



BRUNSWICK HIGH SCHOOL

116 MAQUOIT ROAD
BRUNSWICK, MAINE 04011-7452
OFFICE: 207 319-1910
FAX: 207 798-5515

DONNA M. BOROWICK
PRINCIPAL

TIMOTHY E. GAGNON
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

May 7, 2012

PETER D. GARDNER
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

I am writing to discuss my amazingly positive experiences at the Cathance River Education Alliance (CREA) over the past four years. As a science teacher of multiple levels, I can't express enough how impressed I have been with the professionalism, communication, and high level of science content offered to me and my students through CREA's programs. Rick Wilson and Cheryl Sleeper have played pivotal roles in all our successful endeavors. As a teacher, I know how important planning is to a successful lesson, and both Rick and Cheryl have worked extensively with me to plan the perfect experience for my students and colleagues here at Brunswick High School.

I have brought honors level students, academic level students, and very low-level and behavior issue students to CREA and all types of learners have flourished there. CREA provides exceptional resources as well as knowledgeable and highly trained personnel. I believe strongly in teaching "the whole child" and CREA has helped me reach this goal on numerous levels. From a curriculum standpoint, CREA has offered me access to microscopes and field study equipment I couldn't have gotten from my school. They have provided literature for research, helped design lesson plans, and provided specific data collection help when needed. Outside of curriculum, CREA has also helped my students to foster a much wider and more intimate appreciation for the natural world here in Maine. Through geologic studies, vernal pools studies, hikes, and mammalian ID studies, my students have accessed the natural world in ways they never would have been able to otherwise.

In addition to bringing my classes to CREA each year, I have also had the opportunity to have three independent study students work closely with CREA staff this past year on two big projects: a mammalian density survey and a painted turtle tracking project. My students were granted full access to all of CREA's equipment and resources and they had invaluable experiences working with CREA staff and volunteers to complete their data collection. CREA even worked with them to gain funding for new equipment, including an underwater video camera, to help make their project a real success. In addition to my independent study students, I have also had students be a part of CREA's Environmental Youth Leadership (EYL) program during the summer. These students have gotten community service hours as well as had a chance to do some really outstanding work on environmentally based projects, often with local professionals in the community.

It is rare to have an organization as polished, professional, and willing to work with teachers as CREA is in a community of our size. Through their hard work and dedication to their educational programs, my students have benefited tremendously. I often have students at the beginning of the year ask: "when are we going to CREA?" because they have heard so much about it from previous classes. I can't speak highly enough about all the good work CREA does and I look forward to continuing to work with them over the coming years. If you have any questions, please contact me amccullough@brunswick.k12.me.us.

Sincerely,

Andrew McCullough

