As the saying goes, “Baby, it’s cooold outside!” In the Treasure Valley, a dingy inversion has been hanging in the air for almost two weeks, and at times it seems that all I’m looking at are shades of gray. Those of you who know me know that I tend to look for the silver lining in all things, so it won’t surprise you that I found beauty in the somewhat colorless scene as well.

As I came out of my front door yesterday morning to make the trek to work, I literally had to regain my sense of purpose and make myself walk to my car. I was caught by surprise at the hoarfrost on our maple and birch trees in the front yard. As I looked up into the branches that overhang our front sidewalk, I was captivated by the patterning and true artistry in the frost. I could have stood in awe much longer than I did, but the thought of merging into rush-hour traffic and missing my five-minute window of opportunity to avoid it urged me along. As I navigated my way along I-84, I found myself noticing the effect the cold and ice crystals had on the way the different lights along the way shone, and I caught myself smiling once again.

I reaffirmed that even in my moments of rush, I need to be aware of the space and people around me and enjoy them for what they offer. Those are the gifts that I need to allow myself in order to strike a balance in the pace of my life. I invite you to purposefully take a moment or two each day this next week to be in awe of your surroundings and experience calm in the midst of all the demands on you. As you care for others, focus on you, too! — Kristi Enger

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**STATE BOARD ANNOUNCES TASK FORCE FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION**

From the State Department of Education Weekly E-Newsletter, January 11, 2013

The State Board of Education hosted the first meeting of the Task Force for Improving Education today in Boise. Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter asked the State Board of Education to shepherd a statewide discussion about school improvement after the Students Come First laws were repealed on November 6.

“This Task Force represents a broad and diverse group of stakeholders from across the state,” said State Board President Ken Edmunds. “I am confident in the knowledgeable and forward thinking experts who have agreed to serve on this Task Force and guide the process.”

The meeting was open to the public and streamed live online. Learn more about the Task Force, its membership and first meeting [online](#).

**SAVE THE DATE FOR THE IDAHO STATE PREVENTION AND SUPPORT CONFERENCE**

From the State Department of Education Weekly E-Newsletter, January 11, 2013

Mark your calendars for April 18-19, 2013 for the 20th Annual Idaho State Prevention and Support Conference at the Sun Valley Convention Center. Registration and session information will be coming soon. Plan now to bring your community to this event. For more information, contact Camille McCashland (208.332-6960)

**APPLY FOR THE 2013 NATIONAL YOUTH SCIENCE CAMP**

From the State Department of Education Weekly E-Newsletter, January 11, 2013

The National Youth Science Camp is a residential science education program for young scientists the summer after they graduate from high school. Students from around the country are challenged academically in exciting lectures and hands-on studies, and have voluntary opportunities to participate in an outdoor adventure program, gain a new and deep appreciation for the great outdoors, and establish friendships that last a lifetime. The 2013 National Youth Science Camp will be held June 26 through July 20, 2013. To apply, please [download the application packet](#). The deadline to apply is February 15, 2013.

**SAVE THE DATE FOR THE IDAHO STATE PREVENTION AND SUPPORT CONFERENCE**

**NOMINATE A TEACHER FOR THE IDAHO GIANTS AWARD**

From the State Department of Education Weekly E-Newsletter, January 11, 2013

A coalition of Idaho’s leading industries is soliciting nominations for Governor’s Industry Award for Notable Teaching in Science (GIANTS) that will recognize teachers who integrate real-life applications of science and technology in their classrooms. We are seeking nominations for this award.

**Note**: In secondary schools, nominations must be from student councils. The deadline to submit nominations is February 27, 2013.

**POWER OF ASSESSMENT WEBINAR SERIES CONTINUES THIS MONTH**

From the State Department of Education Weekly E-Newsletter, January 11, 2013

The Power of Assessment Webinar Series continues this month with two new webinars in January. The webinars will focus on:

- Module 3 – Clear Learning Targets
  - Quality Assessment
- Module 4 – Sound assessment design

Click here for more information including registration links. This series is available for professional credit through BSU.
IDAHO SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE SEeks VOLUNTEERS

From Frontier Footnotes, Volume 8, January 2013, Idaho Area Health Education Center

The Idaho Suicide Prevention hotline (ISPH) began operating in November of 2012. Idaho currently has the 6th highest suicide rate in the country, and also has a severe lack of resources to assist those in crisis, especially in rural areas. Thus, the hotline is an important resource for our state. Volunteers are now being recruited to work at the call center in Boise. ISPH volunteers work one 4.5 hour shift per week, with a one year commitment.

Initially, the hotline began taking calls Monday-Thursday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. In mid-February, Fridays will be added to the schedule as more volunteers are trained. When ISPH is closed, calls will be routed to the national network of Lifeline volunteers and be answered from neighboring states.

Volunteers must be 21 years of age or older and must complete a background check (the inability to pass a background check does not mean automatic disqualification; applications will be discussed on a case by case basis). Current volunteers include students, retired individuals, homemakers, and working professionals. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact ISPH volunteer coordinator Sydney Young at (208.258-6992).

APPLY NOW FOR ISEE PHASE II-B GRANTS

From the State Department of Education Weekly E-Newsletter, January 11, 2013

The Idaho State Department of Education is excited to continue rolling out Phase II of the Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE), which includes the use of Idaho’s Instructional Management System, or Schoolnet. Currently, Schoolnet is available to all Idaho districts and charters, through which ISEE data is made available for educators in driving instructional practices through data-driven decision making.

Thanks to the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson’s Foundation, the State Department of Education is able to offer a grant opportunity to assist Idaho school districts and charters in the deployment of Schoolnet. Through the ISEE Phase II-B grant, $2 million will be awarded to school districts and public charter schools in FY2014, for those most ready to benefit. We encourage all interested school districts and public charter schools to apply!

Grant Application Process Timeline:
December 27, 2012: Phase II B Application released
January 7, 2013: Grant writing webinar
February 1, 2013: Grant applications due
February 2-15, 2013: Grant review process
February 18, 2013: Successful grantees announced
March 2013: Grantee workshops and training

The deadline to apply for the grant is February 1, 2013. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Rick Kennedy, ISEE Grant Coordinator (208.332.6880)

JANUARY IS NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

From National Girls Collaborative Project E-Newsletter, January 2013

Mentors play an essential role in preparing girls for a bright future. During National Mentoring Month, we celebrate the contributions of all those who cultivate a supportive environment for the next generation, and we recommit to expanding mentorship opportunities across our networks. The online NGCP Program Directory is a great resource for finding scientists and engineers to meet with girls, as well as finding other programs that offer mentoring. You will also find several mentoring resources highlighted in this newsletter. January is a great month for encouraging girls to visit FabFems to search profiles, connect with role models, and find resources on career pathways.
NGCP WEBINAR:
RECRUITING, TRAINING, AND RETAINING ROLE MODELS TO INSPIRE GIRLS IN STEM

From National Girls Collaborative Project E-Newsletter, January 2013

January 23, 2012 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM PST  ▶ Register ◀

In honor of National Mentoring Month in January, presenters from Techbridge and FabFems will discuss how to effectively provide role models and mentors for girls, including strategies for recruiting, retaining and recognizing professional volunteers. Participants will experience interactive activities, resources, and role model stories that will help craft engaging experiences that dispel stereotypes and ignite girls' interest in STEM careers.

TRAINING DATES

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<tr>
<td>January 18 &amp; 19</td>
<td>8am - 4:30 pm</td>
<td>2-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)</td>
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<td>(Fri. &amp; Sat.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>9am - 4:30 pm</td>
<td>1-day training and presentations on Special Topics</td>
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<td>(Sat)</td>
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<td>January 23 or January 30</td>
<td>6pm - 9pm</td>
<td>General policies and procedures, iCarol software system</td>
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<td>(Wed.; choose one to attend)</td>
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The Hotline will provide callers with:

- Emotional support
- Assessment of suicide risk
- Crisis intervention to those in imminent danger
- Linkages to local services
- Follow-up for persons with potential suicide risk factors

Training of volunteers is based on the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) course. It is a research based two-day course that includes role plays, small group discussion and video presentations. For more information about ASIST, see www.livingworks.com.

We encourage everyone to put the suicide prevention hotline number in their cell phones so that it will be readily available any time you may encounter a situation where either you or someone you know is at risk for self-harm. The Hotline number is 1.800.273-TALK (1.800.273-8255).
There is one intentional action we can take to help our youth better understand STEM and follow its path to learning and leadership in the 21st Century. If we can change the conversation in our schools about STEM, we can heighten student interest in it.

How can we change the conversation? We can change the conversation by using our words; by intentionally using words that inspire.

Words matter.

Words not only describe the work we do; they paint a verbal picture of what we expect and envision. When speaking to students about STEM, our words must do three things:

1. Be Specific -- They must extinguish ambiguity and deepen the understanding and definition of STEM.
2. Be Vivid -- Don’t just describe what girls can do in with STEM; paint a picture of who they can become.
3. Be Audacious -- Young leaders and learners are waiting for the invitation to be part of something big; something that matters. Let our words invite them.

The new words invite young people into the conversation as creators, not consumers. We engage with them as learners and leaders. We transform them into powerful agents of hope and inspiration.

- Goal Oriented
- Diverse
- Global
- Service
- Servant ship
- Hope
- Inspiration
- Optimistic
- Passion Driven
- Passion Fueled
- Cultivation
- Compassionate
- Love
- Difference Making
- Collaborative
- Social
- Ambitious
- Human Centered
- Global, Civic, Community Minded
- Audacious
- Entrepreneurial
- Groundbreaking
- Jaw Dropping

The intentional words we choose make the “why” for STEM exist and the love for STEM sustainable. In future discussions on STEM in education, let’s choose our words intentionally.

The next time students file into your classroom, let’s give them words to which they can tie their aspirations. Then, let us stop and listen to the students who choose to share with us their dreams of changing the world.

“I want to show people what a difference one person can make. If someone, because they heard about me, or met me, decides that they can be a change too, then it will spread from me, to that person, to another person and so on.”

- Mallory

Student member of Futuristex PLN, Founder of Project Yesu (@ProjectYesu), Clarksville, TN

Please add your words to the list in the comments below or share them with me on Twitter @angelamaiers using the Hashtag #STEM #HuffLive.

Let’s see where our discussion takes us as we tackle the challenge of recruiting and improving the top talent and leadership in the fields that will determine the future.
IDAHO STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL LAUNCHES ABLETOWORK.IDAHO.GOV WEBSITE

From the desk of Robbi Barrutia, Executive Director, State Independent Living Council, robbi.barrutia@silc.idaho.gov

The State Independent Living Council (SILC), in collaboration with the Idaho Employment for People with Disabilities Stakeholder Group, recently launched AbletoWork.idaho.gov, a state website. AbletoWork.idaho.gov connects people with disabilities, employers, and service providers with the necessary resources to secure employment, hire qualified individuals, and refer individuals in the right direction.

The Idaho Employment for People with Disabilities Stakeholder Group is comprised of members from the Idaho State Independent Living Council, Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and various Community Rehabilitation Programs.

“I am enthusiastic and hopeful that through our efforts we will make lasting change in employment for individuals with disabilities,” said Robbi Barrutia, SILC Executive Director. “This is the only website of its kind available in Idaho.” The AbletoWork.idaho.gov website was funded through a federal Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG), which helps to increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

The Idaho State Independent Living Council bears the primary responsibility for developing the State Plan for Independent Living. SILC’s mission of advocating for equal opportunity, self-determination and choice for those with disabilities includes an emphasis on education and training for providers who move those with disabilities from dependence to empowerment and self-sufficiency.

For more information on the AbletoWork.idaho.gov website, contact Monique Johns, MIG Project Director or stop by the Idaho State Independent Living Council.

WEBINAR OPPORTUNITY: TEACHING WRITING IN THE COMMON-CORE ERA

Underwriting for the content of this webinar has been provided by The Lumina Foundation

The Common Core State Standards demand that teachers of all subjects teach literacy skills that are specific to their disciplines. They also expect students to prepare for the workplace by reading and writing about a wide variety of nonfiction texts.

In this webinar, two experts who coach teachers in the field share the guidance they’ve developed for cross-disciplinary writing and for writing that builds workplace-relevant skills.

Guests:

- Cathy Fleischer, professor of English, Eastern Michigan University, co-director, Eastern Michigan Writing Project
- Kathleen Yancey, professor of English and director of the graduate program in rhetoric and composition, Florida State University

This webinar will be moderated by Catherine Gewertz, assistant editor for Education Week.

▶ Register Now ◀ for this free live webinar