

THE CURRENT



St. Croix River Education District
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CHANGES WITH SCRED FACILITIES

by Kim Gibbons, Executive Director

By now, most everyone is aware that SCRED has been having facility issues. For many years, we have rented two buildings in Rush City to house the SCRED offices. Beginning last December, the main SCRED office (425 S. Dana) roof began leaking. Attempts were made to patch the roof, but in the process, it was discovered that the entire roof needed replacing, which could not happen until spring. In March, the city sewer line backed up into the SCRED basement. Many staff began reporting physical ailments. Resource Training and Solutions conducted environmental testing and found significant levels of mold present throughout the building. The levels of mold were so high, that the only solution was to remove all flooring and replace with a solid surface. In addition, mold was in some of the walls.

By June of 2011, the roof was not fixed, and the city had not yet decided if they would take measures to fix the building and address the mold issues. Many staff continued to experience physical symptoms. At this time, a decision was made to vacate the SCRED building until the city determined whether they would fix the building. Staff located in the city-owned building were moved to Trinity Lutheran Church in North Branch. Other staff continues to be located in the second SCRED building in Rush City.

In August 2011, the Rush City Council voted not to repair the building, as the repair costs were too excessive. SCRED began pursuing options such as renting, purchasing existing property, and new construction. Experts were consulted to determine which option was most cost-effective, and it was determined that new construction would be the most cost effective in the long term.

As a result, the SCRED Superintendents' Operating Committee and Governing board authorized moving forward with a building project. SCRED purchased Creekside Pizza and an empty lot adjacent to the vacated SCRED building. Rush City is giving SCRED the old building and is paying to demolish that building. ICS has been selected to manage the construction project, and MLA Architectural firm was hired to design the building. Estimates for a 12,000 square foot facility range from 1.5 – 1.9 million dollars. The funding for this project is a combination of SCRED fund balance, federal revenue, and local costs. We expect to begin construction in March 2012 and hope to be in the new building Fall of 2012.

All of us at SCRED would like to thank all of our member districts for their patience and support during what proved to be a difficult couple of months last summer. We are also mindful of the current economic times and are so grateful for the support of the districts with the building project.

Until we move into the new facility, we will continue to rent space at Trinity Lutheran Church in North Branch (SCRED South) and in Rush City (SCRED North). We are trying to hold as many meetings as possible at the Rush City location, however, due to limited space, some trainings and meetings are being held in North Branch. Please pay close attention to the location of any SCRED meetings! We are working with two different phone systems, but our main number is in operation (320-358-3616). Our receptionist will let you know how to contact SCRED staff!

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Instructional Services Update *by Kerry Bollman*

As usual, the Instructional Services Team is off to a busy start this year. We have welcomed two new members to our team: **Jennifer Lake and Julie Seldon**. Jennifer and Julie support secondary language arts and math.

The **Grade Level Facilitator project** is starting its third year. This year we added 9th grade, and are exploring how this framework fits at the high school level. Please visit our website at <http://www.scred.k12.mn.us/School/Index.cfm/go:site.Page/Page:196/index.html> to learn more about this exciting project!

SCRED member districts are also completing a math curriculum review this year. To support our districts, SCRED, in collaboration with Math Consultant Tom Muchlinski, is offering professional development opportunities focused on **algebraic thinking** from K-12th grade. Registration is available on the SCRED website. In addition, schools have the opportunity to participate in the **Surveys of Enacted Curriculum** (SEC) to better understand their current instructional practices. Contact Julie Seldon if you are interested in this project.

In the 2010-2011 school year, member districts collaborated on a review of Reading and Language Arts curricula for students receiving special education services. Support for this work continues in the current school year with training, coaching, and networking opportunities for teachers who are using the **Reading Mastery Signature Edition and Language!** curricular materials with students.

This year, SCRED member districts are migrating to a new paperless system for problem solving documentation. The **Gen-Ed forms** system has been well received, with much positive feedback. **Problem solving team** training continues this year, as does coaching to support quality implementation. Current teams have received their RtI implementation survey results from spring 2011, and are using these to set goals for the current year.

We have enjoyed working with participants in trainings offered so far this year, and are looking forward to continued collaboration this year. Please feel free to contact us if we can be of support!

Secondary Mathematics *by Julie Seldon*

Secondary math is staying in step with SCRED's apparent fall theme of change and activity. Change is found with a new collaborative planner and new Math Application probes. Activity is found in the staff development opportunity of Active Algebraic Thinking. Along with the change and activity is the offer of an opportunity of reflection with the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum. Fall is a great time for change, activity and reflection; secondary math is a great place to begin!

The most obvious change with secondary math at SCRED is the loss of Jay Larson to a teaching job and the arrival of me, Julie Seldon, in early August. I join SCRED after thoroughly enjoying 21 years of a variety of teaching experiences. I am passionate about improving teaching along with helping teachers. I see SCRED as a great opportunity to take my career in a new direction. Speaking of improving teaching, SCRED is now using the new Math Concepts and Application probes. The early feedback with these probes has been upbeat and positive, so we continue to be optimistic that the probes will be an effective tool for the teachers. We are still working on target scores based on our data for these probes, but hope to have them soon. Along with our changes we look forward to encouraging active improvement across the districts.

The math collaborative planners, along with math specialist Tom Muchlinski, created a day of 'Active Algebraic Thinking' for K-12 teachers. The training is offered three times with a follow up day in February. The first two sessions reached 75 teachers and administrators. We had a blast with a variety of activities and rich conversation around the concept of multiple representations in mathematics. The last of the three sessions is set for December 1st and registration can be found on the SCRED website. During the follow-up day a policy will be developed that encompasses the beliefs of all the districts for pulling a student from the core curriculum for mathematics, knowing full well there must be a clear plan of what to offer in place of the core curriculum. SCRED is also gathering resources to review curricula for the non-core mathematics education. We will review all of the resources with teachers across all the districts in order to make the most informed decision. The best decisions happen with collaboration.

Every district has a unique opportunity to collaboratively reflect on their teaching practices with the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum. This is a 90 minute survey teachers take. The survey looks at teacher practices which opens the door to have meaningful conversation around the practices in the classroom and the instructional content. Although the survey is offered in science, English and mathematics, right now we are focusing on the mathematics. Half of the districts have chosen to participate and the offer stands for the remaining districts to participate; simply contact Julie Seldon to get it organized. The survey has been a good conversation starter for what is happening and perhaps what should be happening. The power of the survey comes from the classroom teachers reflecting on what they do and believe in order to match it to what they know to be best practices and effective strategies in the classroom.

Math at SCRED remains a challenging arena as the need for interventions, algebraic probes and effective procedures for accelerating students never lessens. We are working hard to help teachers actively reflect on what is happening to determine if and/or where change is needed. We are committed to researching best practices while listening to the voices in the classroom that speak to their needs. It is our goal to make math as accessible as possible to all learners in all the districts –actively reflecting through change!

Outcome Services Update *by Kindle Perkins*

SCRED Outcome Services has had a busy and productive start to the 2011-12 school year! Throughout August we were busy working with TIES to facilitate a smooth transition for those districts who switched to the TIES Student Information System this summer. We will also continue to work with districts throughout the year to support the transition, and to provide training and support on iCue and One Click Reports, Cognos Report Center, and Principals' Dashboards.

The Fall testing window for GOM and MAP testing was successful!! In addition, cleaning and loading the data into the databases went much better this Fall. We were able to have all of the GOM and MAP data loaded into Aimsweb and TIES within the specified timelines. We will continue to work with MAP Coordinators throughout the Fall and Winter so there are fewer errors at the time of testing.

Other projects we have been working on throughout the summer and Fall include (but are not limited to):

- 1) Organizing and cleaning up One Click reports and test definitions in iCue
- 2) Adding targets into TIES for the 1st grade QDM measure, 9th and 10th grade MAP, and the Early Literacy and IGDI measures
- 3) Target analysis for IGDI, kindergarten TENs, MAP Math to MCA III, and the new Math Concepts and Applications
- 4) Re-calculating the 95th percentile ("blue") norm referenced target in TIES
- 5) Refreshing many of the databases (e.g. Aimsweb, Odyssey, GenEd Forms, and Voyager/Vport) with 2011-12 student data

We have also been working closely with the Early Childhood Coordinators and TIES. The goal is that throughout this school year we will have systems in place, so that all early childhood students will be listed in the TIES Student Information System and we can start to load the IGDI data into TIES. We will also be working on several projects with GATE/SEEK to establish a process for identifying gifted and talented students and monitoring their data in TIES.

Over the next few months Kindle Perkins will be presenting the 2010-11 Annual Outcomes Reports to the Board in each district, and Kindle and the Instructional Services Team will be meeting with each district to review this fall's 2011 data with the administrative teams.

The 2011-12 school year promises to bring continued progress in the Outcome Services area!

From the Unique Learners' Corner by Jamie Nord

Quote of the Day: The 2 most powerful warriors are patience and time. ~ Leo Tolstoy

Here are some quick updates from your Unique Learners' Managers:



New Unique Learners' Managers are Off to a Great Start!

As you all know, SCRED has two new unique Managers this year: Troy Ferguson, who is serving the Pine County districts, and Sarah Brown, who is serving North Branch Area Public Schools. Both Troy and Sarah have really hit the ground running and are doing a great job supporting their respective districts! We are excited to have access to some new ideas and expertise at SCRED. A thank you goes out to the district staff for making them feel so welcomed!



New Programs within SCRED are Up and Running! VISION, a shared Federal Setting IV program between Pine City and Hinckley-Finlayson

School Districts, opened its doors to start the 2011-12 school year. Currently, there are 17 students enrolled in the program, ranging from 4th grade to 12th grade. In addition, Taylors Falls Elementary opened up a new Federal Setting III program in the Chisago Lakes School District. There are currently 4 students enrolled in the program.



Alternative Assessment Options are Available for Students on IEPs.

Like last year, there will be two alternative assessment options for students on IEPs, the MTAS and the MCA-Modified. The process for

determining eligibility for both assessments has remained the same. For more guidance in this area, please refer to SCRED Guideline #18: Alternate Assessment Process and Testing Accommodations. An electronic copy of this guideline is available on the SCRED website under Special Education -> SCRED Manuals -> SpEd Guidelines -> SpEd Guideline #18.



Two Great Resources are Available for Special Education Staff!

Staff is encouraged to check out the Infinitec website (www.myinfinitec.org) for helpful Assistive Technology ideas/resources. The registration button is at the top, right-hand corner of the page. Be sure to use your school email address when registering so the system will recognize your district as a subscriber. Unfortunately, due to a new release of the website, those who registered last year will need to register again. As mentioned at the Unique Learners' Conference in August, the SCRED Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) templates are ready for use in SpEd Forms. The initial feedback we have received from staff regarding the templates has been extremely positive! Thank you for your patience as we transition to using the new templates.

Just a friendly reminder that SCRED now has 2 locations – SCRED North (Rush City) and SCRED South (North Branch). Please be sure to check the specific location for any trainings or meetings you may be attending at SCRED.

Early Childhood by *Karen Beckstrom*

A variety of activities this past summer continued our work to build a comprehensive Birth – Grade 12 educational system. By the end of the 2011-2012 school year, all SCRED early childhood programs will be aligned with the same instructional objectives as the K-12 system by using formative assessment, researched based curricula and instructional methods, and a Problem Solving model utilizing a Multi-tiered Response to Intervention framework.

Early Childhood Special Education Teachers and Speech Language Pathologists were certified this past May on the Early Communication Indicator (ECI), which is a General Outcome that measures a child’s expressive language. The ECI was created by a team of researchers at Juniper Gardens Children’s Project at the University of Kansas. Given that the ECI is one of several Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs), we now have a seamless measurement system from Birth – Grade 12!

Research has demonstrated that a Repeated Read Aloud (RRA) is one of the most effective strategies to increase vocabulary and background knowledge at the preschool level. RRA is multiple readings of the same book, with a different instructional focus each day. By using this systematic approach, teachers are able to guide students to higher level thinking skills by actively engaging them in the story rather than merely passively listening. This past summer, teachers from all six districts created a library of resources by identifying theme-related books and writing detailed day-to-day lesson plans using the RRA strategy.

General and special education early childhood staff spent two days collaborating and prioritizing content with the use of a curriculum mapping software program known as Eclipse (Atlas was used by one district). The process was guided with the use of the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIP). The group concluded that using a software program was beneficial because it helped them to be more detailed and allowed them to see where the “gaps” were in their curriculum in relation to the ECIPs. This project is the first time any Minnesota preschool program has used a curriculum mapping software, so we are the Pioneers in this area!

For the past several years, we have worked with Robin Hojnoski, Ph.D. from Lehigh University to strengthen our math instruction. The foundational focus is from the research of Doug Clements and Julie Sarama using the construct of “learning trajectories” in mathematics education. We know children follow a natural developmental progression, and this is also true in learning math. When teachers understand these developmental progressions, they can sequence activities based on them and build mathematics learning environments that are developmentally appropriate. This past August, we examined the intensity and duration of our daily instruction, along with critically reviewing our Preschool Numeracy Indicators (PNI) data. This year, each district will follow a child through a case study and begin looking at interventions in response to that child’s data.

Our final project gave districts the opportunity to meet with Kindergarten staff to share and discuss our instructional objectives and how we align with their system. There was insightful discussion regarding how our measurement systems in literacy and math align and how the Kindergarten teams can benefit from having this information. Teams also looked at how the preschool math Curriculum aligns with Kindergarten math.

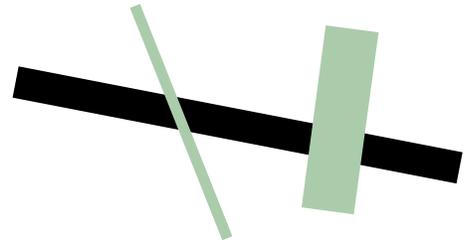
We 'R' Able Update by *Valorie Arrowsmith*

In June 2011, the leadership of We 'R' Able changed hands from Jeannette Kester to Valorie Arrowsmith. The new coordinator will maintain current levels of programming, follow up on an art exhibit project that was in the planning stages under Kester's administration, and add a variety of arts-focused learning activities for the We 'R' Able populations.

During the summer months, the three We 'R' Able staff members, Loreli Miller, assistant coordinator, Anne Olson, clerical support and Arrowsmith met to establish some goals for the upcoming year. During 2011-2012 they will continue to offer experiential and social learning activities, work at increasing participation from Pine City area consumers, meet quarterly to do collaborative planning, and focus promotion efforts on target markets to build event participation.

In August, Arrowsmith and Braham area dance teacher, Cheryl Braddock, attended a two-day Dance for PD (Parkinson Disease) workshop. The pair plan to offer dance and movement classes for people with movement disorders beginning in January.

In mid-September, Arrowsmith submitted a grant proposal to the East Central Regional Arts Council to help support classes and performances in the We 'R' Able service area from January through October. One of the components of the proposal follows up on a project started by Kester, Claudia Hanson and Susan Wehrenberg, in which artwork completed by the We 'R' Able population is matted, framed and exhibited in public buildings in the region.



SCRED MISSION STATEMENT

Through the actions of its administrators and governing body, and through collaboration with other service agencies, SCRED will strive for equity of opportunity for all learners by facilitating cooperation, collaboration, communication and collective excellence among its member districts.

Spotlight on Research – The Power of Having Students Re-Do Disappointing Work by *Kim Gibbons*

“Redos and Retakes Done Right” by Rick Wormeli in *Educational Leadership*, November 2011 (Vol. 69, #3, p. 22-26), <http://www.ascd.org>;

Many teachers struggle over whether to allow students to re-do assignments and/or tests. In a recent article in *Educational Leadership*, consultant Rick Wormeli argues that it is okay for students to regularly re-do below-mastery assignments and tests (whether caused by poor understanding, insufficient effort, or plagiarizing) until they meet high expectations. Across the nation, many teachers give low grades for poor work and move on, which has a negative effect on motivation and future effort. Many students lose hope and disengage from school.

Wormeli makes a strong case that do-overs help students learn the content. He recommends several steps for managing re-dos for maximum impact on teaching and learning:

- Replace the previous grade or mark with the most recent one – don’t average the two. “The A that a student earns on his fifth attempt at mastery is just as legitimate as the A earned by his classmate on the first attempt,” he says.
- Allow students to re-do only the portions of the assignment or test with which they had difficulty.
- Have students submit the original attempt with the re-do and write a brief letter comparing the two and saying what they learned in the process.
- Reserve the right to give alternative versions of the assessment to be re-done.
- Tell students and parents that re-dos are permitted at teacher discretion; they can’t be taken for granted.
- Require parents to sign the original, poorly-done versions of assignments so they’re aware that their children are being given multiple attempts to achieve the standard.
- Require students to submit a day-by-day plan of mastering the problematic material and provide evidence that they are working at it before attempting the re-do.
- If a student doesn’t follow through on promised relearning steps, require a letter of apology for breaking the trust.
- If two or three re-do attempts don’t result in mastery, pause for a couple of weeks to figure out what’s wrong – Inappropriate content? Lack of student effort? Insufficiently creative teaching?

If the same student repeatedly asks for re-dos, something is wrong, says Wormeli. Perhaps the content is developmentally wrong, there are issues at home, or there’s an undiagnosed learning disability.

- Don’t use re-dos with all assignments and tests, only those most important to core learning objectives.
- Allow re-dos for students with *Bs* and *Cs* as well as students with *Ds* and *Fs*. “Why stand in the way of a student who wants to achieve excellence?” asks Wormeli.
- If there isn’t time for a re-do before report card grades are due, go with the current grade and allow the student to make up work in the next marking period and submit a grade change request.
- Consider a blackout period on re-dos just before report card time. “For eight weeks, you’re Mr. or Ms. Hopeful,” says Wormeli, “but for that one week, it’s OK to protect your sanity and personal life.”

Spotlight on Interventions and Resources *by Melissa Chinn*

With few resources and even less research on which to base our practices, implementing an RtI framework in mathematics can present many challenges. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics have authored a position paper endorsing “increasingly intensive and effective instructional interventions for students who struggle in mathematics”, but we are left wondering how this will look in our own buildings.

The RtI network recently hosted a very informative Q&A webinar (<http://www.rtinetwork.org/professional/rti-talks/transcript/talk/36>) addressing multi-tiered systems of support and effective instructional practices for intervention in mathematics. This session addresses many questions you may have, and even a few you didn't know you had. In addition, several links were provided to sites such as MathVIDS, which provides information about math strategies, including video models. Below is a list of online resources that you may consider accessing to assist in planning, designing, and implementing math instructional supports across all Tiers.

RtI and Mathematics Webinar:

<http://www.rtinetwork.org/professional/rti-talks/transcript/talk/36>

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics:

<http://www.nctm.org>

Illuminations (NCTM's resources for teaching math): <http://illuminations.nctm.org/>

MathVIDS:

<http://www.coedu.usf.edu/main/departments/sped/mathvids/index.html>

What Works Clearinghouse:

www.whatworks.ed.gov

Best Evidence Encyclopedia:

www.bestevidence.org

The Access Center: www.k8accesscenter.org

Center on Instruction:

www.centeroninstruction.org

Updates to SCRED Website

Online Registration:

We have improved our online registration process for professional development opportunities at SCRED. The previous registration link on the home page is no longer live. Please go to the staff development page on the SCRED website, and follow the link posted for any workshop you wish to attend.

If you have not visited the Instructional Services pages on the SCRED website in a while, it is worth another visit. Look at the links on the right hand side of the Language Arts and Math Resources pages for ideas and resources.

Current phone numbers for staff at SCRED are listed in the staff directory on the SCRED website.

2011-2012 SCRED Test Calendar:

Go to SCRED website – www.scred.k12.mn.us

- Research and Outcomes Tab
- Assessment Link
- 2011-2012 SCRED Test Calendar

Guideline #12:

Go to SCRED website – www.scred.k12.mn.us

- Home
- Special Education Home
- Social Behavior
- SPED Guideline #12

[SPED Guideline #12](#)

