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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Selected News Releases

Partnership Schools to Share Expertise at Collective In-Service Day

Nearly 700 teachers will participate in a series of workshops taking place from Bangor to Bradley during a collaborative Regional In-service Day on Friday, March 9. The second annual event, pooling the resources and expertise of seven school districts and the University of Maine, is sponsored by the Penobscot River Educational Partnership: A Professional Development Network (PREP: PDN).

Over 100 sessions will be offered during the day, presented by educators and practitioners in a variety of professions, designed to provide new information and hands-on activities to help teachers reach their goals. Topics focusing on instruction, technology, curriculum and assessment range from aligning physical education with the Maine Learning Results to integrating music and social studies. In addition, programs dealing with well-being and safety are offered, such as CPR and crisis intervention.

While most of the presenters work in the area, others are being brought in to share specialized expertise, such as Charles Vonder Embse, professor of Mathematics Education and Mathematics at Central Michigan University. His presentation, aimed at secondary mathematics teachers, will focus on the use of interactive geometry software and graphing calculators to enhance instruction.

In addition, curriculum coordinators from partnership schools will present an update on the PREP-Bank project, funded by a three-year \$659,198 U.S. Department of Education Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology grant. The grant is enabling the Network to develop standards-based instructional units, exemplary learning activities and authentic assessments to be shared through a web-based repository and data management system.

"We will try to offer as much value as possible in single-day workshops and experiences that are immediately usable," says Deborah Belyea, principal at Washington St. School in Brewer and chair of the Network's Professional Development Task Force. By working as a consortium, the school districts are able to offer teachers many more options and be more cost-effective, she points out.

PREP: PDN partners include school districts in Brewer, Bucksport, Old Town, SAD 22 (Hampden, Newburgh, Winterport), Union 87 (Orono, Veazie) and Union 90 (Alton, Bradley, Greenbush, Milford), the Indian Island School and the University of Maine. Its mission is to increase the capacity of each partner to improve student learning by continually improving teaching and the educational experience. Two years ago, superintendents agreed on a calendar that would allow a common in-service day among schools in the Network.

The professional development event is an opportunity for staff of all the districts and University faculty to work collaboratively on the content areas of the Maine Learning Results, according Marc Curtis, superintendent of Bucksport schools and current president of PREP: PDN. "It presents all stake holders with an opportunity to both present innovative programs and to learn new information," he says.

PREP: PDN is a member of the Holmes Partnership, a national network of universities and their partner schools, working in collaboration with key national professional associations to create high-quality professional development and significant school renewal.

Media Note: For a schedule of the Regional In-service Day workshops, contact: Kay Hyatt, (207) 581-2761; kay.hyatt@umit.maine.edu.

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