North Hampton School Assessment Report
Beyond Standardized Assessment - Our Vision in Action

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February 2006

Message From The School Board

Thank you for taking a moment to read this annual report about North Hampton School students. The focus of the report is a departure from that of past student assessment reports. This is because data from the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) fall test was not available by print time.

We decided to take this opportunity to present a more qualitative, rather than quantitative, exposition of student learning at North Hampton School. Snapshots of what and how students are learning at all grade levels are intended to provide the community with a richer picture of our "vision in action."

We also wanted to show you how assessment at North Hampton School encompasses more than standardized test data. Under the guidance of the School

(Continued on page 2)

North Hampton School Vision Statement

North Hampton School is a community of learners that respects the individual interests, abilities and learning styles of its members.

The curriculum ensures the continual development of every aspect of the child. Learners are challenged to explore, question, problem solve and apply knowledge to life situations. Technology, as well as all other available resources, is utilized to connect with the local and global community.

The school, as the center of the community, provides learning opportunities for all residents. The interaction between children and adults creates respect for each other and a shared responsibility for continued learning.

~ Adopted by the School Board February 2000

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Come Sit With Us

The word "assessment" is from the Greek meaning "to sit beside". Teachers have intuitively known that their best assessment tools have been observation and dialogue with their students. These interactions yield authentic information about what students know and are able to do. We invite you "to sit beside" us for a few moments and collect information about North Hampton School's performance.

By reading this document, it is hoped that you will understand and be proud of the high expectations and the rich web of experiences that your school provides its students to maximize their academic, physical, and socio-emotional development. We strive to provide the North Hampton community with evidence of their school's "vision in action". Hopefully you will also see that assessment is dynamic, always evolving as research promotes more effective, efficient strategies and tools. Just as we make daily assessments of our students, we also constantly, continually assess and evaluate our short and long term effectiveness in implementing this vision to which we subscribe. Thus, we invite feedback regarding this document from all of its readers, embracing the larger community as well as the staff of the school.

School Board (Con't)

(Continued from page 1)

Improvement Plan, we are continuing to expand our "exhibitions of learning" process, which requires students to demonstrate their understanding and to apply their knowledge in a variety of situations. Local assessment of reading, writing and arithmetic is also detailed.

Finally, graduates of North Hampton School who are currently in high school, college, or pursuing a postgraduate career, describe how their elementary and middle school experience has impacted their lives.

We hope you find this information enlightening. We encourage you to contact a School Board member with feedback or suggestions for future reports.

We would like to thank all those individuals responsible for educating our students, and to acknowledge the talent, energy and commitment which underscore their efforts.

Janet Gorman, Andrew Hart,
Kim Kisner, Henry Marsh,
Sharon Narsiff

Assessments Lead to Math & Reading Support at the Primary Grades

North Hampton School is fortunate to be able to provide support programs in reading and mathematics for children who have been deemed in need of such in order to achieve at a level commensurate with their peers. These support programs are targeted at grade one for reading and primarily grade two for mathematics because research has shown that early intervention maximizes a child's chance for success in the future.

Eligibility for this type of support is derived from student work, scores from trimester and year-end assessments, teacher observations, parent concerns and report card findings. The support programs provide individualized and small group instruction based on "best practices" for teaching and learning and ongoing assessments guide our instruction. The result is a 'boost' in the students' confidence and competence in classroom learning activities.

The Three "Rs" Are Locally Assessed!

Students should be assessed and evaluated using clear, consistent, public criteria. These criteria specify what is valued to students, parents and the community at large. Regularly evaluating student work against this criteria enables us to have a global look at the strengths and weaknesses of a school's population or a pointed look at where the performance of an individual student falls according to expectations. The GLEs or Grade Level Expectations established by the State of New Hampshire provide us with the criteria that are the basis of the new annual State Assessment. At the local level, North Hampton School uses standard criteria to regularly assess its students' performance in reading, writing, and some areas of mathematics.

A school-wide assessment is conducted each spring in reading using the Developmental Reading Assessment in grades K-5 and the Basic Reading Inventory in grades 6 and 7. These informal reading assessments provide information about reading accuracy (words read correctly) and comprehension (understanding) by grade level. The areas assessed in comprehension include the abilities to: make informed guesses (predictions), summarize the important ideas and details, answer factual questions, make inferences based on the reading, interpret and draw conclusions, and identify the significant message in the reading. Examining the data of the last few years, by the end of third grade, 93-95% of NHS students are reading on or above grade level according to these tests. The annual reading assessments indicate that these same students continue to maintain and improve on this high level of performance as they move up through the grades.

Since 2001, teachers have been using the 6+1 Writing Traits Rubric to assess student writing in a consistent manner and give feedback to students in a consistent language. This rubric enables teachers and students to look at and work on improving performance on traits that are common to a variety of types of writing: Ideas/ Content, Organization, Word choice, Voice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. K-2 Students are scored on a "Beginning Writer's" Rubric and students in grades 3-8 and beyond use the Standard 6+1 Traits Rubric. This rubric is tied into the writing continuum portion of the report card. This trimester report uses specific descriptors for what each child is able to do in his/her writing and what the next steps for growth should be. As of this writing, Winnacunnet High School is currently working to make it's teachers aware of the 6+1 Writing Traits Rubric to improve writing, which will mean that the consistency and familiarity of these expectations in writing will continue for our students throughout high school.

The third "R" has historically been "_rithmetic"...but the emphasis of mathematics has evolved over the years from procedural computation to problem solving. This year has seen an emphasis on Mathematics Problem Solving throughout the grades, K-8. Rubrics have been created for various grade spans that dovetail with each other, keeping the overall criteria consistent and the performance expectations gradually expanding in rigor throughout the grades. The rubrics focus on problem solving competencies: workable strategy, accuracy of response, connection and extension of the mathematics used and communication competencies: accurate and appropriate vocabulary, notation and representations and overall clarity and completeness. In the early grades, the rubrics serve mainly as a guide to teachers for what is valued and expected with regard to student performance. In the intermediate and middle grades, student work is regularly scored by students and teachers using the rubrics. Feedback using this clear, public, consistent criteria tool makes evident to students what is required to excel.

Consistent local assessment tools are critical to enhancing student achievement and communication to parents. North Hampton is working to improve these tools and their use to optimize student achievement.

North Hampton School Improvement Plan (SIP)

In the spring of 2004, representatives of the School Board and the Parent Community joined teachers and administrators of North Hampton School to dialogue about school successes and needs with respect to curriculum, assessment and communication. The result of that day's efforts and subsequent committee meetings was the definition of a new three-year School Improvement Plan (SIP). This document specifies goals to improve the performance of students and our school. Each goal is accompanied by a list of recommended actions that will facilitate its achievement. At the end of each school year, specific committees review the school's progress against the goals and note results accomplished and future actions to be undertaken.

This comprehensive process, which has been in place since 1999, enables the North Hampton School Community to establish priorities and monitor its progress toward improving the quality of the education we provide for each student as an individual and for the school community as a whole.

To gain a more complete historical perspective of North Hampton's SIP plan process, please visit our website at www.northhamptonschool.org and click on the School Council button. From this page you will also be able to access the 2004 Public Presentation of the SIP and the 2004-2007 School Improvement Plan Progress Report for Year One that will detail current goals, results and future actions.

(New England Common Assessment Program) NECAP Testing

The state of New Hampshire conducted the newly developed NECAP testing for the first time this fall. As a result of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and its assessment requirements, the state partnered with Vermont and Rhode Island to develop Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) in reading, writing, and mathematics and the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP). A GLE is an objective aligned with state standards by grade, which differentiates performance on concepts and skills between adjacent grade levels. GLEs allow teachers to clearly see expectations for all students at the end of each of grades 2-8. The Tri-State (NH, RI, VT) group has also delineated Grade Level Expectations for K-1 which are to be locally assessed by the schools.

NECAP testing took place over a three week time period from October 3-25. Grades 3-8 were tested in Reading and Math. In addition, grades 5 and 8 were tested in Writing. The Reading and Math tests consisted of three sessions each and the Writing test consisted of two sessions. Test results are scheduled to arrive at the schools some time in March, though that time frame is not a guarantee.

The GLEs may be found on the North Hampton School website under the green "Curriculum" button. For more information on the NECAP testing, go to www.ed.state.nh.us. First click on Data & Reports in the left hand column, then click on Assessment.

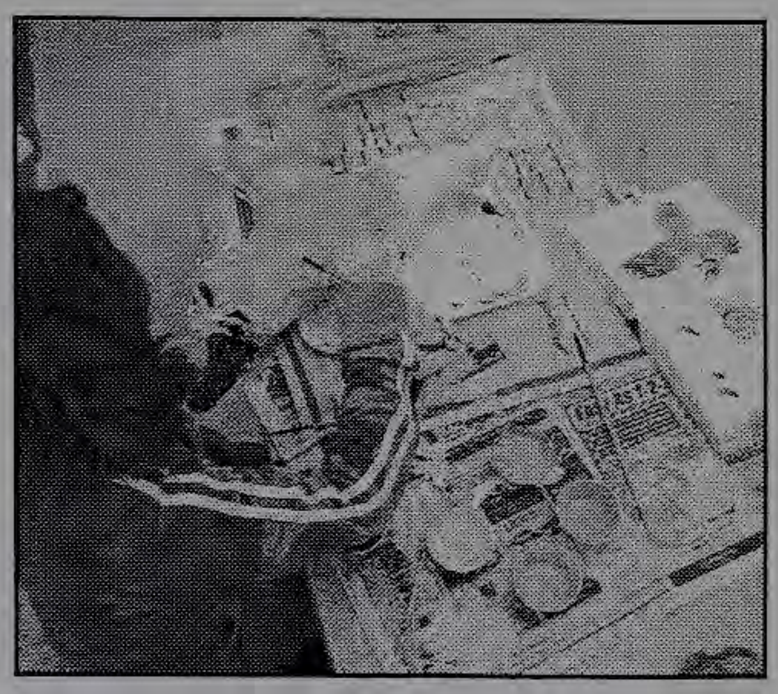
The Role of Student Self-Assessment

The educational community will often link the varied purposes of education into one overarching goal - "to foster active, thoughtful, independent learners" - because these skills enable people to engage in productive life-long learning. Achieving this goal, requires that students are engaged in knowing about themselves as learners, such as knowing effective strategies for learning, current levels of personal achievement, challenges to be overcome, and future goals.

This self-knowledge is developed through opportunities in which students step back from their work and reflect on it. They may consider the personal meaningfulness of the work or its contribution to their growth. They may consider the current quality of their work - its strengths and the areas that need further attention to meet the expected standards of excellence.

This is self-assessment and this is the fuel that empowers students as learners. Future is built on history - knowing where one was, or is, is crucial to determining next steps and the most effective process for getting there.

Student self-assessment is a formidable tool in improving student learning and it is valuable in the long-term because self-assessment is a critical component of the adult work world. It is for these reasons that North Hampton School regularly involves students in this process at all grades.



How do NHS Graduates Perform as High School Freshman?

NHS 2005 Graduates (61)

- WHS 45
- Phillips Exeter Academy 3
- Brooks 1
- St. Thomas Aquinas 6
- Governor Dummer 1
- St. John's Prep 1
- Home Schooled 1

Of the 61 graduates:
- 3 students moved

Percent of NHS 2005 Graduates on Honor Roll

57 Students Accounted for:

- 82% NHS students in private schools are on the honor roll
- 76% NHS students at WHS are on the honor roll
- **77% of all NHS 2005 Graduates are on honor roll**

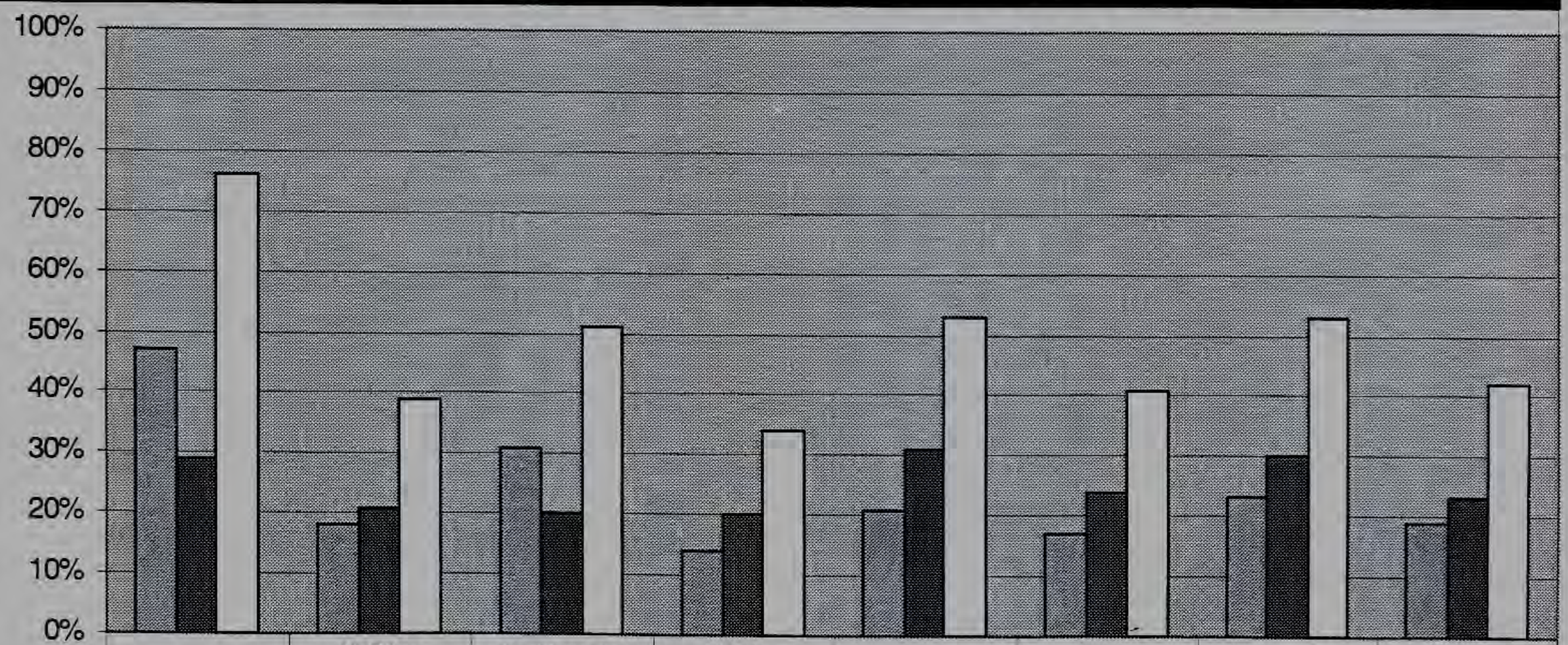
Algebra ... Moving Forward

North Hampton School is currently in its third year of offering Algebra on site. Students enrolled in the rigorous course meet before school 3 days per week in addition to their regular 8th Grade Math class. The numbers and percentages of our students who successfully completed the course over the past three years are as follows:

Class of 2004 ... 20 Algebra students ... 34% of the 8th grade class
Class of 2005 ... 18 Algebra students ... 31% of the 8th grade class
Class of 2006 ... 27 Algebra students ... 39% (anticipated)

Although these statistics are quite healthy, North Hampton School seeks to improve the preparation of its students in mathematics. Examining the profile of our students, the increasing importance of mathematics in the world and the call for greater rigor in the math class nationwide, we are proposing to retool our goals such that by the end of Grade 8, students will have completed the equivalent of Algebra I in a multi-year integrated middle school program. The new Grade Level Expectations (referenced in an earlier article) articulate a mathematics program that balances a variety of topics: number and operations, geometry and measurement, probability and statistics, and patterns, functions and algebra. Although we will maintain the variety of topics in our new multi-year integrated program, some of the expected levels of performance will be shifted to the lower grades to incorporate more of the complex mathematics of Algebra I. It is our hope that more students will achieve at this higher level by the end of their Grade 8 experience. We will be working on a three-year plan for implementation of this goal beginning school year 2006-2007.

How Do North Hampton Students Compare to Other Students in WHS ?



	No Hampton Freshman (45)	All Other Freshman at WHS (380)	No Hampton Sophomores (45)	All Other Sophomores at WHS (374)	No Hampton Juniors (39)	All Other Juniors at WHS (280)	No Hampton Seniors (43)	All Other Seniors at WHS (266)
% High Honors	47%	18%	31%	14%	21%	17%	23%	19%
%Honors	29%	21%	20%	20%	31%	24%	30%	23%
%Total	76%	39%	51%	34%	53%	41%	53%	42%

High Honors: GPA 3.5 or higher, no C's, and taking at least four classes; **Honors**: GPA 3.0 or higher, may have one C, and taking at least four classes

Oratoricals

On a chilly night in January, 18 intrepid 7th and 8th graders climb the steps of the stage in the Winnacunnet Auditorium and take the breath away from every audience member. At the end of the night, several students may be holding award statues....but the winners are every student at North Hampton School. This event is known as "Oratoricals" and it has been going strong at North Hampton School for 42 years, started that many years ago by Wayne I. Elliot, then a junior high language arts teacher.

All North Hampton students win by participating in the activities throughout the grades that ready them for this powerful "Stand and Deliver" event. It is the ultimate authentic assessment of reading, writing, and speaking skills developed from the earliest primary grades. Students at North Hampton School regularly have the opportunity to consider their interests and pursue questions relative to those interests, sharing their discoveries with their classmates and parents in various forums.

This independent research becomes more formalized in 6th grade in "I-Search Presentations". Students refine their questioning and researching skills using a variety of sources. At this stage, students choose the form of their presentation to their peers, tailored to meet certain standard expectations. In grades 7 and 8, students not only continue to hone their research and writing skills, but also their public speaking skills. They actually participate in a number of activities to help them gain confidence with public speaking such as reciting poetry, improvisation games and other short presentations. As the written piece is being developed for oratoricals, each student works with a peer and staff advisor getting feedback on the content, structure and presentation of his or her piece. This is a powerful example of the interaction between children and adults espoused in our vision.

Every student delivers a 3-5 minute speech in front of a large student/teacher group and receives constructive feedback. Finalists (chosen by their peers and teachers) from both grade levels have the honor of presenting their speech to the community at large at the now famous "Oratoricals". If you have never come, mark your calendars now to be looking for next January's date. You will never be prouder of or more impressed by, those who will be responsible for the future of our country.

"... North Hampton School helps students prepare for life, academically and socially, by ensuring that they're well rounded. The school takes each activity beyond the confines of a classroom and into real life situations. As a 7th grader, even being outgoing, I don't think I ever would have gotten up in front of a couple hundred people to read a speech. I don't think that's a very common thing – 7th graders reading speeches they prepared to large audiences. However, I can say that I'm certainly not shy when it comes to public speaking now. If you're unsure of what I'm talking about, it's oratoricals .... My first speech was about freckles. I made it onto the contest and can remember having lessons on inflection and projecting my voice. Now I give demos about chemical lifecycle management products to Fortune 500 companies. It feels quite the same as it did the day of the contest, but I'm much more used to it now. I attribute my public speaking skills to the oratoricals.... The key to overcoming your fears and facing those challenges head-on is being well prepared. NHS does a fantastic job of preparing students for life outside the classroom as well as in. I'm 25 now and have a Bachelor of Science degree from UNH and my first "real" job. AS I am writing this, I mentioned to one of my coworkers what I'm writing about, her response was "Wow, there's no way I'd be able to write about my grade school, I can't remember any of it!" That's the difference in North Hampton School, we remember."

~ Danielle Bennett (1995)

Exhibitions of Learning

As part of the North Hampton School Improvement Plan, we will be expanding the opportunities for our students to demonstrate their learning through exhibitions. An exhibition is a public sharing of learning that extends beyond the school walls to the greater community. Exhibitions of learning provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understandings and to thoughtfully apply knowledge, skills, and habits of mind in a variety of structured and unstructured situations. An exhibition demands a level of creativity, rigor, and student investment above that of standardized assessments. Exhibition assessments often occur over time and result in a tangible product or observable performance. It is important to note, however, that the process of preparing the product or performance is also part of the assessment. The process and performance stages of an exhibition require students to expand their skills in questioning, researching, problem solving, decision making, reflecting and communicating - skills that are critical in the real work of life.

Internally, the exhibitions make the school accountable by producing significant information on what and how students are learning. Exhibitions of learning also enable schools to provide community members with an opportunity to view the education of its students. Most importantly, exhibitions encourage students to move toward more profound understandings in their learning and support students in becoming life-long learners and successful contributing members of their community. The next article which focuses on the many ways children demonstrate their learning at NHS highlights a number of our public exhibitions.

Demonstrations of Student Learning at NHS

On the following pages, you will see examples of the demonstrations of student learning that regularly occur at North Hampton School. Each paragraph highlights just one authentic assessment in one unit from the many that comprise the every day curriculum in each class. These demonstrations provide evidence of what we value as stated in our vision - *Learners are challenged to explore, question, problem solve and apply knowledge to life situations* - and in the second objective of the Assessment Goal of our School Improvement Plan - *To expand and define student learning demonstrations at each grade level culminating in an Eighth Grade Exhibition.*

"Building Big" is a culminating unit in **Fifth Grade** that integrates math, science, technology and multiple forms of communication: written, oral and visual. Students employ the process of scientific inquiry designing and implementing a lab that investigates a structural idea or problem involving the concepts of forces: tension, compression, and torsion. Their findings are then communicated to their audience through an oral presentation complete with models and posters. Students further apply their knowledge of structural elements and terminology in the construction of a United States bridge, skyscraper, or dome - using a Power Point presentation to communicate their research to their audience.

"Individual Data Books" are maintained for **Kindergarten** children throughout the year. These books capture the progress of children in reading, writing and mathematics. Children are able to see the gains they are making in letter-sound recognition, reading, writing, number sense and problem solving. The data helps the teachers and children set goals for next steps together, gives children ownership of their learning and provides the teacher with valuable information to plan instruction and communicate growth to parents.

"Colonial America" comes alive in **Fourth Grade**. Subsequent to researching and writing about the colonial time period, students assume the character of a particular occupation. They create appropriate costumes, tools, models and explanatory posters of the trade in which they are involved and present themselves to their audience in character. They demonstrate, discuss, and respond to questions in character, teaching each other in the process.

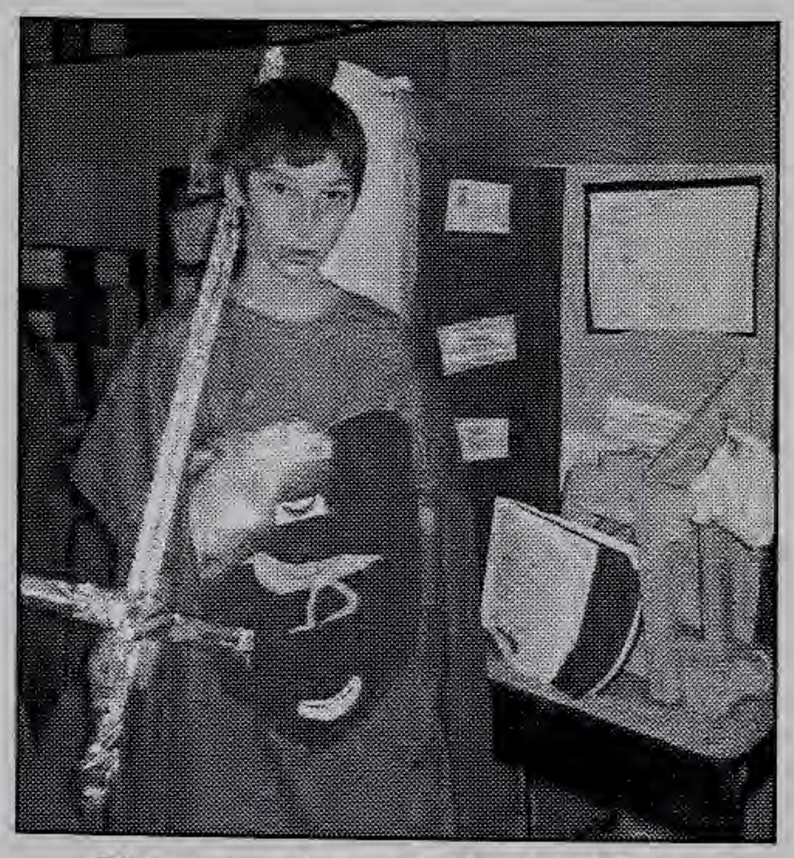
"Fairy Tales" will never be the same! When our **First Grade** students study fairy tales, it is in a very sophisticated manner! They first learn about the elements of fairy tales such as magic, personified objects, animals as main characters, and the lessons such stories teach us. Then the students explore different versions of the same basic story, such as found in a variety of cultures. Their learnings about what constitutes a fairy tale are synthesized and demonstrated in their independent compositions. Yes!, First Graders write and perform their own fairy tales, much to the delight of all of us who sneak into the audience!

Middle School students studying the **Spanish** language periodically write and perform skits that incorporate the newest vocabulary, grammar and cultural themes they have been learning. The skits are recorded on film and students self-assess the growth of their communication skills on a regular basis.

"Physical Best Fitness Testing" occurs during the fall and spring in **Physical Education Classes.** This testing measures three components of physical fitness that have been identified as being important because of their relationship to overall health and optimal function throughout a person's life. The three components are aerobic capacity, body composition and muscular endurance, and strength and flexibility. Our approach encourages not only proper technique but also the enjoyment of working to be physically fit for life!

Demonstrations of Student Learning at NHS

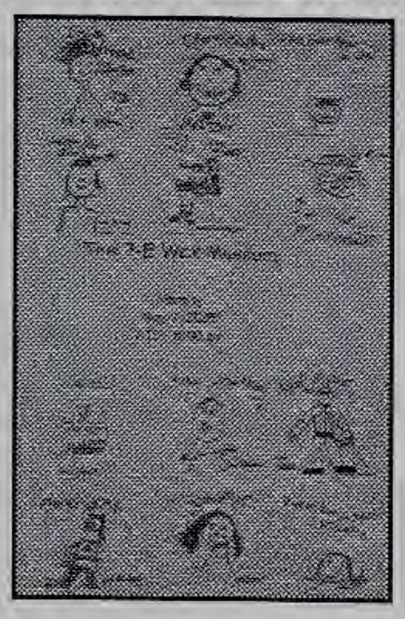
One of the major integrated units in **Grade 3** is **"Astronomy"**. As a way of demonstrating and expanding upon basic knowledge gleaned from the unit, each student researches a topic of choice and creates a brochure. The features of non-fiction resources are used such as an index and table of contents. Research using multiple sources is conducted and various computer technologies are used to layout the brochure in an attractive manner with imported and created graphics.



If you wander up to the third floor during a particular time of the year, you will think you have been transported back in time. Giant shields, stained glass art, and original catapults are merely a few of the items constructed by students and presented to the public in a **Medieval Museum**. This is the culmination of an integrated unit in **Grade 6** that incorporates language arts, science and social studies. During this unit, students conduct extensive research in order that their displays are historically accurate. They demonstrate their knowledge in a written, visual and oral presentation to parents and friends during Medieval Museum Night.

Grade 7 students study four regions of the world: **Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Australia/Oceania**. During the overview of these cultures, students conduct research and then assume the role of 'representative' of a country from one of these regions. Equipped with maps, brochures, and artifacts of their own making, students give oral and visual presentations to classmates, parents and the community at an after school event entitled **"Culture Night"**.

Grade 2 students have the opportunity to study famous people in their **Biography** unit. Spring-boarding off the whole class explorations within this unit, each student chooses a person to research extensively using multiple sources. Students then consolidate the research into a 'new' biography of their historical persons. The extraordinary happens next! Each student take on the persona of the person he or she researched. Students dress up, give oral presentations as their historical figures and respond to questions in character! The students' knowledge is only rivaled by their acting ability!



Middle School students participate in a **Life Skills** class designed to foster good decision making attitudes and skills. Students often role-play various problem situations to develop and practice responses that keep them safe and healthy. Assessment of particular unit knowledge is demonstrated through cross grade level peer teaching.

Music at North Hampton School seems very public, given the number of concerts and special assemblies at which the students demonstrate their growing choral and instrumental knowledge and skills. It is important to note, however, that it is within the music class that the attitudes and skills that create these performances are steadily built. Instrumental and choral opportunities are expanded through the options of jazz band and the annual musical.

Demonstrations (Cont.)

(Continued from page 7)

Grade 8 is engaged in a yearlong study of **20th Century American History.** The students' explorations of each major event are authentically communicated and assessed. Two examples of assessment activities connected to various 20th century events are noted here. At the close of the Immigration unit, final essays entitled *"Should the US Keep the Door Opened or Closed to Immigration?"* are written and shared. The culminating assessment of the WWII/ Holocaust Unit is the creation of a Holocaust Portfolio that houses a collection of personal reflections, poetry, art, and other writings on the unit.

Art class at North Hampton School is structured to give students maximum ownership of their creative endeavors. The ability to generate ideas and the willingness to experiment and refine one's visual communication skills are some of the criteria students use to self-assess their growth. Studying the work of various artists gives students a common vocabulary for analyzing their own work and that of their peers. Design composition, media techniques, and personal style are a few of the criteria students use to describe an art piece.

Experiential Learning ...

At North Hampton School, classroom learning for all subject areas incorporates active, diverse experiences so that concepts, skills, and practices are valued and may be accessed by different types of learners. Our students are fortunate to also experience enrichment opportunities beyond those offered in the regular program of studies. These enrichment opportunities are designed in a variety of forms that strive to meet the individual interests, abilities, and learning styles of all students, as highlighted in our vision statement. Students have the opportunity to reinforce and extend the ideas and skills of the classroom through various field trips, guest speakers, and artist-in-residence programs, to name a few. We would like to focus on the contributions that field trips - "Learning Outside the Walls" - make to the learning process.

Some of the field trips our youngest students experience include visiting the police and fire stations, rock quarry, and Sandy Point Discovery Center while they learn about their community, geology, and estuaries. Field trips in grades three through five include the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium, Plimouth Plantation, and the Freedom Trail in Boston where students extend their learning of astronomy, Early American life, and the Revolutionary War. These opportunities contribute to the understandings and skills students are expected to have at each grade level because the experiences make the learning "real".

Experiential learning comes to life through the adventures taken in sixth, seventh and eighth grade in particular. Students participate in overnight stays at an environmental school, the Isles of Shoals, and Washington, DC during these years. For some, a particular class trip is their first time away from home. Students learn to take risks, stretch their thinking, and ultimately return home with a sense of accomplishment and improved self-confidence.

Soon after school begins, sixth grade students pack their backpacks and sleeping bags and head for the mountains of NH to Camp Merrowvista. At Merrowvista students focus on learning about the natural environment and learning about themselves. They muck about in the wetlands and study different ecosystems in New England, and become aware of the incredible amount of waste that we produce as humans and the need for recycling. The development of their whole self comes into play with the big goals of climbing a wall and climbing a mountain as a team. They experience bonding activities prior to the climbs, learn trust, and physically and emotionally push themselves beyond what they thought possible. In the natural setting, without electronics, person-to-person communication becomes essential and students have time to really learn about each other. Students return to school having forged themselves into a team. Follow up activities such as student made ecosystems in science, calculating waste/trash as a math activity, writing reflections and creating survival shelters throughout the Nature Walk behind the school take place after the actual trip.

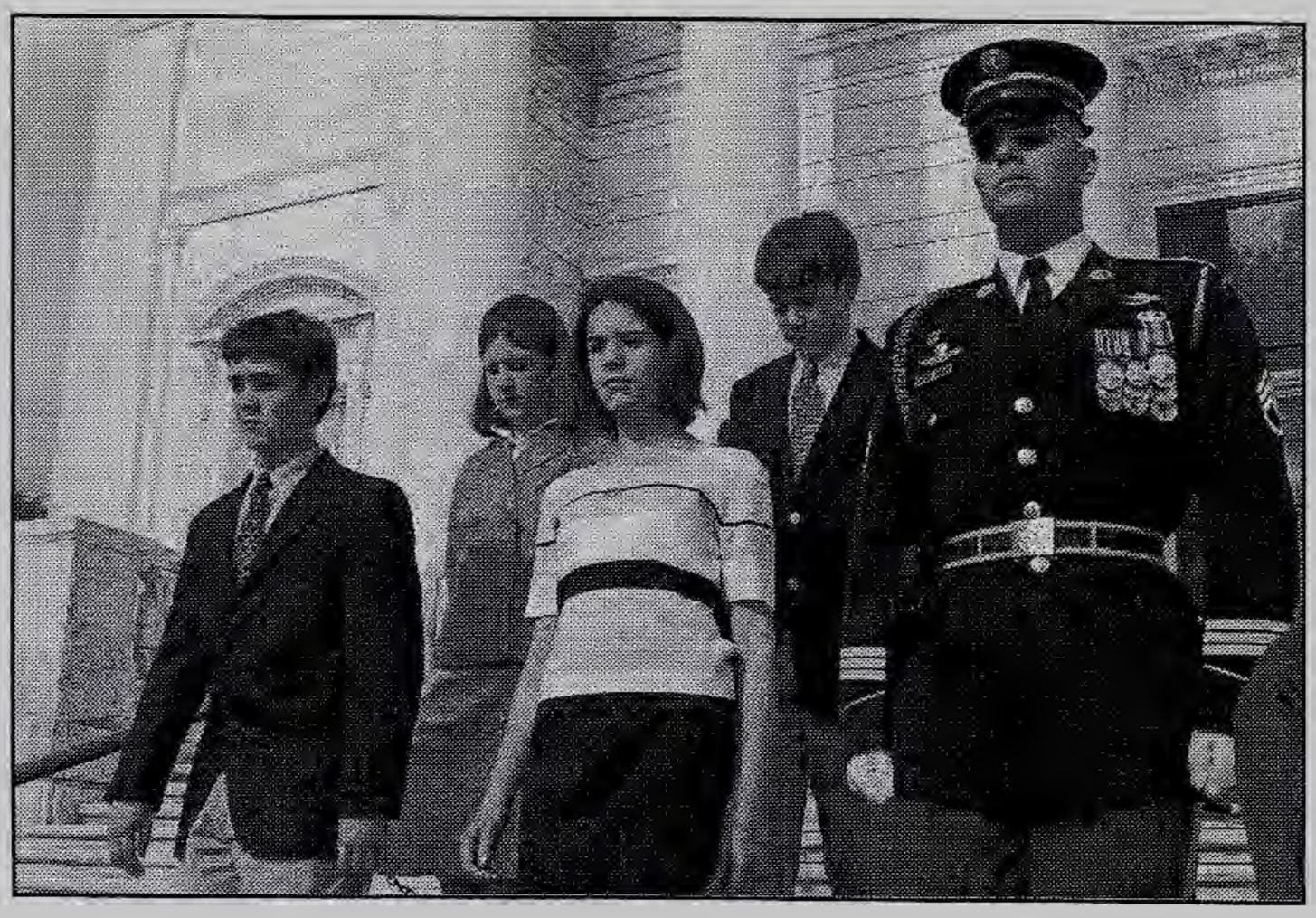
In seventh grade, the Science curriculum focuses on geology, the study of birds, weather, the ocean and its tides, and much more that is life in the seacoast environment of New England. Students have the opportunity to experience what they have learned through real life situations during their trip to the Isles of Shoals. Students learn about the rich history of the Shoals, hear folk tales that have been passed down through the decades, make geological searches to identify a variety of rocks and birds they have studied, and learn what it was like to live in a much simpler time. They are challenged as they apply critical thinking skills to determine how wastewater

... Learning Outside the Classroom Walls

is recycled on the island. Students integrate the arts as they create watercolor paintings of the island and write poems and reflections as they sit upon huge rocks, waves crashing about them. They contribute to meal preparation, dining room set up, wash dishes and assist in cleaning after each meal. Collaboration and cooperation were essential for survival on the islands long ago and the students get the opportunity to experience individual and group responsibility, trust, and appreciation for each other.

In eighth grade, students study the Industrial Revolution, Immigration, WWI, the Great Depression, WWII, the Vietnam War, and learn about citizenship and civic responsibility. The core academic areas and the arts are integrated in each of the units studied. The annual 8th grade trip to Washington, DC comes as a culmination to a yearlong study of 20th century American History. In addition, it culminates what is, for many, nine years of shared school experience. The trip brings history and government to life, preparing our students to become critical thinkers and decision makers for themselves and our global society. They apply what they have learned as they tour monuments, the Capitol building, Pentagon, White House, Smithsonian Museums, lay a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and so much more. After an intense study about the Holocaust at school, the students visit the Holocaust Museum. They view the thousands of shoes taken by Nazis, and stand in a cattle car once stood in by so many Jewish people as they headed toward concentration camps. They expand their learnings about social injustice, acceptance and appreciation for diversity of humankind, and "see" and "feel" that "silence is acceptance." The trip is burned in students' memories and many return years later recalling their experience and life lessons learned on their 8th grade trip to Washington, DC.

We would like to thank the PAL Enrichment Committee and our North Hampton community for providing these special opportunities for our children. Education "outside the walls" is truly what makes education real in the hearts and minds of our students.



"... At NHES we learned that to be a successful student was not simply defined by being the best among your peers. It also meant being able to work as part of a team to accomplish a project or an assignment. I have wonderful memories of team building projects; from our second grade production of the play "Toy Land," to painting an ocean mural with my eighth grade science class.

These same skills of mentoring and working on team projects that I learned in elementary school help me succeed in my job today.

... My personal friendships with my elementary school teachers have been especially important to me. I always felt I could go back to my teachers as friends or advisors after I left NHES.

... I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn and grow as a student and individual in such a supportive and stable school environment. I hope to send my own children to this wonderful school.

~ Linda (Jenkins) Arsdale (1989)

"...Our 8th grade class trip to DC opened my eyes to the world. After high school, I traveled alone to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland. If I had not gone and seen the Holocaust Memorial, I probably never would have traveled so far. After experiencing the Holocaust Museum in DC, I felt I needed to go and pay my respects and experience what millions went through.

... Environmental Camp helped establish where I am today, an Outdoor Education Major @ UNH. ... I found a connection between the environment and what I wanted to learn.

~Kevin Gregory (1998)

"... I don't think it's one lesson, one instance or one event that makes one education better than another. There wasn't one single experience at NHS that made me who I am, or made me think the way I do. I think what North Hampton School does best is give its students a sense of the whole world. ... At NHS I remember feeling confident in exploring, whether that be with art, computer technology or my writing. Teachers were always very supportive and constructive. And there was continuously a strong sense of community present. I am certain that translated into my after-school life. I had the confidence to do what I wanted and pursue the lifestyle I'm now living.

... I don't think I could ever say anything negative about North Hampton School. Aside from the fact that I'm mildly annoyed we didn't have foaming soap when I attended. I always visit the school when I'm home. Even though many of the familiar faces have changed, I'm proud to say that I know my younger sisters are getting the same well-rounded education I received, in addition to so many more opportunities I could have only dreamed of at their age.

~ Rainbeau Tharp (2001)

Long Term Study Pool

In late spring of 2001 the data collection committee decided to develop a long-term study analyzing our effectiveness in preparing our students for high school and beyond. We based our selection of individual students to participate on diversity: from self-motivated to reluctant learners, from leaning towards conformity to leaning towards individuality, etc. Each student attended a preliminary meeting at which we explained our purpose, goals, and commitment to ten years of follow up. All of the original choices readily agreed, and have met with us (8th grade teachers, administrator, and school board member) each June since.

Several weeks prior to our meeting, we sent students a questionnaire with objective questions about quantifiable things such as grades, class rank, extracurricular activities, extension of service learning module from experiences at North Hampton, and work. We also asked subjective questions about how well prepared they'd felt in their subject area course work, as well as study skills, technology, life skills, and unified arts areas. Urging them to be candid, we explained that we needed honest, specific feedback in order to improve what we do here. At each of these yearly gatherings we have taken prodigious notes and shared our findings with our staff. Often teachers have been able to address an area of weakness (for example the writing of formal lab reports for science, or writing objective responses to questions based on the reading of an article) in the next year.

Overall, our students have been quite successful so far, and genuinely credit North Hampton School for giving them the foundation that promoted their smooth transition into high school and the larger community. Although there have been areas designated as "needing attention" each year (and these have changed from year to year), there have been no gaping holes, no abysses into which our students have fallen. In 2005 the group identified the life skills program as a strong component of their decision-making processes throughout high school. They said that if they made "poor" choices, it wasn't because they hadn't explored the ramifications of those choices!

One strong recommendation has been to provide more career-oriented opportunities to help students explore earlier and more broadly. They suggested having former students now out in the working world come in as guest speakers as an ideal, and soliciting anyone working in a particular field willing to share the benefits and steps to getting into this line of work as a viable "second best" way to address this need.

Although these findings cannot be placed on a spreadsheet with graphs for statistical analysis, we feel that this long term following of our graduates gives us yet another assessment piece sometimes missing when determining program and culture effectiveness. This should continue through 2011.

"...I would say that the absolute best thing about North Hampton was that I really felt that the staff and my teachers genuinely cared about each and every student at the school. Mr. Caron always seemed to stick with me, caring about the most insignificant little projects we would do with absolute sincerity, and you really had a feeling that, even at such a young age, you were empowered to do a lot of pretty impressive things. But this carried on with all my teachers at North Hampton, and I was impressed by how significant the teachers made me feel at a time in my life that seems impossibly young as I look back on it now. I would certainly be exhausted to carry on as all of you do, and it really meant a lot to me.

~ Ryan Dunfee (2000)

Service Learning

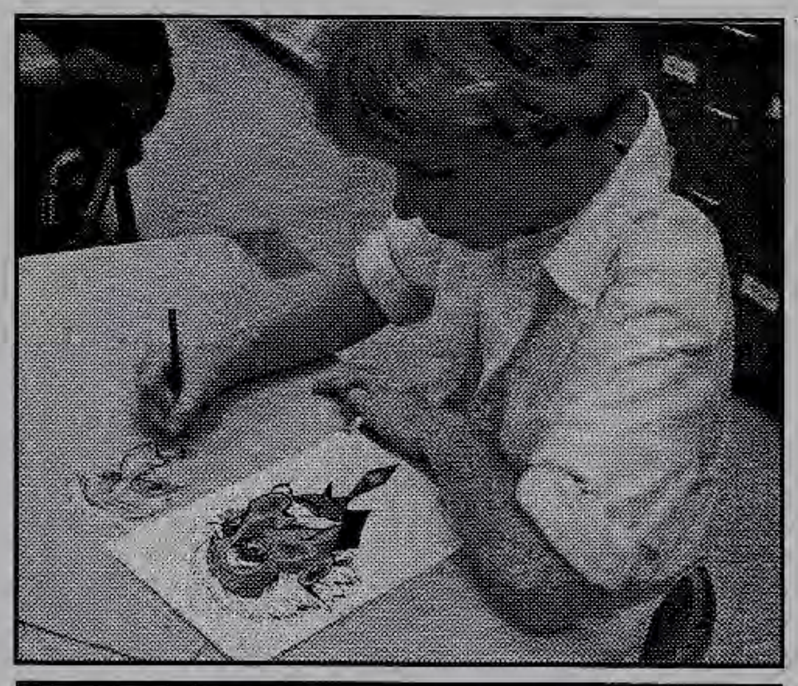
North Hampton School takes seriously its commitment to educating the whole child. The Service Learning component to the Middle School curriculum enables students to participate in a variety of community service activities. Giving back to the community fosters responsibility, work ethic, time management, organizational skills, compassion, and a sense of pride and accomplishment in our students.

Sixth graders rotate through a variety of committees throughout the year that mainly service the North Hampton School community and special charities, work that enables them to use academic skills in real life situations. Recycling paper and plastic for the entire school, they learn about the positive environmental impact recycling has on a local The Finance Commonomic concepts by ing healthy snacks dents learn about fair ply and demand, and their fellow class- Meeting Committee runs a weekly town liamentary proceful experience for ate a productive 70 students and tees are formed Meeting and students vice activities such as ishable items for lo- sponsoring a needy family over the holidays, or collecting items to be sent to military personnel serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

> ***"... We had a weekly community service opportunity, Service Learning. In high school, we also do service learning activities, but the difference is that at North Hampton we did it on a regular basis at the same place, so it had more meaning than the random things we do in high school ..."***
>
> **~ Maddy Packard (2004) & George Packard (2002)**

Seventh and eighth graders not only work within the school, as volunteering with preschoolers and kindergarteners, but also participate in out-of-school programs. Some of these activities include visiting residents in area nursing homes and working in day care facilities, hospitals, and soup kitchens. Specific committees are formed that focus on sending packages and writing letters to service men and women serving overseas, working with the Department of Public Works in clearing beaver dams, and cleaning public outdoor areas such as parks and the local beaches. Larger scale projects such as The Lighthouse Kids and the Side Walk Kids from grade seven take on monumental tasks such as raising funds to restore the White Island Lighthouse and install a sidewalk from the school to the library.

There are many other service related activities aside from those noted here in which the seventh and eighth grade students participate. The life skills learned through Service Learning build character and citizenship in our young people. We consider ourselves most fortunate to be able to offer this outstanding program to our North Hampton School students.



and global level. mittee utilizes ecopurchasing and sellfor a profit. Stumarket value, supprovide a service to mates. The Town sets an agenda and meeting using pardure. It is a powerstudents to modermeeting with over adults. Subcommitthrough Town vote on various sercollecting non-percal soup kitchens,

Technology Enhances Learning

At North Hampton School, we use an integrated approach to Technology Education. Our staff works closely with classroom teachers to design lessons and experiences that will allow students to gain access to current research and use software applications that will be used in high school and beyond.

Students at all levels are afforded the opportunity to develop skills using current software applications. The Microsoft Office suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) is used throughout the school (and the world). Students are able to master "desktop publishing" programs such as Printshop. Multi-media is attainable to all. Utilizing the easy to use tools available today, students use digital photography and video to supplement presentations. Several web-based programs are offered to our educational community. These are Nettrekker, a safe and reliable way for children to research topics; Atomic Learning, a tutorial-based website that can help anyone use current software applications; and United Streaming which has thousands of videos that students can access and incorporate into their projects.

Computer technology reflects changes in the way our world operates. Students at North Hampton School are offered tools that use technology as a "means" to achieving their high academic goals. Teachers have made significant progress in learning how technology can help students learn. We will continue to strive to offer all members our educational community the best possible technology education in the state of New Hampshire.

North Hampton School
Student Assessment Report

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