



Washington
West
Supervisory
Union

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CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: FALL 2011

Welcome back! I hope that the summer was rejuvenating and relaxing for each of you. The summer was a productive one for curriculum planning and professional development across the Supervisory Union. I'm excited about the work that occurred and wanted to provide a summary. Also provided is a review of the curriculum and assessment expectations, with some important dates to be mindful of this year.

This also serves as a reminder to sign up for your early-release day professional development session if you haven't already done so. You may see a copy of the updated list of offerings by going to the WWSU website's curriculum page. The online sign-up has been closed, so you need to contact Tisa Rennau to add your name to the sign-up sheet. You may email her at trennau@wwsu.org or call (802) 496-2272 ext 121.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns. Best wishes for a wonderful school year!

Vermont Council on Reading book discussion opportunity

In anticipation of the VCR 2012 Spring Conference keynote: author/educator **Dr. Steven Layne**, Vermont Council on Reading is hosting a self-directed, roving book club for Steven's 2009 Stenhouse book: **Igniting A Passion for Reading**.

Carla Lewis, Fayston School, will lead a 3-week book club discussion of Steven's teacher-friendly, easy to read, and hands-on guide book. The book looks at practical ways to re-engage readers who *can* read, but choose not to. It helps us examine our classroom and school practices for a balance of skills, and the promotion of the desire to read.

There are 10 slots available. Please r.s.v.p. to Carla if you wish to attend. <clewis@faystonelementary.org> The book club stops in WWSU first (Sept. 9-23) so indicate your interest right away!

REPORT ON THE SUMMER DEVELOPMENT WORK

Mathematics Best Practices Course

All mathematics teachers of grades 7-12 took a week-long course in Mathematics Best Practices in the month of June. This course focuses on how students learn mathematics and how teachers can modify their instruction in ways to promote critical thinking and problem solving in their classrooms. Further follow-up for this course will be provided throughout the year on the ERD days.

Integrated RESEARCH, INQUIRY, SOCIAL STUDIES development aligned with Common Core Standards

In July, teams of K-12 educators from many of the WWSU schools attended a three-day institute to begin development of curriculum aligned with the research expectations of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These new standards connect with the existing inquiry standards for Social Studies and with the 21st Century Skills framework. This provides an opportunity for some rich integration of topics and application that are best developed through *project-based learning experiences*. The work of this group will build throughout the year on the early release days with the support of the library-media specialists and technology integration leaders. The outcome of the work will be a K-12 research framework along with a companion document showing the application of these standards through sample units or examples. Anyone can join in this work by attending the ERD session or by attending our summer institute in July of 2012. Please be mindful of this exciting work and listen for more information as the year unfolds.



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HUHS Curriculum Council Planning

Harwood Union High School Curriculum Council worked to further create and define learning outcomes related to the Harwood Graduate Expectations through development of rubrics. The HGEs are a cross-curricular common set of skills, habits of mind, knowledge, and dispositions, similar to Vermont's Vital Results. All teachers share responsibility in teaching and assessing students in the academic and social/civic components in order for them to be prepared to demonstrate proficiency. These expectations clarify common outcomes for all of our graduates, no matter which learning pathways they pursue. Next steps with this work include the development of student created digital portfolios to demonstrate individual progress toward these standards over time.

Harwood graduates will achieve the following:

Academic Components

1. Solve complex problems and pose creative solutions
 - Recognize and describe the limits of the problem
 - Suggest workable and effective solutions
 - Select and try out the best solution
 - Revise initial solution or try other solutions and explain why they were not the best and how they address the limits and barriers of the problem
2. Know themselves as learners
 - Identify personal learning style
 - Demonstrate initiative
 - Set goals
 - Identify, select and use resources
3. Demonstrate literacy for a variety of audiences and purposes across content areas:
 - reading, writing, and speaking
 - numeracy
 - information and technology
 - visual representation/media
4. Possess intercultural competence
 - knowledge of at least one culture other than one's own
 - demonstration of the attributes of empathy and understanding
 - understanding of the impact of culture in one's own life and others' lives, in communities, and societies

Social/Civic Components

1. Know, show, and value who they are as individuals with dignity, integrity, and confidence
2. Be passionate about something they may pursue
3. Work collaboratively with other individuals and give and receive meaningful and respectful feedback
4. Demonstrate respect and compassion for the environment and humanity
5. Participate in the community and be a responsible citizen in a democratic society
6. Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks



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CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT UPDATES AND IMPORTANT DATES

Common Core State Standards

Vermont is beginning to transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). This is an exciting time for us as the common core allows for more possibilities for application and integration of content. In WWSU we will be looking for ways to leverage this transition to achieve our broader goals around transformation. The focus of the work this year will be to continue to build understanding of the standards and develop a specific timeline for other work that needs to occur. The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) will be the assessment system replacing the NECAP in 2014-2015. During this school year, we expect to have more detailed information about the SBAC assessment which will likely include both formative and summative assessment events. It is unclear at this time how this change will ultimately affect the local assessment expectations within our Supervisory Union. We will forward more information about these important changes as it becomes available.

Summary of Mathematics Assessment Expectations

The CCSS will begin to impact our curriculum work in many ways. There are two important facets of these standards in mathematics; those that relate to the *content* and those that relate to the *instructional practices*. This year our focus will be to build staff understanding of the standards through the work we have currently in progress on our ERD days. In grades 7-12, all staff will participate in the follow up to the summer "Best Practices" course which aligns with the common core *standards of practice* and provides support for modifying instruction to meet those pedagogical demands.

In grades K-5, the ERD session for the Investigations program will focus on identifying *content* within the program that aligns with the CCSS and on using assessments provided within the program to monitor student understanding of these important concepts.

Mathematics Local Assessment Expectations

PNOA Grades K-2

Full implementation with established benchmarks for Fall and Spring. Please check VCAT for the most updated version of the assessment prior to administration.

September 12-30-Fall Testing Window: **All Data into VCAT by Oct. 14**

January 30 -Grade Level Data Team Meetings for all teachers to review data and discuss instructional strategies: 2nd Grade 8-10 a.m., 1st Grade 10:30-12:30, Kindergarten 1-3 p.m. (snow date February 2)

March 23-PNOA Leadership Team Members Only 8:00-12:00 Prepare for the Spring PNOA administration (snow date March 30)

May 1-25, 2011: Spring Testing Window: **All Data into VCAT by June 8**

EOY Assessments for grades 3-8

Last year was a pilot year for the EOY assessments. This year we will only give the assessment at the end of the year. All schools will be giving Form 1 of this assessment. We will provide summary data from last year's administration at the point the standard setting has been finalized.

May 1-25, 2011: Spring Testing Window: **All Data into VCAT by June 8**

Fayston · Harwood Union · Moretown · Waitsfield · Warren · Waterbury-Duxbury



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CMP Unit Assessments

Development work has occurred with some of the 6th grade unit assessments over the summer. These will be shared with staff early this Fall. Student data will be collected for these assessments in VCAT throughout the year. Grades 7 and 8 have also informally aligned their assessment expectations within the program across schools and this work will continue as time permits.

High School Courses

Development work has occurred within the algebra and geometry courses for both the midterms and finals. Student data will be collected for these assessments in VCAT again this year. Additional development work will occur within departments throughout the year.

K-8 Science Curriculum Implementation Expectations

Both the K-8 and 9-12 Science committees continued to meet over the last school-year to continue developing local assessments tied to the WWSU Science Curriculum. As a result some of the K-8 assessments have been modified and updated within VCAT. The summary of the K-8 units is listed below. Schools should work to develop building based curriculum plans that address the content within the grade clusters identified below in a rotation that best meets their needs.

It is not the intention to promote a high-stakes testing environment with local assessments. It is the instruction and learning that is the true priority. Local assessments provide indicators of implementation across schools, and give grade-level aligned benchmarks to aim for; however it is the student learning and the meaningful context provided for it by individual teachers that matters most.

WWSU K-8 Science Unit Summary:

Kindergarten- Classification of Plants/Animals (no formal assessment), Human Body (senses), Sorting/Classifying (Matter/Rocks), Weather

Grades 1/2- Earth and Sky, Force and Motion, Human Body (no formal assessment), Life Cycles, Magnets, Matter, Needs of Living Things, Sound

Grades 3/4- Solar System, Electricity and Magnetism, Geology (Erosion), Human Body (no formal assessment), Interdependence, Life Cycles,

Grades 5/6- Cells, Ecosystems, Force and Motion, Geology, Human Body, Matter/Physical and Chemical Change, Solar System

Grades 7/8- Comparing Plant and Animal Cells, Density, Ecosystems/Interdependence of Organisms, Force and Motion, Properties of Matter, *and the following topics with no formal assessments:* Classification, Electricity and Magnetism, Genetics/Evolution, Light, Microbiology, Natural Resources, Weather