

Pinkerton Academy

5 Pinkerton Street, Derry, NH 03038

TO: Members of the Class of 2009 and their Parents
FROM: Mary A. Anderson, Headmaster
DATE: May 11, 2006
SUBJECT: Computer Literacy Requirement

I hope students in the Class of 2009 have enjoyed their first year at the Academy and are looking forward to entering the 10th grade next fall.

Some of you may be aware that the revised State Standards for High School were approved in May 2005, and became effective July 1, 2005. The new Standards address Computer Literacy quite differently from the old Standards, as students can no longer receive credit for Computer Literacy from classes taken in the Middle School. As a result, Pinkerton Academy must remove the half-credit of Middle School Computer Literacy from transcripts of students in the Class of 2009. This affects all students in the state of New Hampshire and will occur at Pinkerton during the last week of May. The report cards issued at the end of the 2005-2006 school year will reflect the removal of the half-credit that was given for Computer Literacy for work done at the Middle School. This new Standard affects the Class of 2009 and all *future* classes at the Academy and throughout the state.

A provision in the new Standards requires that all students must maintain an electronic portfolio in which they keep their best electronic work. To obtain a half-credit in Technology students may either take a high school course in which computers are an integral part of the curriculum, or through a favorable review of their electronic portfolio. While we are still working through all of the details, we anticipate that this review will occur sometime during the student's junior year. More details will be provided on this as the process by which students can earn credit for Computer Literacy is finalized.

Pinkerton Academy was in agreement with the New Hampshire Department of Education concerning the need to ensure that high school graduates in New Hampshire are technologically literate and applauded the methodology to assess those standards. The use of the digital portfolio as a mechanism to observe students' work while they perform real electronic projects in their classes throughout their high school career will better assess the students' ability to use technology effectively as a communication tool in real life. However, we were dismayed at the Department's desire to initiate the implementation of these Standards with the graduating class of 2009. These students selected their courses for the 2005-2006 school year in February 2005, long before the implementation of the Standards in July of that same year. In addition, it was not until January 2006 that the New Hampshire Department of Education held their first session to review the major changes to the Computer Literacy Standards, as they were working to clarify the meaning of the Standards since they were approved. This meant that our ninth-grade students lost a full year in developing and implementing a plan to address these changes.

When students in the Class of 2009 selected their courses based on the Standards that were in effect in February 2005, they were granted their half-credit in Computer Literacy and developed their four-year high school course plan based on what they understood to be the *rules*. According to the new Standards however, it is now necessary to rescind that half-credit. Pinkerton has no alternative but to comply with the state's ruling. The Academy is troubled by the effect of this change on our students, but will work with the students to help them through these modifications to the Standards so that they will be computer literate and will graduate with their class.

Information will be posted on the Academy's website, www.pinkertonacademy.net, as the plans for the portfolio are developed. If you have any further questions, please contact Dr. Christopher Harper at chrisharper@pinkertonacademy.org.