Dear Faculty, Staff, and Colleagues,

Another look at our Balanced Literacy Common Commitment with today’s e-connections feature on adolescent literacy and the struggling reader, part II.

Reading Comprehension—Adolescent literacy instruction must include reading comprehension strategies. These skills are not “learned” through a simple reading of a story, they are developed through activities designed to teach students about reading for purpose and using strategies to develop and deepen understanding. The following list includes some strategies to teach literacy:

1. Select and summarize important ideas
2. Reorganize and elaborate these ideas
3. Ask questions concerning specific information
4. Monitor understanding and “fix” situations where understanding is lacking
5. Establish goals and define academic tasks
6. Evaluate plans and reflect on the content strategies used

Comprehension strategies can also help students develop awareness of how they learn (known as metacognition) and allows students to monitor their own reading comprehension. The use of questioning is a great reading comprehension strategy to help students develop and deepen their understanding of a particular content. For example, before reading, discuss questions such as these with your students:

- What is my purpose for reading?
- What do I already know about this topic?
- How long do I think it will take to read this chapter, book, document, etc?

During reading, ask these questions:

- Do I understand what I am reading?
- If not, what can I do to help myself?
- What do I already know that I can connect this information to?
- Do I need to change my pace?
- What are the important ideas?

After reading, revisit the text, by asking these questions:

- How did I do?
- Did the reading meet my expectations?
- Did I understand?
- Do I need to revisit part of what I just read?

Graphic Organizers—Graphic organizers are another great reading strategy for adolescent readers. Graphic organizers are useful because they provide a visual dimension to the class discussion or text. They allow students to see visually how concepts are connected. Researchers have found graphic organizers to be a highly effective reading strategy for both adolescent readers and struggling readers as they encourage students to reread passages they do not understand and become more
active readers. There are numerous types of graphic organizers, but the most common are concept maps, flow diagrams, tree diagrams and matrices.

**Reciprocal Teaching**—Another strategy to consider is reciprocal teaching. This strategy involves students working in groups of four and reading common text.

The text is divided into smaller chunks combined with periodic checks for understanding. At each stopping points, the students use four reading comprehension strategies—questioning, clarifying, summarizing, and predicting to understand the text.

**Note-Taking**—Good note taking is a skill that can and should be taught. Most adolescent students do not have sophisticated note-taking strategies. It is a good idea for students to use the same procedure to take notes in all of their classes. In Santa Fe Public Schools, our secondary schools use Cornell Notes. In this format, students divide their paper into two columns, using the right side for notes and the left side for questions, main ideas and key words. At the bottom students summarize what they have learned. This format helps students find information quickly, locate references, and study for exams.

**Read Alouds**—Reading aloud to students is another important literacy activity because it can enhance students’ background knowledge, expose them to new vocabulary, and provide them with a model of fluent reading. If possible, teachers should read aloud to adolescent students at least five minutes within each class period everyday. Rather than reading strictly from a textbook, consider reading from a newspaper, storybook, magazine or electronic text.

The intent of a read aloud is to establish purpose and connect the area of study to other areas and the real world; model fluent oral reading using animation and expression; develop class discussion to question; and connect reading to writing about the text. The remaining Adolescent Literacy strategies will be featured in the January edition of *e-connections*.

Improving our lives through education,

Bobbie J. Gutierrez, Superintendent of SFPS Schools

**Project XCLR8-Logo Design Scholarship**

Project XCLR8, a local business based in Santa Fe that runs a driving school is offering a $500 scholarship to the student who designs a logo for their new driving school, XCLR8. XCLR8 will include the top five entries from each school in a drawing for other great prizes such as IPODs, pizza parties, $50 gift certificates, and chances to obtain your license for free through our driving school. Our main objective at XCLR8 is to help our driving students become responsible and knowledgeable drivers in a fun, safe, and effective way.

You may select one or all three of the following options as a guideline for your design:

1) The logo should incorporate the name “XCLR8” while promoting it as a driving school. It should be eye-catching, simple, unique, and timeless.

2) The logo should be bright and fun and geared to our target audience (14-plus teens and young adults). The logo should use white, black, and/or yellow as primary colors and green and/or red as secondary colors.

3) The logo should be an original mascot (an inanimate object that you add human characteristics to such as eye, mouth, hands). It should also incorporate guidelines 1 and 2.

*Note: The integrity of the design should not be compromised when it is faxed several times. Color choices should be easily transferred into a plain black and white design.*
Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival School Concerts and Teacher Training

Concerts
During the week of November 16, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival’s “Music in Our Schools” program visited El Dorado Community School and Agua Fria, EJ Martinez, Kearny, Piñon, Ramirez Thomas, Salazar, and Wood Gormley Elementary Schools with a professional string quartet and guitar ensemble. This world class ensemble, including Bryan DeLay, guitarist, and first violinist L. P. How of New York City Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, performed Vivaldi’s Concerto for Guitar and Strings and Quintet by Luigi Boccherini. Students in grades K-6 prepared for these concerts in their music classrooms with their music teachers, and attended the performances.

Teacher Training
On December 1, elementary music presenters Boo Miller and Janine Sammeth (also elementary general music teacher and choral director of El Dorado Community School) provided teacher training for implementation of the next “Music in Our Schools” concert series scheduled for January. Using lesson and activity plans that conform to NM Standards and Benchmarks as well as National Standards for Music Education, presenters prepared teachers to present music to their students prior to a visit from the New Mexico Brass Quintet. SFPS music teachers who participated in the training were Galina Austin (Agua Fria), Karen Conley (Wood Gormley), Todd Hansen (EJ Martinez), Cora Harms (Kearney), Antonio Romero (Piñon), Deb Ungar (Salazar), and David Wheeler (Ramirez Thomas).

The SFPS Music Department partnership with Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival is an example of how public schools can partner with professional organizations to foster meaningful learning in our schools. Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival has gone to great lengths to match their lessons rigorously with SFPS Music Curriculum. Through this program, students benefit, among a multitude of concepts, from lessons in music literacy, history, culture, formal structure, ensemble, music compositions, as well as connecting to our SFPS district focus on oral and written language fluency.

Santa Fe High String Orchestra to Perform for Legislative Breakfast
On December 9, the Santa Fe High Orchestra, under the direction of James Leger, will perform for our state legislators at the annual SFPS Legislative Breakfast. The event will be held at Larragoite Elementary. The group will perform Vivaldi’s Concerto for Guitar and Strings with special guest guitar soloist Patrick Burns. Mr. Burns also teaches guitar at Santa Fe High.

Scholarships Available for Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) is partnering with SFPS to provide educators with affordable, high-quality, on-line Master of Arts degree programs in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in literacy studies, mathematics education, science education, and educational leadership and policy studies. These degrees can be earned for a cost of $4,950, in just 18 months.

SFPS will award four scholarships in the amount of $2,500 to individuals interested in earning their Master of Arts degree in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies. The program start date is May 24, 2010. The selection process for awarding the scholarships will occur in three parts. Part 1 requires interested candidates to submit initial documents by January 22, 2010. If you have been thinking of pursuing a degree in Educational Leadership, this is the opportune time!
**K-12 General Grant Information**

**ING Unsung Heroes Program** -- One hundred $2,000 grants for educational projects using new teaching methods and techniques that improve learning…three top awards $5,000 to $25,000…for any full-time educator, teacher, principal, paraprofessional or classified staff member with an effective project…judged on innovative method, creativity, and ability to positively influence students.

**CHARACTER EDUCATION** -- *Character Education Partnership*: The National Schools of Character Awards identify exemplary schools and districts to serve as models for others, and helps schools and districts improve their efforts in effective character education. Maximum award: $2,000. Eligibility: A school must have been engaged in character education for a minimum of three full years, starting no later than December 2005. Smaller administrative units that maintain a separate identity within a large district may apply in the district category, e.g., a school pyramid or cluster.

**COMMUNITY/SERVICE** -- *Do Something Awards*: Four awards of $10,000 and one grand award of $100,000 for a cause or organization…for a young person aged 25 or under who identifies a community problem and ways to combat it…who is passionate about empowering their community.

**LITERACY** -- *Letters About Literature*: Students write letters regarding exploring their emotions inspired by a book, short story, poem, essay or speech…state winners receive $50 Card Target and a chance at the national award of a $500 Target card and a $10,000 grant for their school library or community…honorable mention awards are $100 Target cards and a $1,000 grant for the school library or community.

**MATH** -- *The Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship*: a paid fellowship for K-12 math, science, and technology teachers. Einstein Fellows spend a school year in Washington, D.C. serving in a federal agency or on Capitol Hill. To be considered for an Einstein Fellowship for the 2010-2011 school year, apply and submit three letters of recommendation online by 1/13/10.

**AIAA Math and Science Programs Grants**: The Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics assists educators in presenting mathematics, science and technology principles to students in an exciting, hands-on manner to develop our future aeronautics and aerospace engineers, scientists, pilots and space explorers. Maximum award: $1,000. Must be AIAA Educator Associate K-12 teachers.

**MEDIA/TECHNOLOGY** -- *We the People Bookshelf Grant Opportunity*: The National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Assn. announce this grant for K-12 libraries to receive seventeen books that help young readers understand great literature and explore themes in American history. The theme is the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. There is an option for materials in Spanish.

**FOUNDATION FOR TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION** -- *Pitsco/Hearlihy Grant*: Recognizes and encourages the integration of a quality technology education program within the school curriculum. Criteria include: evidence of an effective quality technology education program, documented success in the integration of technology education with other academic subjects, and plans for professional development via the anticipated grant. Maximum award: $2,000. Eligibility: Teachers K-12 who are members of the International Technology Education Assn.

**AVERMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES, INC**. Every month, AVerMedia will raffle off an AVerVision document camera to an individual who submits blog posts or refers people to the AVerMedia Teacher Forum.
MUSIC: Muzak Heart & Soul Foundation: Music Matters: Focused on educational reform in school music programs and independent music programs across the U.S. Maximum award: $12,000. Eligibility: U.S. schools that already employ a music educator or educators and have an existing music program in place. Must articulate specific music program needs for existing and/or planned programs.

SCIENCE/ENVIRONMENT Welch's and Scholastic Parent & Child School Garden Funding Program: two schools per state will receive grants to create a school garden (outdoor or indoor)...packages of tools, seeds, and educational materials worth up to $1,000...to teach nutrition and sustainable agriculture...to use fruit and vegetable gardens to connect students with nature and the origins of their food supply...website for application also lists free resources.

TOSHIBA/NSTA: EXPLORAVISION AWARDS: Kids create and explore a vision of future technology by combining their imaginations with the tools of science. Maximum award: $10,000. Students K-12.

ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION: FREE ARBOR DAY VIDEO AND POSTER: Free to educators who want to inspire their students to plant, nurture, and celebrate trees.

VERNIER/NSTA: TECH AWARD: Recognizes the innovative use of data collection technology using a computer, graphing calculator, or handheld in the science classroom. Maximum award: $3,000—$1,000 in cash for the teacher, $1,000 in Vernier Products, and up to $1,000,000 toward expenses to attend the NSTA National Conference on Science Education, 3/18-21/10. For current teachers of science K-college.

TOYOTA TAPESTRY Grants for Science Teachers: Grants up to $10,000 to K-12 teachers for innovative science projects that enhance science education in their school and/or district over a one-year period. The 2009-2010 competition marks the 20th anniversary of the Toyota TAPESTRY program.

SOCIAL STUDIES: American Historical Association: Beveridge Family Teaching Prize The American Historical Association Beveridge Family Teaching Prize recognizes excellence and innovation in elementary, middle school, and secondary history teaching, including career contributions and specific initiatives. Maximum award: $1,500. Eligibility: K-12 teachers in groups.

TEACHERS: New Teacher Survival Central Sweepstakes: Discovery Education sponsors a monthly drawing from entries for a variety of classroom resources. From the monthly winners, an international adventure trip is awarded. Entries provide opportunities to give input and direction to developments.

Secondary Level Grants COLLEGE PREPARATION DonorsChoose: See the special grant opportunities for New Mexico listed on the website: www.DonorsChoose.org/teacher

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF): $5,000 and a trip to Washington, D.C., to high school educators who have successfully integrated environmental education into daily curriculum and serve as an inspiration for students and model for other teachers.

SCIENCE Honeywell: Educators at Space Academy: The Honeywell Educators at Space Academy Program funds five-day scholarships for middle school math and science teachers at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, AL. Recipients have 40 hours of intensive classroom, laboratory, and training time, focusing on space science.
MIT: LEMELSON-MIT 2011 INVENTEAMS LEMELSON-MIT InvenTeams foster inventiveness among high school students. InvenTeams composed of high school students, teachers, and mentors are asked to collaboratively identify a problem that they want to solve, research the problem, and then develop a prototype invention as an in-class or extracurricular project. Maximum award: $10,000. Eligibility: high school science, mathematics and technology teachers — or teams of teachers — at public, private and vocational schools; intra- and inter-school collaborations welcome.

TECHNOLOGY: See SCIENCE section above (MIT).

Elementary Level Grants (See K-12 grants section above.)

EARLY CHILDHOOD... The Terri Lynne Lokoff/Children’s Tylenol National Child Care Teacher Awards acknowledge the critical role of childcare teachers in providing quality early care and education. Applicants are asked to design an enhancement project for the children in their classroom illustrating the educational, social, and emotional benefits from the project. Maximum award: $1,000. Eligibility: teachers of infant, toddler, or preschool age children employed in a home, group, or center-based program that is fully compliant with local and state regulations for operating child care programs.


BUILD-BEAR WORKSHOP BEAR HUGS FOUNDATION: Literacy and education grants to help children for specific programs with measurable outcomes, especially for summer reading programs, early childhood education programs and literacy programs for children with special needs…$1,000-$10,000…public schools, higher education and others.

MARINE TOYS FOR TOTS LITERACY PROGRAM: Free books to schools and organizations who support economically-disadvantaged children. For a form please see the web site.

SCIENCE NSTA: SYLVIA SHUGRUE AWARD: For full-time elementary school teachers (K-6) with a minimum of three years of experience. $1,000 plus up to $500 to attend the NSTA conference, March 18-21, 2010, in Philadelphia. Based on an interdisciplinary, inquiry-based lesson plan fully referencing sources of information and relevant National Science Education Standards and benchmarks found in The Atlas of Science Literacy.

SIEMENS “WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD CHALLENGE” (K-8): A national sustainability challenge which encourages students to team up with their classmates and teachers to create replicable solutions to environmental issues in the classroom (K-2), school (3-5) and community (6-8). Awards vary according to grade level and include savings bonds, school grants, trips, TV appearances, and more.

Free Project Based Learning Course at Santa Fe Community College

Big Sky learning, in collaboration with Santa Fe Community College is offering a free eight-week course in teaching High Interest Project Science. The course begins Thursday, January 28 and meets from 5:30 PM – 8:15 PM. The focus of the course will be on developing hands on science units and web-based curriculum. Successful participants will earn two SFCC credit hours. Successful course participants will also be eligible to apply for paid summer work at science camps and earn $250-$650/wk.