

Annual Evaluation Report

NORTH COLONIE CENTRAL SCHOOLS

SPECIAL ISSUE WINTER 2011

The North Colonie School District is dedicated to the goal of providing an excellent education for all of our students. Each year, our Annual Evaluation enables us to reflect on our effectiveness as measured by the progress of our students and to examine where we need improvement. We consider it important to share all information about our results. This issue compares the June 2009 to June 2010 evaluation data.

This is the twenty-second annual accounting of the North Colonie district's instructional programs. The careful analysis of each program by our principals and supervisors and their recommendations help us determine the level of expectations for our students.

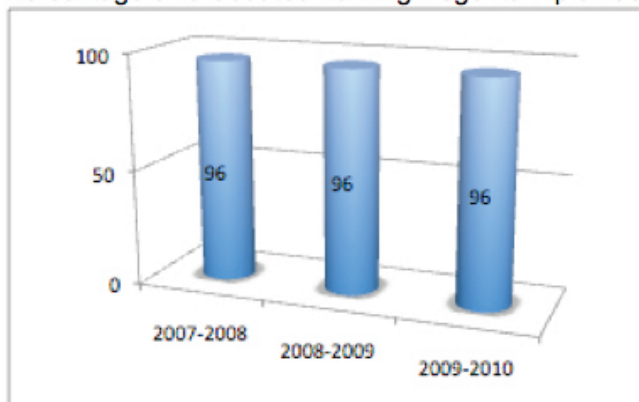
Profile of the Graduating Class of 2010

- Earned a Regents diploma - **96%**
- Earned an Advanced Regents diploma - **71%**
- Students with disability earning a Regents diploma - **57%**
- Completed 3 years of a foreign language - **87%**
- Completed a 5 - year foreign language sequence - **52%**
- Attending college - **95%**
 - Attending a 4-year college - **60%**
 - Attending a 2-year college - **35%**

To earn an Advanced Regents diploma students must pass seven Regents examinations and complete either one foreign language Regents Examination or a sequence (3 years) in either technology education or art.

NEW YORK STATE REPORT CARD

Percentage of Graduates Earning Regents Diplomas



This year North Colonie was ranked number four among 85 schools rated by the Capital District Business Review. We have been named a top district since the rankings began about ten years ago.

S.A.T. MEAN SCORES

Subject	North Colonie	NYS	Suburban Council
Critical Reading	556	484	539
Writing	554	478	527
Math	579	499	558

ADVANCED PLACEMENT: 291 students sat for 558 Advanced Placement examinations. Eighty-nine percent (89%) earned grades equivalent to college credit. These results are all the more impressive when one notes that at Shaker High School all students who take the Advanced Placement courses are required to take the A.P. examination.

We offer Advanced Placement courses in English, Calculus (2 levels), Computer Science, U.S. History, U.S. Government and Politics, World History, Art History, French and Spanish.

Drop out rate in 2009-2010 was 2%

English/Language Arts/Reading

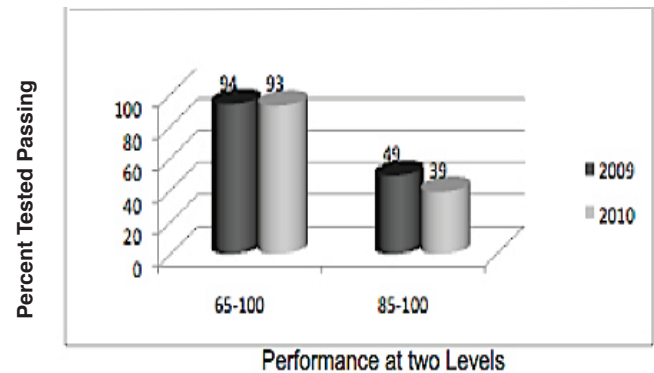
IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS READING COMPREHENSION - 2010

Performance Standard is the % at each level which we expect based upon the measured intellectual ability of our students.

Performance Standard - 35% at or above the national 75th %
- 65% at or above the national 50th %

Grade	75%	50%
3	44%	75%
4	43%	75%
5	43%	74%
6	46%	75%

NEW YORK STATE REGENTS COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH EXAM (all students, including students with disabilities) 2009-2010



Goal: To develop proficiency in the essential skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

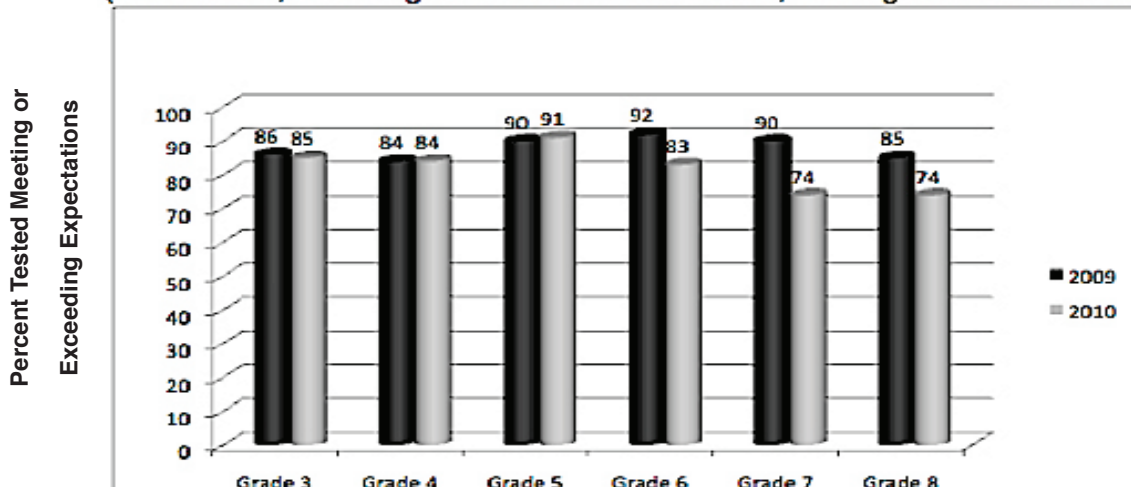
In an effort to effectively implement the Balanced Literacy Program in all grades, K – 6, the district has been committed to ongoing staff development for teachers. Staff development opportunities include, but are not limited to, presentations of information by reading consultants, administrators and teachers; classroom and consultant classroom visits; demonstration lessons; modeling of instruction; and an open dialogue between administrators and teachers and between teachers and teachers. The success of the pilot programs in spelling led to the program being fully implemented across the district in grades 1 and 2 for the 2010 – 2011 school year. The K – 12 Language Arts Steering Committee/District Writing Committee continued the study of writing in grades K – 6 and disseminated and implemented “The Writerly Life” units across all seven elementary schools. The seventh and eighth grade English/Language Arts program involves students in reading material of greater complexity and higher degree of difficulty and emphasis is placed on depth of critical analysis of reading and writing tasks. Students are also highly encouraged to engage in reading texts outside of the required classroom texts in an effort to nurture students’

love of reading. Students in Shaker High School English classes are respected as members of a community of people who support each other’s efforts to develop as writers, readers, and thinkers. In this community, the individual voice is valued and celebrated, as students learn to respect the complexity of others’ thoughts and develop flexibility in their own thinking.

Teachers continue to incorporate a variety of instructional strategies such as modeling, differentiation of materials, pre-teaching of vocabulary, pre-reading activities, such as providing background information, front-loading for instruction during reading activities, such as making connections and asking questions, and post-reading activities such as summarizing, incorporation of literature circle activities, and including activities that address various learning styles. At all levels North Colonie students continue to outscore the performance of their statewide cohort.

Kindergarten Intervention Program (KIP). The Kindergarten Intervention Program remains an excellent intervention for some kindergarten students in need of additional assistance. A comprehensive array of services is provided

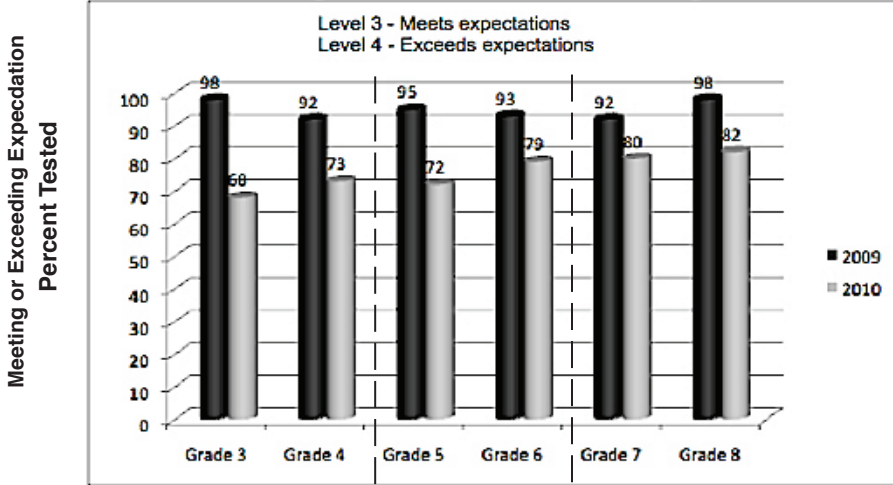
N.Y.S. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ASSESSMENT 2009-2010 (all students, including students with disabilities, scoring at levels 3 and 4)



Mathematics

N.Y.S. MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT

(all students, including students with disabilities, scoring at levels 3 and 4)



Goal: To have students master basic functions in the elementary grades, and gain further understanding of mathematics as a system of logical reasoning with abstract symbols, at the secondary level.

In 2009 – 2010 the New York State Education Department shifted the cut scores for demonstrating proficiency in mathematics. The grades 3 – 8 testing program has always been geared towards predicting success on the Regents examination (administered at the high school levels). Mastery on the Regents examination has now been linked to success in college level mathematics. As a result, cut scores were shifted upward to reflect this factor. Given this shift, our students at the elementary level had results similar to those of 2009. In grades 7 and 8 there were significantly fewer students earning scores of Level three or four. Noteworthy is the fact the North Colonie students exceeded New York State perfor-

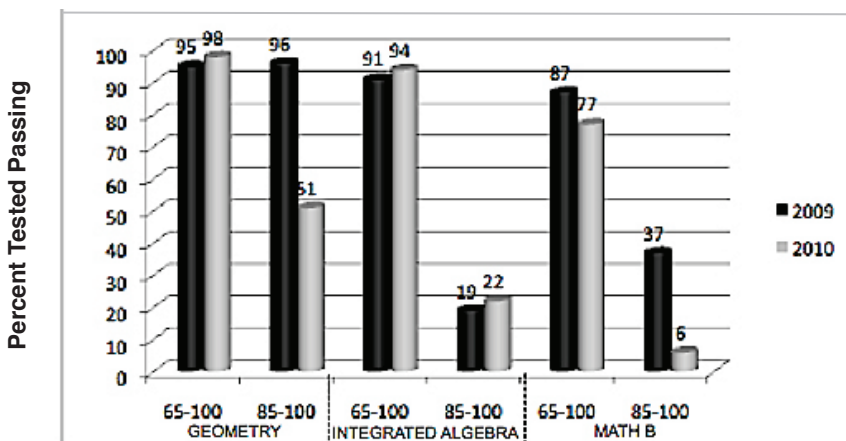
mances at all levels in grades 3 – 6. We will monitor information from the New York State Education Department regarding shifts in State assessments and standards and continue to align our curriculum and instruction for the benefit of our students.

At the elementary level, the K – 6 mathematics program follows a spiral model in that most topics are taught in each grade level, but differ in the range of depth and breadth of topics and activities. There are five content strands as determined by The New York State Department of Education. They include: Number Sense and Operations, Algebra, Geometry, Measurement, and Probability and Statistics. The five process strands include: problem solving, reasoning and proof, communication, connections, and representation. Instruction is differentiated to ensure that students work at their level while mastering New York State and North Colonie objectives. Manipulatives, learning centers, literature, and technology are all tools and strategies used in the teaching and learning process. Technology is used to enhance instruction in mathematics and understanding of mathematics.

N.Y.S. REGENTS MATH EXAMS

2009-2010

(all students, including students with disabilities)



At Shaker Junior High School and Shaker High School mathematics instruction is offered in a variety of courses designed to meet the needs of students at all ability levels, learning styles, and post-secondary plans. The aim is to provide all students with a strong foundation of math skills, to foster good thinking skills, and to promote the communication of mathematics. The Mathematics Department also offers computer science classes that include programming in the Java languages and a one-semester class in computer applications for college level mathematics classes at Shaker High School.

IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS - MATH 2009-2010

Performance Standard -

35% at or above the national 75th %
65% at or above the national 50th %

Performance Standard is the % at each level which we expect based upon the measured intellectual ability of our students.

Grade	75%	50%
3	46%	71%
4	44%	69%
5	45%	75%
6	42%	69%

SCIENCE

Goal: To help students in the elementary and junior high school years to understand the world through the application of the various science disciplines as well as the scientific method, and to enable students at the senior high school level to gain proficiency in specialized science areas.

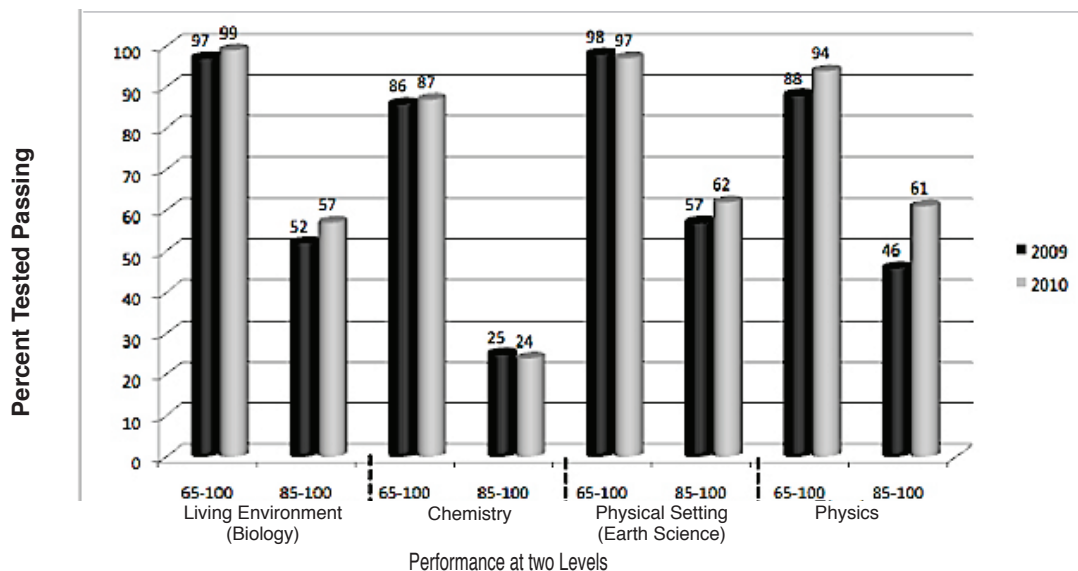
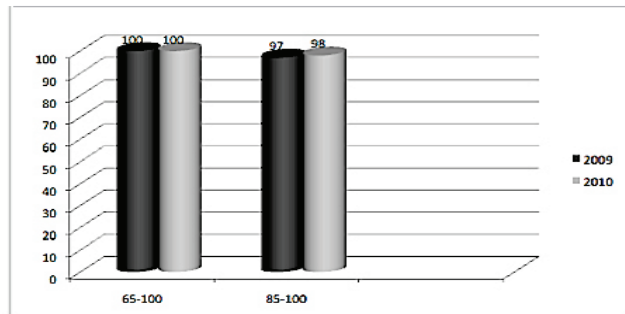
The elementary science program is built on a spiraling curriculum focused on Physical, Life and Earth Science concepts. The science program is supported with a variety of resources that facilitate differentiated instruction which leads to a greater level of student understanding. Science at Shaker Junior High School consists of Life Science in grade 7 and Physical Science in grade 8. In addition, students are required to learn to properly manipulate science equipment such as a microscope and triple beam balance. Far more than just understanding content, a strong foundation in science encourages the development of critical thinking, reasoning and problem solving skills while sparking interest in the physical and biological world around us. The Shaker High School Science Department is dedicated to helping

SCIENCE ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS		
Percent scoring "3" or higher, equivalent to college credit.		
	SHS	N.Y.S.
Biology	92%	57%
Chemistry	97%	66%
Physics	85%	68%
Environment Science	74%	58%

students apply and effectively communicate scientific concepts and literacy to real world phenomena through the use of independent critical thinking and problem solving skills.

The New York State Science tests at grades 4 and 8 are a requirement for district accountability as part of the **No Child Left Behind** federal legislation. These tests also serve as benchmark assessments at grades 4 and 8 to determine if students have the necessary skills and knowledge for graduation. The assessment covers science content and skill application. There is also a lab portion that requires our students to apply science in an authentic setting. On this year's assessment the number of students achieving at levels 3 and 4 increased from 93% to 96%. Some grade 8 students have the opportunity to earn high school credit by taking the high school Earth Science course in grade 8. This year a record of 105 students opted to take this course. They represent 22% of the Shaker Junior High School grade 8 class. 89% of these students scored 90 or better on the final examination. At the high school level, four Regents examinations measure student achievement in science. These exams are Living Environment, Earth Science, Chemistry and Physics. We are very pleased with the number of our students achieving mastery on the Regents exams. Mastery is defined by achieving a grade of 85 or better.

N.Y.S. SCIENCE REGENTS EXAMS - Earth Science Accelerated 8th Grade



NEW YORK STATE REGENTS SCIENCE EXAMS

(all students, including students with disabilities)
2009-2010

Social Studies

Goal: To gain understanding of people’s social, political and economic organization through the use of the skills of analysis and discovery used in the social science disciplines, and to stress good citizenship and democratic values.

At the elementary level the social studies program follows a concentric model. Beginning in kindergarten, students focus on self. The instructional focus then begins to expand outward to the family in grade one, the community in grade two, world communities in grade three, and local history in grade four. In grade four, students also begin to focus on specific subject matter. They study the history of New York State in relation to United States history. The fifth grade focuses on the Western Hemisphere including the United States, Canada and Latin America. Our sixth grade students examine global history with an emphasis on key events in European History. In grades seven and eight, the main focus is the study of the history of the United States from pre-exploration to the recent past. At the high school level, the social studies program prepares students with core knowledge as well as authentic, real world skills while simultaneously addressing the New York State Learning Standards. Students in grades nine and ten study Global History and Geography. The focus shifts to United States History and Government in the eleventh grade. The senior year is

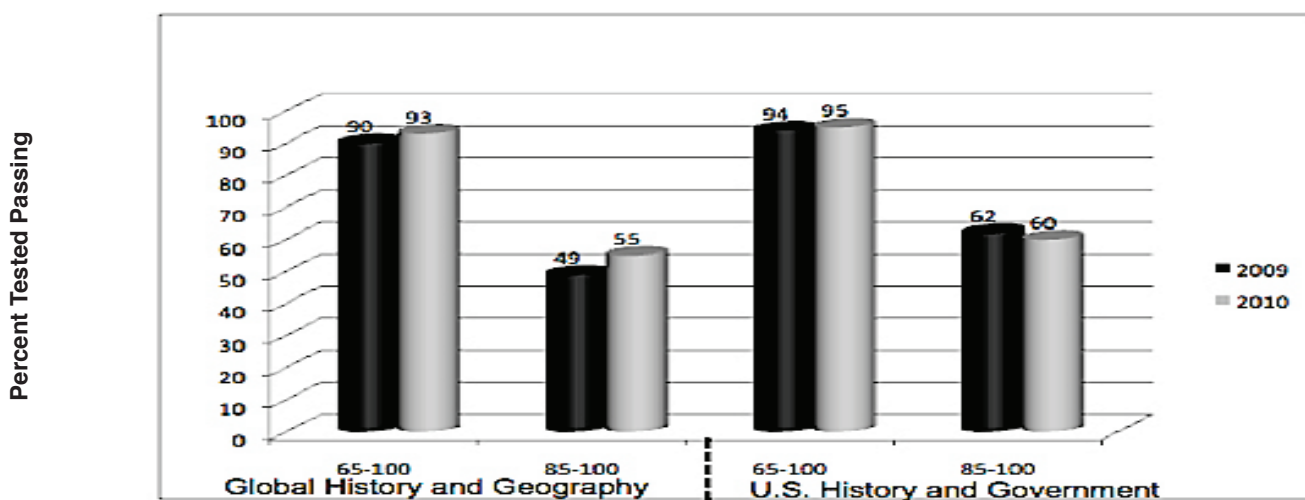
SOCIAL STUDIES ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS		
Percent scoring “3” or higher, equivalent to college credit.		
	SHS	N.Y.S.
United States History	93%	62%
World History	93%	64%
U.S. Government	87%	57%

a blend of a two-semester required course, Participation in Government and Economics. Social studies is an excellent venue for the teaching of study skills, and the use of instructional technology to support social studies instruction and research.

New York State offers benchmark assessments in social studies at grade 5, grade 8, and the commencement level with two Regents exams. Elementary social studies is the first of these assessments and is offered in the middle of November of the fifth grade year and the grade 8 assessment the following spring. This past November represents the last administration of these assessments as New York State has decided to eliminate them from the testing cycle.

NEW YORK STATE REGENTS SOCIAL STUDIES EXAMS

(all students, including students with disabilities)
2009-2010



Performance at two Levels

Foreign Language

Goal: To develop the student's skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking the foreign language being studied, and to help the student gain an understanding of the culture of country (ies) speaking that language.

The North Colonie Foreign Language Department provides students an opportunity to experience four modern languages: French, German, Russian and Spanish, as well as the classical language, Latin. Language study begins with an exploratory program at the elementary level. As students move into the junior high and high school programs they can concentrate their study in a language to four or five years of language study. Interested students can also complete two years of college level study in the modern languages.

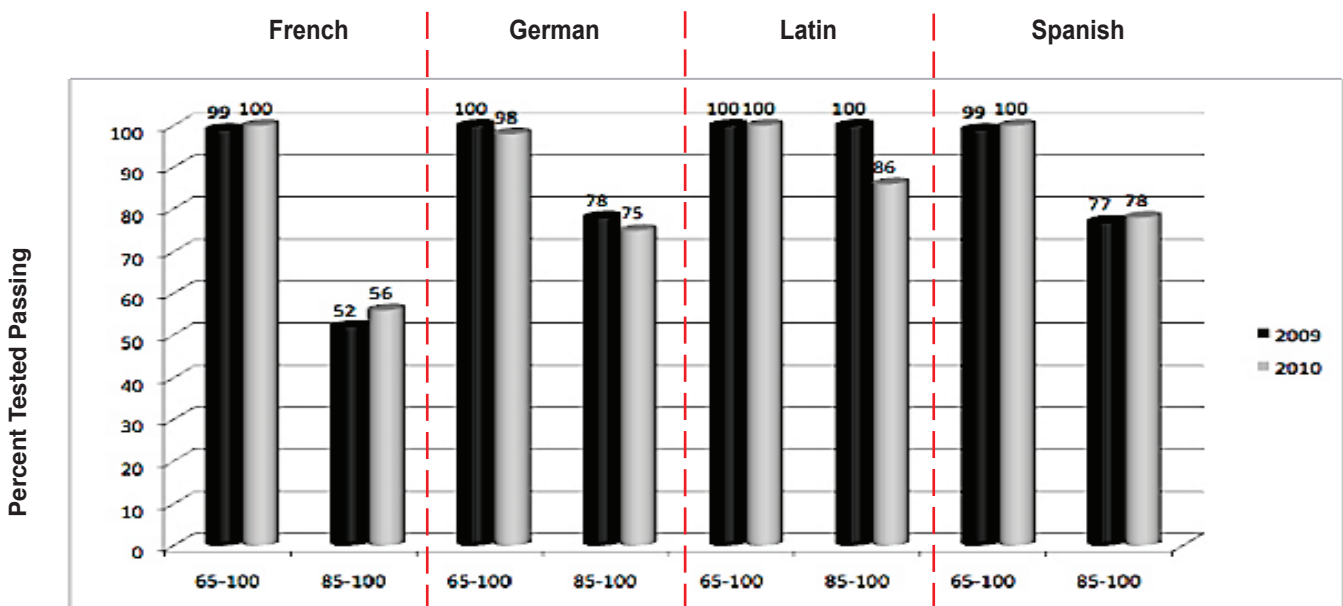
The elementary exploratory foreign language program continues to be highly successful. Students in grades 5 and 6 were able to communicate with students in Spain and Germany by using a web-conference program and by exchanging e-pal letters. 99.8% of grade 8 students enrolled in foreign language study passed the 2010 New York State Language Proficiency Examination. The department con-

Russian: There is no Regents examination in Russian. A sample comprehensive exam prepared by the NY State Education Department is offered for Regents credit.		
<i>Percent Tested Passing</i>		
Score	2009	2010
65 - 100	100%	100%
85 - 100	86%	77%

tinued to integrate technology to enhance foreign language instruction. All foreign language teachers used presentation units, including LCD projectors and a wide variety of CD-ROM programs, Quia-based teaching materials, multimedia performance assessments and internet-related tasks in their instruction. The new elective program, Teaching World Languages in Elementary Schools, was successfully launched this year.

NEW YORK STATE REGENTS FOREIGN LANGUAGE EXAMS FRENCH, GERMAN, LATIN, SPANISH

(all students, including students with disabilities)
2009-2010



ELECTIVE SUBJECTS

ART

Goal: *To gain an appreciation and understanding of the various art skills and to explore the art forms as an opportunity for personal expression.*

The Art Explorers Workshops held a fall course on observational drawing. The students attended a field trip to the Empire State Plaza Collection in Albany and participated in a summer art workshop at the Prunyn House. A digital student artwork gallery for Maplewood Elementary School was completed and added to the district web page.

The junior high school Accelerated Studio Art students attended a field trip to The Hyde Collection in Glens Falls, NY. The Accelerated Studio Art class also held its annual exhibit in the spring. Artist-in-Resident, Cathy Diefendorf, local book illustrator, worked with eighth grade students to create illustrations connected to the literary classic, **To Kill a Mockingbird**.

Students were able to earn college credit through three area institutions, Sage College at Albany, the University at Albany and HVCC. Several students attended the Sage portfolio Review Day and were accepted into art school based on the merits of their portfolios.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Goal: *To develop student's abilities and skills needed in today's working world.*

Business Education – Courses provided career exploration and skill development in business and marketing fields. The CEIP provided internships for 90 grade 12 students. The Capital Region Business Review awarded a SHS student their 40 under 40 award and a SHS student was recognized by the Business Teachers Association as outstanding business student. The Business Department organized a job fair for SHS students. 54 local businesses and government agencies participated.

Family and Consumer Sciences – Project-based instruction contribute to student interest, motivation and ultimately, academic success. The junior high school Home and Careers students completed a unit of study on Global Humanitarianism. They designed and constructed fleece hats, mittens, neck warmers and blankets. These items were sent to Adoptions Together, for orphanages in Russia and China. Students volunteered at the Regional Food Bank, the Arbor Hill Soup Kitchen, the pediatric ward at Albany Medical Center, and at the Ronald McDonald House in Albany. They constructed and distributed pillows and craft kits for children at AMC. At Thanksgiving, the group helped to prepare meals through the Equinox program, and helped to provide food and gifts through the Adopt-A-Family program.

Technology Education – The Robotics team traveled to competitions in Ambler, Pennsylvania, Worcester, Massachusetts, and Hartford, Connecticut. The Broadcast class and club continued to broadcast morning announcements five days a week to the student body at SHS.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Goal: *To provide students with an understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and to provide health education knowledge and skills so that students can participate in a healthy lifestyle throughout their lifetimes.*

During the 2009 – 2010 school year, guidance counselors, librarians, student assistance counselors, a DARE Officer, and area physicians spoke to students in each of our schools. These guest speakers encouraged students to learn to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Fifth and sixth grade students participated in a three-day Adolescent Growth and Development unit. Following the Adolescent Growth and Development unit, parents were asked for feedback on the program. 98% reported that the growth and development classes are helpful and 87% reported involving their children in at-home discussions following the classes. North Colonie continues to vigorously enforce its policy prohibiting the possessions, use or selling of drugs.

MUSIC

Goal: *To gain an appreciation and basic understanding of the various music forms as an opportunity for personal expression.*

Twenty-two Shaker High School students were selected for the NYSSMA All-State Music Festival and thirty-five students participated in the Suburban Council Music High School Festival. 4th grade students attended the Empire State Youth Orchestra's Young People's Concert. 44 students participated in the ESYO performing groups.

At the NYSSMA Major Organization Festival in April, the Shaker High School Wind Ensemble was awarded a Silver medal; the Grade 8 Band, SHS Chorus and SHS Symphonic Band, Gold medals; Symphonic Orchestra a Gold medal with distinction, the highest honor given. Six performing groups participated in the Great East Music Festival in Massachusetts. Select Band, Jazz Ensemble and Scherzo were awarded Gold. Select Chorus, Treble Makers and Syncopella were awarded the festival's highest rating, Platinum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Goal: *To provide students with a good understanding of the importance of physical fitness and to provide students with a wide variety of activities in which they can continue to participate throughout their lifetimes.*

Last fall over 560 boys and girls in grades 4 – 6 participated in six races in our annual District Cross Country Races held at the Town of Colonie Park. In the spring District Track Meets, all of our 5th and 6th grade students competed in 25 different events on June 2 and 3. There were over 70 races and 6 field events conducted. This was the 58th Annual Track Meet held in our district. Before or After School Intramurals programs were conducted in all of the elementary schools. The junior high school intramural program attracted 395 students.

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DISTRICT GOALS 2009-2010

Highlights

- ◆ At the district level, the Turnkey Trainer program for grades K – 2 and 3 -6 continues to be both valuable and effective in sustaining professional growth of faculty members and moving the reading program forward.
- ◆ In December, the English department hosted its first annual Senior Reading Night. Held the week before the first round of college admissions were published, the night was a celebration of the time and effort that students put forth to craft their college application essays.
- ◆ In March, the English Department held the annual Shakespeare competition. Shaker High School junior, Kelly Hoffman, placed in the top five in the regional competition.
- ◆ All elementary teachers received Math Gizmos training to integrate technology into mathematics instruction.
- ◆ The annual sixth grade math competition was held in December for Alternate Mathematics students. Dr. James Matthews and several of his Siena College students presented challenging problems for the competition.
- ◆ 178 students in Math 12R, Statistics, and Topics in Advanced Math were enrolled in the University in the High School program through the University at Albany.
- ◆ Proactive math labs continue to be offered at Shaker Junior High School for students requiring Academic Intervention support.
- ◆ This was our most successful year for Math Club. One particular highlight was a Math Scavenger hunt, in which students had to solve math problems and obtain clues around the high school to complete a puzzle. Math Club also sponsored The Pi Day Pie Eating Contest which was an overwhelming school-wide success.
- ◆ Mastery on the Regents Exams in Earth Science and Physics were at a five-year high.
- ◆ The Chemistry Center was created. This is a new program aimed at assisting Regents Chemistry students in meeting the Chemistry – R course with greater success.
- ◆ The Forensics program remains a tremendous success in its third year.
- ◆ On the College Entrance Examination Board achievement test in American History, there was an increase in the average score from 664 to 673. This exceeded the performance standard.
- ◆ Maplewood students in grades 5 and 6 participated in a five-week program in traditional Russian dance offered by EBA Dance Company.
- ◆ This year, the Foreign Language department planned and organized successful program for visiting exchange students from Costa Rica and Russia. An exchange group from Shaker visited Moscow, Russia.