

Superintendent's Update

Fall 2009

Superintendent's Welcome Back Letter To Teachers

Greetings,

Despite the extremely rainy weather, I hope that everyone is experiencing a relaxing and enjoyable summer. Although school is not scheduled to open for another couple of weeks, I am excited about the upcoming school year. First, I would like to congratulate each of you on the job you are doing in the classroom on a daily basis. We are currently living and working through one of the most difficult time periods in our nation's history. As educators we have seen our funding sources from the federal, state and local governments decrease over the past six years. Each of us has had to adjust to having less funding to perform our job responsibilities, but yet we are required to do more each year. In spite of these seemingly insurmountable challenges our students in every grade are meeting with success! This is evident by the fact that each of our five schools has been identified as having "Met Annual Yearly Progress". I know that each of you will work just as hard as you have done in the past, and continue to challenge your students on a daily basis.

This year, the high school will continue to work towards submitting the Commissioner's Plan on high school reform to the RI. Department of Education. Throughout the summer, Mr. Fezette and Mrs. Sanna have been meeting and working with department heads and teachers in order to address the submission expectations and recommendations from RIDE's preliminary approval of the high school's original submission. Work has also been completed in the areas of standards setting. The high school is also expected to submit assessments which are aligned to the GSE's in each course of study. These assessments will allow teachers to separately grade proficiency assessments on a quarterly basis. Additionally, the Technology and Fine Arts Departments have established alternate pathways for students to become proficient in these areas. Without the help of these teachers, it is doubtful that this report

would be submitted on time. This is a great example of the time that teachers "put in" at every grade level after the school day is over or in this case when school is not in session to help provide a high quality education for all our students.

Last spring, the district was chosen as one of thirteen school districts by RIDE to participate in the Mathematics and Science

teacher to reflect upon what they teach, why they teach it and in turn develop new strategies to support those students who do not initially master the GSE's and GLE's that are embedded in the material which is being taught. I am confident that if we continue to support this philosophy, our students will continue to increase and expand their abilities to learn.

As part of the School Department's Strategic Plan that was developed and approved by the School Committee last spring, a central component of the Strategic Plan revolves around developing subcommittees to study and make recommendations in four areas that were identified as essential to improving the quality of instruction throughout the district. The Strategic Plan also focuses on maintenance and usage of all five schools in the district. Four subcommittees have been formed to study and make recommendations in the following areas; Professional Development, Human Resources, Facilities and Community Use and Planning. If you would like to volunteer to serve on any of these four subcommittees, you can contact my office and we will place you on the subcommittee of your choosing. I will also be seeking members of the community to volunteer to participate in this very important process. These subcommittees will start meeting next month.

I look forward to seeing everyone on Teacher Orientation Day which will be held in the high school auditorium on Friday, **September 4, 2009** at 8:30 am. Employees new to the district will attend **New Teacher Orientation** which will be held in the high school library on Thursday, September 3, 2009 at 9:00 am.

Enjoy the remaining days of summer.



The start of new school year

Partnership Grant which is designed to improve student achievement in Science and Math for students in grades K-12. Teachers and administrators representing every grade have been asked to participate in this training. The first session was held last May, and remaining sessions will begin this September. The information and training that is provided will be shared with every teacher and administrator at every grade level throughout the course of the school year. I ask every teacher to avail themselves of the Model Lab Classrooms that are at the middle school and high school. I believe this program to be a valuable learning experience for both the teachers and students who participate in the program.

As always we must continue to concentrate on incorporating "best" teaching practices in every classroom throughout the district. I am asking every

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High School Submits Update to Commissioner of Education



The Commissioner's Review 2010 protocol requires that each school district provide an updated progress report indicating the level of implementation of the identified priority Diploma System Components (any additional progress in the level of implementation or substantial changes made since the initial 2008 Review should be included).

The first part of the report included the high school's response to concerns that RIDE had with the data which was submitted in the original review. The high school was re-

quired to provide evidence of how they addressed these concerns.

The second part of the report focused on how the high school was progressing regarding alignment of curriculum to the Grade Level Expectations (GLE's) and Grade Span Expectations (GSE's), individual course assessments, and opportunities for science, social studies, the arts and technology.

For the final section of the report, information was provided about our middle school. The informa-

tion requested pertained to what progress was being made in implementing an Advisory Program, Individual Learning Plans (ILP's) and Common Planning time for middle school teachers.

High School Principal Steve Fezette, Curriculum Director Diane Sanna, Middle School Principal Patricia Aull, along with several high school department heads and teachers spent the summer researching the requests for data and compiling responses for the Commissioner's 2010 Review.

Start Times and Student Biographical Sheets



Listed below are the start and end times for all five schools.

All Three Elementary Schools (Ft. Barton, Pocasset and Ranger)

School Starts: 8:50 am

School Ends: 3:20 pm

Tiverton Middle School

School Starts: 8:00 am

School Ends: 2:20 pm

Tiverton High School

School Starts: 7:34 am

School Ends: 1:54 pm

Each fall Student Biographical Sheets are sent home to parents to be filled out and returned. The information allows the school to contact you in case of illness or emergencies.

In order to facilitate communication be-

tween our schools and parents, it is critical for parents to submit an email address in order to receive school newsletters, memos, and Connect-Ed messages.

Commissioner of Education to Visit Tiverton

Newly appointed Commissioner of Education for the State of Rhode Island, Ms. Deborah Gist is tentatively scheduled to visit Tiverton on Thursday, October 1, 2009. Commissioner Gist's visit is part of her initiative to tour every school district in the state.

Commissioner Gist is scheduled to arrive at Pocasset Elementary

School in the morning and while there she will visit the Co-Taught classrooms in grades 1-4.

After visiting Pocasset, the Commissioner will go the middle school where she will observe the Model Classroom.

The Commissioner's tour of the district will conclude with her meeting with high

school students who are members of the Peer Helping Network.

Following her meeting Commissioner Gist will spend time speaking with School Committee members, district and building-level administrators, as well as union leaders representing NEA-Tiverton.



School Department Prepares for H1N1 Flu

As everyone is aware, the Center for Disease Control and the RI Department of Health has been preparing for a potential outbreak of the H1N1 Flu this winter. In response to this potential outbreak the School Department has created a link on its website which contains the most recent press releases from the RI Department of Health.

The School Department has also taken several steps to try and minimize the potential number of H1N1 cases.

These steps include the following:

1. Refilled all hand

sanitizers in every classroom that has a dispenser.

2. Purchased portable hand sanitizers for those classrooms that do possess a dispenser.

3. Are in the process of repairing/replacing water faucets in the boys and girls lavatories at the middle school and high school.

4. Purchased additional replacement packs of sanitizers and portable hand sanitizers.

5. Any students who do become ill from the H1N1 Flu will not have these days

count against them.

6. The School Department is developing contingency plans if a significant number of teachers and support staff contract the H1N1 Flu.

Any new information pertaining to the H1N1Flu will be immediately sent home to parents and placed on the school department's web site.

