

# THIS & THAT

A Newsletter for Business, Marketing and Information Technology Educators

Spring Issue, 2006

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## Nebraska Career Education Conference

June 5 - 7, 2006



Spring is here and we hope you are making plans to enjoy summer. Start your summer off right by networking with your peers in Kearney. We've planned a conference that will meet all your professional needs. On March 1, complete details will be available at [nceconference.com](http://nceconference.com). Online registration is due May 10.

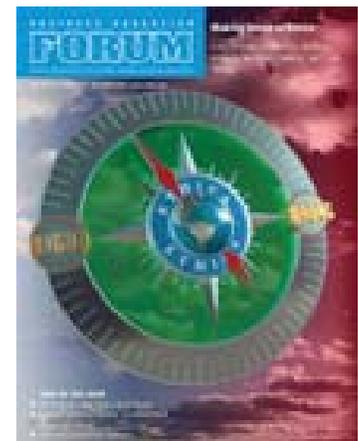
## Middle Level Keyboarding Standards

According to the enrollment data reported to the Nebraska Department of Education by public and nonpublic schools, 13,189 elementary students were enrolled in beginning or advanced keyboarding and/or computer classes during the 2003-04 school year—a significant increase from the 2,723 students enrolled during 1997-98! Visit [nde.ne.state.ne.us/BMIT/](http://nde.ne.state.ne.us/BMIT/)—click on Business and Marketing Enrollments to see a breakdown of our most current data on elementary, middle and secondary keyboarding enrollments. Data for 2004-2005 will be available later this spring.

It's no wonder there has been an above-average number of middle level business and technology teachers raising many excellent questions about keyboarding/technology standards for middle level students. It seems that many schools are currently working on curriculum revisions for the middle level. In an effort to share best practices for business and technology from across the state and nation, several teachers have shared what middle level curriculum looks like in their respective schools.

You will also want to reference additional NBEA resources that include:

- *Business Education Forum* April 2006 will focus on middle level curriculum.
- "Marketing Business Education Curriculum in an Untapped Market—Elementary School Input Technologies," *Business Education Forum*, December 2005.
- Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education's Policy Statement 73—*This We Believe about Computer Input Technologies*.



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## NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**M**any elementary and middle level keyboarding resources are posted in the Curriculum section of the BMIT web site – click on Elementary Keyboarding to view the Nebraska Elementary Keyboarding Position Paper, a recommended elementary keyboarding model and numerous examples of scope and sequences used by various districts.

Teachers are most often concerned about the timed-writing scales that they use at each level. It is important to remember that timed writings should not be overemphasized. The following assessment breakdown for a middle-level keyboarding course should include:

- Technique – 50 percent
- Daily Work and Tests/Quizzes – 25 percent
- Timed Writing – 25 percent

During the Nebraska Department of Education's Elementary Keyboarding Workshops, Bev Newton and Bonnie Sibert stress the importance of using 30-second and one-minute timings for elementary students. **Timed writings at the middle level should be limited to one- or two-minute timings.**

**E**lementary Keyboarding Workshop—The next one-day workshop will be held on August 8, 2006 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Nebraska Department of Education - Education Technology Center Lab. The cost is \$15 per person. Please register online at <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/TEHCEN/>. Bonnie Sibert and Bev Newton will demonstrate teaching strategies for incorporating keyboarding into the elementary curriculum while workshop participants have hands-on opportunities at the keyboard.

The Position Paper for Elementary Keyboarding and a scope and sequence from several exemplary programs will be reviewed. Participants will explore several of the leading elementary keyboarding software packages. This is an excellent workshop for educators preparing to purchase keyboarding software for their school or district. Teams consisting of an elementary teacher, computer teacher and/or a business teacher are encouraged to participate.



### MODEL SCOPE AND SEQUENCE FOR KEYBOARDING

#### Exposure to Foundation Technology Skills K-6

##### Keyboarding Awareness

Grades K-3

**Introduction to Keyboarding** (20 days each year—20-30 minutes each day)

Grade 4 – touch typing (don't teach numbers)

Grade 5 – review keyboarding and integrate into language arts

Grade 6 – build skill and writing process

Elementary students will master touch operation of the keyboard and demonstrate correct technique, keystroking and care of equipment.

##### Keyboarding Applications (9 weeks)

Grade 7

Designed for middle/junior high students who have completed an introduction to keyboarding course. Students will review touch technique and proper keystroking while continuing to develop composition and proofreading skills as well as speed and accuracy. Students will demonstrate keyboarding proficiency in document formatting (personal letters, reports, tables). Other forms of input technology (speech recognition, wireless devices, handwriting and speech recognition applications) may be introduced.

##### Advanced Keyboarding Applications or Input Technology

Grade 8 (9 weeks)

Designed to help students improve touch method keyboarding skills and to develop handwriting recognition and speech recognition skills. Instruction emphasizes improved techniques for increased speed and accuracy, composition at the keyboard, word processing, introduction to spreadsheets, presentation software and production of projects. Students demonstrate computer skills proficiency that determines placement in high school curricula.

#### Exposure to Information Technology Career Cluster

##### Computer Applications (18 weeks)

Grades 9 and 10

Designed to include basic skills in the areas of word processing, database management, spreadsheet, electronic

## MODEL SCOPE AND SEQUENCE CON'T

presentation, Internet, electronic communication and graphics. Students are offered opportunities to identify ethical issues pertaining to information systems and to gather information about careers in technology.

### **Advanced Computer Applications** (18 weeks)

Grades 9 – 12

Designed to assist students in developing proficiency in computer and technology applications. Advanced units of instruction may cover database management, trouble shooting, electronic communication, desktop publishing, web design, Internet, interactive media, operating systems and network design.

### **Business Technology** (18 weeks)

Grades 11 – 12

Designed as a capstone class for students to develop the attitudes, techniques and skills necessary for success in today's fast-paced business world. The integration of emerging technologies and business principles is incorporated throughout the course. Students may be given the opportunity to complete certification requirements.

View **Information Technology Career Cluster Overview** at <http://www.nde.ne.state/BMIT/> or refer to the Career Pathway chapter and the Model Programs chapter of the 2002 *Nebraska Business Education Framework*. The framework identifies Essential Learnings that provide additional course content.



**A**fter 18 weeks of keyboarding instruction, the National Business Education Association recommends the three-minute timings with 0-5 errors found in **Table A**.

By May 1, NBEA will have a new *Elementary/Middle School Keyboarding Strategies* book available for sale on NBEA's Online Bookstore located at <http://www.nbea.org>. The document will include technique checklists, a scope and sequence for the course at different grade levels, hours of instruction versus speed expectations, a checklist for how to evaluate keyboarding software, activities and sample lesson plans.

**K**eyboarding Rates Table – Some teachers set the initial keyboarding speed goal the same as the student's handwriting speed (Miller, Smith, Fidanque, and Sullivan, 2000 and Wetzel, 1985). This individualizes the keyboarding instruction and also sets a sense of motivation to key faster than they can write. A typical keyboarding lesson is 20-40 minutes. This increases slightly from Grade 3 to Grade 8 (from 15-50 minutes). Keyboarding instruction in Grades 3-5 is typically 6-12 weeks per year with intervals of 1-2 hours per week for a minimum 3 times per week. The new *Elementary/Middle School Keyboarding Strategies* book documents that speed expectations vary, but typically correspond to **Table B**.

**Table A**

Grade	Speed
A	35 +
B	30-34
C	21-29
D	20-24
F	19 or less

**Table B**

Hours of Instruction	Speed Expectations
15-18 hours	10-15 wpm
30-35 hours	25-30 wpm
45-60 hours	30-40 wpm



### **Wisconsin**

**A** 20-25 wpm standard for grade 8 has been established in Wisconsin.



### **South Carolina**

To see grading scales used by Debbie Gould in South Carolina, visit [http://207.232.227.25/education/staff/staff.php?sectionde-tailid=7054&sc\\_id=1132179091](http://207.232.227.25/education/staff/staff.php?sectionde-tailid=7054&sc_id=1132179091).

## NEBRASKA SCHOOLS

**Columbus** – Columbus Public Schools expects 8th grade students to have a minimum competency of 30 wpm. Current Columbus 9 – 12 students have the opportunity to take the Input Technologies/Keyboarding test-out before or after school on an announced date each semester. Eighth graders are tested in February. In addition, two opportunities for testing are provided before school starts in August. To successfully test-out, students must key 30 words per minute with 0 errors on a three-minute timing, using correct keyboarding technique. Students may correct mistakes within the three-minute time frame. Students who do enroll in Input Technologies/Keyboarding will receive instruction on the following:

- MLA report form as required by high school and college classes
- Voice recognition
- Handwriting recognition
- E-mail/memos
- Business letters
- Proofreading technique

*Submitted by Mona Schoenrock, Columbus High School*



**Omaha Public Schools** – Review <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/BMIT/> – Curriculum – Grade K-9 Technology Literacy Standards to see the standards established by Omaha Public Schools. Additional scope and sequences available on the web include Dundy County, Columbus, Chase County, Grand Island, Westside and Adams Middle School in North Platte.



students get two errors for each minute they key. For example, if they take a three-minute timing, they get six errors and then he stops counting. At the end of the sixth error, they receive their WAM rate and that number is used for the grading scale. “My philosophy in seventh grade keyboarding is that no one will fail if they give me some effort. This is my feeder class into the high school business courses, and I need everyone to have a positive experience,” indicated Krejci.

**Tri County Schools** – Dennis Krejci reported that he teaches keyboarding in the seventh grade, but it is initially introduced at the third grade. After the third grade, each classroom teacher reinforces what was introduced in the third grade.

Seventh-grade keyboarding is a one-semester class. Krejci uses a variety of assessments. The grades are all weighted the same and no tests are given. Keyboarding grades include quizzes, production assessments, timed writings and technique grades. The simple technique rubric that is used is very similar to the keyboarding rubric found on page 62 of the assessment chapter in the *Nebraska Business Education Framework*.

Krejci begins using one-minute timed writings approximately four weeks into the semester. These timings are for speed only and are based on the grading scale in the instructor’s manual of South-Western’s *Century 21* textbook. Dennis doesn’t start looking at errors until the second nine-weeks of the semester. At that point, the

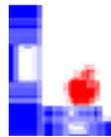
**Norfolk Middle School** – Jenny Bayer teaches 7th grade keyboarding at Norfolk Middle School. Norfolk uses a trimester system that covers a 12-week period of time. Every student takes either keyboarding, life management or industrial technology for 12 weeks rotating through one course each trimester.

The students come into this school from eight different elementary schools and have varying degrees of experience. Therefore, the first six weeks of Bayer’s class involves learning the keyboard correctly. She uses a Glencoe program called “Computer Applications and Keyboarding.” The last six weeks concentrate on the numbers and symbols, numeric keypad, how to use various features of Microsoft Word such as: all four alignment buttons, various tab alignments, cut, copy and paste, spell-check, thesaurus and producing documents such as letters and reports. The last two weeks expose the students to Microsoft Excel, Access, Publisher and Power Point.

“My grades are calculated using the weighted-grades system. I use 50% for daily work, 30% for tests, 10% for technique and 10% for timed writings. I grade the students’ technique using a slightly revised Glencoe chart. I grade the students at least two times during the first five weeks. I have found that students type with better technique when they know that it will be part of their grade. It is surprising what you discover about a student’s technique when you watch one student type a few sentences for a few minutes. This usually takes me two to three days per class period to complete. It takes time, but it is well worth it!”

Bayer indicates that she grades only one-minute timed writings and to qualify they can only have three errors or less. She does not put a lot of emphasis on timed writings in 7th grade and feels that if a student has good technique, the speed will come later. Bayer loves teaching her 7<sup>th</sup> grade class and watching the progress her students make throughout the trimester. You may view her class web site at <http://teachers.esu8.org/jbayer/> or email questions to her at [jbayer@npsne.org](mailto:jbayer@npsne.org).

**L**incoln Public Schools – Carol Andringa, Curriculum Specialist for Career and Technical Education for Lincoln Public Schools provided the following information.



Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) keyboarding instruction occurs primarily in our 6<sup>th</sup> grade 12-week required class for all students. Students have been exposed to correct finger positioning and basic keyboarding fundamentals in our elementary schools. Elementary student report cards assess demonstration of touch typing technique during grades 4 and 5 but the amount of time allocated to keyboarding instruction varies greatly by school site due to multiple factors such as accessibility to computer labs, emphasis of instructor and competing demands on student instructional time. Elementary classrooms utilize All the Right Type software for instruction.

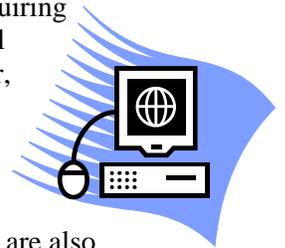


**Sixth Grade Keyboarding Data.** At present, the required 6<sup>th</sup> grade keyboarding class uses *Typing Time* texts and software as the primary instructional tool. Alphabetic key introduction is completed by the end of week eight followed by numeric and symbol key introduction, speed and accuracy skill building, proofreading and word processing applications for the remainder of the twelve-week class. Strong emphasis is placed on correct technique to build a good foundational skill. LPS has set the goal of 35 wpm (speed goal) with less than 3

errors (accuracy goal) for one minute as a benchmark for an acceptable life skill. However, LPS has found that 20% of the LPS 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are meeting this speed goal while 9% meet both the speed and accuracy goal at the end of 12 weeks. Students are then encouraged to keep improving their keyboarding skills through reinforcement in a 7<sup>th</sup> grade 9-week computer class and an 18-week elective keyboarding/computer class at 8<sup>th</sup> grade. LPS also offers 18-week elective keyboarding/computer classes in high school for additional skill development.

**Historical Eighth Grade Keyboarding Data.** LPS moved to a 12-week required class for 6<sup>th</sup> grade during 2003-04. Prior to that time, LPS had an elective 18-week keyboarding class primarily consisting of 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The LPS historical data for 8<sup>th</sup> grade shows that approximately 67 % met the speed goal of 35 wpm while 43% met both the speed and accuracy goal. (<3 errors). The longer length of the class and the older student age certainly affects student achievement.

LPS has made progress in requiring keyboarding instruction for all students at 6<sup>th</sup> grade. However, we continue to advocate for a longer period of instructional time for skill development but it has been difficult with competing demands. Students are also “pulled out” of some elective classes once a week for music lessons or academic interventions, which can be problematic. Although qualified business/technology teachers do most of our instruction, middle school schedule conflicts have resulted in teachers from other disciplines teaching some of these keyboarding classes.



**A**dditional Keyboarding Resources—Visit the BMIT web site to check out the **Online Resources** link. You’ll find lesson plans from Tonya Skinner, South-Western’s K-8



keyboarding sequence, One Hand Typing, RSI (repetitive strain injuries) information, Washington State keyboarding activities plus a wide array of online keyboarding and computer applications.

## Moving Beyond Keyboarding

**S**o—what do you do with all this information? How can we best prepare our students to be future business leaders of America in a world that revolves around all forms of technology? Consider carefully the importance of providing keyboarding at the elementary level with reinforcement at the middle level. Students should be proficient in keyboarding BEFORE they move to high school. Infusing technology into keyboarding at the middle level is also very important.

**B**uffett Middle School, Omaha – Patricia Weddle, Magnet Coordinator for Alice Buffett Magnet Middle School provided the following information.

The technology vision at Buffett is to bring all students to a common level of keyboarding skill and technology knowledge before they enter high school. As a magnet school, we accept students from 26 different Omaha



Public School elementary schools, plus several parochial schools. This provides us with students who have been exposed to a wide range of keyboarding/technology instruction—from no instruction to a lot of instruction. In addition to developing basic skills, we are committed to providing a

level of advanced technology knowledge for all students in the areas of speech and handwriting recognition. Interested students may also choose to advance their skills by taking a digital media course in grade 7 and grade 8.

All Buffett students take 9 weeks of keyboarding/computer applications instruction in grades 5 - 8. Students in grades 5 and 6 work on basic touch typing with emphasis on technique and accuracy. Additionally, the students work with the basic features of Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. In grades 7 and 8, students continue to work on technique and accuracy, but more emphasis is put on speed.

They continue learning more about the features of Word, Excel and PowerPoint. We also begin instruction in speech recognition and handwriting recognition. In all grades students are taught about Internet safety, ethical computer usage and email etiquette.



Besides their 9-week computer applications course, students in grades 7 and 8 have the opportunity to take an additional class as a part of our magnet program.

Digital media is one of our magnet courses and is offered as a semester course at both grades 7 and 8, and as a year-long course at grade 8. At grade 7, students in digital media learn basic design concepts and apply those concepts to print materials. They then move on to HTML, where they learn to create web pages and finally are introduced briefly to Macromedia Dreamweaver. Students also learn how to use Photoshop and Wacom tablets for photo editing and continue working with speech recognition. In 8th grade the students continue learning Macromedia Dreamweaver, creating web pages for staff, school clubs and our athletic teams. In the year-long class, students learn Flash to create animations.

Throughout their time at Buffett students work with a lot of technology, so instruction often takes place in their science or math classroom. Our teachers have access to mobile laptop carts, PDAs, digital still and digital video cameras. Additionally we have our own television studio, complete with a control booth and all of the necessary technology where students produce a daily news show and work on video production.



### Indiana

**T**he Indiana State Department of Education has designed *Digital Communication Tools* as a business course for 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade students that prepares them to use computerized devices and software programs to effectively handle communications-related school assignments and to develop communication competencies needed for personal and professional activities after graduation.

Indiana encourages teachers to use the rotation method when equipment and/or specialized software are limited. The Indiana State Department of Education also promotes the use of Microsoft OneNote as they feel it is an excellent tool for middle and high school students and those going on to college. To see the course content standards and performance expectations for this one- or two-semester course, visit <http://www.speakingsolutions.com/news/standards.asp>.

## MARKETING

### Three-Year Study on U.S.-Based Brands Shows Direct Link Between Brand Health and Shareholder Wealth

Landor Associates, the world's leading branding and design consultancy, in partnership with BrandEconomics, a division of global consulting firm Stern Stewart & Co., announced the results of its 2005 Breakaway Brands Study. The study identifies the ten brands in the United States that have made the greatest percentage gains in business value as a result of superb brand strategy and execution over the three-year period from 2001-2004. The list includes a wide range of consumer and business-to-business brands, as well as mono- and sub-brands.

Landor's Breakaway Brands Study represents a significantly different approach from the more traditional published brand rankings, which tend to categorize brands by size or popularity. "Instead, our study quantitatively values measurable improvement in brand strength over three years," said Hayes Roth, Vice President, Worldwide Marketing and Business Development for Landor. "The result is a revealing list of transformed brands that clearly demonstrate the importance branding can play in driving financial performance."

While the study includes popular brands, like Google and iPod, it also recognizes newer brands that are still carving a niche for themselves, like LeapFrog and Sierra Mist, as well as old favorites, such as Eggo and Gerber that have successfully revitalized their franchises through well conceived and executed strategies. The study demonstrates that building strong brands is vital to virtually any organization, regardless of its size or industry. The study identifies the following ten Breakaway Brands:

- BP—Oil & Petroleum
- DeWalt—Power Tools
- Eggo—Packaged Foods
- Gerber—Baby Foods
- Google—Internet
- iPod—Consumer Electronics
- LeapFrog—Educational Toys
- Sony Cyber-Shot—Digital Cameras
- Sierra Mist—Soft Drinks
- Subway—Quick Serve Restaurants



The study's findings appeared in FORTUNE magazine's October 31 issue, available at [www.fortune.com](http://www.fortune.com).

### DeWalt Lesson—Know Your Customer

*The following article was shared by Jeffrey Faaborg, Regional Account Manager for DeWalt Black & Decker in Portland, OR and is reprinted with the company's permission.*

Rick and Rose Whitaker weren't comfortable with the idea of a white-gown-and-tux wedding. They kept coming back to the fact that Rick, a carpenter, had a passion for DeWalt power tools. So at the July nuptials, 50-plus guests gathered in Rick's backyard wearing DeWalt's trademark yellow-and-black T-shirts. The Michigan couple dressed in shirts emblazoned with an image of DeWalt-sponsored NASCAR driver Matt Kenseth. They made their way to a wooden chapel built with their DeWalt gear. They exchanged power tools, cutting the cake with a power saw.



DeWalt didn't always have such fanatical customers. Less than 20 years ago it was a dead brand walking. By the late 1980s production of the line stopped, and the brand was shelved. "Makita [a Japanese tool company] had eaten our lunch throughout the 80s," says Nolan Archibald, CEO of Black & Decker, which owns the name. "So we started doing a bunch of market research." They were surprised to learn that professional tool users had a high regard for DeWalt. "The light went on," says Archibald. Black & Decker launched a line of portable electric power tools under the DeWalt name in 1992, and then an innovative line of cordless tools two years later.

## MARKETING

In just 13 years, the Towson, Maryland, company has become one of Black & Decker's most profitable divisions. With \$1 billion in annual sales, it commands a 35 percent share of the professional-tool market. In August 2004, editors at *Tools of the Trade* magazine called DeWalt the "single greatest change within the power-tool industry this past decade."

How did DeWalt fix itself? For one thing, the company decided to market DeWalt primarily to professionals—who make up 6 percent of U.S. tool sales. "The contractor doesn't want a tool that has the same name as his wife's toaster," says Dan Gregory, vice president of marketing for DeWalt. The company also made the tools more rugged and reliable. That was important to people who use tools every day; it also allowed the company to charge a higher price. Frequent upgrades keep the products fresh.



Then they got creative. An army of tool guys in bright-yellow trucks swarmed construction sites around the country to get workers to test and critique DeWalt tools on the spot. The DeWalt folks also became frequent and welcome squatters in Home Depot and Lowe's parking lots, inviting passersby to test their tools. "DeWalt pioneered that marketing," says Home Depot's senior vice president of merchandising, Craig Menear.



Figuring that many of their customers were likely to be car guys, too, DeWalt started investing in NASCAR in 1993. Now DeWalt spends more than \$10 million annually on NASCAR sponsorships and events. The company has a signature 18-wheeler known as Rolling Thunder that docks trackside on race day and transforms itself into a 6,400-square-foot demo site. Tailgaters can test tools, meet Matt Kenseth and compete against one another in a staged pit tire change.

To reach Hispanics—who represent nearly 20 percent of DeWalt's customers but aren't huge NASCAR fans—DeWalt hired EMG (Ethnic Marketing Group), a Los Angeles-based agency. In 2004, DeWalt and EMG launched a contest to find the most dedicated, respected Spanish-speaking construction worker in the Southeast. This year it is running similar programs in four cities, from San Diego to Orlando, doubling its Hispanic marketing budget along the way. Just as interesting is what DeWalt doesn't do. It doesn't do TV commercials. It doesn't sell at Wal-Mart. The strategy is all about controlling distribution and protecting the brand. Of course, a brand not aimed at ordinary Joes gives DeWalt a certain cachet. "The less we talk to do-it-yourselfers," says John Schiech, president of the division that includes DeWalt, "the more they want our product."

## CSO's in Action

**Commissioner's Recognition for Student Excellence in Career Education**—Governor Heineman and Commissioner of Education Doug Christensen hosted the eighth annual Commissioner's Recognition for Student Excellence in Career Education at the State Capitol on February 13. Governor Heineman congratulated the students for their achievements through his comments at the awards ceremony. Rich Katt, Nebraska Career Education Director, presented certificates to 81 students representing 42 school districts for receiving top national awards at the career student organizations' national conferences. Organizations included were DECA, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), FFA and SkillsUSA.

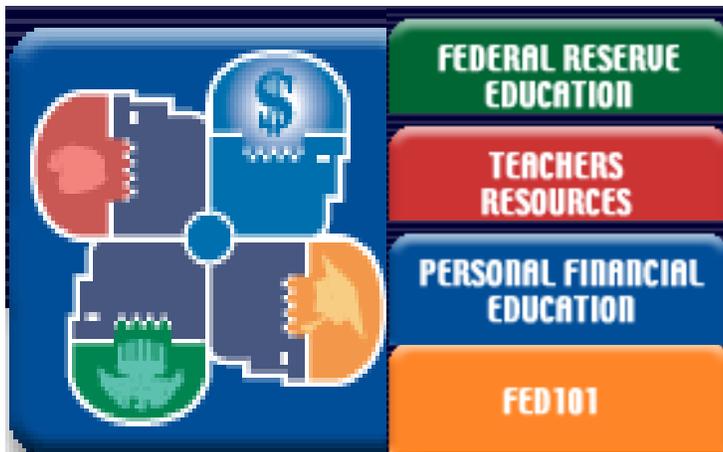


DECA recognized eight students from Lincoln East, Millard South, Millard West, Omaha Bryan and Papillion-LaVista. FBLA recognized 20 students from Aurora, Bellevue West, Centura, Elmwood-Murdock, Heartland, Meridian, Omaha Northwest, Tri County and Twin River.

More than 19,000 Nebraska students are members of the Nebraska Career Student Organizations. The recognition ceremony was followed by a reception at the Governor's Residence sponsored by the Vocational Foundation of Nebraska.

## FED CHALLENGE

Are you interested in a way to help connect students with economic concepts? Are you searching for ways to broaden your own experience and understanding of the U.S. economy? If so, the Fed Challenge competition could be an option for you.



### FederalReserveEducation.org

- Connects you to all of the education resources available from the Federal Reserve.
- Teachers Resources match Fed materials to national standards for teaching economics.
- Personal Financial Education provides information on consumer finance topics.
- All of the Fed web sites, curriculum, newsletters, booklets and other resources are free.

Fed Challenge is an academic competition sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank. During the competition, teams of high school students analyze the economy and develop their own recommendations on what the Federal Reserve should do with short-term interest rates. Besides a formal 15-minute presentation, team members also face a question-and-answer period with a panel of economists. The competition includes multiple levels, including a state level-competition in Nebraska, and regional competition in Kansas City. The regional winner advances to the national competition in Washington, D.C. with an opportunity to win scholarships and grants.

The Nebraska competition includes a variety of support for educators that can be helpful personally and in teaching students about the economy. All interested teams can attend a half-day workshop in the fall to learn more about the competition and hear from a Federal Reserve economist. Ongoing support is provided to teams, including weekly emails to teachers with links to economic resources, and regular conference calls for students and teachers with a Federal Reserve economist to talk about the state of the economy and to answer students' questions.

The Nebraska competition is taking place March 2, but if you're interested in learning more about the competition for next year, please contact Jennifer Clark at the Federal Reserve Bank in Omaha at 402-221-5560 or via email at [jennifer.clark@kc.frb.org](mailto:jennifer.clark@kc.frb.org).

It is the policy of the Nebraska Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, age, or national origin in its education programs, admission policies, employment or other agency programs.

This newsletter was funded by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Educational Act, Grant #V048A1002700 with the State of Nebraska.

Products mentioned in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by the Nebraska Department of Education staff; products are mentioned for your information and review.

## CAREER CLUSTERS

**N**eeded—Good Writers  
CIO Magazine's online newsletter (Chief Information Officer) has a great link to an editorial about the desperate need for writing skills. CIO Publisher Gary Beach has often voiced concern about science and technology education, but now he's learned that writing deficiencies cost American business as much as \$3.1 billion annually. To read in more detail, visit <http://www.cio.com/archive/081505/publisher.html>.

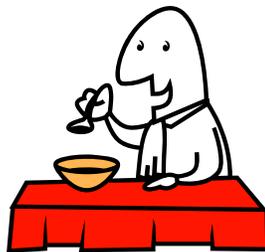
**H**ospitality and Tourism – Johnson & Wales invites middle school students (7th and 8th grade) to enter their Fourth Annual National Middle School Healthy Heritage Contest. Students who enter the contest will not only hone their culinary skills but also learn about nutrition and their family's culinary heritage. Prizes include renewable tuition scholarships worth up to \$12,000 for the grand prizewinners, a "Chef for a Day" on-site visit to the winning students' school and many items for the budding chef. A brochure on this contest is available at: [www.jwu.edu/admiss/educator/contests](http://www.jwu.edu/admiss/educator/contests) OR [www.healthykidschallenge.com/recipe.php](http://www.healthykidschallenge.com/recipe.php). The entry deadline is March 24, 2006.

**B**usiness Etiquette – The *Lincoln Journal Star* December 12, 2005 article listed new resources that teach proper business etiquette. Consider using one of these as a resource to help your students improve their confidence and chances for career success.

*The Etiquette Edge—The Unspoken Rules for Business Success* by Beverly Y. Langford, AMACOM, 2005 explains how to make a good impression on the boss.

Emily Post's *The Etiquette Advantage in Business—Personal Skills for Professional Success*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition by Peggy Post and Peter Post, Collins, 2005 is a comprehensive edition covering multiple aspects of business and office etiquette, including etiquette standards in other countries.

*Business Class—Etiquette Essentials for Success at Work* by Jacqueline Whitmore, St. Martin's Press, 2005 discusses the importance of making a good impression, mingling skills and proper business dining.



**C**areer Cluster Resources



After receiving input from 2005 Fall ESU participants, a resource for each of the career clusters shown above is now available on the BMIT web site. Under **About Us** you will find an overview for each of these five career clusters. The .pdf files are designed to be used by students as they explore the career clusters, education programs available after high school and the foundation knowledge and skills needed to succeed in each career cluster.

## CALENDAR

**T**he Nebraska Department of Education supports several online calendars that will help you plan for upcoming events. A current calendar and list of conferences and workshops related to Business, Marketing and Management as well as Information Technology can be accessed at [www.nde.state.ne.us/BMIT/](http://www.nde.state.ne.us/BMIT/). The NCE Calendar at [www.nde.state.ne.us/nce/Calendar.htm](http://www.nde.state.ne.us/nce/Calendar.htm) will provide a broad range of Perkins and NCE-related events and deadlines. Visit the career student organization (CSO) web sites at [www.nedeca.org/](http://www.nedeca.org/) and [www.nde.state.ne.us/BUSED/fbla.html](http://www.nde.state.ne.us/BUSED/fbla.html) for complete details on CSO events for DECA and FBLA.

