

**Falcon's Nest School Store**  
**North Country Career Center (Vermont)**

Contact: Susan C. Birchard or Roger Cartee

We are very proud of the Falcons Nest School Store and credit its success to a number of factors. The most important factor is that we offer a wide variety of items. Our inventory ranges from power bars, fresh fruit, yogurt, milk and smoothies to candy bars, sodas, chips and pastries. One corner of our small space is designated for NCU clothing which we sell as a means to promote school spirit and we also carry school supplies for the convenience of our customers. We have worked closely with our school health committee to design a health policy which appeases the concerns for healthy eating while allowing students to make choices. The food items that we offer for sale do not compete with our school cafeteria so we maintain a good business relationship with them. Our business hours are 7:30-3:00 every day including lunch hours which is convenient for students, teachers, support staff, parents and visitors.

A clean, bright, well organized store is also a great contributor for success. Our coolers are constantly being filled and shelves faced off. We decorate the store for the seasons and holidays to keep a festive atmosphere which allows students to use their creativity. We also bring in items and displays that are not part of our regular inventory which keeps our customers interested and provides an opportunity for our students to use their marketing skills. Occasionally we will hold a raffle where customers may win a prize such as a coca cola t- shirt. Not only does this bring in customers but it also creates a fun way to thank our customers for their business.

Of course it is important to have a well trained staff. Our store is fortunate to have a full time adult store manager who generally oversees all aspects of the store. The second year marketing students serve as department managers and are responsible for taking inventory and ordering all the products we sell. Two students take care of the bookkeeping end of tracking our sales and paying all the receipts. Balancing monthly statements is part of their duties. Each student learns customer relation skills and how to properly use the cash register as well as making change. Each student learns how to balance a cash drawer and how to make a deposit balancing to the daily sales

receipts. All profits made in the store go back to the marketing students which is a great incentive for them to do a good job. Also, because we live in an economically deprived area this extra money enables many students to take advantage of the great trips that DECA offers.

We are looking forward to the building of a new career center in the next two years where we will have a larger space and greater visibility within the school. At this time we are always looking for ways to increase our sales. Two years ago we started a coffee club which has grown to include forty members and attracts faculty to the store. After returning from the national convention, we invested in a breeze freeze machine that has been a hit with our customers. This year we were able to purchase, with some outside funding, a beverage golf cart that marketing students drive to soccer, field hockey and baseball games. As the popularity of this cart grows we will include clothing items, such as sweatshirts, hats etc. to compliment the food items of sodas, chips and hot dogs.

At this time our store is thriving. Last year our store had profits of over \$52,000 and just in the first two months of the new school year we are up 20% from a year ago at this time. The more successful the store is, the more opportunities are offered to our marketing students in way of trips and other benefits. Our store provides a great learning opportunity for the marketing students to practice real life skills that they can carry with them outside the school environment. The highest compliment is when an underclassman comes into the school store and states “Awesome, you get to work in the store as part of your marketing class!”



