

IDAHO DISTANCE EDUCATION ACADEMY

Planting the seeds of tomorrow, **TODAY.**

October 2011

Boise Region Newsletter

Issue 2



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From Jason Bransford, I-DEA Director

Dear I-DEA Families, I hope that each of you are enjoying schooling with I-DEA. Playing a key role in your child's education is rewarding, so I hope each of you can feel the pleasure of this great investment in your children.

In the last few years, Idaho has been flooded with virtual schools. Some are statewide, others are run by local school districts. This trend will likely continue in the coming years, so I thought it would be useful to outline what makes I-DEA different than other virtual schools in Idaho.

Curricular Choice- I-DEA is the only virtual school that offers a variety of research-based curricular options. This is because I-DEA is not sponsored by a publishing company and can freely choose the most effective curricular programs without loyalty to any one company. Student performance has shown that this is a very effective approach to curriculum selection.

Instructional Support- I-DEA offers Instructional Support to supplement instruction in elective courses. Our students have developed countless skills as a result of this opportunity.

Low Student/Teacher Ratios- Many virtual schools have well over 200 students assigned to one teacher. In

I-DEA, the most students that can be assigned to a teacher is 75. This allows more individualized attention, and the feedback we receive regularly is that parents and students feel like they actually know their teacher well.

Resource Centers- We have 3 resource centers around Idaho to serve students face-to-face as much as possible. We recognize the value in having an office in each part of the state where parents and students can come to meet with teachers, get tutoring, and get the support they need to be successful.

Dual Credit Reimbursement – We are the only virtual school that reimburses for dual credit college courses for high school students. This program has grown substantially each year. The more people understand this program, the more it continues to grow. Students who fully utilize this program during their junior and senior years can save over \$18,000 in college costs by the time they graduate high school. Over 50% of I-DEA graduates have taken Dual Credit courses. This speaks highly of I-DEA high school students!

High Academic Achievement- As I mentioned in my last email that went out to all I-DEA families, we were the

only statewide virtual school to meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) academic targets set forth in No Child Left Behind legislation. This speaks to the success of what our families do each day, and to the educational programs offered at I-DEA.

Enrollment- We are happy to focus on quality not quantity. Rather than setting goals for enrollment growth, I-DEA is happy to stay the same size and focus on increasing student academic achievement each year. We rely almost entirely on word of mouth referrals for new enrollment. This allows I-DEA to focus our limited resources on educational programs, rather than a large marketing budget.

Thank you again for all your hard work in making I-DEA a place where students are successful and people love to bring their friends!

Sincerely,
Jason Bransford

Parent to Parent by Jill Call, Community Coordinator

Feeling a little overwhelmed? Concerned? Frustrated? If so, don't worry, these are common feelings at this point in the school year for parents teaching at home. Sometimes things just don't go quite as we envisioned; in fact, over the years I've learned to enjoy the pleasant surprise when things do go as planned. Relax, make any needed adjustments, and stay focused on your goals. Settling

into a good routine can take time; meanwhile the kids may be doing a great job of testing the boundaries and expectations, so be sure you are clear and consistent. The I-DEA community coordinators are always available to help you be successful with schooling at home, so please give us a call if you need some ideas or support.

If your school year is off to a smooth and running start,

great! Keep the momentum going. We'd love to hear from you what's working well so we can share those tips with others.

Schooling at home is an adventure for both parents and students, so enjoy the journey!

Portfolios by Velvet Gutridge, Teacher



Portfolio ideas can be found on the I-DEA website.

After logging on click on the curriculum/standards tab.

Then click Elementary K-6th tab.

Go to pacing guides. Click on a subject.

The column on the far right will give you examples of portfolios.

“Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.”

Malcolm Forbes

Portfolio Conferences occur every semester at I-DEA. For many of us, Portfolio Conferences are a favorite time of the school year. It is a time for students to show successes, explain goals, and express struggles. It is a time for Contact Teachers to get to know their students better and for students and parents to reflect on what they have accomplished.

Student portfolios should be an authentic collection of work over time that reflects a student's day to day learning. Portfolios are a collection of work in progress. There are two primary types of portfolios: Best Work and Process portfolios.

The Best Work Portfolios, which consist of finished projects and are often used when students are applying to college, internships or jobs.

The Process Portfolio is the type most commonly used at I-DEA. It is a collection of evidence that documents the student's learning from the beginning of the year to the conference time. It can be used as an assessment portfolio

because it shows a student's effort, progression to, and achievement of mastery of basic and advanced skills.

Choosing items for a student portfolio should be a collaborative effort of the administration, teacher, parent and student. At I-DEA, our board of trustees requires that every student have at least one writing sample included in each semester's portfolio. The writing sample needs to include a prewriting activity, a rough draft, a revised and edited draft as well as the final copy.

The Contact Teacher may have input into what goes into the portfolio. For example, if a student is just learning to read the teacher may ask for a list of sight words mastered each semester to be included in the portfolio. If a student is struggling in math the teacher may ask the student to include evidence of math facts mastered. These requests aren't punitive in nature but are made to help the teacher gain better insights to the student's abilities and needs. It also gives the teacher the opportunity to be a cheerleader for your student and a resource to empower your student to succeed.

The parent is responsible for showing evidence of growth towards mastery for every course on the student's ILP. Therefore, the parent will have input on what

goes in the portfolio. The key is making good choices showing student understanding, application and mastery of skills.

Therefore, including whole workbooks or daily work in the portfolio is appropriate. If you are using a variety of materials to cover the standards, then bring those workbooks or projects your student completed to the conference.

Student portfolios are property of the student. To help students take ownership of the portfolio, they should be involved in the process of choosing what goes in it. Students should choose pieces they enjoyed, pieces they are proud of, and pieces they really learned from, along with a reflection of why they chose each piece. The reflection can be written or given orally during the portfolio conference. Portfolio ideas are listed on the I-DEA website or your Contact Teacher can provide more ideas if you desire.

The portfolio should be a unique representation of your student. The portfolio pieces should be chosen with purpose and meaning to document academic growth and it should be an authentic collection of your student's effort, ability, and application of skills mastered.

It doesn't matter if you're a student or a teacher, the educational process can sometimes be an uphill battle. It's important to find things that will keep you motivated, inspired and striving to do more.

Community Events

Park Day!!

Friday, September 30

2pm—3pm

Tully Park

2500 N Linder Road

Meridian, Idaho

Join us for some fun at Tully Park!
This is a great chance to make new
friends within the I-DEA community and
to re-connect with old friends!

Deer Flat National

Wildlife Refuge

4th, 5th, 6th Graders ONLY

Wednesday, October 12

10am—2pm

1375 I Upper Embankment

Nampa, Idaho

(Chaperones are welcome..

Please make arrangement

for children who are not

4th, 5th, or 6th graders)

Learn about Lake Lowell's ecosystem!
...hands-on, inquiry based experiences
Participants will receive a workbook with
pre and post-visit activities
4th, 5th, 6th Grade Idaho Standards
BRING: Sack Lunch, Water Bottle
Comfortable Shoes, Appropriate Clothing
Questions...lisabown@idahoidea.org

RSVP: mwhitworth@idahoidea.org

High School Speech

Thursday, October 20

Thursday, November 3

Thursday, December 1

BRC—8620 W Emerald St
Suite #190, Boise

Bring Oral Presentations
Practice Debate Skills
Get-to-Know Other I-DEA HS Students
Questions: pattiboliou@idahoidea.org

RSVP: mwhitworth@idahoidea.org

Farmstead Field

Trip--Corn Maze

Thursday, October 20

1pm—3pm

1020 S Rackham Way

Meridian, Idaho

Join us at the Farmstead!
Hayride Playing in Courtyard
Exploring Part of a Corn Maze
Pick a Pumpkin
COST: \$4 per person (child and/or adult)
(Includes one (1) pumpkin...additional
pumpkins may be purchased)
RSVP: mwhitworth@idahoidea.org
(include number of participants)

High School Mall

Scavenger Hunt

Monday, October 24

11am—3pm

BRING: \$5-10 for lunch
or backpack with your
lunch

Meet in Food Court near Orange Julius
All 9th-12th Grade I-DEA Students
Also Bring: Signed Permission Form
(download on I-DEA website)

RSVP: mwhitworth@idahoidea.org



**IDAHO
DISTANCE
EDUCATION
ACADEMY**

Educating Through Partnership One Child at a Time

Boise Resource Center

8620 W. Emerald, Suite 190
Boise, ID 83704

Phone: 208-682-1155
FAX: 208-321-4757

Boise Community Coordinators

Jill Call

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208-585-7390

Lisa Bown

lisabown@idahoidea.org

208-890-4147

Patti Boliou

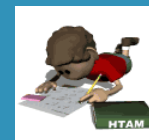
pattiboliou@idahoidea.org

208-585-7244

Getting involved in
community activities
helps students stay
interested in school.



Science Help with Mrs. Rightler
10 to 12 Mountain time
Wednesday and Friday
[https://idahoidea.ilinc.com/join/
fpijkt](https://idahoidea.ilinc.com/join/fpijkt)



H.S. Math Help
With Mrs. Pappas
10 am to 12 pm MST
Tuesday and Thursday
[https://idahoidea.ilinc.com/
join/ccjcmhw](https://idahoidea.ilinc.com/join/ccjcmhw)

**TECH
SUPPORT**
1-866-904-4332

