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September was rejuvenating for all of us as we welcomed students back to our school buildings and saw all of our planning take shape in the form of socially-distanced teaching and learning. Reports from students and parents have been generally positive and our work on Social-Emotional Learning was typically well-received.

**Staffing**

Several additional teachers have been hired in the last month to replace outgoing staff. We are pleased to welcome:

<b>School</b>	<b>Teachers and Grade/Subject Area</b>
Kent Center School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amanda Forbes, Grade 1 Teacher</li></ul>
North Canaan Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allison Savage, K-8 Music</li></ul>
Pupil Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liam P. O'Reilly, Special Education at HVRHS</li></ul>

**Instructional Coaching**

Mandi van Dellen will again be working (virtually) with our instructional coaches during the week of October 5. She will continue work that began last year (but was interrupted by the Covid-19 move to distance learning). Her initial meetings will be half-day building-based opportunities to continue to help the coaches develop a climate in which teachers feel comfortable approaching them with requests for help or reflection on their own teaching. She will be back in January and again in April to continue her work and ensure that we can fully implement an Instructional Coaching model across all of the schools.

The High School coaches have once again started up their "Coaches Corner" which will meet each Wednesday at 7:45am. The coaching session is low key and open to suggestions from the High School staff about topics of concern. The sessions are being run by the High School Instructional Coaches, Jackie Fenn, Caitlin Messina, and Beth Dinneen.

**Professional Learning (PL)**

**Feedback from August professional learning**

The feedback from the August week-long professional learning activities has been quite positive:

- On a scale of 1-6, with 1 meaning "There was little that I found valuable" and 6 meaning "The sessions were generally valuable and helpful to my work," 90.5% of respondents rated the week with a 4 or higher, with an average score of 5.0.

- 83% of the respondents agreed that they had adequate choice for their professional learning around required learning activities.
- Teachers described 3 areas in which they would like to continue their professional learning: (a) distance learning, (b) the use of specific technology tools, and (c) collaborative time with colleagues.

Jill and Scott will use this information to plan additional learning activities for teachers.

#### Upcoming Local PL and Regional PL

We will be using the feedback from the 5-day PL Conference to work with the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) to determine Regional PL needs. Individual Leadership Teams in the schools will be using data on student achievement and social-emotional learning to develop their plans for the local PL days and the local PL half-days throughout the year.

#### TEAM Program

We are deeply appreciative to those teachers who have stepped forward to mentor teachers new to the profession, as well as those who will be reviewing TEAM submissions this year. The TEAM Coordinating Committee met in September to revise plans for the year. A virtual TEAM Orientation is scheduled for Thursday, October 1 for all participating first year teachers and their mentors.

#### Teacher Evaluation

Amy Tepper from Revision Learning will continue to work with Region One Administrators and teachers on topics necessary for us to continue to offer a quality teacher evaluation program.

The State has proposed a modification to the existing Teacher Evaluation requirements that would have teacher evaluations focus on social-emotional learning, student engagement, or academic achievement. PDEC will meet on Monday, 5 October to determine whether (and how) we will adopt the new guidelines once the building administrators have had a chance to review the State's options.

#### Grants

Fall is typically a time for many grant applications. We completed Title IV grant applications and funds transfers, and are in the process of completing Title I-A and Title II-A, as well as Title III-A.

This year, we have also been working through new grants developed to help support schools in shouldering the costs associated with COVID-19. Earlier this year we completed applications for the ESSER grant, which was created as a result of the CARES Act. ESSER allocations were connected to Title I allocations from the 2019-20 school year.

More recently, we received allocations from the Coronavirus Relief Funds, which were determined as a result of a survey that the principals worked with Sam to complete. We completed the application materials for the Corona Virus Relief Fund Grant. All of our schools received some allocation from the Grant, which provides funds for Personnel Costs in four areas (Academics, Student Support, Health & Safety, and Transportation) and Non-Personnel costs in those same areas. All of the principals have been working hard to determine their needs in each of the areas and supporting our work as we finished the grant application for October 2.

### **EL Programming**

Ms. Celina Huber is currently working with a regional caseload of 34 students. She is in the process of completing initial assessments and will then be determining an appropriate schedule for service.

We also want to congratulate Ms. Huber who was selected to work with the State Department of Education on developing a revised LAS Links assessment for grades 2-3. She completed this work at the end of September, and feels confident that the work being done will result in an improved assessment for all EL students. A link to her monthly report is included below.

[October 2020 EL Report](#)

### **Career/Work Experience Program**

Dr. Mary O'Neill has been working over the past few weeks to re-establish contacts in the community and within the school and gather information for students about career opportunities.

Progress has been made in the following areas:

- Virtual healthcare job shadow proposal to Sharon Hospital/Nuvance
- Meetings with individuals in the school and local community
- Collaborating with Ms. Monico in her Practical English class
- Unpaid Experiential Learning Program (UELP)

Her full report can be found [here](#).