



## Pinkerton wins inaugural MRE Challenge

### Students and Guardsmen team up for cooking competition

**SALEM-** The team from Pinkerton Academy won the inaugural MRE Challenge at Salem High School, taking home the coveted Granite Skillet. The team cooking competition organized by the New Hampshire Department of Education and the New Hampshire Army National Guard teamed high school culinary students from six New Hampshire high school CTE programs and Guardsmen to create gourmet dishes using the ingredients from a military-issue MRE (Meal Ready to Eat.) The 2,000 calorie packs are meant to keep troops fed in the field, but are not known for their culinary excellence.

Competing schools included Pinkerton, Alvirne, Nashua, Milford, Salem, and the Manchester School of Technology.

Guardsmen have been working with the student chefs for months to familiarize them with MREs, but none of the competitors knew in advance which meals would serve as their ingredients. The teams also had to incorporate a secret ingredient, plantains, that was revealed to them during their 45-minute cooking time. The Pinkerton team's winning dish was plantain ratatouille with garlic.

"What an impressive display of culinary talent," said New Hampshire Adjutant Gen. David Mikolaities. "The students were focused and disciplined, a great reflection on their respective teachers and schools. They are well led. Equally impressive was the student-led video production crew. We look forward to making this an annual event."

The 2019 MRE Challenge involved students across several CTE programs. Pinkerton's Marketing team took first place in the poster contest. MST Mar-



Pinkerton Academy Culinary Arts students Lily Mendes, Austin Patrick Spanks and Matthew Wolcott put the finishing touches on their dish with the assistance of Staff Sgt. Ben Courchesne, a recruiter with the New Hampshire Army National Guard, as they compete for the top prize in the inaugural MRE Challenge on Nov. 20 at the Salem High School's Career and Technical Education Center.

keting students won the logo design competition and MST's Culinary Arts team won the appetizer cooking competition. Teams from the school's Video Production programs also created commercials to promote the event. Salem High School's Video Production students live-steamed the event online and to an audience in the Salem High School auditorium.

"Our first MRE Challenge was a huge success, and I want to thank the Guard and our CTE centers for working together across several programs to create such a great learning environment for these students," said Education Commissioner Frank Edelblut. "We're hoping to expand this to more schools next year when Pinkerton puts the Granite Skillet back up for grabs."

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# Rebecca Fredette promoted to Special Education Director

**CONCORD-** New Hampshire Education Commissioner Frank Edelblut announced the promotion of Rebecca Fredette to serve as the Department's Special Education Director within the Bureau of Student Support. Fredette has spent the past year and a half as an educational consultant within the Bureau, serving as a member of the Compliance, Improvement, and Monitoring team. In her new post, Fredette will oversee the Department's special education, Title III, and migrant student programs.

"I am thrilled that Rebecca Fredette will be taking over our special education programs," said Education Commissioner Frank Edelblut. "She has been a fierce advocate for students throughout her career. All children deserve a path to a bright future, and Rebecca will help extend those opportunities for more

New Hampshire students."

Fredette has been an educator in New Hampshire for the past 26 years. She has worked as a special education teacher, a special education coordinator, an assistant principal, and a principal. Fredette also worked in the private sector in a residential facility for students with unique challenges academically and behaviorally.

"I am excited to start this new chapter in my career and look forward to working with the team at the DOE to provide a learner-centered approach to supporting families, administrators, and educators," Fredette said. "I feel this is an



important time for the Bureau of Student Support as the state and local school districts work to provide innovative educational opportunities for students, including students with disabilities, English learners, and migratory students. It is more important than ever to ensure we are collaborating together to support the needs of all our students."

## Announcing NH Girls Technology Day Calendar

**CONCORD-** The New Hampshire Department of Education's Bureau of Career Development announced the 2020 Events Calendar for NH Girls Technology Day, and called on interested schools to participate.

NH Girls Technology Day is a partnership between the Bureau, the NH Tech Alliance, post-secondary schools, and businesses across the state that provides female middle and high school students hands-on exploration of STEM fields in a series of supportive environments. Participating schools may bring up to 30 young women (grades 8-10 encouraged, but the program is open to all middle and high school grades.)



"The New Hampshire Department of Education is thrilled to be working collaboratively with CCSNH, USNH, industry, and the NH Tech Alliance to bring cool science and tech to young ladies in our schools in this interactive opportunity outside of the traditional classroom walls," said Eric Frauwirth, Administrator of the Bureau of Career Development. "We want to encourage every school to join this successful and growing partnership."

The 2020 Events Calendar for NH Girls Technology Day includes:

**December 17-** White Mountain Community College, Berlin

**January 15-** University of New Hampshire, Durham

**March 18-** NHTI, Concord

**March 20-** Manchester Community College, Manchester

**April 9-** Hypertherm, Lebanon

Schools interested in participating should [register here](#) by December 13.

For more information on NH Girls Technology Day, [click here](#).

# The Legislature should trust educators and parents

By Commissioner Frank Edelblut

FROM ITS INCEPTION, the idea of public charter schools has been to free public education from the burden of excessive and restrictive rules that prevent educators from being effective.

Back in 1988, the Citizens League of Minnesota published a report, "Charter Schools=Choices for Educators + Quality for All Students." Elaborating on this vision, the report states, "Many teachers believe they know how to do a better job of educating their students. But they need to be freed from the constraints of an excessively rigid school-management system to do it."

The concept is to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that unleashes the innovative power of educators and parents to bring students to great outcomes and put them on a path to bright futures. The Citizens League report states it this way:

"It is the process of schooling and not the building itself that will differentiate a chartered school from a conventional one. The chartered school concept recognizes that different children learn in different ways and at different speeds, and teachers and schools should adapt to children's needs rather than requiring children to adapt to the standard system."

The principles of the original Citizens League report are embedded in New Hampshire's charter school law and culture. It was in pursuit of these principles that the New Hampshire Department of Education sought, and won, a \$46 million federal grant to build on the success of charter schools by doubling the number of public charter schools in the Granite State. Unfortunately, the broad bipartisan vision for public charter schools in New Hampshire has been lost to many. Last Friday, the Joint Legislative Fiscal Committee voted along party lines to table the first round of this federal funding for public charter schools.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE UNION LEADER

There is a lot of misinformation about charters schools. Every New Hampshire charter school is a public school. This means they are open and accessible to any student who applies, and at no cost to the family. Yet at the Fiscal Committee meeting, an experienced State Senator argued that public charter schools were not public. Perhaps this confusion has led to the breakdown of the long-held bipartisan consensus on the value of charters schools in New Hampshire.

There are several ways to charter a public school in New Hampshire. Three groups of individuals; a qualified nonprofit organization, two or more New Hampshire certified teachers, or 10 or more parents, may submit an application. These groups may seek approval from a local school board or from the State Board of Education. Currently, PACE Career Academy in Allentown is the only school chartered through a local district. The rest have been chartered through the State Board.

Many of New Hampshire's public charter schools are led by New Hampshire educators who have embraced the Citizens League aspiration of "Choices for Educators." We often talk about choice for parents and students, but we should recognize the value of choice for educators as well.

Thirty years ago, the Citizens League recognized that children learn in different ways and at different speeds and that it is the responsibility of the teachers and schools to adapt to the child rather than have the child adapt to the school. This is another concept firmly embedded throughout New Hampshire education rule and law. RSA 193-H states, "Students best learn at their own pace as they master

content and skills, allowing them to advance when they demonstrate the desired level of mastery rather than progressing based on a predetermined amount of seat time in a classroom will assure that students will reach college and career readiness."

The State Board of Education plays an important role in chartering schools. In addition to evaluating a proposed charter for a quality education, the State Board also evaluates each application for creativity and innovation. The goal is not to simply replicate the traditional public school, but to come up with something to meet the unique needs of students and educators, or, as the Citizens League puts it, "to be different in the way it delivers education."

New Hampshire is a leader in education innovation. We innovate because of the high value we place on education for our children - all children - including disadvantaged and at risk students. The \$46 million public charter school grant is targeted to provide new ways to teach at-risk students. With just one in five economically-disadvantaged students reaching proficiency, we need to find better ways to give these kids a chance at a bright future.

I hope that when the Fiscal Committee meets in December, it will recognize the potential that charter schools hold for at-risk and disadvantaged students who are not being served by the status quo. I hope they will value educator choice and family choice, and approve the \$46 million investment in education innovation that we fought so hard to win for our students.

*Frank Edelblut is Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Education.*

## Holiday Pot Luck & Conversations with the Commissioner Tuesday, December 10 ~ 12:00-2:00 PM, Londergan Hall, Room 15

Wellness, Inc. invites you to the annual pot-luck holiday luncheon in Londergan Hall, Room 15, starting at noon.

You will soon receive an email linking to the signup sheet, or you can make a cash donation. We'll hold a 50/50 raffle to

support future Wellness Inc. events.

The Commissioner will take your questions after we eat.



The Department of Education team collected 645 items for the New Hampshire Food Bank, as well as cash donations, during the Turkey Trot.

## NH schools get new report cards

DOE updates iPlatform data on NH schools

**CONCORD-** The New Hampshire Department of Education released the latest school accountability data on its iPlatform data portal. The department recently uploaded 2018-2019 Federal Accountability data.

Individuals can access school, district, and state report cards through iReport at <https://ireport.education.nh.gov/>.

“The report cards include important data points for schools and districts, including measures of student academic achievement and growth, college and career readiness indicators, and school environment indicators,” explained Dr. Nate Greene, Administrator of the Bureau of Educational Opportunities within the New Hampshire Department of Education.

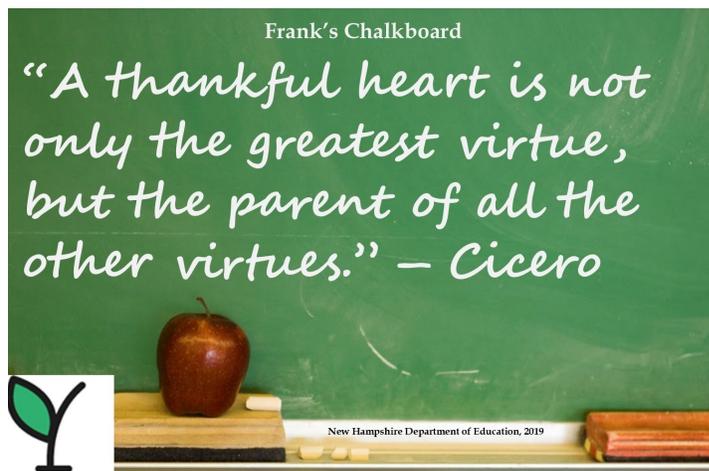
New features include a drop-down date selector, which has been added so that individuals can toggle between the previous 2017-18 data and the new 2018-19 data. Additional data is also included on the Educator Profiles page, including the percent of classes taught by educators on an intern or emergency authorization and the average teacher salary. A new Finance page has also been added to the report cards, and will be updated with district level financial information in mid to late December.

iExplore allows users to visualize and compare school

performance data.

iDefine includes a Data Dictionary to help users navigate the portal.

“Good information leads to better decisions,” said Education Commissioner Frank Edelblut. “iPlatform provides transparency and accountability, giving educators, school officials, and parents the information they need to help provide bright futures for New Hampshire students.”



### WHAT'S GOING ON?

If you would like to suggest an item for the next issue, please email Grant Bosse at [grant.bosse@doe.nh.gov](mailto:grant.bosse@doe.nh.gov).



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