

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

CALEDONIA CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION

Superintendents Report : Issue 2

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Why Third Grade Matters

The CCSU board and each district board has adopted a rigorous goal stating that by the end of third grade 90% of all students will be at or exceeding grade level expectations in reading. This goal will require systemic change, it will require boards to be focused on student achievement and outcomes; it will require creating a system of accountability throughout CCSU to ensure student growth.

The CCSU board will be working with the Vermont School Board Association in creating a strategic plan to assist us in achieving this goal. I strongly encourage each district board to work with the School Board Association in creating a strategic plan moving forward. I feel this is essential to our systems growth and success. Each district will have unique needs in obtaining our targeted educational objectives.

CCSU will still be focused on all the other areas we have set out to achieve. We will continue to perfect our common formative assessments and develop our units of studies, for math, humanities, ELA, and science. We will continue to perfect our MTSS model to ensure all students receive an academic intervention at their level. We have set proficiency goals for mathematics, because math builds reasoning, which leads to comprehension. Developing a mentally organized way of thinking is critical to a students learning.

So why the focus on reading in third grade? Research indicates that reading proficiency by the end of third grade can make or break a child's educational development :

- * According to the Children's Reading Foundation up to half of the printed fourth grade curriculum is incomprehensible to students who read below that grade level.
- *According to researchers at Yale University three quarters of students who were poor readers in third-grade will remain poor readers in high school.
- *Low literacy achievement correlates with more behavioral and social problems and subsequent grades levels later on.
- *One in six children who are not reading proficiently in third grade do not graduate from high school on time, a rate four times greater than that for proficient readers.
- *Low reading skills is a stronger predictor than poverty in predicting high school dropout rates.

Achieving this goal will take a combined effort from board members, administrators, faculty/staff, parents and the community.

In organizations , goals erode because of low tolerance for emotional tension. Nobody wants to be the messenger of bad news. The easiest path is to just pretend there is no bad news, or better yet, "declare victory"- to redefine the bad news as not so bad by lowering the standard against which it is judged."

-Peter M. Senge

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Eureka Math

CCSU has adopted the Eureka math program this year. Teachers took part in a training in August. Trainings will continue throughout the year. This program will provide consistency throughout our system in delivering math instruction. It is crucial that as we adopt this program, we do not become dependent on it. Teachers knowledge and understanding of the common core standards are crucial.

Any program regardless of how good it is, will have gaps. It will be our job as educators to make sure we are hitting our priority standards. We need to make sure as we transition to the Eureka math program that the hard work done on the units of study for math are in the forefront of our thinking. For example, a remediation week was built into the units of study, this was done purposefully with the understanding that some students may need a re-teaching of some materials within the units, or some units may simply take longer to teach. The same practice should be carried over into the Eureka math program. The program is a tool to be used to assist us in teaching the common core. Our goals and initiatives need to remain a focus.



Above :Left Ms. Amanda Norton reviews the learning target with her class. Above Right. Mrs. Heather MacDonald works one on one with a student during administrative round's at Barnet School.

Administrative Rounds

Two years ago CCSU started the practice of administrative rounds. Each month a building administrator hosts all CCSU administrators at their school. The administrators visit classrooms, observing, taking notes and reflecting on the lessons being taught, student engagement, instruction as well as specific items the building administrator might request the team to look for. At the end of the rounds the administrative team provides feedback to the principal on their observations. For example, a principal might asked the team to look for ***"what evidence is there that questioning is being used as an effective instructional tool"*** the team would then provide supportive evidence / feedback from their observations regarding this question. The rounds are geared to provide the administrator with critical feedback on how to improve instructional practices within the educational setting of their school. The rounds are not used in any supervisory capacity, only as a supportive tool to assist the building administrator and faculty in perfecting their practice. This is a supportive collaborative process that has been well received by all administrators. I'm very pleased that this is going into year three of this practice. Septembers administrative rounds were hosted by Principal Shawn Gonyaw, at the Barnet School.

***The roads we take are more important then the goals we announce.
Decisions determine destiny."***

Frederick Speakman



Walden Principal Liz Benoit and Danville Dean of Student's Patrick Penrock, take time to process after the administrative rounds on Sept 21

Featured

Teacher of the Month

As an addition to my monthly superintendent reports I will be featuring a teacher each month. We have a depth of high quality, dedicated professionals within our supervisory union. It's important that all our boards, community and faculty members become familiar with them. To start this off the featured teacher for the month of October is Ms. Randi Lowe. Ms. Lowe is a first year teacher at the Walden School, teaching a combined 1/2 classroom. She's a recent graduate of Norwich University where she studied elementary education and psychology. Ms. Lowe did her student teaching at Northfield Elementary School where she was recognized as student teacher of the year. Principal Benoit states "Ms. Lowe is an enthusiastic teacher! Who is always well prepared and makes learning fun for students."

Counseling Supervision

Last year CCSU began to offer clinical counseling supervision for our guidance counselors. Sylvia Bedor, LCMHC, LADC a local therapist provides the service to our counselors. This will be the second year we've offered this service to our professionals. As a former counselor myself I found this an area of need. Our guidance counselors deal with a multitude of issues with students that are outside of the academic realm. Mrs. Bedor meets with our counselors monthly for group supervision. She is also available for counselors to contact her when dealing with complex situations. The feedback from our guidance counselors has been positive, at the end of last year they requested that the service be continued. This year we have included Cabot and Twinfield counselors into the supervisory group. I'm very pleased with how this is progressing and feel that this is a service that CCSU should continue to invest in.



Featured Teacher of the Month: Above Ms. Lowe addresses her class at the Walden School.

Act 46 Update

The administrators on the K-8 side of the RED, Waterford, Barnet, and Walden along with Peacham and CCSU administrators met on September 27, with consultant Peter Clarke. The team discussed various options in moving forward in preparation for the upcoming 706b committee meeting, scheduled for October 3 at 6:30 in Walden. This meeting was at the request of the committee after the last meeting.

The K-12 side of the RED Danville, Cabot and Twinfield will be reconvening in Cabot on Oct 12 at 6:00PM. Peter Clarke will be attending the October 10 Peachem Board meeting to discuss the Boards roll on a 706 committee defining the differences between being an advisory member versus necessary.

As we continue to discuss merger configurations among districts, I feel it is very important to constantly reflect back on the goals of Act 46 to ensure that whatever model is created is done with the intention of meeting the statute.

Goals:

Act 46 (2015) is designed to encourage and support local decisions and actions that::

- Provide substantial equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities statewide;
- Lead students to achieve or exceed the State's Education Quality Standards, adopted as rules by the State Board of Education at the direction of the General Assembly;
- Maximize operational efficiencies through increased flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with a goal of increasing the district-level ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff;
- Promote transparency and accountability; and
- Are delivered at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value

CCSU Board Adopts New Bullying Policy

The CCSU board, which serves as the policy board for the SU has adopted the new language for the Bullying policy. The major change in language is stating that one significant incident opposed to a repeated or pattern of incidents can be bullying. Each district will need to vote and adopt this policy at the November board meetings. Policy must be posted 30 days prior to the vote. The policy is below for your review:

I. (a) "Bullying" means a single significant incident or a pattern of incidents involving a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another pupil which:

- (1) Physically harms a pupil or damages the pupil's property;
- (2) Causes emotional distress to a pupil;
- (3) Interferes with a pupil's educational opportunities;
- (4) Creates a hostile educational environment; or
- (5) Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

(b) "Bullying" shall include actions motivated by an imbalance of power based on a pupil's actual or perceived personal characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs, or motivated by the pupil's association with another person and based on the other person's characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs.

II. "Cyberbullying" means conduct defined in paragraph I of this section undertaken through the use of electronic devices.

III. "Electronic devices" include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones, computers, pagers, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, and websites.

IV. "Perpetrator" means a pupil who engages in bullying or cyberbullying.

V. "School property" means all real property and all physical plant and equipment used for school purposes, including public or private school buses or vans.

VI. "Victim" means a pupil against whom bullying or cyberbullying has been perpetrated. *

Milepost– Custom Assessments:

Mileposts is up and operational. This is our data warehouse system for all our assessment data. This software will make our data team meetings more efficient for teachers by easily accessing student information in one location. It has been a lengthy process to get all the data collected, as it was scattered throughout the SU in multiple areas. In addition we are working with Renaissance learning and fine-tuning our Star assessments. In perfecting our MTSS model, every student receiving a tier 2 remediation or tier 3 intervention are progress monitored biweekly. We are able to custom designed assessments to the students that will drastically reduced the amount/length of the test students are taking. For example, the full Star assessments take approximately 30 minutes. We can create custom assessments specific to the child's needs they can take 5 to 7 minutes. I'll be organizing a training for our reading and math specialists so we can gain further understanding on how best to create these assessments to reduce test taking time for children, while still obtaining crucial information to drive instructional practices.

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**"OPPORTUNITY IS
MISSED BY MOST
PEOPLE BECAUSE IT IS
DRESSED IN OVERALLS
AND LOOKS LIKE
WORK".**

THOMAS A. EDISON