

Monthly Report – January 2008  
George Zini, Principal

**Special Note**

**Included in your packet is the NEASC report of the Visiting Committee for Uxbridge High School. The report will be “officially distributed” at the February 5<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting during which I will give a summary of the findings. Out of respect for the faculty and staff at the high school, I am asking that you please keep the report confidential until the February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Thank you.**

**Overview of Activities for January**

- During professional development half-day held on January 25<sup>th</sup>, Grades 9-12 English teachers worked to revise the English course offerings reflected in the UHS Program of Studies guide book. Also, as the English department is looking to add two additional English elective courses to its class offerings, teachers discussed which courses might be the most helpful and interesting to students.
- We have revised our program of studies to accommodate juniors who do not meet the prerequisites for Functions & Trigonometry.
- The construction classes have started work on the interior of the shed and will begin a second shed in the near future.
- The UHS Band continues in its role as the Hoop Band performing at home boys' and girls' basketball games. Several members of the Whitin School bands have performed with the UHS Band during the football and basketball seasons.
- Mrs. Plasse's Independent Living students have begun reporting acceptances to colleges. This rewarding result is due in part to their resume writing and college exploration during the course.
- Our first Articulation agreement has been completed by Sue Priore and submitted for review to Quinsigamond Community College. We should be hearing from QCC in about 6-8 weeks. This agreement would link our Early Childhood Ed program with QCC in order for our students to receive college credit here at UHS.
- Contact has been made and information received on attempting the formulation of a second articulation agreement; this time with Mount Wachusett Community College. This potential agreement would link our Video Tech program with MWCC.
- An articulation agreement has also been developed with Quinsigamond Community College in the area of Computer Aided Drafting. Pending the purchase of new CAD software, the agreement will begin in the 2008-09 school year.

- Our Memorandum of Agreement was signed by Grafton Job Corps and was forwarded to the Region I headquarters for approval. We should be hearing from them momentarily.
- Contact was made with Workforce Central Career Center in Milford in order to connect some of our students who are not going on to post-secondary education programs with the resources provided by this employment center.
- Second Semester Internships have begun with 6 new students. Our placements this semester are:
  - Whitin School gr.8 ELA program
  - Whitin School P.E. Program
  - Beaumont Skilled Nursing Center
  - Blackstone Valley Veterinary Hospital
  - Uxbridge Town Treasurer
  - Mosaic Mill Program
- Scott Winters addressed the Junior class on Friday, Jan 25 with his presentation entitled “Making the College Search Process Count.” This presentation signals the beginning of the college application process for the class of 2009.
- On January 8, UniBank conducted session #3 of the Financial Literacy Program for our Juniors. Our next session is scheduled for Feb 5.
- The Worcester Tornados have donated a free ticket to attend a baseball game to all students who were at their assembly in November. They have also donated gifts to be used as rewards for our “Stop Everything and Read” program.
- Four works of art created by UHS students were submitted to the annual *Scholastic Art* competition. Artwork created by Matt Conrad, Keri Lemoine, Rashelle Palmer and Rylie Rockwell were submitted earlier in the month. Rashelle Palmer’s item received a *Silver Key Award* and Keri Lemoine’s item received an *Honorable Mention*.
- Rylie Rockwell (gr. 11) has submitted an application to attend a program at the Worcester Art Museum in May (*Art All-State*). She will attend an interview in early March and will be informed of her acceptance to the program shortly thereafter.
- The Uxbridge High Library was selected as a pilot recipient of the *Picturing America* grant, the latest initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). *Picturing America* will be integrated into parts of the curriculum to help students understand American history through iconic masterpieces of painting, sculpture, architecture, photography, and the decorative arts. The library has received 40 large, laminated reproductions of famous art and a Teachers Resource Book with ideas for using the images on social studies, writing, literature, architecture, photography, etc. Many of the reproductions are now hung in the library and people are welcome to stop in and view them.

- New materials were cataloged into the high school library collection in January with the greatest concentration being in Literary criticism. A new set of literary criticism examines social issues in novels such as racism in Harper Lee, class conflict in F. Scott Fitzgerald, etc. Other new items are books to support the Forensic Science courses. These books examine forensic aspects of arson, forgery, poisons, and pharmacology. Other materials include books on NASCAR, sports mega-events, smoking, and the newest (and always popular) Guinness World Records.

### **Subject/Course/Classroom Activities**

- The students in FCS classes as well as some second grade classes at Taft School, were introduced to foods from Israel and Egypt that Mrs. Priore brought home from her recent trip. While in Bethlehem, Israel, Mrs. Priore skyped with the Child Development class and was able to answer questions from her students about the cultural, social and political atmosphere of the Palestinian state. In addition, she was able to hear feedback from her students about activities they were participating in during her absence. Many thanks go to Margie DePasquale for her efforts to assure a smooth session and the administration for encouraging this valuable endeavor.
- The second semester art classes are in process and students are beginning to explore drawing challenges in Art I, while students in Ceramics classes are beginning to explore the challenges of working with clay.

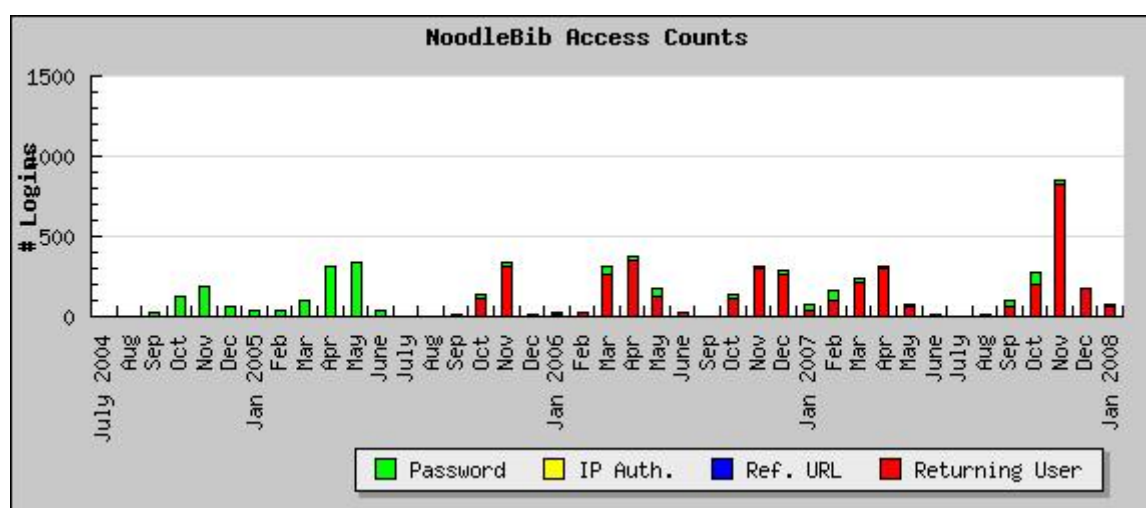
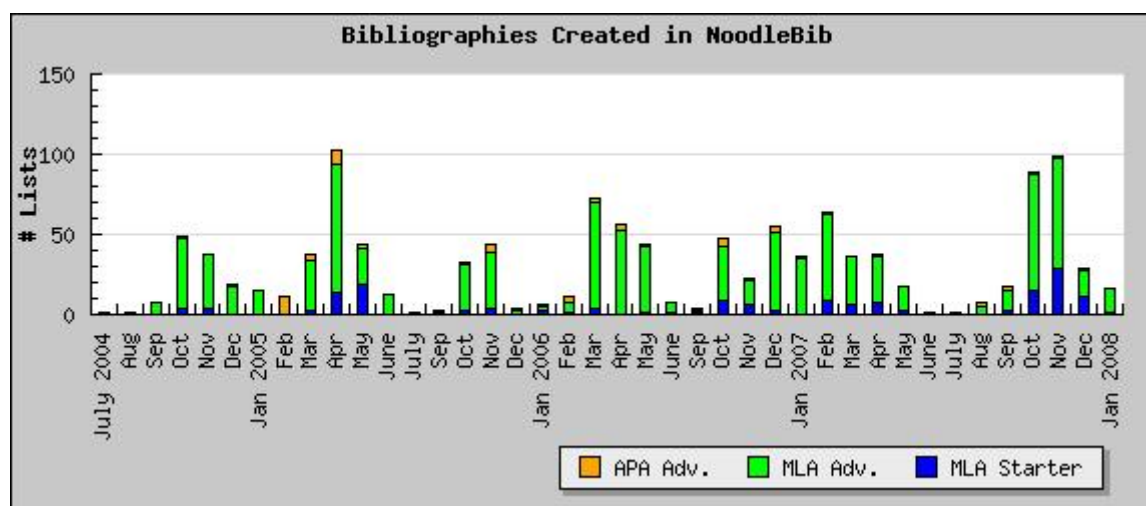
### **Professional Development Activities**

- During the Professional Development day on January 2, Rob Hammerton led district music teachers in a technology session entitled “Applications of Computer Music Notation Software in Elementary and Middle School Music Education”.
- Mrs. Plasse and Mrs. Priore have been in contact with Jonathan Dickl, Director of Sales for Z Trim, a patented, all-natural, zero-calorie fat replacement made from the fiber of corn, oat or soy. As a result, we have received a number of samples to use with our Foods classes. We have been asked for feedback in return.
- Mrs. Priore returned from her trip to the Middle East with valuable experiences to enrich all of her classes. From new food and preparation methods to introduce to her Foods classes, to her experiences on a working kibbutz, to an inside look at the difficulties encountered by Palestinians behind the segregation wall and the effect on adolescents and families, Mrs. Priore has a lot of material to enrich her classes.
- Brian Burke and Mrs. Bennett attended a very informative conference sponsored by the Atty. General’s office on the subject of “Cyber-Bullying”.
- During a meeting held on January 25<sup>th</sup>, members of the Arts Departments for the elementary, middle and high schools agreed to host a night of art and music. This event will be held on March 11<sup>th</sup> at the Whittin School and will feature works of art and music presentations by students from all three schools.

- Mr. Sweeney has begun a course in Nutrition at Assumption College. This should prove useful in evaluating materials and serving students from the Health and Science areas when dealing with nutrition issues, research, and acquisitions.

### **General School/Department Information**

- Beginning in the spring of 2007, the Scheduling Review Committee has held many meetings to examine the strengths and weaknesses of our present schedule and research various schedules that would help resolve the weaknesses of our present schedule. The possibility of changing to a trimester schedule has been discussed and debated at faculty meetings. Although it appears to have merit, there is much work to be done before we would be certain of its successful implementation. Scheduling in a small school is challenging and there are many variables to consider before implementing a completely different schedule. I would like the opportunity to report to you on our findings and the next step in this process during the March School Committee meeting.
- Rema Malaeb has joined the math department as a long term substitute while Julie Richards recovers from surgery.
- Chris Prior is teaching College Algebra in the evenings at Worcester State College.
- Sue Buckley is teaching Business Mathematics and Elementary Algebra in the evenings at the Community College of Rhode Island.
- Our annual holiday buffet, held in the Spartan Café by the pre-vocational students, was a huge success as students, staff, families, and administration enjoyed the festive atmosphere. The students worked hard to make it a great day and our new students were able to learn how to plan for a large event.
- Students in the pre-vocational program took a post-holiday field trip to Emerald Square Mall where they enjoyed comparison shopping. They were able to calculate the savings of items that have been significantly marked down following the holidays. Academically, students are studying the digestive system, strengthening individual reading skills, working on MCAS portfolios, learning about various community agencies, and enhancing their communication skills.
- A link to **MassAnswers** has been placed on the library homepage for students to be able to access a reference librarian online 24 hours a day. The librarian on the other end will formulate an answer to a question and then post it on the screen. It works like a chat room – click on the link on the homepage and the next screen gives simple instructions on what to do.
- The semester has just started and students from some English and Social Studies classes are already coming in for research. Meanwhile a library project is underway to reclassify some of the literary criticism into one area to make it easier for students to find books.
- The following charts track the student usage of Noodletools to create works cited pages while doing research. The other statistics demonstrate various student Database usage when doing research. Compare the statistics with the bar graphs to see correlations between the two.



InfoTrac Statistics	November 2007
Total sessions	424
Total Connect Time (min)	3833
Average Session Time (min)	9
Total Fulltext	175
Total Retrievals	289
Total Searches	1182

InfoTrac Statistics	December 2007
Total sessions	123
Total Connect Time (min)	1343
Average Session Time (min)	11
Total Fulltext	56
Total Retrievals	71
Total Searches	352

### Upcoming Events

- The UHS Chorus is been preparing for its performance of “God Bless America” before a Providence Bruins AHL hockey game in April. The UHS Jazz Band and Rock/Blues Bands are continuing with preparation for the programs they will perform at the upcoming Music In Our Schools Month fundraiser in March.
- Mr. Mike Ryan from the Office of the Jury Commission in Boston will be speaking to Mr. Hutchings’ Law classes and Mrs. Puckett’s U.S. Government classes in February. More information about this visit will be in next month’s report.
- For the first time in several years we have 7 students registered to take the AFL-CIO exam which qualifies them for generous scholarships provided by this union. We wish them good luck. The test will be given on Feb 6<sup>th</sup>
- UPS District Guidance and support personnel are scheduled to meet on Friday, February 8 in order to continue our goal of establishing and strengthening communication links with the end result being stronger vertical alignment.
- Preparations are under way to submit works of art created by UHS students to Worcester Art Museum’s *Youth Art Month*, which is held during the month of March.

  
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