

April 2021

Cabinet Report to Boards

Our mission

*"Windham Central Supervisory Union provides leadership and resources
to ensure a strong educational system for all students."*

Core Values

Windham Central Supervisory Union will...

- *place students at the center of decision-making.*
- *build trust and respect by acting ethically, transparently, and with integrity.*
- *operate as a community of learners, committed to developing the skills and capabilities of all.*
- *collaborate, share and seek creative solutions.*

Connections to the WCSU Mission Statement Core Values

Collaborate, share and seek creative solutions: *Director of Special Education*

Very exciting times for **southeast regional collaborative efforts**, including Windham, Windsor, and Orange counties! The regional group has drafted an RFP (request for proposal) for a temporary Researcher to gather the necessary information to proceed with regional programming options. Our plan is to have this position overlap for a couple of months with a Program Developer (to be hired in August/September) which will be a year-long position aiming to develop the programs desired by and needed for our region. It is the hope that we can create programs that are regionally available and regionally funded, thereby expanding offerings to students, reducing the number of students in private placements, and reducing the cost of special education transportation.

Build trust and respect by acting ethically, transparently, and with integrity: ESSER

Recovery Team: The ESSER Recovery Team is a newly formed team representing our school and communities. The Recovery team's major responsibilities are to coordinate recovery efforts amongst the WCSU schools and to respond to state planning requirements. The Recovery team will gather and interpret data about school and community needs, gain feedback from stakeholders, and make recommendations to the Leadership Team for how to spend ESSER funds. While the team will need to navigate plenty of regulatory guidance, the members of the team are really being tasked to "think big" about what we can do with these funds to make the most impact for our students, staff and families.

Operate as a community of learners, committed to developing the skills and

capabilities of all: Director of Operations **Custodial Training:** Planning the second Weiss Bros. training for April break. Will be focusing on the benefits of Microfiber, and hard floor maintenance and refinishing. Our February training was around fully understanding the CDC guidelines around virus management. Understanding what a virus is, how it functions and mutates. What the proper steps are to kill viruses.

Updates

Starting **April 26th**, are planning to have students **in-person** for 5 days/week in all WCSU schools, except for Leland and Gray, which is planning for 4 days/week. Additionally we are deep into Recovery Planning preparing the school environment to serve the needs of our students and staff. Legislation is moving swiftly and I will continue to send out Ed Leg Updates.

Academic Proficiency

Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Academic Support Team (AST): The AST continues to meet weekly or biweekly. The purpose of these meetings is for the team to share resources for in-person and remote learning and to organize their efforts assessments and resources for literacy instruction in order to make recommendations for the LCAS. The team is also helping in the preparation of new AST staff for next year.

C&I Office: We are working on documentation for the AOE on our Continuous Improvement Planning and in preparation for the CFP. We are completing the final processing of REAP fund and ESSER I fund requests. We have begun planning for the 2021-22 Professional Development and Inservice days and are preparing for the hiring of four new AST interventionists.

Scope & Sequences: The Scope and Sequences for Math (6-12), Science (6-12) and English Language Arts (6-8) continue to be workshopped and revised with the help of the Leland and Gray teachers from each of these departments.

Director of Special Education

I have recently participated in a 2 day training for proficiency based IEPs in preparation for our Supervisory Union's work toward proficiency based efforts. While participating in the training, I reviewed some of the scope and sequence work that has been done by our Director of Curriculum and Instruction, teachers, and others and I must say it is quite impressive! I encourage you to see the work everyone has been doing to improve equality of access for all students and improve instructional outcomes. In just the 3.5 short years I have been in this role, it is astounding to observe the amount and quality of work that has been accomplished by all. Please see this work here:

<https://www.windhamcentral.org/home/curriculumandinstruction> Moving toward proficiency based IEPs (Individualized Education Program) will be an area we will continue to work toward as schools shift.

As a reminder, our Local Comprehensive Assessment System (LCAS) which can be found here: [Windham Central Supervisory Union - Curriculum and Instruction](#) is the basis for our Multi-Tiered System of Support and is the basis for much of our work toward creation of systems that meet the needs of all students and positions us well with the implementation of Act 173 (7/1/22) funding shifts.

Personalized Learning

Director of Curriculum & Instruction

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Director of Special Education

Recently, I attended an IEP team meeting for a student who is considering signing up for a Project Based Learning opportunity that may be available through Leland & Gray next year. It was fantastic to learn about this possible option and see the ways in which Leland & Gray is working to provide personalized learning for students. It was remarkable to see a shift from discussion of what courses need to be completed prior for graduation to how a student can meet the graduation requirements while engaging in meaningful, personalized learning. Pretty remarkable efforts and I look forward to continued discussions!

High Quality Staffing

Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Foundations of Literacy: The WCSU is hosting a Foundations of Literacy course this spring (8 half days). Academic Support Teachers, Special Educators, Classroom Teachers and Administrators (22 participants) are attending this course offered by Brian Buettner, Literacy Specialist. This course was designed for our SU to provide foundational information about early literacy, explore assessment and intervention tools, and plan for instruction in our classrooms.

Leadership Team: The LT continues to use its monthly meeting to share resources and knowledge for working during the pandemic, be it in-person, hybrid, or remote learning. Each month the leaders review an observation together, share feedback, and calibrate their evaluations. This month the team solidified plans for continuing the Implicit Bias work and for supporting the Trauma Catalyst Group's efforts in support of our schools. The LT also completed an MTSS screener to evaluate their school and the SU work so far. The team has begun planning for professional development for the 2021-2022 school year.

Director of Special Education

Special Educators have been excited about the Foundations of Literacy course offered by our SU this spring. Several instructional items have been ordered recently as they begin implementing some of the ideas from the training.

We have held several department meetings with our Case Managers and School Psychologist, discussing our referral processes, ensuring we are reviewing benchmark data and other progress monitoring data upon receiving a request for a special education evaluation. Due to the extraordinary efforts of teachers, Principals, AST (Academic Support Teachers), Special Educators, and other staff, we have the ability to hone in on the exact area of difficulty which significantly reduces the amount of time a student engages in special education testing as part of the referral process. We will continue to meet in order to implement best practices on this process. Additionally, there will be significant changes to the special education evaluation process if the rules and regulations for special education become adopted at the state level. This will shift some disability areas as well as change the criteria for SLD (Specific Learning Disability) from a severed discrepancy model to an RtI (Response to Intervention) model. We are preparing for the change but await the final decision before implementing. This, in addition to Act 173 (funding shift from a reimbursement model to a census-based model) are catalysts for changing practices and emphasizing the extreme importance of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), benchmark assessment, structured intervention, and more. Our Supervisory Union is in a great position for these upcoming changes and have been asked to share our ideas, processes, and model with other supervisory unions. More than ever, I am very thankful that we have a model that allows our Case Managers to focus on the management of procedural compliance and our Special Educators, Reading Specialists, Behavior Specialists, and Related Service Providers to focus on specialized instruction. This model is working very well so far and I appreciate the support of all of you with getting to Phase 3 of 3 with that.

Safe, Healthy Schools

Director of Special Education

We are beginning our planning work to launch our in-district program for elementary-aged students (fall 2021). It is exciting to think that we will be able to help transition some elementary students back from their therapeutic placements while also being able to support students who may escalate throughout the school year. We are already seeing success with our NewBrook Thinking Feeling Room continuum which addresses social emotional and/or behavioral needs of students. Our in-district program will partner with these efforts and will also be able to assist students with more frequent difficulties.

Our Behavior Specialist has conducted observations and some Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) throughout the school year for students in our supervisory union as well as some placed in out of district placements. The vast knowledge she has of our entire supervisory union's offerings, supports, and more is positioning her well to make recommendations for students to return to our in-district schools. In years past, we contracted with behaviorists outside of our supervisory union for this type of work and it is nice to see how well our shift to an in-district employee in this role has resulted in a higher level of services, supports, and the ability to help students transition back to their hometown schools.

Director of Operations

HVAC Controls: All elementary controls units are functioning. Leland and Gray are awaiting a patch to the server so we can fully build out the web interface. All building automated controls will be remote accessible by trained staff.

Act 66 Water Testing: Leland and Gray have submitted their final water samples, we are awaiting the results. We expect that these will be acceptable this time through.

High Quality Staffing

Director of Operations

Custodian Vacancy: Will be posting a long term sub position for Leland and Gray. We hired a part time custodian for Leland and Gray for now, and are using another covid related staff member in the district to provide additional support in the morning at Leland and Gray

Custodial Training: Planning the second Weiss Bros. training for April break. Will be focusing on the benefits of Microfiber, and hard floor maintenance and refinishing. Our February training was around fully understanding the CDC guidelines around virus management. Understanding what a virus is, how it functions and mutates. What the proper steps are to kill viruses.

Financial Efficiencies

Director of Special Education

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Director of Finance

FY 22 Budgets and Tax Rate Implications

The following school boards have approved the FY 22 expense budgets:

- Windham Central [WCSU 10/28 Board Docs Including Budget Information](#)
- Marlboro **Voter Approved!**
- Stratton
- Windham **Voter Approved!**
- West River Modified Union Ed **Voter Approved!**

Human Resource/Payroll

WCSU/WEST RIVER Master Agreement has been ratified. Retro pay will be paid out in the April payrolls. Upcoming we are getting ready to issue letters of intent or contracts depending on negotiations. We will be learning how to create contracts through the new eFP system.

Covid Related Expense and Grant Funding Sources

Typically districts receive approximately \$979 per pupil in federal dollars in a given year. With the passage of three stimulus bills that number is, on the average, \$3,526 per pupil. This number increases based on poverty rates. Windham Central will have access to \$3,643,193 dollars in total, roughly \$3,643 per student.

- **UPDATE: The ESSER I grant has been submitted and approved by the AOE.**
The critical needs being addressed with ESSER I funds range from additional custodial staff, summer recovery, remote academy, sensory materials/furniture for in-person learning, additional technology support, and other response tactics.
- **UPDATE:** ESSER II money, from the new stimulus (CRRSA act) will be available for use out to Sept 2023
 - The 1.1m will primarily be used for school COVID recovery plans
 - The business office will be coordinating with the recovery team, led by Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Jen McKusick.
- **UPDATE:** ARPA-ESSER III money has been announced. This is from the 1.9b American Recovery Plan Act stimulus package. This money will need to be obligated by 9/2024 and spent by 12/2024.
- **UPDATE:** Also included in the last federal stimulus package is additional grant funding for special education through the IDEA grants. Below shows what the State received. We are awaiting the allocation to WCSU.

Estimated ARP IDEA Supplemental Grant Allocations			
State	Part B Grants to States (Section 611)	Part B Preschool Grants (Section 619)	Part C Grants for Infants and Families
Vermont	\$6,625,874	\$472,522	\$1,040,479

- Child Nutrition Program will have some additional funds from the new stimulus package CRRSA act.
- Child Nutrition has requested the SU to collect information on Free and Reduced lunch applicants so that the state can issue P-EBT cards to those families that qualify. This work continues and we recently found out that all WRED families will receive P-EBT cards due to the WRED Boards commitment to provision II where all students eat for free!
- 15m CRF-LEA money; The bill was passed recently that the remaining 15m of CRF-LEA money left will be designated to additional air quality projects. We expect more communication from Efficiency VT in the next coming weeks. I will be working alongside Greg Frost to secure funding for the rest of the work that needs to be done.

Audits

UPDATE: WCSU audit is final and will be available for the WCSU super board meeting. Other FY 20 draft audits are being delivered. We still need to go through them before they will be finalized.

Director of Operations

HVAC Grant Program: The final invoices were sent to Efficiency Vermont for reimbursement. We also received the final commissioning report from John Penny consulting. This allowed us to submit this to Efficiency Vermont for reimbursement from the Leland and Gray boiler project.

L&G Challenge Course: The Leland and Gray poles have been set. Working now to finish the installation of the cables and then there will be a staff training for up to 12 staff members.

Grant Procurement: Submitted a plan to Efficiency Vermont for our next phase of HVAC upgrades and repairs. Much of which is work we have already completed or are scheduled to complete in the next month.

CMMS: Akitabox will be going through all the schools during April break to create our Facility Asset Mapping, Work Order Management and Facilities Information File System. This will allow us to have a map of each school and the equipment therein. We will be able to track all assets and costs related to maintenance with those assets, whether they are in house repairs or subcontracted repairs.