

SPECIAL POINTS OF IN- TEREST:

- **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND** news on pages 3 and 4.
- **School Vacation Week** is February 21 through February 25, 2005. All schools and the central office will be closed on Monday, February 21st in honor of President's Day.
- **Budget Workshops** continue on February 15, February 17 and March 3rd in the Media Center at the high school. All meetings begin at 6:00 p.m.
- **Massachusetts Association of School Committees' Day on the Hill, April 26, 2005** at the State House in Boston.

Math Counts

The Nashoba High School Freshman Math Team (which is composed of 3 high school students and 7 Hale students) did very well with their second meet this past month. Last month, they were ranked 7th among all the participants and this month they moved up to tie for 5th place with 131 points. There are 16 inter-high school teams that compete. 100 students compete.

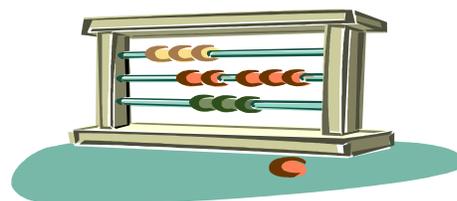
The Hale students who are on this team are: Jeff Stokes (8), Jacob Kopczynski (8), Allie Spear (8), Avi Shaha (8), Aaron Wassall (8), Zachary Wassal (7), Justin DeBenedetto (7), and Yvon Chiany (7).

The 9th graders on this team are three of last-year's graduates: Tasha Borozny (9), Marie DeLuca (9),

and Ian Stevenson (9).

6 of the students ranked as top scorers in the competition: Jacob ranked 12th, Marie ranked 19th; Zach ranked 29; Ian ranked 33rd, Avi 50th; and Aaron 56th.

The Nashoba Regional High School Varsity Math Team tied for second place in our division at the December tournament.



Nashoba Regional High School News

Two high school faculty members were recently honored. Carol Lengyel, a math teacher at the high school, was honored at Westfield State College's Celebration of Teachers. She was nominated by Jennifer Gould, a former Nashoba graduate and aspiring teacher. Laura Siciliano, a Social Studies teacher at the high school, recently had an article published in Teaching Tolerance Magazine. The article centered around teaching the Holocaust in History. (see the nrhs.nrsd.net web site.)

Leah Shoer has been named a National Merit Scholar Finalist and Kristen Squires, #1 in her class and the Student Representative to the School Committee has been accepted at Yale early action.

The following students were named as all-stars for Fall Sports:

Girls Soccer All Stars: Jillian Camilleri, Liz Polido, Kylie Ricker, Whitney Saunders, Brittany

Schandelmayer and Abby Shields. Golf All Stars: Harrie Schnare (Mid Wach B Individual Champ) and Justin Schultz. Boys Soccer All Stars: Brad Bonazzoli, Kyle Dudley (Central Mass All State), Dan Mandell (Central Mass All State), and Russell Wise. Boys/Girls Cross County All Stars: Lindsay Horowitz, Laura Lakin, Duncan Amos, and Patrick Leach. Football Central Mass All Stars: Garrett Jones, Gary Nixon, and Casey Ruggiero. Football Cheerleaders: Kristen Jones, Megan Rheaume, and Christie Melanson.

50-60 students continue to compete in the new England Math League competitions and results will be in by April.



Tri Town Meeting

Tri Town Committee met on Wednesday, February 9 at Florence Sawyer Elementary School. Their agenda included a discussion of the NRSD Budget as presented by the Superintendent of Schools on January 27th. The Committee asked questions, including what areas could be reduced without causing pain. Mr. Wood reviewed a number of reasons for the 9.24% increase and said that it was too early to discuss what could be cut since the school committee hasn't reviewed the entire budget by cost center. In other

agenda items each town reviewed its budget status including the need for an over ride in each town. Estimates ranged from five hundred seventy thousand to nine hundred thousand for combined school and town over rides. All suggested that town budgets would be reduced before passage at the select board level. There was also discussion of land trusts, housing partnerships and accessing conservation funds for such ventures. The committee did discuss insurance options for coverage for fire and police,

and Nancy Stell Keilly reviewed some of the recommendations by the task force at the state level.

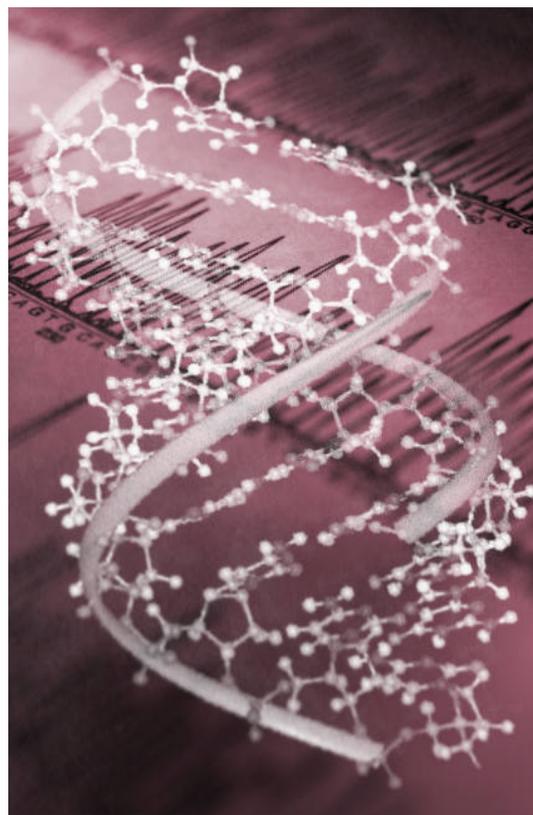
In discussing the next agenda, the committee suggested that we discuss ways that long range planning could be addressed as it concerns the schools, land and buildings. The next meeting will be in Stow on March 2 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Stow Town Hall.

Minuteman Minute

The Nashoba Regional High School Administrative Team, John Antonucci and Michael Wood met with the Superintendent of Minuteman Technical High School, Bill Callanan. This is Mr. Callanan's first year as Superintendent of Minuteman, replacing Dr. Fitzgerald who was there for twenty-nine years. Mr. Callanan has been there for a similar period, but as the principal. The meeting was to review how students are admitted to the programs, how students leave the program, and how communication between the two high schools can be improved so that students can access the technical high school.

Several action steps have now been planned, which include a meeting between the directors of guidance.

In other matters we discussed the current Minuteman program that we have in two of our middle schools. Mr. Callanan will be discussing the future of these programs with the representatives from Lancaster and Bolton and invite the Stow representative as well. This program was started a number of years ago and has continued through funding through the local communities and Minuteman. At the prompting of local officials, I was asked to discuss if these positions could be transitioned to the regional budget. Unfortunately, Mr. Callanan's budget has already been approved, but he will pursue this in preparation for next year's process. One question he asked is if Stow's program could become a Minuteman satellite.



Concession Stand Update

Mr. Spratt, Director of Facilities and Mr. Richards, Athletic Director have researched available designs for a new concession stand at Nashoba Regional High School. They gave a presentation of the mobile concession unit. This would be a trailer that is outfitted as a concession stand with equipment chosen by the school personnel in consultation with the NRHS Booster Club. Brian Day and Janet Collier have been very involved throughout the discussion about the renovation of the press box. The concession stand is located under the press box and the press box must be redesigned to become

handicapped accessible. The cost of the base unit is approximately \$34,000 and with some modifications suggested at this presentation it would cost approximately \$45,000 with shipping and set up.

This recommendation is being made so that the unit could be moved when needed for fund raisers and other activities that would have a need for concessions. The unit would be owned by the District, but operated by the Boosters. As soon as there is a final design I will share it with the committee.

School Improvement Plans—NCLB

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Although none of the schools in the Nashoba Regional School District have failed to make adequate yearly progress and thus been identified as needing improvement, I believe that it is important that we be aware of what is considered essential in an improving school and to consider those elements many of which we address within our district already. As we endorse School Improvement Plans at this meeting, we may wish to keep these elements in mind. This article is reprinted from the [No Child Left Behind Compliance Insider](#), February, 2005 with their permission.

With school choice and supplemental education services attracting so much money and attention, it's easy to forget that the real focus of a school in improvement should be on creating (or revising) its school improvement plan. That task can consume extraordinary amounts of time and effort from administrators, teachers and parents. But what if the resulting plan is not compliant with NCLB?

That's happening in too many districts, says education attorney Leigh Manasevit. Several recent state monitoring reports issued by the U.S. Department of Education (D) include findings that school improvement plan failed to include all 10 elements required under NCLB Section 1116 (b)(3). With Manasevit's help, we'll summarize the 10 elements here. NCLB requires every school identified for improvement to develop (or revise) its school improvement plan within three months of the identification. These plans are designed to encourage schools to undertake major reforms, so that more students meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals. According to Section 1116(b)(3), each plan must address the following 10 elements. **1) Using Research Based Strategies** The plan must incorporate strategies, based on scientifically based research, that address the academic issues

that caused the school to be identified. This requirement underscores NCLB's emphasis on making sure that Title I dollars don't get wasted on activities that aren't effective. **2) Adopting "best practices"**. For the core academic subjects, the plan must outline policies and practices that have the greatest likelihood of ensuring that all subgroups of students become proficient by 2013-2014. The key is adopting those practices that will benefit *all* students, not just the subgroups that traditionally have had the best chance of meeting standards. **3) Meeting professional development needs.** The plan must provide an assurance that the school will spend at least 10 percent of its Title I, Part A funds for high-quality professional development. This professional development must directly address the academic achievement problems that caused the school to be identified. **4) Using professional development funds effectively.** The plan must specify how the school will use the 10 percent set-aside described above to remove itself from improvement status. In too many cases, professional development programs haven't had the direct effect on student achievement that they should. **5) Setting annual goals.** The plan must set specific annual measurable objectives for continuous progress by each subgroup of students. Certain subgroups may not be meeting your state's objectives right now, so you'll need to set interim goals that enable these students to get back on track. **6) Outlining parent notices.** The plan must describe how the school will provide written notice about the improvement identification to parents. **7) Assigning responsibilities.** The plan must specify the responsibilities of the school, the district, and the state under the plan, including descriptions of the district's technical assistance, and fiscal responsibilities. That way, it's clear who's accountable for which plan components. **8) Increasing parent involvement.**

The plan must detail strategies to promote effective parental involvement. There's widespread agreement that without increased parental involvement, many schools won't be able to make AYP. **9) Increasing instructional time.** As appropriate, the plan must incorporate activities for students before school, after school, during the summer, and during any extension of the school year. Many schools already have these activities under programs like 21st Century Community Learning Centers, so make sure to include them in the plan. **10) Setting up teacher mentoring.** The plan must incorporate a teacher mentoring program. It's not surprising that Title I school experience high levels of teacher turnover. But what may be surprising is that the main reason many teachers leave isn't salary, but lack of support. A good mentoring program can address this critical need.

Problems Covering Elements Because these 10 mandatory elements are so detailed, it's easy to end up falling short—either by failing to address an element thoroughly or by omitting it entirely. That's why it's important to start the planning process by determining what you'll need to cover each element properly. Insider Says: Even if you plan covers all 10 elements, if you don't make it clear that you've addressed each point, you could still wind up with a problem in an audit, Manasevit warns. He recommends organizing the plan around the 10 elements, so that someone who's not familiar with the plan can easily see that you've met the NCLB requirements. As an alternative, provide an index that shows the parts of the plan that address each element. "Remember, auditors usually aren't educators, and they often don't have time to wade through the details of a plan. If you don't make it easy for them to see that you've complied, they may assume that you didn't," he explains.



As you know, the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires virtually all teacher to become “highly qualified” by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. We know that many of you have already met this new requirement. But because the deadline is rapidly approaching, we want to make sure that *all* of our teachers meet it in time.

Teachers who don’t meet this requirement are at risk of reassignment or replacement. We don’t want this to happen to anyone, so we urge you to read this carefully to make sure that you’ll get the right credentials in time.

1. WHO IS COVERED?

Every teacher who teaches a “core academic subject” must be “highly qualified” under NCLB by the deadline. The core academic subjects are: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. Even if you teach just one class a day in a core academic subject, you must meet the highly qualified requirement for that subject. So if you’re a physical education teacher who also teaches one math class, you must be highly qualified in math.

2. WHAT DOES “HIGHLY QUALIFIED” MEAN?

To be highly qualified, NCLB requires all teachers to have three credentials:

- ◆ A bachelor’s degree
- ◆ Full certification or licensure, which has not been waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis, or participation in an alternate route to certification program like “Troops to Teachers;” and
- ◆ Subject matter competence.

3. WHAT IS SUBJECT MATTER COMPETENCE?

How you can demonstrate subject matter competence differs depending on the grade level you teach and your level of experience. In general:

Elementary school teachers. You must pass a state test on knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, math, and other areas of basic elementary school curriculum. Teachers who are certified in elementary education meet this standard.

Middle and high school teachers. For each subject you teach, you must either: 1) pass a state subject matter test, or 2) have a college major (or equivalent coursework), a graduate degree, or advanced certification. Remember if you teach two or more subjects, you must meet this requirement for each subject.

4. ARE THERE ANY EXCEPTIONS?

Yes, at least in part. So long as you aren’t “new to the profession”, you may be able to avoid going back to school or taking a test. Experienced teachers can demonstrate subject matter competence by successfully completing a high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation, or

“HOUSSE”, in each subject they teach.

5. WHAT ABOUT SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS?

In December 2004, President Bush signed the new Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). IDEA 2004 requires special education teachers to be certified or licensed in special education—in addition to meeting the above standards. However, the law also created exceptions for special education teachers who teach multiple subjects, or who teach only students eligible for alternate standards. If you believe you may qualify for one of these exceptions., please contact me.

6. I NEED HELP MEETING THE DEADLINE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

We want to help you get the required qualification in time. Please contact me to set up a professional development plan so you meet this important deadline. If you were hired after the first day of the 2002-2003 school year, you should meet the “highly qualified” requirement already. If you don’t, contact me immediately.

