

Karen Toavs

EDUCATOR

Specializing in Rural and Secondary Education

VITAE

CONTACT DETAILS

*Karen Toavs
7001 3rd Ave. E
Williston, ND 58801*

*701-570-8499
karen@thethinkingextreme.com
www.thethinkingextreme.com*

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Teacher Education

Rural Education

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment

Secondary Literacy

Secondary Education

Teaching & Technology

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Secondary Educator

Educational Consultant

Curriculum Writer

Curriculum Editor

Literacy Trainer

TEACHING FOCUS

Global Learning Awareness

Common Core Integration

Building Rural Curriculum

K-12 Writing Approach

Strategic Literacy Approach

Critical Thinking Strategies

Elective Course Design

PERSONAL PROFILE

- I am an educator with extensive experience in secondary education in grades 7-12. I have a Ph.D. in Education and have specialized in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. I am hoping to expand my professional practice into higher education.
- I am working as an independent educational consultant, specializing in K-12 literacy, writing, and curriculum development.
- While I do not yet have instructional experience in online environments, both my Master's degree through Valley City State University and Ph.D. through Walden University were completed via online classroom environments. I am comfortable with online academic research, posting, discussion, and collaboration.
- Curriculum development is a particular interest of mine, and I have worked as an independent educational consultant, an independent curriculum writer/editor, and a district curriculum team member.
- I have one year of experience with telecommute work, as a history curriculum writer.
- I am licensed as a secondary teacher in both North Dakota and Montana: North Dakota Educator License #58771 (English/ History 7-12); Montana Educator License #71910 (English/ History 5-12)

PROFESSIONAL HONORS AND RECOGNITION

- 2012 Pearson Global Fellowship and NEA Teaching Excellence
- 2011 North Dakota Teacher of the Year
- April 2006 KUMV-TV Teacher of the Month
- Classroom Transformation Grant recipient
- 2005 North Dakota Middle School Team of the Year member

PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

- 2011 Northwest SIG Regional Conference, Adolescent Literacy
- 2010-2011 North Dakota Curriculum Initiative, WHHW Series (model classroom)
- 2010 Roughrider Education Services Program Curriculum Institute, Presenter
- 2009 North Dakota Curriculum Initiative Adolescent Literacy Conference, Presenter
- 2008 North Dakota Curriculum Initiative Adolescent Literacy Conference, Presenter

IN-DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Independent educational consultant, The Thinking Extreme LLC
 - 2014-2017 in-district secondary curriculum planner, writing process planner, Culbertson Public School, MT
 - 2010-2012 in-district curriculum template trainer and guide for development of standards-based curriculum units, Williston Public Schools, Williston, ND
 - 2009-2010 in-district middle school literacy trainer, Williston Middle School, Williston, ND
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PUBLICATIONS

- K-12 Instructional Strategy Sheets, The Thinking Extreme LLC. These documents are viewable on the website: www.thinkingextreme.com
- Toavs, K.J. (2017). How rural educators implement common core state standards. (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved from <http://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/3212/>
- “Is Teaching Multicultural Texts Enough to Prepare Students for Modern World?” Blog featured in *Innovation*, 3 Dec. 2013, published by NEA Foundation. <http://www.neafoundation.org/blog/karen-toavs>
- *The Power of Homelands* (Introductory unit into diaspora literature), BetterLesson unit created for Teachers of Global Competence, 2013, <http://betterlesson.com/community/document/2112844/the-power-of-homelands-toavs-pdf>
- *US History Unit I: The Individual and Society* (45 day complete teaching unit), published by ESubjects, 2005, Petaluma, CA
- *US History Unit 2: Principles and Ideals* (45 day complete teaching unit), published by ESubjects, 2005, Petaluma, CA
- *The Jungle Mini Unit* (5 day complete teaching unit), published by ESubjects, 2005, Petaluma, CA

CAREER HISTORY

Independent Educational Consultant

The Thinking Extreme LLC

April 2017-Present

Work Experiences:

- Developed full day workshops to support K-12 teachers and staff in their continued education.
- Building Rural Curriculum: workshop series for designing a K-12 curriculum plan.
- Growing Webs: full day workshop for K-12 writing approach.
- Written Reading: full day workshop for strategic literacy in K-12 classrooms.
- Providing strategy guides and materials for K-12 teachers via The Thinking Extreme LLC website.
- Providing Montana teachers with alignment strategies for the Montana Common Core Literacy Standards.
- Created and am maintaining website for consulting services.

9-12 English Teacher

Culbertson High School, MT

Aug. 2013-Present

Work Experiences:

- Currently teaching high school English within a trimester schedule framework.
- Responsible for design of standards-based curriculum for varied English courses, including electives specific to the writing process, research process, literary analysis, historical and scientific texts.
- Assisting in the development of a secondary curriculum structure for the district and cohesive K-12 writing process.
- Serving as advisor for district’s National Honor Society chapter.
- Serving as district ACT testing coordinator.

CAREER HISTORY (CONTINUED)

7-8 Language Arts Teacher, 10-11 English Teacher

Williston Middle School, ND Williston High School, ND

Aug. 2005-June 2013

Work Experiences:

- Taught 6 years of middle school language arts and history within a middle school teaming framework.
- Taught 2 years of high school English.
- Led year-long middle school literacy training.
- Served as district curriculum team member, where I assisted in the development of a standards-based curriculum template and guided all K-12 teachers in developing standards-based units for science, technical education subject, physical education, mathematics and English language arts.
- Served as a member of the district's accreditation team, responsible for collecting accreditation data and information to meet the standards in the AdvancED accreditation process. My work included writing sections of the accreditation plan, planning and hosting the accreditation visit.
- Developed 8th grade Language Arts curriculum units.

Curriculum Writer and Editor, US History

ESubjects, online curriculum company

Feb. 2004-Jan. 2005

Work Experiences:

- Wrote as a contracted writer for ESubjects, structuring complete US history units, with each unit designed to span an academic quarter (45 days).
- Served as an editor of history curriculum.
- Completed all work as a telecommute employee, with work submitted online and communication with company vice-president via e-mail and phone conference calls.

9-12 English/ History Teacher

New Town High School, New Town, ND

Aug. 2002-June 2004

Work Experiences:

- Taught 2 years of high school English, world history and yearbook.
- Contributed to the creation of standards-based curriculum framework for social studies department.
- Served as the advisor for the school annual.

NCATE Accreditation Administrative Assistant

Montana State University-Northern

Aug. 1999-June 2001

Work Experiences:

- Served as a part-time assistant within the College of Education and Graduate Studies to support NCATE accreditation work.
- Assisted in writing and editing accreditation documents, recording meeting minutes and information, and supporting the work of seven accreditation sub-committees.
- Concurrently, I was a student within the College of Education, so I was able to share a student perspective when sub-committees requested my participation.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

PhD, Walden University

2011-2017

- Specializing in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Coursework included social change theory and Knowledge Area Modules as independent scholar practitioner work (KAMs).
- KAM Specialized Investigations: multiculturalism, globalism, internationalism, rural teacher leadership, leader-member exchange theory and rural education.
- Dissertation theory: Aoki's theory of planned and lived curriculum, rural curriculum and the standards-based curriculum reform.
- Dissertation: How Rural Educators Implement Common Core State Standards
- GPA: 3.92
- Completed degree in February 2017

M. Ed., Valley City State University

2006-2008

- Specializing in Teaching and Technology
- Relevant Coursework: research in education, diversity, principles of teaching, supervision and assessment, technology for learning, field design, action research, design for engineering.
- Thesis: The Impact of Original Research Practice in Motivating Academic Integrity in High School Students
- GPA: 4.0
- Completed degree in July 2008

Continuing Education Work

Bismark State College, University of North Dakota, Valley City State University

2001-2010

- Relevant Coursework: Online Instructional Design, SMART Board Training, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, North Dakota Native American Studies, Technical Education
- GPA: 4.0
- Credits Earned: 18 credits

B.S. (Secondary English), Montana State University- Northern B.S. (Secondary History)

1997-2001

- Relevant Coursework: English grammar, writing process, literature, literary criticism, global history, Montana history, international relations, global perspectives, Native American culture, history and literature.
 - Served as vice-president of the Student Senate and participated in the Western Model United Nations as a delegate and chair of Security Council.
 - Graduated Summa Cum Laude, Departmental Distinction
 - Student Excellence Award, 2000
 - GPA: 4.0
 - Completed degrees in May 2001
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PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Contact Information Available Upon Request.

- Peg Portscheller, Pathways To Results (President), Professional Colleague
 - Deanna Boddie, Dissertation Chair, Advising Faculty
 - Larry Crowder, Administrator, Culbertson School
 - Shawn Harkins, Teaching Colleague, Culbertson School
 - Lori Roys, Teaching Colleague, Culbertson School
 - Duane Noeske, Administrator, Williston Middle School
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