

MainePSP

March Newsletter

TESTIFYING FOR NGSS



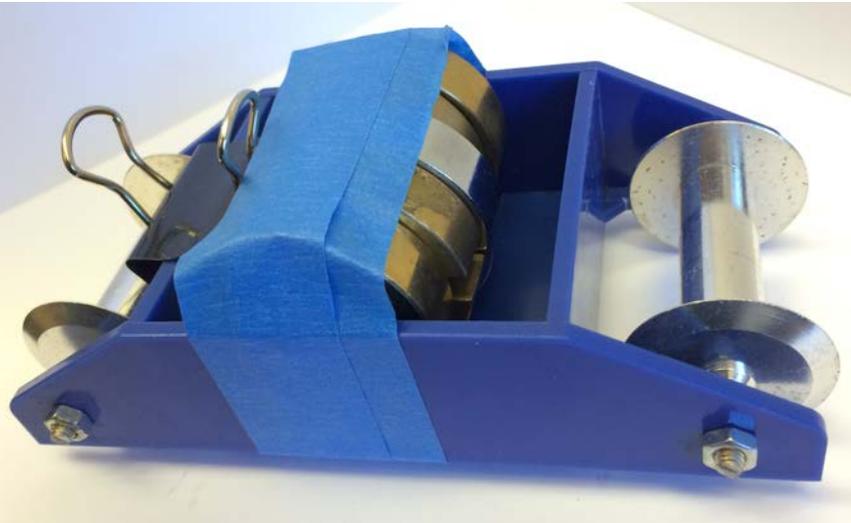
The RiSE Center had the great opportunity to testify in favor of Maine adopting the Next Generation Science Standards at a recent legislative hearing. LD 464 is currently being considered by the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, and will hopefully be brought to the legislative floor for a vote. Many people came out to speak in support of NGSS, including teachers, educational associations, non-profit leaders, University leaders and school-based administrators! RiSE was in a very unique position because while everyone else was talking about how great of an idea NGSS is, we were able to present actual data from the PSP showing how NGSS classrooms look different, how students are performing better and are more engaged, and how teachers are truly able to adjust to the implementation of these standards. **But we need your help!** The strongest opposing position was “yes, but not now.” The committee seemed to feel that there is too many new initiatives coming down on teachers right now. Our counter argument was that it is inefficient to do all the work of shifting to proficiency-based grading and educator effectiveness built on old standards, only to have to redo all of that work in a couple of years when the state finally moves to NGSS! If you would like to have your voice heard on this issue, please pick up a letter writing prompt from us and write a letter to your representative. All voices are critical at this point - especially middle and high school voices who can speak to how this is working in classrooms!

STUDENT SUMMIT IS COMING!

As you’ve hopefully heard by now, the first MainePSP Student Summit will happen at Estabrooke Hall on Saturday, April 11th. This MainePSP teacher-designed event is intended to provide the same awesome science community experience for our students that we all experience when we come together as a PSP community. PSP students from across the state will come together to take part in a massive engineering design challenge related to space science. Each grade level will have a part in the challenge, and there will be both a design competition and a spirit competition. Our very own Travis Hall will be leading the students through an interactive team-building and leadership extravaganza while all PSP teachers participate in Chemistry & Modeling PD with Mitchell Bruce. The Summit Planning Committee is led by Amy Taylor and includes Lauren Driscoll, Jeff Gordon, Carla Magoon, Beth Haynes, Cindy Lambert, Jane Stackpole, Teri Jergenson, Bill McWeeney, Kelley Littlefield, Ruth Poland and Melissa Lewis. This should be a blast!

VEHICLES IN MOTION 2.0 IS OUT OF THE GATE!

The modified PBIS Vehicles in Motion unit is ready for field testing across the MainePSP community. Changes to the original VIM have been made to improve the learning progression for students in response to data showing the original was missing fundamental knowledge building blocks. To teach this modified unit, you will need the original VIM textbook and supplementary PDFs, which can be downloaded from the MainePSP community website. Your feedback as a field tester is extremely important in this process! As you pilot the lessons, materials and documents, please take note of areas that



you feel need improvement. Once you finish each module, please share feedback on that module online at bit.ly/vimmod. There will also be an opportunity for you to share overall feedback from your Vehicles in Motion 2.0 field test experience, compare student work and analyze performance data on Wednesday evening of Summer Academy (June 24th at Estabrooke). Dinner and stipends provided for the recap dinner!



MAINE TAKES ON CHICAGO

You might recognize some familiar faces from the NSTA National Conference in Chicago earlier this month. Carla Magoon and Beth Haynes presented a workshop on Performance-Based Assessments to more accurately match instruction. Lauree Gott and two teachers from her school presented on how Talk Science can transform school culture, and Lauree and Erika presented on how the MaineESP is using NGSS crosscutting concepts to promote higher order thinking skills with students (aka HOTScience!). All presentations went very well, and each audience was around 25-30 people. They loved hearing about the exciting work teachers are doing here in Maine. And it was great to be surrounded by so many geeks on Ultimate Pi Day! :-)

Way to go, MainePSP & MaineESP!!



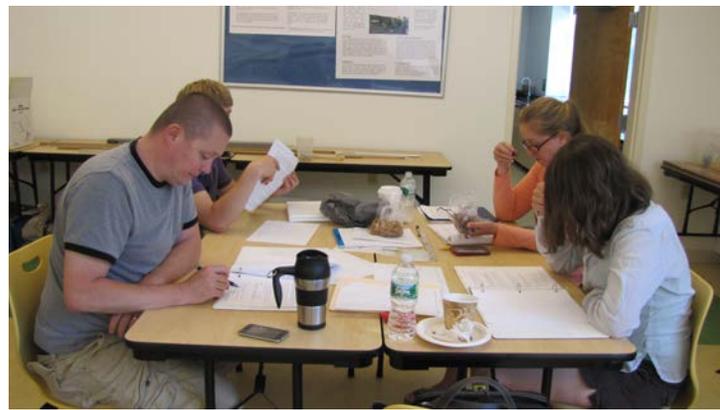
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

SUMMER ASSESSMENT TEAM

We're looking for a group of teachers to work with Melissa Lewis this summer to design a portfolio of assessments across our curricula that are aligned to our instruction/learning targets and the NGSS. The idea is that we would create these assessments as a resource for educator effectiveness efforts by providing a framework for measuring and tracking student growth goals. These assessments would be flexible enough for individual teachers and districts to modify to meet their needs. These work weeks will be very structured and guided by assessment best practices, resources and guest presenters. The first work week for the Summer Assessment Team is the week of July 13. A requirement to join the team is to attend Assessment Training at the RiSE Conference June 29-30 at UMaine. Applications to join this team will come out by email by mid-April.

NEW! TEACHER CAMP

This new development in PSP Summer PD was designed based on your creative ideas from the Summit back in November! Thank you! We will pilot the idea this summer with a small group of interested PSP teachers. The concept is to invite students to attend a paid "summer science camp," which is really just a forum to allow teachers to work together to deepen instructional strategies. Teachers will come together the week before camp to plan lessons and instruction together and to design an observation rubric. Then teachers will co-teach camp sessions with a partner teacher while another pair of teachers observes the session. Teacher teams meet together to discuss observation data and refine instructional strategies. There will be lots of time this week to experiment with various instructional strategies and techniques, all while receiving support from fellow teachers. Teacher camp will run July 27-30 (prep week), Aug 3-7 (camp week), and Aug 10 (wrap-up day). Applications for teachers will come out by email by mid-April.



SUMMER ACADEMY IS BACK

This *optional* professional development week is an opportunity to deepen content knowledge and pedagogy with your closest PSP friends! This year's Academy will be held June 23-26 at UMaine (no Schoodic this year to allow for a commuter-friendly program). This year, you can pick from 3 exciting strands: Earth Science & Climate Change led by Chris Gerbi, Force & Motion led by Mac Stetzer & John Thompson, or Place-Based Earth Science (using SEPUP examples) led by Ruth Kermish-Allen and Joyce Tugel from the Maine Math & Science Alliance (MMSA). Stipends and lunch will be provided, as well as three fun dinner events (Tu, W, Th). Lodging will be provided for people traveling more than 50 miles. Hope to see you there!



LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

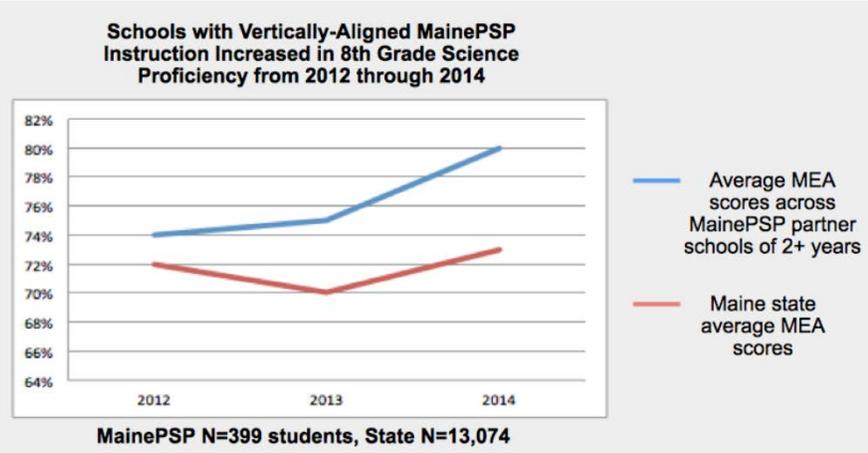
Just a reminder that we will be accepting 10 teachers from the PSP community into the next Leadership Academy, which will take place July 6-10 at Schoodic. Stipends, meals and lodging provided, plus a chance to build your identity, confidence, and skills in teacher leadership and ambitious teaching.

Applications will come out by email by mid-April.

DATA DAY

Please join us on Wednesday August 12th, 2015 from 9am-3pm at the University of Maine for presentations and discussion of findings from

MainePSP classroom and project-wide research and data analysis. This event will be open to teachers and school administrators, UMaine faculty and researchers, graduate students, and RiSE Center staff. Topics for discussion will include findings from pre- and post-instruction data collected during the 2014-15 school year from SEPUP, PBIS, and EarthComm classrooms, statewide MEA data analysis to examine our students' science achievement, and both in-progress and published academic research on teaching, learning, and professional community in the MainePSP. Our focus will be on using our data to support effective science classroom instruction, building community, and learning through research and data analysis. Save the date! If you have any suggestions or would like to participate in planning this event, please contact Laura Millay at laura.Millay@maine.edu.



MEDEA STEINMAN CAMPUS INITIATIVES COORDINATOR

What were you up to before joining the MainePSP?

Before joining MainePSP, I was wearing two hats. I worked for SERC (now Schoodic) Institute as an Education Researcher, coordinating the ever-popular Data Literacy Project! I also worked for UMaine Coop Extension as the Assistant Coordinator

for "Signs of the Seasons," a fascinating and engaging citizen science phenology data collection project, which has now expanded beyond Maine to New England.

What's been the most rewarding?

For me, the most rewarding aspect of my job with MainePSP has been my work on the Maine Learning Assistant program. I also believe it is where I have been able to make the most effective and lasting contribution to the campus-based initiatives of this NSF grant. The MLA program has been a win-win-win--for faculty, MLAs and students alike.



JIM FRATINI HERMON MIDDLE SCHOOL

What were you up to before joining the MainePSP?

I am a science teacher at Hermon Middle School. In the past six years I have worked on a number of grants including a four year grant, (IDEAS) through the University of Maine to integrate technology and student data collection. As a member of the Challenger Learning Center's three year grant (C2C) I developed lessons and teaching strategies to help with the teaching of climate change. I have worked closely with the Innovation Center to help re-design the Maine Invention Convention. I also maintain a busy schedule as a professional bassist playing with many local bands.

What's been the most rewarding?

Being part of a larger community of science teachers, with a passion for teaching, has made me a better teacher. Being part of the Leadership Team has provided me with additional skills and knowledge to communicate more effectively and evaluate my own teaching in ways I have not done before.