

Winooski School District
Office of the Superintendent
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The mission of the Winooski School District is to awaken in its diverse student body, a thirst for knowledge, a passion for learning, and a desire to become responsible members of the world community. We offer a safe, supportive, educational environment. Our team of professionals recognizes individual strengths and needs and fosters academic excellence and personal growth. Working together in partnership with families, and the community, we strive to instill shared core values –respect, responsibility, empathy–and a commitment to help every student reach his or her potential.

Superintendent’s Board Report

- Introductory Meetings: I have continued my emphasis on building relationships across the Winooski community by meeting with the following folks and organizations:
 - Moe Paquette-Papa Franks’s,
 - Lance McKee-McKee’s Pub,
 - Subway-Zac Parker & Steve Forbes

- Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment
 - Tim Wise-Post-Racial Ideology, Systems, Blame & Responsibility: I attended this powerful presentation at Champlain College on November 20th. It was co-sponsored with Champlain College by WSD and BSD via funding from the Partnership for Change.
 - Tim Wise, whom philosopher Cornel West calls, “A vanilla brother in the tradition of (antiracism and antislavery fighter) John Brown,” is among the most prominent anti-racist writers and educators in the United States. Wise, who was named one of “25 Visionaries Who are Changing Your World,” by Utne Reader in 2010, has spoken in all 50 states of the U.S., on over 800 college and high school campuses, and to community groups across the nation. He has also lectured internationally in Canada and Bermuda on issues of comparative racism, race and education, racism and religion, and racism in the labor market. (<http://www.timwise.org/about/>)
 - Champlain College is following Tim Wise with a “train the trainer” workshop about racism coming up in January, which we have secured four slots for administrators, teachers and/or students.

 - “Fix it With Five” grant/St. Michael’s College: I have worked with Ed Wilkens, Development Director at the Stern Center for Language and Learning to write a grant to help identify families with pre-K children in Winooski, collect relevant family information, information about engagement with early childhood education and care programs, provide BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY® training for building early literacy foundational skills to parents, grandparents, and early learning providers, and strengthen the relationship and communication between WSD and local early learning providers. This will help break the cycle of disadvantage associated with reading failure and alleviate its deleterious social consequences, thereby strengthening the community overall. We have requested \$10,000. For more information: <http://fixitwithfive.wordpress.com/>

 - Vermont Public Records & Open Meetings Laws:
 - “Failure to understand and comply with Vermont’s open government laws can be a disaster waiting to happen. These laws continue to evolve through legislative action and court decisions, and it is challenging for local government officials and employees to stay current with and meet their obligations under these laws. The attorneys of Stitzel, Page

& Fletcher, PC regularly assist clients to navigate the procedural and substantive aspects of public records and open meetings laws, and to defend their actions when the need arises.” (Stitzel, Page & Fletcher, P.C.)

- I attended this important workshop on November 19th. I have included the notes in the agenda packet for your use. Also, if the board would like to learn more about these topics, the following free webinars are available:
 - **Vermont Open Meeting Laws, “Fundamentals & Issues”** – December 19, 2013 – 1pm to 3pm. Register at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6176439853664326401>
 - **Vermont Public Records Act, “Fundamentals, Issues & Key Exemptions”** – December 20 – 10am to 12pm. Register at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6396230029034480386>
- Legal Update for School Administrators with Art Cernosia, Esq.
 - This workshop provided Central Office and school based administrators a review of new Vermont and federal statutory/regulatory changes along with new judicial decisions impacting the operation of schools. Topics covered included technology issues, special education, behavior and discipline, confidentiality, bullying, and liability issues.
- Winooski Health & Wellness
 - I convened the second meeting to study the concept of *Collective Impact* and the following health and wellness data and plans. We will be meeting again in January.
 - 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)
 - http://www.healthvermont.gov/research/yrbs/2011/district_results.aspx
 - VT State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)
 - <http://healthvermont.gov/hv2020/ship.aspx>
 - VT Early Childhood Framework
 - <http://governor.vermont.gov/sites/governor/files/VT%20ECH%20Framework.10-29-13.pdf>
 - What is Collective Impact?
 - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k2nY6_mpWLZcIWekHmPM6-qM5bpD9BpKqLheCwyMMY7wZd5fKxgpCbtrts6EO/edit?usp=sharing
- Penguin Plunge update: Our Winooski Team has 70 team members and has raised \$2940. I would encourage all board members to register to plunge and/or contribute by checking out this link: <http://www.firstgiving.com/team/247809>.
- WSD Weekly issues
 - **WSD WEEKLY-ELL** <http://flip.it/N8ack>
 - **WSD WEEKLY-PROJECT-BASED LEARNING** <http://flip.it/yDKMa>
 - **WSD WEEKLY-Student Centered Learning** <http://flip.it/Dmtlp>
 - **WSD WEEKLY-Mindfulness** <http://flip.it/sBxcj>
- Partnership for Change updates:
 - [Nov. 2 Community Learning Conversation Data Report](#)
 - <http://partnershipvt.org/progress/family-school-communication-study/>
 - Winooski Tutoring Proposal approved: \$8,606 to support the hiring of a part-time School/Community Tutoring Coordinator that will work with both school and community partners (including the City of Winooski’s Teen Center and O’Brien Community Center, as well as the University of Vermont Department of Education) to provide consistent, high-quality tutoring for youth, primarily high school-aged, which spans both the school day and out-of-school hours to help improve academic outcomes, language acquisition for New American students, and student academic engagement.

WSD Goals

Goal #1: Increase student learning and growth

- At JFK, the instructional coaches are working with grade level teams and reviewing literacy and math data. The data is being used to inform instructional decisions. Our goal is to continue to improve outcomes for all students.
- The Middle/high School continues with a focus on strengthening reading fluency and comprehension. In addition to the established use of Read 180 and System 44 reading programs for students with a low lexile, a 25-minute block of Reading Plus has been integrated into the day for all middle school students since late October, and is an elective opportunity in the high school. Early data is very positive, both with the high level of student engagement and clear indication of strong growth in reading fluency and comprehension.
- We continue to prepare for professional development class for mainstream and ELL teachers in grades K-12. Kirsten Kollaard, who is trained as a WIDA professional developer, will teach this class. The class will be held once a week for 8 weeks. During this class the WIDA's "Can Do" philosophy will be shared with teachers and how to use this strength-based approach to best support students with ELL needs. Additionally, Kirsten will draw connections between the Common Core Standards, the WIDA standards and math and literacy best practices.

Goal #2: Increase student engagement through best instructional practices

- The JFK Green Mountain Star Action Planning Team held it's meeting on December 2nd. We continue to move forward on implementing aspects of the plan. Our discussion focused on delivery of instruction in mathematics. Each grade level team has been asked to submit one small change they will try in mathematics. This change needs to be something they have not tried before. The other topic of discussion was on parent communication and weekly newsletters. A template was presented to the group. This template is being shared with grade levels. In January, each grade level will begin communicating on a weekly basis.
- Middle and high school teachers increasingly explore and embrace blended learning practices into their classrooms. Blended learning is a relatively new term, which refers to the intentional integration of online technology, with personalization of content and extension of time and learning environment, and classroom instruction. Our reading programs above provide the opportunity for blended learning. Student and staff excitement is evident, and engagement in learning clearly increases as these learning tools are expanded.

Goal #3: Increase parent/community engagement

- The Winter Performance is coming up quickly. Students have been practicing during music and with their grade levels. This year's theme is "Growing Stars of the Future." As always teachers, staff and students work very hard on making this a memorable evening for families.
- Anera Foco organized a full middle/high school family outreach effort recently. Using adult and student translators, representatives of the school visited the parent/guardian of each middle and high school student, affirming our interest in working with them for their child's education, providing a calendar of key events and opportunities during the school year, and asking for their feedback. The information gathered is now being compiled and a report to the leadership team is forthcoming.
- The Parents as Educational Partners (PEP) class continues to go well. Parents went to parent conferences well prepared and were able to use their new skills as active participants in their children's conferences.
- The PACTS group held a meeting on Thursday, December 5th. Great attendance with over 25 people! I shared upcoming events and notable work happening in the school before we broke into our subcommittees. The Transitions group took a tour of the Middle/High School. The Communication group enjoyed a demonstration of UVM's translation equipment from Serifa Cicak, Winooski resident/parent and UVM employee. We will be pursuing the purchase of this equipment. Agendas and minutes can be found here: <http://wsdschools.org/Page/1535>

Goal #4: Collaboration and communication

- We have just inventoried parent email addresses and ~45% of parents don't have an email address listed in our student management database. We will be working in the next month to reach out to parents to collect email addresses and/or determine how many parents do not have an email address and why. Our goal is to have 100% parent email addresses so we can utilize this mode of communication more broadly and inclusively.
- Here is an update on the number of English Language Learners as of December 3rd.

English Language Learners-December 3, 2013

School/	Total Number of Students	Number that are English Language Learners	Percentage who are English Language Learners
JFK Elementary	349	114	33%
Middle School	155	51	33%
High School	223	100	45%
District	727	265	36%

Finance

- The leadership team continues to review the baseline FY15 budget. A revised budget will be presented at the December 9 meeting.
- There was little change in the Financial Management Report (FMR) ending November 30, 2013. At this time our projected Fund Balance is \$89,034 or 1%. We have received the final bill for the parking lot project, which will leave a fund balance of \$ 657,896.94 in the reserve account.

Action Items

The Winooski administration recommends that the board approve all of the following action items:

- Consent Agenda
 - Minutes of Meetings: November 18, 2013
 - Policy Title: 2.2 Treatment of Staff
 - Accept Superintendent Monitoring Report for Policy 2.2 Treatment of Staff
 - Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
 - Approval of Bills
 - Policy Title: 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
 - Superintendent Report