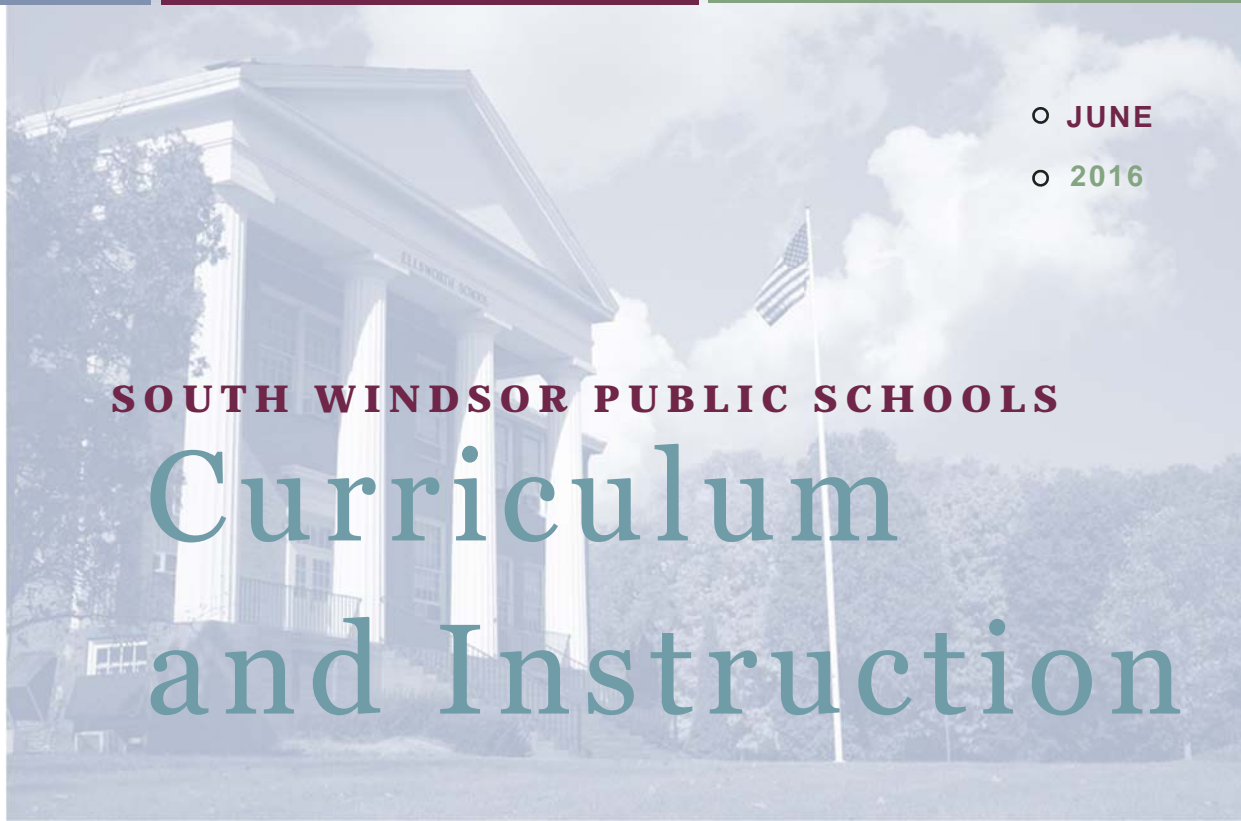


- ▶ WORLD LANGUAGES AND ENGLISH LEARNERS ..... 2
- ▶ MATHEMATICS..... 2
- ▶ SCIENCE..... 3
- ▶ VISUAL ARTS..... 3
- ▶ EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY..... 4
- ▶ MUSIC..... 4
- ▶ SOCIAL STUDIES..... 5
- ▶ HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION ... 5
- ▶ PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS ..... 6
- ▶ BACK TO SCHOOL/ FALL DATES TO REMEMBER..... 7



○ JUNE  
○ 2016

**SOUTH WINDSOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

# Curriculum and Instruction

## A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

It is hard to believe that another school year is coming to a close. I am proud to share this end of year curriculum newsletter which highlights events from the second half of this year. It is clear that in all subject areas and at all grade levels, teachers are engaging their students in meaningful activities that translate into learning. Our teachers continue to be lifelong learners as well, as evidenced by the many professional learning opportunities that staff have participated in over the course of the year. The district's Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) met four times this year, and the committee continues to make recommendations for future learning utilizing the results of surveys distributed after PD days.

Moving forward, this newsletter will be the vehicle through which we will highlight the Professional Accomplishments of staff. This will provide an opportunity to acknowledge the contributions made by staff across the district on a regular and consistent basis. The categories for recognition are outlined in greater detail in the newsletter, and additional information is available on the district website as well.

Next year will be an exciting year as we watch the construction of the new Orchard Hill school unfold, hear about the activities in the STEM pilot program at PRS, observe instructional changes in high school classrooms as 1:1 devices are deployed to ninth and tenth grade students, and much more.

As we end the school year, I would like to thank you for all that you do to make a difference in the lives of our students. All the best for a safe and happy summer!

*Sheryl L. Mortensen*

Sheryl L Mortensen  
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction



1737 Main Street • South Windsor, CT 06074  
Phone: (860) 291-1200 • Fax: (860) 291-1291  
Web: [www.southwindsorschools.org](http://www.southwindsorschools.org)

### SOUTH WINDSOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS VISION STATEMENT

South Windsor Public Schools promotes an engaging and dynamic culture of learning that prepares students to achieve their own individual excellence. Within an emotionally safe environment, educators will foster students' academic, social and personal growth. Our students will demonstrate critical and creative thinking, self-direction, collaboration, adaptability, compassion and civic responsibility in an ever-changing global society.

## WORLD LANGUAGES AND ENGLISH LEARNERS

Karen Stoj, Curriculum Specialist

**2016 LAS Links C Administration.** The LAS is an English proficiency assessment which measures speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The LAS provides us with information regarding a student's English proficiency. The data from this year's administration can be found in Performance Tracker. Students are eligible to exit our English Learner program if they receive an overall 4, with a 4 in the reading and writing categories as well. If you have any questions in regards to English proficiency, please do not hesitate to reach out to an EL teacher or tutor in your building. Students who have qualified to exit the program will receive a letter and move directly into a monitor status. Students remain on monitor status for 2 years and remain eligible for EL services during this time, if necessary.

**Elementary World Language Committee.** The Elementary World Language Committee presented their findings to the Board of Education on Tuesday May 24th. Karen Stoj, Curriculum Specialist, Megan Wojcicki, World Language teacher and Vinnie Federici, Principal at Eli Terry, presented the program proposal that the committee has been working on for the past year pursuant to the 2015-2018 South Windsor Public Schools Strategic Plan. The presentation highlighted trends in the state of Connecticut in language teaching as well as what similar schools in our DRG are doing. Spanish is the most common language taught at the elementary level and the majority of schools in our DRG offer language programming at the elementary level. The committee suggested rolling out Spanish at the elementary level, starting with kindergarten, first and second grades. The program would then continually add a year, up through grade 6.

### Did you know?

*South Windsor Public Schools offers instruction in five different languages to students in grades 7-12:*

- Spanish
- Italian
- French
- Latin
- American Sign Language

## MATHEMATICS

Sharon Keegan, Curriculum Specialist

The math department has had a very successful spring early release session. Sessions were run by Sharon Keegan and our five elementary coaches/interventionists. Topics were specific for special education teachers, kindergarten teachers, math practices, and fact fluency. In addition, Rebecca Likar, a fifth grade teacher at Eli Terry, presented a session during which she shared her Million Dollar Project with fellow teachers. This project develops a theme to spend a million dollars with students using google sheets to create formulas and google slides to create presentations.

Larry Bojarski and Matt Eppler have been hard at work with the new Mobile CSP class at the high school. The students have each written several apps which address a social issue within our community. Mr. Bojarski, Mr. Eppler, and SWHS students Lexi Dickstein and Sheeva Samadi were invited to showcase their Preschool Apps at the CECA's 17th Annual Tech Expo.

The Expo was held on April 27 at the Connecticut State Capitol Legislative Office Building in Hartford, and South Windsor State Representative Jeff Currey stopped by for a special hello!



The SWHS Math Team led by Andrew Brindisi had a very successful season. Their performance qualified them to compete at the state math competition held at Greenwich High School. The team placed in the top half of the competition, and 10th grade student Carter Cob qualified to be on the CT Math Team. The team's overall performance resulted in an invitation

to the New England Math Competition in Canton, MA, where they placed 15th.

On April 25, TEMS grade 6 math teachers held a fun filled math night for more than 100 students and their families. Stefan Klein presented his "Magic in Math," and JuliaBeth Leveille and Joanna Pantages facilitated a session on "What's in a Shadow," which showed the relationships found in Ratio and Proportion. In addition to the main attractions the teachers also set up several stations filled with puzzles, challenges, estimation activities, and "cracking the code" on the computer. Beth Goldman, Kimberly Ruschmeier, Laura Nelson, Elise Butson, Tammy Zurkowski and Mrs. Keegan were on deck to provide assistance during the night. Kudos to all who continue to show South Windsor families that math is indeed fun and useful!

## SCIENCE

Arnica Sullivan, Curriculum Specialist



The SWHS Science Olympiad team, led by teacher/coach Janet Belval, won the State Championship on April 2nd at UCONN and went on to the national championship at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The students competed in 23 different science events such as Astronomy, Wind Power and engineering. This was the first time South Windsor High School has advanced to the national level.

As part of the creation of hands-on learning opportunities, Astronomy students and their teacher Heath Carlson came in on Wednesday nights to star and planet gaze on the SWHS observation deck. Students learned how to calibrate the GPS enabled telescope, and use solar filters to safely



view features on the Sun's surface.

On January 27, the high school held its third annual Women in STEM event. Six women working in STEM careers were invited to the high school to share their academic and career experiences to give girls an opportunity to learn about the amazing opportunities available to them as they begin thinking about course registrations and college majors. The event was organized by senior Gillian Cohen and facilitated by Jamie Lang and Sarah Davies.

Dana Powell's AP Chemistry students visited 5th graders at Eli Terry and Philip Smith schools in May to explore the Next Generation Science Standards through a service learning project. The high school students designed lessons that focused on the structure and properties of matter. We are looking forward to expanding this project to all the elementary schools in future years.

In early March, ten students from the SWHS Environmental Club went to Pleasant Valley to present a science

lesson about climate change and CO2 emissions to all 5th grade students. The club also hosted Earth-a-Palooza at TEMS over April break. The SWHS students, along with their advisor Danel Eitel, created a variety of activities to celebrate Earth Day. Approximately 100 children enjoyed a variety of activities such as t-shirt up-cycling, nature scavenger hunt, recycling race, coloring contest, water conservation game, nature trivia, and free-cycling.

This past April, 6th grade science teachers Dianna Roy, Pete Lepak and Deb Bajorek took their students on a field trip to Meigs Point Nature Center at Hammonasset State Park in Madison. While at the park, students were able to compare and contrast different organisms that reside in these ecosystems and how adaptations allow them to survive in their habitat. Students also observed the effects of weathering and erosion. The trip was a great success, and students enjoyed spending the day in the sun while exploring grade level standards.

## VISUAL ARTS

Nicholas Canova, Curriculum Coordinator

The Visual Arts department continues to delve into curricular writing/revision K-12. This on-going work is in response to new National Arts standards. As part of these new standards, responding to art, teaching students to look at, describe, and interpret the work of self and others is a new standard. The implementation (K-8) of Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is one way in which art teachers are addressing this new standard. The first year of this new program has been met with much success, and the K-8 art staff will continue to employ its delivery next year.

As the department has been celebrating the achievements of students through the K-12 and High School Senior exhibits at the South Windsor Public Library, the Art Department faculty have made some accomplishments of their own throughout this year that should also be recognized. The following are a small sampling of the myriad of activities and accolades of the South Windsor Art Faculty:

- Laura Mazzarella (TEMS) was awarded the 2016 Outstanding First Year Professional Award by the CT Art Education Association.
- Lynsey Desmond (PRS) has had her students' framed artwork on display at Rita's Italian Ice Parlor in South Windsor. Lynsey will be changing the display, highlighting 15 new students for the summer.
- Natalie O'Brien (PV) worked in collaboration with Nick Canova (TEMS) to design and lead a professional development workshop at Pleasant Valley Elementary School for their HOT Schools workshops series this past winter. The focus of the workshop was on leading students in the responding to art process. The workshop was attended by educators from across the state and was well received.

*Need help with Google Docs?*

*Contact one of the Technology Content Coaches or a member of your building's tech team.*

The educational technology team continued to expand its supports and programs in all of our schools. Steve Albrecht and technology content coach Debbie Matchett facilitated hands-on professional learning activities for elementary school teachers during early release Wednesdays. Sessions have focused on adopting new features in Google Apps for Education, on refreshing class and team web pages, and on introducing a technology-integration model called "SAMR." SAMR invites teachers to consider the uses of classroom technologies through four stages: Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition. The SAMR framework will provide a common foundation as teachers find new and meaningful ways to connect curricula with digital tools.

At Timothy Edwards Middle School, Debbie Matchett has been busy working with teachers to refine their class web pages. A Google Sites template has been developed for teachers to use. These refreshed pages will include common elements and organization, providing students and parents with increased ease of navigation. Ms. Matchett also organized a team of middle school teachers to attend a technology workshop, "Making Best Use of Free Google Tools to Enhance Content Learning."

The educational technology team has also been busy readying high school teachers to use Chromebooks to support student learning in the new school year. Chromebooks are mobile devices that offer a host of cloud-based productivity tools, including Google Docs, Slides, and more. They are lightning fast, and they facilitate collaboration anytime, anyplace. In March, each teacher completed training and received a Chromebook. Ed Duclos, the SWHS technology content coach, has also introduced teachers to new applications and provided individualized coaching using these technologies during weekly technology sessions. To further support SWHS teachers, Mr. Duclos has created a new technology committee called "INC Crew" (Innovation in the Classroom). Working together, members representing each academic discipline will explore new applications of technology in the classroom and share innovative practices with their colleagues. Members of the INC Crew also attended a workshop dedicated to using Google tools to facilitate learning.



MUSIC

The South Windsor Music Department had another extraordinary year. Timothy Edwards Middle School band students in grades 6-8 had the privilege of working with a renowned band composer. Timothy Broege composed a piece for Timothy Edwards Middle School entitled "Partita for Band." The grade 8 band was one of only four ensembles selected to perform at the Connecticut State Music Festival this year. Timothy Edwards also successfully piloted a new program entitled "Music Matrix Technology." Students who elect this course learn how music is being created in the 21st century using state of

the art music software. They also receive piano instruction. Students in vocal ensembles at Timothy Edwards are also receiving piano instruction to aid in their ability to read musical print. Students in these vocal ensembles are enjoying this experience.

Due to the 8-period day being reinstated at the high school, we now have a record number of high school students able to take a music elective next year. The Piano Keyboarding class has become quite popular and the numbers keep growing each year. Our high school performing groups continue to receive medals

and awards with many students participating in state and national festivals.

Elementary general music continued to branch out to the grade level classrooms to collaborate and create arts integrated activities with classroom teachers. We also had over 90% of grade three students elect to play a string or wind instrument in the elementary schools.

The South Windsor Music Department will continue to provide diverse programs and exemplar instruction to meet the needs of students in our community.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Greg Frank, Curriculum Specialist

The end of the year is a time to reflect on accomplishments within the Social Studies department as well as an opportunity to look ahead. This year, all elementary and secondary units were reviewed and aligned with the new State of Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks document. The biggest changes were in the 9th grade Modern World History course, where several new units were written to bring the curriculum to the present. New 20th century units on the post-colonial era in Africa and Asia were introduced, as well as a new unit on the Middle East including the Iranian Revolution. Globalization, and new international challenges such as poverty, access to resources, and refugees were incorporated into the course which concludes with all 9th grade students taking part in a Global Summit in early June.

Of note at South Windsor High School this spring, students competed in the Connecticut Geographic Alliance Challenge at UConn, earning 2nd place in the state. Social Studies teacher Erin Simcik was recognized

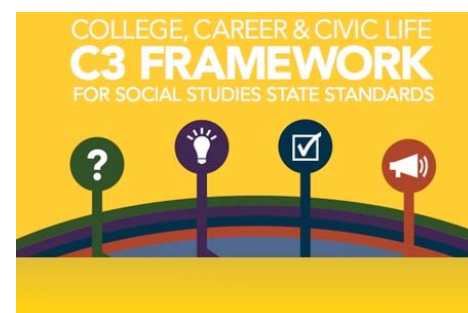
by Civics First and Secretary of State Denise Merrill's office with the Mark Shedd Award for the promotion of civic engagement and excellence in teaching.

Middle school teachers have begun to create inquiry-based mini units including 6th grade units on the Modern Middle East and Modern Europe, while 7th grade is creating units on the impact of climate change on Oceania and a World Hunger unit. Throughout the year, the focus has been inquiry-based units where students practice the four domains of: (1) forming questions, (2) evaluating sources, (3) using content-specific skills, and (4) taking informed action.

The Elementary Social Studies Committee has accomplished a great deal, especially in curriculum unit realignment within the vertical continuum between grades. Certain units will be shifted between grades and new ones created (such as a Local Heroes and Town Civics unit in Grade 2) to fully meet state recommendations but also to properly sequence units and work in a co-curricular means

with literacy. Throughout the spring during professional development time members of the Elementary Social Studies Committee introduced their work and collaborated with grade-level teams to roll these out in the 2016-2017 school year.

This summer, curriculum work will continue to create new inquiry-based units to align to existing courses and to prepare for exciting events this fall. Creating authentic assessments in social studies classes based on primary and secondary source documents will be critical. Also preparing materials to teach civics and the 2016 election is a priority for all grades.



## HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Dave Sytulek, Curriculum Specialist/Travis Edwards, Curriculum Coordinator

In May, 8th grade students at Timothy Edwards Middle School held a Silent Protest against Hate and Violence as part of the health curriculum. Students created posters about a topic covered in our violence prevention unit. They stood silently in hallways while holding their posters to make others aware of the violence around us and to encourage efforts to end these behaviors. Topics included: domestic violence, hate crimes, bullying, cyberbullying, school violence, sexual harassment, dating violence, self-harm, animal abuse, terrorism, gang violence, gun violence and gun control. The Silent Witness Initia-

tive seeks to help us remember victims of violence and end the cycle of violence.

Also in May at TEMS, all students participated in Project ACES (All Children Exercise Simultaneously), a signature program of the Youth Fitness Coalition, Inc. Project ACES was created by physical education teacher Len Saunders in 1989 as a method of motivating children to exercise. ACES takes place in May as part of National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. As part of their advisory group, all students participated in a school wide campus walk in support of this program.

At South Windsor High School, PE I (9th grade) will now include a First Aid unit and PE II (10th grade) will include a CPR/AED unit as part of the state mandated Senate Bill 962, which requires CPR instruction for students starting in the 2015-2016 school year. The high school Health/PE department will also offer Sports Medicine and Disease Prevention course electives for juniors and seniors.

## RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

South Windsor Public Schools is pleased to recognize the accomplishments of its faculty and staff in the field of education, lifelong learning and the commitment to children. Twice each school year, we will highlight these professional accomplishments in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction's "Curriculum Update" newsletter. Categories include the following:

- National or State Recognition
- Professional Articles Selected for Publication
- Outstanding Community Involvement with Youth
- Presentation at a National Conference

All staff are invited to share information regarding professional accomplishments by emailing Sara Chamberlain. The next publication is expected in December 2016.



### National or State Recognition

#### *Coaches for Science Olympiad, National Competition*

- Janet Belval ..... SWHS
- Sarah Davies ..... SWHS
- Josh Kraus ..... SWHS

#### *Connecticut Outstanding New Professional Art Educator*

- Laura Mazzarella ..... TEMS

#### *National Board Recertification, Early Childhood Generalist*

- Melissa Potamianos ..... OH

#### *Elected to Board of Directors for CT Council for the Social Studies*

- Gregory Frank ..... District

#### *National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), Ranking of "Excellent" in Student Literary Magazines*

- Corianne Olsen ..... TEMS
- Barbara Carvache ..... TEMS

### Professional Article Selected for Publication

#### *The First Person Project, Keene State Today—Magazine for Alumni and Friends, Winter 2015-2016*

- Allen Dunbar ..... SWHS

#### *Excellence in Education, presented by Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) to SWHS Bereavement Team*

- John Hackett ..... SWHS
- Jean Luddy ..... SWHS
- Heather Brindisi ..... SWHS
- Beth Piantek ..... SWHS
- Kathy Rizzo ..... SWHS
- Frank Rizzuto ..... SWHS
- Dan Sullivan ..... SWHS
- Bob LaRochelle ..... SWHS
- SRO Brian Eckbloom ..... SWHS

#### *Mark Shedd Award for Excellence in Law Related Education, presented by Civics First Inc.*

- Erin Simcik ..... SWHS

#### *Coach, Stock Market Game—Elementary Division, First Place Team - State of Connecticut*

- John Smith-Horn ..... TEMS

## 2016-2017 BACK TO SCHOOL AND OTHER DATES TO REMEMBER

<p><b><u>New Teacher Orientation:</u></b> August 23 and 24</p> <p><b><u>Convocation:</u></b> August 29</p> <p><b><u>First Day of School:</u></b> August 31</p> <p><b><u>District PD Days:</u></b> August 29 August 30 November 8 March 21</p> <p><b><u>Elementary PD (Wednesdays):</u></b> September 7—November 16; April 19—June 7</p> <p><b><u>High School Late Arrival:</u></b> Mondays, beginning Sept. 19</p> <p><b><u>PDEC Meetings:</u></b> September 20 December 8 March 30</p>	<p><b><u>Parent Open Houses:</u></b> Pleasant Valley September 1 SWHS September 6 TEMS—Grade 8 September 7 TEMS—Grade 7 September 8 TEMS—Grade 6 September 12 Eli Terry September 15 Wapping September 19 Philip R. Smith September 22 Orchard Hill September 29</p>
---	--



### SOUTH WINDSOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#### BOARD OF EDUCATION

David S. Joy, Chair  
Beth Esstman, Vice Chair  
Craig Zimmerman, Secretary  
Joseph Durette  
Jamie Gamble  
Michael Gonzalez  
Mary Justine Hockenberry  
Phil Koboski  
Richard Stahr

#### SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

**South Windsor High School**  
Daniel P. Sullivan III, Principal  
Tera Harlow, Associate Principal  
Robyn Ongley, Associate Principal  
Frank Rizzuto, Associate Principal

**Timothy Edwards Middle School**  
Nancy Larson, Principal  
Elise Butson, Associate Principal  
Dave St. Jean, Associate Principal

#### CURRICULUM LEADERS

Steven Albrecht, Educational Technology  
Nicholas Canova, Visual Arts  
Travis Edwards, K-8 Physical Education/Health  
Gregory Frank, Social Studies  
Sharon Keegan, Mathematics  
Allan Mothersele, Career/Technical Education  
Donna Shea, 6-12 School Counseling  
Karen Stoj, World Languages/EL  
Arnica Sullivan, Science  
Dave Sytulek, 9-12 Physical Education/Health  
Jo-Ann Thomas, Music

#### CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

**Kate Carter, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Sheryl L. Mortensen**  
Assistant Superintendent  
Curriculum & Instruction

**Colin J. McNamara**  
Assistant Superintendent  
Personnel & Administration

**Chris M. Chemerka**  
Director of Finance & Operations

**Eli Terry Elementary School**  
Vincent Federici, Principal

**Orchard Hill Elementary School**  
Michael Tortora, Principal

**Philip R. Smith Elementary School**  
Michelle Dixon, Principal

**Pleasant Valley Elementary School**  
Tiffany Caouette, Principal

**Wapping Elementary School**  
Laura Hickson, Principal

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION

Denise Epps, Director  
Special Services

Jessica Kuckel, Supervisor  
PK-5 Special Education

Maureen Pearson, Supervisor  
6-12 Special Education