasingly engaged and self-directed in the ownership of their learning. All of these measures are aimed at fulfilling the district's goal of providing students with a 21st Century education.

The 21st Century learning model reveals to us that students will need to utilize a multifaceted set of skills, the likes of which have not been asked of students before in American education. This immense challenge also provides an opportunity to use different teaching methods to engage this learner. Engaging students in relevant and meaningful learning experiences is a critical means to academic excellence. It should also be noted that high level, engaging work is motivating work, which leads to transformative learning in our students. We must push and encourage more.

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SAVE THE DATES

Elementary Language Arts & Math Night

Stonington High School Commons

Wednesday, January 20, 2010
(Snow Date-February 3, 2010)
5:45-7:45 p.m.



Middle School Language Arts & Math Night

Stonington High School Commons

Wednesday, January 27, 2010
(Snow Date-February 24, 2010)
6:30-7:30 p.m.



SNOW DAY INFORMATION

For cancellations or delays watch the following television stations:

- WTNH – Channel 8/MYTV 9
- WFSB – Channel 3
- WVIT - NBC 30 - Channel 10
- WTIC – Fox 61 News



Tune into one of the following radio stations:

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| Q105 | 105.5 FM | WXLM | 102.3 AM |
| WBLQ | .881 FM | WNLC | 1510 AM |
| WSUB | 980 AM | WWRX | 107.7 FM |
| WICH | 1310 AM | WBMW | 106.5 FM |
| WCTY | 97.7 FM | WADK | 99.3 FM |
| WTIC | 96.5 FM | | |

Check the website: www.stoningtonschools.org







Winter



DECEMBER 2009 SPS DISTRICT CALENDAR

SUN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
		1 6:15 WBSS PTO mtg.	2	3 7:00 WVSS PTO mtg. Stonington Human Services bldg.	4 6:00-8:00 MMS Grades 5-6 Movie Night 6:30-8:30 DMS PTO Family Movie Night	5
6	7 6:00 PMS SBIT mtg.	8 5:30 MMS SBIT mtg. 7:00 PMS Winter Band Concert	9 5:30-6:30 MMS Grades 5 & 7 Jazz Band Concert 6:30-7:30 MMS Grades 6 & 8 Jazz Band Concert 7:00 PMS PTO mtg.	10 6:00 SHS Fall Sports Awards Night 7:00 Central Office BOE mtg.	11 9:00-1:00 DMS Coffee Social	12
13	14 4:30 DMS SBIT mtg.	15 5:00 SHS SBIT mtg. 7:00 PMS Choral Concert	16	17 7:00 SHS Band Concert	18	19
20	21 11:30 WBSS Winterfest	22 7:00 SHS Choral Concert	23 WVSS Crazy Sock Day Early Dismissal Holiday Recess begins	24 No School	25 Christmas Day	26
27	28	29	30	31	January 1	2
→		<i>Holiday Recess</i>				
3	4 Back-to-school	5	6	7	8	9
