

APRIL  
2013

## National Catholic Educational Association

### Elementary Schools Department

## Monthly E-Newsletter

April 12, 2013

### In This Issue

- [From the Executive Director](#)
- [NCEA Seeks New Executive Vice President](#)
- [Pastor Appreciation Day](#)
- [Digital Learning with MOOC](#)
- [Professional Development vs. Capacity Building](#)
- [Libraries?](#)
- [It Was Professor Plum, With the Lead Pipe, in the...What is that Room?](#)
- [Libraries: Not a Closet for Books](#)
- [Reaching All Learners](#)
- [Growing an Environmental Club](#)
- [5 Tips for Developing Master of Math](#)
- [Thoughts on Art Education](#)

### NCEA Upcoming Events

[Five Pieces in the Enrollment Puzzle](#)

[National Day of Appreciation for Pastors](#)

[Servant Leader in the Ministry of Administration](#)

[The One Room Classroom: Differentiated Instruction Made Easy](#)

[The Cure for the Common Core](#)

### From the Executive Director



Dear Catholic Education Colleagues,

Our NCEA 2013 Convention and Expo has come and gone. Can you believe it? I survived my first convention and expo as executive director! It seems appropriate to take a look at all that I learned in planning for the convention and in spending three wonderful days in Houston among 9,200 convention participants!

A few years ago, long before I ever had an inkling that I would be working for NCEA, I heard that the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston would be hosting our convention in 2013 and I was excited. Sister Kevina Keating is a great leader and I knew she would gather excellent people and would do a wonderful job. I was correct! The liturgies were fantastic! The students sang well, the homilies were inspiring and each day began on a very positive note. The first lesson learned: Begin each day with prayer. It is more than worth the time.

[Read More](#)

### NCEA Seeks New Executive Vice President

#### Executive Vice President Position

The Executive Vice President assists the President in carrying out NCEA's mission of leadership, direction, and service. The Executive Vice President also serves as the Chief Operating Officer of the Association with direct responsibility for communications, marketing, publications, information technology, and strategic planning for the Association. The Executive Vice President works across all departments to facilitate communication between and among all NCEA departments and represents the President when needed.

The successful candidate will have demonstrated leadership skills in Catholic educational ministries, excellent human relations skills, strong verbal and written skills, and proven ability to work collaboratively.

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter outlining experience in the above areas, an updated resume and contact information for three references by May 3 to [scomeau@ncea.org](mailto:scomeau@ncea.org).

### Pastor Appreciation Day

## [Conference](#)

### [Common Core Catholic Identity Initiative Conference](#)

## Summer Conferences



## Congratulations!

Congratulations to all those honored at the NCEA 2013 Convention and Expo, especially our Elementary Schools Department awardees. Please [enjoy the photos courtesy of NCEA](#), which are available for downloading.

## NCEA News

[NCEA Searches for New Executive Vice President](#)

[New Catholic Schools Week Theme Designed to Last a While](#)

[Explore great insights and learnings from NCEA 2013](#)

[NCEA Announces New Name for ACRE](#)

## Stay Connected



Catholic schools across the nation will celebrate Pastor Appreciation Day on April 21, which is Good Shepherd Sunday. On April 2, at our annual convention, NCEA celebrated 12 pastors who lead their schools and parish communities with compassion, prayer and a bit of humor!

When I first came to NCEA, Brother Robert Bimonte told me that I would really enjoy reading the Distinguished Pastor applications. He was so right! The applications were full of stories of priests who

go above and beyond what anyone has a right to expect, in order to meet the needs of their flocks. This year's 12 Distinguished Pastors included two pastors who had donated one of their kidneys in order to help someone. These are extraordinary men who provide all of us with examples of how to lead with humility, focused on the mission of evangelization.

Please let your pastor know how much you appreciate his work in your school and life. Gratitude is a great gift. Please share your gratitude with your pastor.

## Digital Learning with MOOC

The Alliance for Excellent Education and North Carolina State University are sponsoring a free "Massive Online Open Course for Educators" (MOOC-ED) this week to help educators understand the potential of digital learning, assess goals for digital learning, and develop plans to achieve those goals. The seven-week innovative course starts this week and runs through the end of May. It is free of charge and open to private school educators who are planning digital learning experiences for schools or school systems.

For more information and to register, [visit their website](#).

***Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former governor of West Virginia, met with the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) board and state CAPE representatives in March 2011 to discuss the potential of digital learning. Visit the [CAPE website](#) for more information about this and the 2014 Blue Ribbon School Program, which will begin accepting applications in November 2013.***

## Professional Development vs. Capacity Building



Catholic school teachers and administrators must continually learn if they are to do their jobs well. Some schools call these activities professional development and some call them capacity building. Whatever you call them, please consider the activities NCEA has planned this summer to assist you in meeting your learning needs!

From the Common Core to leadership to spiritual development, NCEA is working diligently to meet your needs. The difference between our activities and other's is easy. We are about and for Catholic education. We try to offer learning opportunities



## Innovation Institute



Initiative Two: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math. The Innovation Institute seeks schools who are currently operating a STEM or STEAM program at their school to [take a very brief survey](#) and return to the attention of [Heather Gossart](#). Learn more about the Innovation Institute by [visiting our website](#).

that meet the unique needs of Catholic educators. Please consider joining us or contact us. We want to help you meet your needs. For more information about our summer schedule, please [visit our website](#).

### Libraries?



Recently I have been thinking about libraries. Greg Dhuyvetter, superintendent for the Diocese of Orange has asked more than once, "Are libraries going to survive? What will become of them?" I read Greg's blog about libraries and thought that it should be shared with you. I also thought there are more opinions about libraries, so I asked Katie Buck who has a degree in library science and is a member of the Catholic Library Association what she thought. I am printing both Katie's and Greg's thoughts

here. I hope that their ideas will provoke some conversation in your school about libraries.

### It Was Professor Plum, With the Lead Pipe, in the...What is that Room? by Greg Dhuyvetter



I'm playing a new game recently; it's called "Did I just say that?" I have found myself in the middle of conversations or presentations to groups saying things that even five years ago I would have argued against, and I certainly would never have said myself. Usually these are not complete about faces like my [opinion about the iPad](#), most often they are more extreme views about subjects I've been talking about for some time. However, my former timid language of accommodation ("Even as technology rich world, there will be a need for non-tech teachers.") is replaced with more extreme

versions or absolutes.

One area I have waffled (like the good Belgian I am) for some time has been on the subject of books and libraries. Conscious of the immense store of assigned value and nostalgia for traditional paper books, I've always tried to carve out a position that expressed my views while allowing "safety space" for those in the audience. "Electronic books will improve and grow and will take their place alongside traditional forms, creating the best of all worlds for all types of readers," was my safe position, designed to invite but not offend. This always received shaky nods, applause, and invitations to speak again.

[Read More](#)



## Libraries: Not a Closet for Books by Katie Buck



People often approach me with concerns about the impending death of books and libraries, but I see a bright future for libraries in our schools and communities. Libraries will continue to evolve as they have throughout history to meet our changing information needs, but even the high-tech libraries of the future will have a place for good, old-fashioned books. However, even if that proves not to be the case, and books as we know them are completely wiped out, libraries will

survive. A library is not a closet for books; it is a critical access point in our search for information, and the need to manage information will only increase in the digital age.

Many hallmarks of the libraries we grew up in will go the way of the card catalog. Despite a little nostalgia, I'll be happy to see many of them wave the white flag. Goodbye, paper almanacs and encyclopedias. So long, heavy textbooks. Silent spaces, we will miss you. Others, such as children's picture books, world atlases, story hours, and reading programs, are here to stay. For me, the jury is still out on the majority of our print resources. I predict that most will coexist for the foreseeable future. Different formats alter our experience in some way, and preferring one to the other is not purely a matter of grooming but of taste. This translates into demand for both, and as long as there is consumer demand for print books, it will be met. As more investment goes to digital development, traditional books will be less ubiquitous and more expensive, but nevertheless present.

[Read More](#)

## Reaching All Learners by Sarah Beth Omenski and Susan Kaufer



Johnny is reading chapter books in kindergarten, but Suzy is just beginning to recognize letters. How do we tailor language arts instruction to meet both their needs? After struggling with this issue for several years, we crafted a

solution to meet those widely varying needs we encounter.

St. John the Baptist is fortunate to have two kindergarten classes, and a full-time teacher's aide for each class. We begin each year by conducting baseline testing to determine the appropriate grouping for each student: advanced, on-level, or intervention. We then begin a system of team-teaching twice a week in ninety minute blocks. On the first day the advanced and higher on-level groups from each class are combined into one classroom to receive intensive instruction tailored to

their academic needs and abilities. The intervention and lower on-level groups gather in the other classroom to participate in various literacy center activities conducted by the teachers' aides. On the second day, the intervention and lower on-level groups receive intensive instruction, while the advanced and higher on-level groups participate in literacy centers.

[Read More](#)

### Growing an Environmental Club by Mary Ann Mecher



Have you heard of tree huggers? Well I was one of the first! I was interested in environmental education before it was popular. I was a fourth grade teacher when the first Earth Day took place. I spent part of that day teaching my class about the preciousness of the earth, and making our own paper by recycling newspaper. Since then, I have shared my love of God's creation with my students in Religion as well as Science.

At Our Lady of Victory, first and fourth grade teachers work together to have an annual Earth Day celebration with our students. Each teacher chooses an environmental lesson about recycling, rainforests, paper making, oil spills, etc. to share with first and fourth grade buddies. We pack lunches and challenge the children to bring a trash free lunch.

The students and teachers enjoy this day so much, that we wanted to share this with all grade levels. Two of my colleagues and I discussed forming an environmental club. We decided that we would include all students, first through eighth grades, if they wanted to participate. Our purpose was to instill an appreciation of our environment and a sense of responsibility to care for it. We have anywhere from 40-80 members each year. The multi-aged Environmental Club also encourages students to learn from each other, as older students serve as role models and leaders.

[Read More](#)

### 5 Tips for Developing Masters of Math! by Allison Horn



Recently, my students decided to write and perform a song entitled, "The 12 Days of Math Class." While listening to my students perform, I was inspired to share what I find myself saying and doing on a daily basis in order to help develop them into Masters of Math!

#### 5. "Show ALL your work!"

It can sometimes be like pulling teeth to convince my students to write down every step they use to get to their final answer, especially when I allow the use of a calculator. However, showing work and understanding the process is just as important, if not more important, than simply a correct answer. My students know that even if they do not get the right answer, there is still potential for partial credit, as long

as they are demonstrating they understand the process.

[Read More](#)

### Thoughts on Art Education by Janice Bettiga



Educators need to recognize the importance and benefits of a dedicated art education for teaching the whole child. The benefits range from learning to express themselves visually, to think critically, to problem solve, and to develop art skills, including the evaluation and appreciation of art. Art also helps students to better understand cultural differences and to be creative thinkers. The challenge for our Catholic schools is to advocate and provide for a quality art programming that promotes the continuum of skills and

processes<sup>1</sup>.

When I began to teach art to Junior High students at School of the Madeleine, I observed some students struggling to use simple art materials and tools and lacking confidence in their ability to be creative. Our students needed to learn the art skills, historical background and appreciation for art, and vocabulary necessary to create art. We also learned that our students would benefit from a program that developed these skills in Kindergarten and grew and expanded as the students progressed through our curriculum.

[Read More](#)