



District Goals – 2011-2012

The Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union Administrators have established several goals for the 2011-2012 school year. The goals include:

- Implementation of a new teacher supervision/evaluation model
- Implementation of The Skillful Teacher training for all staff over the next two years
- Development of a revised/updated English/Language Arts curriculum
- Development of a new paraprofessional supervision/evaluation model
- Implementation of a mentor program for new teachers
- Offering of additional technology training for staff
- Development of technology integration into classroom instruction
- Continued shift of responsibilities of transportation, special education and hiring to Supervisory Union Office
- Implementation of the Intensive Needs Program at Weathersfield
- Updating Board policies as a result of policy audit
- Investigation of the Carousel Meeting format for school district Board meetings
- Investigation of possible offering of common summer remedial services to middle school students in need

This is an ambitious agenda which focuses on our continued efforts to enhance student achievement. An action plan has been written for each goal and many of the activities designed to achieve the individual goals have been accomplished already. We will report on our progress in achieving our goals as the school year proceeds.

Carousel Meeting

At the October 26 Supervisory Union Board Meeting, Mr. Angelo Odatto, Board Chair and Brent Kay, Superintendent at the Orange Southwest Supervisory Union (Randolph) provided a presentation on the Carousel Meeting format. This format is designed to bring the boards in the Supervisory Union closer together in sharing their work. The focus for the Boards is the establishment of a strong policy/governance emphasis. In this format, most school board meetings would be held on one night. The Supervisory Board meeting would begin the evening's meetings. After this meeting, each individual district would meet at the same time on district specific items. There would also be an opportunity for district boards to share ideas and to discuss issues. The ultimate goal is to maintain each district's autonomy while working together to share services, ideas, etc. to build a strong, cohesive Supervisory Union.

RED Committee

Act 153 required school districts to bring specific services under the umbrella of the Supervisory Union. These services include transportation, special education and hiring. We have made significant strides in making this transition. An additional segment of Act 153 requires districts to consider a RED (Regional Education District). All four school districts voted the past spring to conduct a RED Feasibility Study.

The study will be funded by the Vermont Department of Education. A RED Committee will be selected with proportional representation from each school district. The RED Committee is an independent body working outside the governance of the Supervisory Union. The composition of the Committee is based on pupil enrollment and will be comprised of 9 members (four Board members and five community members). The membership break down by school district is as follows:

West Windsor - one Board member
Weathersfield - one Board member, one community member
Windsor - one Board member, two community members
Hartland - one Board member, two community members

We have contracted with a consultant from the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA) to conduct and lead the Feasibility Study. Work/meetings for the RED Committee are scheduled to begin in late November, early December. RED Committee members will meet once a month for a two hour meeting over the next 12-15 months.

Superintendent's Coffee

Tom Christensen, Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union Superintendent, is inviting parents and community members to a morning coffee session on Friday, December 2 at 9 AM in the Second Floor Conference Room at Windsor High School. The purpose of this session is to provide an opportunity for the public to share their ideas, perspectives, aspirations, etc. about our schools. This session is not for airing personal items/concerns. Please RSVP to Diane Tessier via e-mail at dtessier@wsesu.net or by phone at 802-674-2144, ext. 107 by Tuesday, November 29. Please enter through the Windsor High School doors and sign in. Also, please park behind the High School. We look forward to meeting with you.

Budget

We are rapidly approaching budget season. Each school district and the Supervisory Union administration have been working diligently to develop the 2012-2013 budget. Budget meetings will be scheduled in Windsor, Hartland, and Weathersfield to garner input from the community and to discuss budget goals and budget parameters. Please check your school's website for the dates and times of these meetings.

Policy Audit

The Vermont School Boards Association recently completed a policy audit for Board policies in each of our districts and the Supervisory Union. The Administration and Board members will be working together to update and revise our policies during the remainder of the school year.

Constitution Essay Contest Winner

Peter Jaarsma, a Windsor High School Freshman, recently won the New Hampshire Constitution Essay Contest. Congratulations to Peter and please see below for a Valley News Article chronicling this honor.

Peter Jaarsma's contention that cell phones, iPads and other communication devices shouldn't be used by students for personal use during the school day probably isn't shared by all of his classmates. No matter: The reasoning that Jaarsma, 15, used in an essay submitted for the New Hampshire Constitution Day Essay Contest, and the previous Supreme Court cases that he cited, have propelled him to first place in the high school division of the Contest.

The Windsor High School freshman argued in the essay –originally written for teacher Stan Spencer’s civics class – that such devices prove disruptive to the educational process that the Constitution requires schools to provide.

“If you’re sitting next to someone in class and talking to them, that’s not allowed. So cell phones are pretty much the same thing, if used in that manner,” Jaarsma, a Cornish resident, said yesterday.

The contest is coordinated by the Nackey S. Loeb School of Communications in Manchester. In this year’s contest, students were asked to consider whether schools had the right to confiscate or prohibit the use of various communication devices, or whether doing so infringed upon a student’s First Amendment rights.

Eight New Hampshire newspapers, including the Valley News, sponsored the contest and named two finalists, one each from a middle school student and a high school student attending schools in their circulation area. The statewide contest winners were chosen by the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

Jaarsma’s essay was one of 58 submitted for Spencer’s civics class. Of those, Spencer forwarded the four he felt were strongest to the contest. In Jaarsma’s essay, Spencer said, his student carefully considered previous High Court decisions that came down on the side of schools. “Citing precedents of prior cases made his stand apart,” Spencer said.

Jaarsma will be recognized at a Nov. 10 ceremony at the Loeb School’s First Amendment Awards ceremony in Manchester. Vice President Joe Biden is expected to attend.

“It feels pretty good, because I did put a lot of effort into that essay, and it feels pretty good to get something back for it,” Jaarsma said.

Jaarsma’s essay was one of 14 finalists in the statewide contest, with seven each from the middle school and high school divisions. Also named as a finalist in the middle school contest was Avery Judd, a seventh-grader at Richmond Middle School in Hanover.

Supervisory Union Spelling Bee

Congratulations are extended to the winning teams listed below in our annual Supervisory Union Spelling Bee. Both teams came in second at the regional meet on Saturday, November 5.

State Street School – Grades 7/8 (Mackenzie Davis, Allen Fan, Karen Fan, Annie Soho, Brooke Winter)

Hartland School -- Grades 5/6 (Carrie Rediker, Devon Beland, Bronwyn Smith, Molly Thompson, Sara Kleber, Halsey Jones)