

Superintendent's Report for July 2014

Student /Staff Learning

1. The student enrollments for summer programs in the WCSU are exceeding expectation. Our summer programs include the Explorers Camp for grades 1-6 at Jamaica and Summer Educational Enrichment Camp (SEEK) at L&G for grades 7-8, and Dover's Summer School and Camp. They are for four weeks, three weeks and five weeks respectively ending on or before Aug. 1st. Dover, Jamaica, Leland and Gray now provide free breakfast and lunch for all campers. Planning and logistical support are provided by our WCSU 21C Grant Coordinator, Thara Fuller. These camps focus on hands-on learning and outdoor activities.
2. Four members of my administrative team attended the Education Leaders Institute at Dartmouth for five days, June 22 – 26. Bill Anton, Dorinne Dorfman, Laura Hazard, and Matt Martyn joined me for an exceptional series of lectures and discussion led by the faculty of the Tuck Graduate School of Business. The specific content and ideas generated from our planning together will be shared with all schools and boards beginning this summer and fall. Perhaps the most provocative and pertinent to our work together was Matthew Slaughter's linking the "Globalization of the Economy" to the imperative for improved public education in the United States.
3. Our two Vermont Elementary School Principals of the Year, Bill Anton and Rosemary FitzSimons will be honored at the Vermont Principals' Association Annual Summer Conference on Tuesday. The recognition banquet will be held at Killington Mt. Resort on August 5. I invite you all to attend. Please let me know if you wish to carpool.
4. This is the time when I review all annual evaluations of teachers and reviewed them with the principals. The WCSU Guidelines for Supervision and Evaluation implemented by Wendy Houlihan are due for a revision. I will appoint a committee of teachers and administrators representing all schools early this fall to undertake a review in keeping with the changes in the Vermont Educator License renewal requirements and direction from the Secretary of Education Rebecca Holcombe to improve Education Quality across all school districts.
5. On July 17 two representatives from the WCSU Local Standards Board will attend all day training sessions to ensure effective implementation of the new requirements for educator license renewal. I will attend this same workshop on July 10.

Policy and Regulation

1. Requirements for teachers to renew their licenses have been changed in response to lobbying from the VEA/NEA and the Education Committees of the House and Senate. Renewal is now required every five years for a level II professional license. Independent Professional Learning Plans are no longer required, but the Local Standards Board will still verify the professional learning credits earned by each teacher.
2. For all teachers and administrators in the WCSU the electronic approval system for approval and reimbursement will support these requirements and provide a

WCSU will ...place students at the center of our decision-making.
...build trust and respect by acting ethically, transparently, and with integrity.
...operate as a community of learners, committed to developing the skills and capabilities of all.
...collaborate, share and seek creative solutions.

- professional portfolio for them in My Learning Plan (mylearningplan.com). This database also tracks total investments by the boards in professional development. The WCEA/WCSU Master Agreement calls for a cap of \$46,000 combined for all teachers covered by the agreement. For FY14 the cap was \$44,000 and the actual reimbursements were almost \$42,000 (to date). We will not exceed the cap. This capped amount does not include nor limit our support for administratively directed in-service and professional learning. The Consolidated Federal Grants primarily fund these workshops and courses to improve instruction in mathematics and English language arts.
3. Across the WCSU policy review, warning, adoption, and posting on-line continues to consume an enormous amount of time. The duplicated effort is hard to justify, especially for the majority of policies that are mandated (now standing at 29). These require consistent implementation across all Vermont school districts. I recommend that the WCSU Board direct the WCSU Policy Committee to consider preliminary approval to all policies except those pertaining to local school conditions, traditions, and grades 7-12. Examples of unique policies include but are not limited to field trips, community use of facilities, and inter-scholastic sports. Any policy given approval by the WCSU Policy Committee would be included in the consent agenda of each school district board for their next meeting.
 4. Late last month I emailed the changes in Vermont's Open meeting law to all board members. Should you have any questions regarding your responsibilities on a school board, please give me a call.

Finance/Accounting/Operations

1. Bud DeBonis is onboard as our WCSU Chief Financial Officer. He and his team are involved in activities relating to closing FY14 accounts and opening FY15.
2. The Sullivan and Powers team will be in our office for the weeks of September 22 and October 6 to audit the accounts of Windham Central SU, Jamaica, Leland and Gray UHSD #34, Marlboro, NewBrook, Townshend, Wardsboro, and Windham. This annual professional audit continues to be required by law for all Vermont school districts regardless of size.

Enrollment/Staffing

1. Terry Davison-Berger, the Administrative Assistant at L&G, is working in our office for four weeks this summer to review and select files for retention as legally required.
2. Nearly all the staff we require to open the school year are now on contract. A few part-time openings still need to be filled including, Driver's Ed., and elementary physical education and music.

Informational Items

1. The WCSU Board's Summer Retreat will be Wed., September 24 at 5:00 P.M. This will be a dinner meeting with location yet to be determined.

7/8/14 - sbj