



# The HUMAN Resource

Spring  
Edition

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## From the HR Desk - *Debbie Anderson, Human Resources Director*

### Inside this issue:

### Attention Teachers: we received the information below from Susan A. Gendron, Commissioner.

RE: Maine's NBPTS Candidate Subsidy Program for Public School Teachers – Information letter # 100 , Policy Code: GCIE

The Maine Department of Education announces the availability of \$1250 assessment fee scholarships to support Maine public school teachers wishing to participate in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process during the coming school year. Candidates who have not received federal money to support their candidacy, and have to enter year two or three of the assessment cycle, are also eligible to receive up to \$700 for two re-take exercises.

Each year the National Board receives federal funds from the United States Department of Education that are allocated to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Department of Defense schools. The federal subsidy funds are allocated through a formula that provides a proportionate share of the funds for each state based on that state's percentage of the nation's teachers. The states are required to follow specific procedures established by the National Board for the disbursement of funds to candidates in their states. In Maine these include:

- First-time candidates may be subsidized up to one-half of the assessment fee (\$1250).
- Advanced candidates (year 2 and 3 candidates) may be subsidized for up to two re-take exercises (\$700).
- Each Candidate Subsidy Program Administrator (the individual responsible for allocating the federal subsidy to candidates in their states) determines whether the full allowable allocation will be given to each candidate or if a lesser amount will be allocated.
- Subsidy funding may only be allocated to candidates who have not previously received federal subsidy funds.
- Subsidy funding will only be allocated to candidates who have begun the on-line application process at NBPTS.org, paid the \$65 application fee and the \$500 initial certification fee, and have received a candidate number.
- Subsidy allocations will be made on a first come, first serve basis.
- Subsidy funds for first-time candidates who withdraw from the assessment process by the published deadline will be returned to the National Board. These funds may not be reallocated, so it is crucial that candidates requesting a subsidy allocation take this commitment seriously.
- Subsidy allocations are posted to each candidate's NBPTS account upon the request of the Subsidy Program Administrator

A copy of the candidate's confirmation form and a completed agreement form found at

<http://www.maine.gov/education/cert/nbpts.html> must be forwarded to Ellen Holmes via email, fax with cover letter, or mail to the following contacts: Email: <mailto:ellen.holmes@maine.gov>; FAX: 207-624-6821; Mail: 23 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04330

For more on the availability of funds, please contact Ellen Holmes at [ellen.holmes@maine.gov](mailto:ellen.holmes@maine.gov) or at 207-624-6979.

<i>Just for the Health of It</i>	2
<i>Info that Benefits You</i>	3
<i>SAD75 Work Healthy Award</i>	3
<i>Lockout/Tagout</i>	3
<i>Exercise and the Brain</i>	3
<i>Green Cleaning</i>	4
<i>From the Custodial Closet</i>	4

### CHRC Expiration – A Date to Remember!

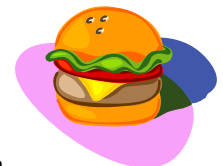
Remember when you received your CHRC (Criminal History Record Check) approval card after you had fingerprints taken? These cards are issued by the Department of Education and are valid for five years. Take a moment to check your expiration date!

**It is each employee's personal responsibility to keep their approval current.** If you find that your renewal date is near, you should contact the Department of Education at 624-6603; visit [www10.informe.org/cgi-bin/dps/fingerprint/select\\_type.pl](http://www10.informe.org/cgi-bin/dps/fingerprint/select_type.pl); or, call HR at 729-9961.

## Fast Food = Fat Food

It's no news that fast food is fattening, but is it one of the leading causes of childhood obesity? A study shows a startling connection between the amount of fast food kids are eating and the rise in child obesity. Researchers from the Children's Hospital in Boston studied the lifestyle habits of some 6,200 children between the ages of 4 and 19 to determine what role, if any, fast food was playing in their weight. They were shocked to find that on any given day, one out of three children are eating a fast-food meal. That's a fivefold increase over statistics collected in a similar study during the 1970s! The researchers also found that children today are eating fewer fruits, vegetables, and whole grains than in generations past, while taking in far more fat, sugar, and simple carbohydrates. The result? Those extra calories are adding up to an average gain of six pounds per child per year!

You can stop this trend starting with your child. First, limit the amount of fast food you and your child eat every week. Then, when you do visit a fast-food restaurant, encourage your child to choose healthier options, like apple slices over fries, milk over soda, and grilled chicken sandwiches over hamburgers and cheeseburgers. More and more fast-food restaurants are trying to smarten up their act by offering healthier choices, so encourage them by ordering fit food over fat food the next time you do drive thru!



## Know the Signs of Heart Attack

- Chest pain or discomfort
- Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck or back
- Feeling weak, lightheaded, faint or sweaty
- Pain or discomfort in the arms or shoulders
- Shortness of breath

At the first sign, CALL 911 immediately,

Don't miss a beat and remember time is muscle!



## Test your knowledge

Question:

1) How many calories will a 154 pound man use if he walks 3.5 miles per hour for 30 minutes?

- 300 calories
- 212 calories
- 140 calories
- 60 calories

2) True/False

Light gardening/yard work burns the same number of calories per hour as dancing?

On days when you are less physically active remember to moderate your food intake so you stay in balance!

2) True.

light yogurt.

1. 140 calories. This would be equal to ~20 almonds or a 8oz

Answers:

## Just for the HEALTH of it!

### Antioxidants... foods that fight for you

When it comes to nutrition most people think of foods they will have to give up. Instead consider foods you can add to your daily diet to help protect you from disease. Antioxidants are found in numerous foods and are the substances which help to prevent cellular damage caused by unstable free radicals. Because free radical damage may lead to cancer and other diseases antioxidants are important! Nutrition scientists at the United States Department of Agriculture measured the antioxidant content in over 100 different foods. The following foods had among the highest antioxidant concentrations, so be sure to include these in your diet and say cheers to better health!

Artichokes

Berries (blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, cranberries)

Prunes

Plums

Beans (red kidney, pinto and black)

Russet Potatoes

Apples (granny smith, gala, red delicious)

Cherries

Pecans



### Are you in Balance?

Finding the right balance between food and physical activity can be challenging, but with a little planning it can be done. In order to maintain current weight the calories consumed in foods and beverages must equal the calories burned with physical activity. To loose weight one would need to expend or burn more calories than they consume and so on. The recommendation is to be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week at a moderate to vigorous level and 60 minutes if you want to prevent weight gain. Remember you can obtain benefits from doing your exercise in 10 minute segments 3 times per day. One of the most doable ways to increase your activity level is to make it a part of your regular day. Try the following:

Park farther away at work and when running daily errands. That extra walking really does add up.

Take a brisk 10 minute walk during part of your lunch break or on other daily breaks.

Clean the house, use a push lawn mower and wash your car by hand. You can get the chores done and burn calories all in one.

Walk the dog at a quick pace.

Play outdoors with your children... go for a nature hike, rake leaves, build a snowman, ride bikes, play pass etc.

Take quick exercise breaks during television commercials, walk around the house or try push ups or sit ups.

## Thinking About Quitting?

Following are some resources that can help!

- **Maine Tobacco Helpline, 1-800-207-1230** Offers free, confidential telephone counseling to Maine residents who want to stop using tobacco. If you do not have health insurance or if your insurance does not cover patches or gum, then the Helpline will provide them. It's for teens too!
- **Mid Coast Hospital, Brunswick, 373-6586** Marla Davis is a Certified Tobacco Cessation Specialist who works with people on an individual basis and does group classes. Free patches or gum may be provided.
- **Parkview Adventist Medical Center, Brunswick, 373-2216** Sheryl McWilliams will work with people on an individual basis and also does group classes.
- **St. Andrews Hospital, Boothbay Harbor, 633-2121** Call for information on what they currently offer.
- **ACCESS Health, Brunswick, 373-6973** Offers many free materials to help you quit.



## Info that **BENEFITS** you!

**Saving for Your Retirement** Looking for an efficient and somewhat painless way to save for your retirement? You might want to consider a 403(b) account. These accounts allow employees who work for public school systems and non-profit organizations to save for their retirement years by having the contributions automatically deducted from their paychecks on a pre-tax basis.

**All district employees are eligible to open a 403(b) account** The maximum contribution levels for tax year 2007 will be 15,500 for employees under age 50; for those over 50 the maximum increases to 20,500. Please contact Human Resources at 729-9961 if you are interested in learning more about the benefits of tax deferred savings with a 403(b) account.

**Benefits Review** Every employee should take the time to review their benefits at least once a year. If you would like our Employee Benefits Specialist, Karen Kilmer, to review your benefits with you, contact her at 729-9961 Ext. 271 or online at [kilmerk@link75.org](mailto:kilmerk@link75.org) to schedule an appointment. She will be happy to help you!

## SAD75 recognized at the April 17, 2008 ACCESS Health Annual Meeting

**The 2008 Big Carrot Award** This award celebrates those individuals whose efforts inspire and encourage students and staff to engage in healthy behaviors. Four employees were recognized: Jennifer Talbot, Barry O'Neil, Helene McGlaflin, and Diane Stahl. Great job!

**Work Healthy Award** The School District was recognized and presented with the "GOLD Work Healthy" Award for its efforts in maintaining a Smoke Free work environment, encouraging physical activity and promoting healthy eating.



## SAFETY

### District Lockout /Tagout

During the Maine SafetyWorks!™ inspection of the District they identified the need for the Dis-



trict to implement their own Occupational Safety & Health Act (OSHA) Lockout / Tagout process. Effective this March, our Procedure (MSAD-75-006) was issued. Lockout/ Tagout is an administrative process (mandated by

OSHA) that delineates the necessary steps that must be taken to ensure safe isolation of electrical and mechanical equipment before work can commence by "Authorized" and trained Maintenance personnel in the Facilities & Transportation Departments.

Although the procedure directly applies to only a small group of people, we all need to be aware of the administrative controls that are used to ensure the safety of our Maintenance personnel. Employees who need to be aware of the process and may be affected by the equipment that could be removed from service are called "Affected" employees.

Two tags are utilized to convey the status of a piece of equipment:

- 1) A Yellow and Black "Out of Service" tag may be used to alert personnel that a piece of equipment is out of service or perhaps special instructions must be followed before using the equipment. A Work Order (WO) number may be referenced on the tag to track resolution.
- 2) A Red and White "Danger" tag is used to alert personnel that someone is working on the equipment and under no circumstances should the tag be removed and/or the equipment operated until the Authorized employee who is pictured on the tag has completed the repair and removed the tag.

For more information on our Lockout/Tagout process contact your Safety Representative, Building Representative or the Facilities Department.

**REMEMBER – If in Doubt – Do not Touch**

## Exercise and the Brain

John J. Ratey, MD's new research on the connections between exercise and the brain is worth a glance. *Spark, The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, published in 2008, points to compelling evidence that getting your heart and lungs pumping can change the way you think. Not only does exercise produce the neurotransmitters we need to think clearly and quickly, it also improves our ability to focus and be in a positive mood. In addition to making it possible to be more engaged and able to learn, exercise also produces a protein that has been proven effective at brain growth. (This is news, as many of us were taught that the brain cannot grow new neurons.)

At Naperville High School they have taken some of this research to heart. As evidence mounted that students are more prepared to learn following rigorous exercise, the school instituted a physical education class prior to the school day for some students, Zero Hour PE. The school has been testing the effects of exercise on learning by tracking the results of students taking a required remedial literacy class. Their research indicates that the group doing the exercise prior to learning demonstrated greater improvement in their reading and comprehension than the non-exercise group.

Another interesting point that Ratey makes throughout his book is that it is important to help people voluntarily embrace exercise as a means to improve learning, manage mood, stress, anxiety, focus attention and fight the effects of aging. He believes that valuing what exercise can do to help manage our brains and learning is essential. He points to the research with lab animals; when they were exercising voluntarily their brains grew more than the ones that were exercising under duress.

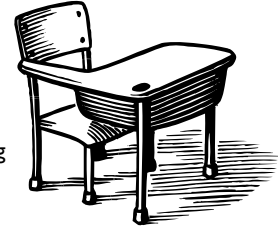
If this short article has made you curious, great! The district owns several copies of *Spark*. Please contact Sally Loughlin if you'd like to borrow a book. It's 2008, there are types of brain research being done today as a result of neuroinformatics, neuroanatomy and neurocomputation that far surpass the brain research of the 1990s. We all care about learning; it might be worth our time to become updated on mind-body research that has direct impact on student learning.



## WHY GREEN CLEANING IN OUR SCHOOLS?

Each school day, some 53 million students and five million staff members attend our nation's schools, representing 20% of the American population. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), half this population is exposed to polluted indoor air, lead, asbestos, chemical fumes, pesticides, molds, and other toxins, along with some overcrowding and in some cases poor sanitation. A well-designed green cleaning program is extremely important in combating these harmful exposures, and yield many other positive benefits for all those who enter the school buildings. Some of the benefits of green cleaning include:

1. Green cleaning helps students stay healthy and learn: Research shows a clear link between poor indoor air quality, sick students and teachers, and poor academic and occupational performance. Furthermore it is estimated that children miss more than 14 million school days each year due to asthma, exacerbated by poor indoor air quality. Green cleaning can help reduce the environmental hazards that negatively affect children's growing, developing bodies.
2. Green cleaning protects the health of custodial staff: Members of the custodial staff, especially those of child bearing age, are particularly susceptible to health problems caused by their frequent and close interaction with cleaning chemicals and equipment. Choosing safer products and training the staff to use them properly can help reduce the number of injuries and lost time, which will in turn decrease workers compensation claims, and lower insurance costs.
3. Green cleaning increases the lifespan of facilities: Proper maintenance extends the longevity and performance of school building materials and furnishings by preventing damage and premature aging, which in turn reduces waste and unnecessary spending. For example, school districts allocate a significant amount of money to carpeting, which is expected to have a useful life of 10 to 15 years. Dirt and sand can wear out carpet long before its useful lifespan and before the district has budgeted to replace it.
4. Green cleaning preserves the environment: Traditional cleaning products can contain harmful ingredients that can cause harm to our bodies if used improperly. There have been cases where these chemicals have found their way into ground water, lakes and streams, adversely affecting plant and animal life, threatening public health and adding to pollution. Switching to green products can help to conserve precious natural resources for future generations.



It seems to me that green cleaning just makes sense, and if you would like to learn more about green cleaning, please, I urge you, take the time to go to [www.greencleanschools.org](http://www.greencleanschools.org).

## From the Custodial closet

The face of cleaning is ever changing. For example the methodology, types of products, equipment and supplies are vastly different when I was in school. They are all huge factors in keeping spaces germ and stain free. I am truly amazed to see the myriad of changes made, in the period of time since I came to this district a short 6 years ago.

Well folks, I am excited to say, we are changing again, to a new and better technology, it's called green cleaning, and I'm excited about the opportunity that exists for our district to help the environment in such a positive manner. The approach that we are embarking on is a six step approach.

The first step is to look at the chemicals that we are now using, and to eliminate the ones that pose any type of risk to people and to our environment, replacing them with environmentally friendly, certified green substitutes that work as well if not better than our existing chemicals. We also realize with new products comes new methods, which results in training on the use of green products. We have identified and removed all of our chemicals that pose even the slightest risk to our people and environment. (with the exception of the High School, which is depleting their supply and will soon be switched over.) We have also completed the training needed to use these chemicals in the proper manner, using the proper equipment. This training was held on December 28th 2007.

The second step in green cleaning is to introduce green equipment and supplies, we have been switching to vacuums that have high efficiency filtration systems that will capture microscopic materials that might adversely impact building occupant health, or dust that could also damage sensitive equipment. Green equipment quite often costs more, but are higher quality, more durable, and cost effective in the long run.

The third step in green cleaning is to adopt green cleaning techniques and procedures, it may be as simple as changing the frequency certain tasks are performed. It also may be that instead of spraying the surface, and then wiping, we spray the cloth first and then wipe the surface. This will decrease the amount of overspray which saves product and time, yet is just as effective.

The fourth step in green cleaning is using green paper and plastic products by introducing environmentally preferable paper and recycled plastic trash can liners to our schools. By taking a few simple steps to reduce consumption (such as replacing multi-fold hand towels with large rolls, and replacing single roll toilet paper dispensers with multi roll dispensers, we can offset the higher initial cost by buying in bulk.

The fifth step in green cleaning is to share the responsibility by educating staff, administrators, teachers, students, and visitors about what they can do to promote a healthy school environment, such as recycling plastics and paper, conserving water, maintaining an uncluttered classroom, and other work spaces, and especially handling foods, and other solid wastes in the proper manner.

The sixth step is to evaluate our school classroom environments for possible improvements to the "Learning Environment" which is one of the objectives of our recent performance contract with Honeywell.

As you can clearly see, it takes the cooperation of everyone to make our green cleaning program a total success, I am excited to be a part of the force that got the big green ball rolling. I would ask that you all work with us as we embark on a green future. As I close, I can still hear the words of the immortal Kermit the frog "It's good to be green"

Steve Reed, S.A.D. #75 Custodial Supervisor