

LET
IT
SHINE!



Nebo News



VOLUME II ISSUE V

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NEBO SCHOOL DISTRICT'S SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Nebo District has over 30,500 students 2012-2013.
- Nebo District has over 3,500 employees.
- Nebo District is the 7th largest district in Utah.
- Nebo District is the 5th largest employer in Utah County.

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Superintendent's Message

"By Endurance We Conquer" was the family motto of polar explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton. In just the past few years, Shackleton has been recognized as a model of leadership and unconquerable spirit in the face of unimaginable circumstances. This recognition comes in spite of the fact that he never accomplished his goal of reaching the South Pole, failing three times.

"Shackleton once drew up a list of qualities he believed an explorer needed. Optimism, then patience, led the list. Courage came in last at number five. 'Few men are wanting in courage,' he said, 'but optimism nullifies disappointment and makes one more ready than ever to go on.' He would need all of those skills on his third attempt."

Aboard the ship *Endurance*, Shackleton and 27 others set sail with the goal to cross the Antarctic by sled. Their ship became engulfed in ice, eventually breaking up and sinking 1,200 miles from the nearest outpost. Shackleton led his team across 400 miles of floating ice floes to the uninhabited Elephant Island. Realizing that supplies would soon run out and that no one would be coming to rescue them, he and five others loaded a 20-foot lifeboat named *James Caird* and began an 800 mile trek over the "most turbulent, furious seas on earth" in a race to save the lives of all. "Shackleton treated it like an adventure, infusing the other five men with more than hope. Despair was a weight they could not afford to carry." Four months of harrowing experiences later, Shackleton

returned to Elephant Island with a rescue ship, saving the life of every member of his expedition team.

As we continue to navigate difficult economic times and the increasing pressures being placed upon those of us serving children, my hope is that we will follow the "Let it Shine" example set by Sir Ernest Shackleton. In all of his trials, Shackleton "never lost his cheerfulness, his sense of humor." When faced with challenges the "extreme hardship seemed to awaken in him reserves of courage, willpower, and resilience. *Hopeless* was not a word registered within his mind. 'Difficulties are just things to overcome after all,' he had said."

(Quotes are from "10 Great Souls I Want to Meet in Heaven" by S. Michael Wilcox)

Nebo Classified Employee Recognition

Nebo School District and the Board of Education will again formally recognize outstanding classified employees: classroom technicians, bus drivers, custodians, food service workers, secretaries, maintenance personnel, media tech., etc. Our classified employees add so much to the smooth operation of the district and the education of our students. One employee in eight different categories will be recognized at the March Board Meeting.

We need your help in identifying candidates for this recognition. If you have seen extraordinary performance of work, significant professional accomplishments, or activities that have improved the overall image and professionalism of our district, please submit your nominations online at <http://tiny.cc/neboclassified> with a brief description of why you are nominating the employee or email sandra.jarvis@nebo.edu. DEADLINE: February 22, 2013.

School Environment Crisis

Recent events have prompted a reminder that teachers become influential during times of crisis in a school environment. Though schools do remain one of the safest environments for students during the day, we must continue to develop skills to help students remain calm in a variety of situations that may occur. Though many individuals received this article in their email, it serves as a helpful guide if students are experiencing any concerns related to events they have experienced or heard about. Additionally, if a teacher feels that a student needs extra support, then counselors and school psychologists can provide additional assistance. A district response team can be helpful in identifying factors that may assist families in accessing appropriate treatment or communicating concerns to the guardians. http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/terror_general.aspx

February 7, 2013

The 2013 Charitable Giving campaign, "Spread Some Sunshine", will be held on February 7, at 3:00 p.m.

Revisions to the Separation Payments Plan

Come learn about revisions in the district's Separation Payments Plan on February 21 or 27, 2013, in the Nebo School District's Board Room. See adjacent article.

Revisions to the Separation Payments Plan

Nebo School District's Separation Payments Plan is a district funded retirement incentive to reward eligible employees who have completed at least fifteen years of service in the district. On January 9, 2013, the Board of Education approved revisions to the Separation Payments Plan, which now provides for improved options for retiring employees. Certain eligible employees now have the opportunity to purchase medical insurance coverage through the district at 100 percent of the premium cost (which was reduced from 175 percent) for up to five years or until the employee is eligible for Medicare. Employees who are eligible for separation payments also have the opportunity to purchase life, dental, and vision insurance directly from the district's insurance carriers.

The eligibility criteria for the Separation Payments Plan can be a bit complicated, and there are several details that cannot be fully explained in this article. You can read the Separation Payments Plan document online by going to www.nebo.edu and clicking on the Human Resources Department link. So, if you are considering retirement this year, please make sure to attend one of the following retirement meetings to obtain more

information on the district's Separation Payments Plan and information from the Utah Retirement Systems (URS):

Thursday, February 21, @ 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.,
Nebo District Offices, Board Room

Wednesday, February 27, @ 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.,
Nebo District Offices, Board Room

You are also welcome to schedule an appointment to visit with Allen Gurney, Human Resources Specialist, to see whether you are eligible to receive separation payments from the district. Mr. Gurney can be contacted by email at allen.gurney@nebo.edu or by phone at 801-354-7414 on Mondays through Wednesdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Nebo District Makes AP Honor Roll



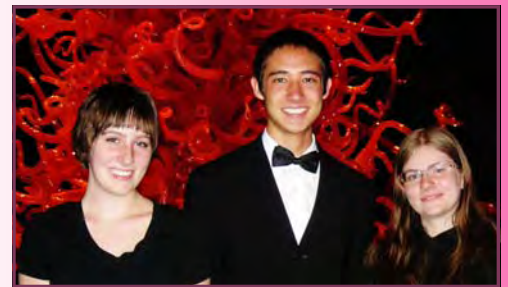
Nebo School District placed on the College Board's 3rd Annual AP® District Honor Roll for significant gains in Advanced Placement® Access and Student Performance. Nebo School District is one of 539 school districts in the U.S. and Canada for simultaneously increasing access to Advanced Placement® course work while increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP Exams. Achieving both of these goals is the ideal scenario for a district's AP program because it indicates that the district is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared

students who are likely to benefit most from rigorous AP course work.

Since 2010, Nebo School District has increased the number of students participating in AP by 15 percent while improving the percentage of students earning AP Exam scores of 3 or higher by 10 percent. More than 90 percent of colleges and universities across the U.S. offer college credit, advanced placement or both for a score of 3 or above on an AP Exam — which can potentially save students and their families thousands of dollars in college tuition.

Superintendent Rick Nielsen said, "We are honored to be one of five districts in Utah recognized for the AP® District

Honor Roll. We have outstanding students in Nebo School District, and this is a strong indicator of their academic strength and commitment to obtaining post high school credentials. This honor is also an acknowledgement of the hard work and commitment to excellence shown by our dedicated teachers." For the entire article go to: <http://www.nebo.edu/news/971>.



Secondary and Elementary Unite to Improve Collaboration

Teachers and administrators on every level are making a united effort to learn and apply the principles of Professional Learning Communities with the goal of improving student learning. To accomplish this, elementary and secondary principals are receiving intensive training on what the district calls the "6 Non-Negotiables," which are foundational principles critical for the success of any collaborative team, regardless of the grade or subject taught. Administrators then train their school faculties and provide support through the implementation and refining processes.

This is a district-wide effort to build common vocabulary and conceptual understanding, leadership, and a united vision of what we do in our collaborative work in every grade, department or team, K-12.

The 6 Non-Negotiables: 1) Norms, 2) I Can Statements, 3) Curriculum Maps, 4) Common Formative Assessments, 5) Data Analysis, and 6) SMART Goals.

November's Principal Academy focused on I CAN statements in time for secondary administrators to extend the same training to their faculties on the Minimal Day held on November 7. Elementary principals trained their faculties on days other than the Minimal Day because elementary teachers spent that day receiving training on the Utah Core Standards.

January's Principal Academy focused its training on the effective making and using common formative assessments. A common formative assessment is an assessment created by a collaborative team and administered to their students with the purpose of assessing student mastery of the standards within an I Can Statement. Instead of an assessment OF learning, or after learning has happened, common formative assessments are designed to be assessments FOR learning, or during the learning process. Effective common formative assessments enable teams to improve teaching and learning because of the data they produce.

March's Principal Academy will focus on Data Analysis. The training's purpose will be to help collaborative teams know what to do with the results of their common formative assessment in order to provide their students with either re-teaching and/or enriching learning activities.

The topics of future trainings will be determined as feedback from exit surveys is reviewed. The feedback has been very valuable and positive. We applaud the amazing work teachers and administrators are doing to improve culture and practice in each school throughout the district. Teachers and administrators alike are excited about the huge impact collaboration is having on student learning throughout the district. Nebo School District is a professional learning community!



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Nebo District's Celebrations

- ◆ Students have access to college courses including receiving their associate's degree upon graduation.
- ◆ Advanced Placement (AP) students, in 37 different classes, earned 4,492 college credits.
- ◆ Nebo School District placed on the College Board's 3rd Annual AP® District Honor Roll for significant gains in Advanced Placement® Access and Student Performance.
- ◆ Nebo students earned 7,420 college credits by successfully completing concurrent Enrollment classes.
- ◆ Nebo District's Career and Technology Education students passed 6,077 Skill Certification tests—more than any previous year.
- ◆ Nebo students' ACT scores exceeded the national and state scores in every category—English, Math, Reading, Science, and Composite.
- ◆ Nebo School District has a graduation rate of 87 percent, which is significantly higher than the state average of 78 percent.
- ◆ Nebo Education Foundation received over \$225,000 in donations to fund projects in schools.
- ◆ More than \$9.2 million was awarded in scholarships to our graduates this past year.
- ◆ Nebo District belongs to the Utah Valley University K-16 Alliance and is a member of the Brigham Young University Public School Partnership.



Employee Immunizations

The Nebo School District Board of Education adopted a policy in its January board meeting encouraging all employees to provide a record of their immunizations. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the impact of a communicable disease outbreak should one occur in our schools. Employees will soon receive instruction on where information can be entered for immunization against measles, mumps, rubella (German measles), pertussis (whooping cough), and varicella (chicken pox).

The local health department has the authority to exclude employees from the workplace in the event of an outbreak if they have not shown proof of immunity against a disease. This policy makes clear that if there is an outbreak of one of these diseases, any employee excluded by the health department will be placed on unpaid administrative leave until cleared by the health department to return. Those whose religion or medical condition prohibits receiving immunizations may still be excluded by the health department if there is an outbreak but will be placed on paid administrative leave.

The policy will become effective at the start of the 2013-2014 school year to provide time for all employees to find their immunization records or receive the necessary vaccines. The school nurses will be holding clinics where employees may get any immunizations they are lacking. For additional information contact your school nurse or the Legal Department.