

NCVPS

# OCS Blended Learning Program

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## HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES: Planning something fun?

*The holidays are always so much fun around schools: choral and band concerts, decorated hallways, holiday treats and those infamous holiday sweaters! We all hope you are able to enjoy this season without being overwhelmed by commitments!*

We wanted to provide you with some thoughts for taking some time and doing something fun with your students to celebrate the season. Pat Lewis, OCS English I teacher, loves these activities because

they are great memory games for the students. We do suggest using them as whole class activities so the students can be kept on task. The website is presented [here](#). Suggested games are below:

- \* Elf Freeze
- \* Gift Gather
- \* Christmas Match
- \* Festive Puzzles

Most importantly, take some times to enjoy the holiday with your students!



<http://schools.iclipart.com>

## More Praise...this time from a student!

Laura Woodard, NCVPS partner teacher for OCS English I, excitedly shared a persuasive paragraph written by one of her students. His final words are presented below: *"Online classes are awesome. Online classes are awesome because you get to learn about a online teacher you don't even know. Another thing I like about online classes is that you will have extra time on your work if you need any help. Also you will get to send messages back and forth to*

*your teacher. One quote I got from Mitch was, "I think that online classes are good because you get to do work hands on with a computer and you don't have to write much with a pencil and paper." Also you get to spend a lot of time focusing on your work then having time to just play around on the computer. This is why I think online classes are awesome."* Both Laura and her partner teacher Carolyn Smith Benton of Rosman High School were so pleased with his en-

thusiasm about his online OCS English course.

## Look inside for:

- An interview with a partner teacher who adores the OCS program and her online teacher.
- Suggestions for balancing more than one class in one block.
- Two partner teachers' reflections on the successes and struggles of their relationship.

## MORE ABOUT US?

Online at

<http://www.ncvps.org/index.php/courses/ocs-blended/>

# Tips for Trying to Balance Too Many Courses in One Block

As we have reported in the past, this Fall 2011 semester is the first that our NCVPS OCS Blended Learning Program has gone statewide. With that expansion has come some growing pains. Over this semester, we have experienced a huge number of ideal situations that are a testament to the success of our blended program and the exciting partnerships it brings.

We have also seen some situations in classrooms that do not lend themselves nicely to our blended learning program. In many cases, schools have scheduled multiple courses in one block in one classroom. The challenges to the classroom teachers, the online teachers and especially the students are substantial.

The side bar offers some tips to help you. But most importantly, in these last few weeks of class, ask one of the scheduling individuals at your school to visit your classroom. Let them see the difficulties you are experiencing first hand. Describe how your students would benefit from your full attention. It is not too late to potentially solve some of these issues before the spring.



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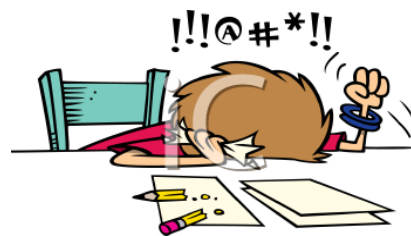
## Read it Here First: The Interview with Stephanie Walsh about her Partnership

Every so often, a partnership comes along that exceeds all expectations, where the partners are actually giddy about working together! Such is the case with classroom teacher, Stephanie Walsh of Jack Britt High School and her online partner, Joanna Schimizzi. We recently questioned Stephanie about her experiences. Here's what she had to say.

**Describe your partnership with Joanna.** *"Joanna is energetic and it is such a pleasure to work with an enthusiastic and knowledgeable core person. She knows Biology and can really break it down for my students."*

**How has the OCS Blended Program helped your students?** *"Her messages to my students have changed my students 360°. They can't wait to get to class, log on and see what message Joanna has left them and also what challenges she gives them daily. She has personalized her instruction with*

*them. They want me to take them on a field trip to go meet her and one even asked if she was coming to Prom. I would consider moving to her town just to work with her in person everyday and assist her with the needs of EC students in her school. "*



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**How do students NOT on our program compare with students using our program?** *"I was very disappointed when I saw DPI was requiring the OCS students to take Algebra I, Biology and English I. I actually went to a Biology class with one student last*

### Tips for Managing Multiple Courses in One Block

- *To teach two courses, split the class into two 45 minutes sessions. Focus on Course 1 during the 1st half, doing whole group instruction. Switch your focus for the second half, while the students in Course 1 work independently online.*
- *Utilize your TA so that the two of you can alternate between two courses. This will keep you hands on, while giving full guidance to the students.*
- *If students need guidance during a time where you are helping students in another course, pair high and low students together for support.*

*semester. The teacher was outstanding but the pace was way too fast. It was exhausting trying to keep up and tutor the student. However, it did give me a wonderful co-op situation accidentally. I enjoyed problem-solving with the Biology teacher about mods and accommodations for EC students in her class. My student in the regular ed Biology class was frustrated and depressed and constantly could not keep up with note taking and projects. Classes are already crowded and I believe it is a lot to ask a regular education teacher to accomplish without help from an EC teacher. The true OCS program was to prepare a certain amount of students for the world of work. This population was normally reading and calculating at about the 4th grade level. With the online OCS program, we went from knowledge on Blooms to analysis. Wow!*

## ***SHE SAID: SHE SAID***

### ***Delving into a Successful Blended Teaching Partnership!***

At the end of last semester, we looked into a successful partnership between partner teachers Molly Peagler, now retired from Croatan High School, and Pat Lewis in a blended OCS English I course. We often discussed the importance of the partnerships between the online and classroom teachers. Seldom do we get a chance to hear from both sides of a successful partnership, such as the one between Molly and Pat. It should be noted that Molly originally had English I & II scheduled during one class period, working with two separate online teachers. As indicated here, her principal recognized that the situation did not allow for a true blended approach to teaching, and with a few schedule changes, the problem was rectified. Here are excerpts of answers to selected questions.



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#### **How important were the co-teaching logs to your success? How did you use them to your advantage?**

Molly said *"At first it was difficult to remember to add the log entries on a daily routine. I took a lot of time to review the lessons, plan for the next lessons and coordinate with on-line teachers for two subjects, English I & II, as well as my other class assignments. ....I did, however, use the logs occasionally to review over what lessons were done and review specific notes that highlighted the weak areas that needed to be re-taught as well as lessons that the students seemed to enjoy."*

Pat said *"For me, the log was my guide to being the best online teacher I could be. I checked in every day and used the information on what had transpired that day to plan the next day's announcement. Molly would often tell me about students who were struggling, and I would modify a lesson for that student and have it ready for the next day. Molly was SO helpful to me by documenting each day before she left school. It is also important for the f2f teacher to check back to see what the online teacher has added to the doc."*

***We cherish our relationships with all of our partner teachers. We wish all of you a Happy Holiday Season!***



#### **Any other suggestions for our f2f and online teachers about creating the most successful experience for their students and themselves?**

Molly said *"Please note that in using the online program that it is imperative that a teacher not be forced to combine the English I & II curriculum together during one class period. It sets up an impossible mission, and only guarantees failure on all parts. English I & II MUST be taught separately in order to be successful."*

Pat said *"I agree with Molly completely about not combining English I & II together. A teacher cannot work two programs at one time. Molly's principal recognized the problem and made schedule changes. I would say the most significant part of the success of this program will come from consistent communication from both the f2f and online teachers."*

*Do you want to see updated testimonials from students and teachers about the OCS Blended Program? Click on the link in the black circle below!*

[WWW.NCVPS.ORG/  
INDEX.PHP/COURSES/  
OCS-BLENDED/](http://WWW.NCVPS.ORG/INDEX.PHP/COURSES/OCS-BLENDED/)

## *We Want to Hear from You!*

Have a shout-out for your NCVPS partner teacher or an activity that you planned together that was a smashing success? Or maybe you have photos, quotes, or work products from your students that you would like to see in our newsletter? Just email the newsletter editor, Karla Tucker at [karla.tucker@ncpublicschools.gov](mailto:karla.tucker@ncpublicschools.gov).

If your submission is selected, all featured parties will need to sign a permission slip for release. Our next edition will be in early February. We'd love to hear from you!

## **Hands-On Activities are a Sweet Success!**

Sometimes, hands on activities are the best for OCS students to grasp difficult concepts. Jeannette Nunnery's Biology I students at Lakewood High School loved the DNA candy modeling lab. Jeannette's partner teacher, Jacki Clark, was thrilled to get these photos of two students, demonstrating their models. Students were excited to get to eat the candy models afterwards!



## **SPRING REGISTRATION**

*If you haven't registered for your Spring 2012 courses, there's still time and space! Contact your schools eLA and make sure you get what you want!*