

Superintendent Report – February 2020

Dr. Pam Vogel

January has been a busy and productive month. We have held meetings to discuss the Middle School Sports and Activities and all of the boards either have had or will have a presentation at their meetings from Sam Herrick, our Business Manager, who discusses Shared Services.

The CUBE session that was held for board members was well received and we heard from new board members, in particular, that it provided them more facts that they needed for good boardsmanship. We would like to have more of these informational sessions, going forward, for all the board members in the region, so that everyone can have a clearer understanding of our schools, our focus, and the strategies we need to reach our goals.

There have been a number of teachers and administrator groups that have been working throughout the year on curriculum committees in a very collaborative manner. These groups (PLCs), led by Lisa Carter, have representation from all of the schools, which creates constructive conversations on what we want to do around specific topics and what we all can agree to, which translates into more alignment among our seven schools. These have proven to be very productive as each school adheres to the goals in their strategic plans.

[Next Generation Accountability Report for All Schools](#)

On January 30, we received the state data results from the Next Generation Accountability Report. It is now available to the public, as well.

To see the results from our schools, one has to click on the link and then use the pull-down menu to find the name of each of our schools. The High School is listed under “Region One”.

http://edsight.ct.gov/SASStoredProcess/guest?_year=2018-19&_district=State+of+Connecticut&_school=&_program=%2FCTDOE%2FEdSight%2FRelease%2FReporting%2FPublic%2FReports%2FStoredProcesses%2FNGAReport&_select=Submit

Most of our schools performed above the state growth targets. For a few of our schools, this is the first time this has occurred since the report became the “report card” for the schools in Connecticut.

For years, we have had continuous discussions around ways to increase student achievement. Our curricular programs, how we deliver these, how we provide extra time and support for students to reach proficiency, not accepting work that is below proficiency—all of these factors make a difference.

The data in the reports are all around growth, not just percentages. They show the growth students have shown in 2018-2019 from the previous year. As you know, the reports are computed by the state, based on our state assessments and other criteria. The reports are always for the previous school year, as the Smarter Balanced Tests that are given in the spring.

[The Development Assets Survey](#)

The latest survey was last administered in the spring of 2019. We received our results in the fall. With this came two different documents. One of these shows the responses provided by students in grades 8, 10, and 12 for that year.

The second document shows trend data for the past 10 years. There is much more information in the actual report, but the trend analysis key findings were:

- *With the exception of alcohol, most results related to youth's use of substances and perception of risk were aligned with trends nationally*
- *Region One students are at a greater risk to use alcohol than youth surveyed in other parts of the country, in fact 1 out of 5 students surveyed reported binge drinking in the last 12 days and 1 in 4 reported driving in a car with a driver who had been drinking*
- *Youth now perceive alcohol use as being riskier than marijuana use, historically Region One students reported the opposite*
- *Adult protective factors have declined in recent years, just under half of the youth surveyed reported feeling that adults in their lives make them feel important and listen to what they have to say*

These reports were shared with our administrators. They were asked to review the data and to find an opportunity to share findings with their staff, board, and community.

The costs associated with the survey are funded by the McCall Center, Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, and The Foundation for Community Health (Sharon). If you wish to read more information about the basis for the DAS, a brief presentation that the McCall Center conducted for our administrators at a team meeting is here:

These data also guide our work with social-emotional professional development, as well as the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force.

Presentation:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1go3IV-WclfoVAb6vc7ZFY-bjHTL5zdEU/view?usp=sharing>

DAS 2019 Data:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16-K6C8dOtKKs9Gpvw-GKHSk7P4HoHfXo/view?usp=sharing>

DAS Data for 10 Years:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IHFdaFGNoGZTk4Lu_1FD-WEpU58XyqpC/view?usp=sharing

The Interagency Task Force

This group was formed in the fall of 2018 has become quite active and involves a number of community agencies. These include: School Counselors and School Psychologists, Region One Administrators and Teachers, Board Members, Members of Northwest Corner Prevention Network (NCPN), HYSB, Mountainside Treatment Center, Law Enforcement, McCall Center, Wheeler Clinic, First Responders, State Government (Maria Horn), Women's Support Services, Foundation for Community Health, Rotary Club, YMCA, and 21st Century Fund.

The group meets about four or five times a year at the High School. We have a structured agenda and accomplish a great deal in our time from 2:30-4 PM. The minutes of the last two meetings are attached.

October 2019 Minutes:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gcTvFNyyoUN13fl5vJATKt92Nnp9RkFX/view?usp=sharing>

January 2020 Minutes

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gPEpZVzs46DG5PACz29HWP8yu8fGHayD/view?usp=sharing>

Our primary focus is to discuss what programs are most effective in the area of prevention and intervention for substance abuse and also how to support positive social- emotional learning and behaviors for students through the programs we could provide.



Dalio Partnership

You may have heard about the Dalio Partnership, which came about through the generosity of the Dalio family, from Connecticut, who gives through both Dalio Philanthropies and individual donations of Ray and Barbara Dalio.

There is a new future grant opportunity through the Dalio Partnership. More information about the Partnership can be found here:

Dalio Partnership Overview:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yVo3e62KF22HmukdqpKMThBWKEoRNgg5/view?usp=sharing>

I submitted the Request for Information (RFI) from Region One. This was not a mandatory report; however, our school name and contact information is on the RFI and I am a believer that those schools that contribute may have a better chance at the future grant funding.

At this time, the RFI is intended only to help the Partnership Program Committee, so they can review submissions, make recommendations to the Governing Board, and issues a public report describing key learnings relative to the primary goals.

As stated in the document, “The RFI will contribute to a landscape analysis by building the Partnership’s knowledge base pertaining to organizations and individuals active or interested in the Partnership’s mission. The RFI will also help inform the focus and structure of future Requests for Proposals and funding opportunities in 2020 and beyond.”

Here is the information/application that was completed on behalf of Region

One: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eKIDTl6lgYbcLzZTtYr3hDTdWVWHLHQD/view?usp=sharing>

HYSB

I submitted a letter expressing our support for funding for Housatonic Youth Services Bureau (HYSB) from the Foundation for Community Health. HYSB provides many services to our school community. Direct services to all of our seven schools are just one way our students receive support from the Bureau.

Laurie Collins and the clinicians on the staff have listened to our staff say that there is an increasing need for more help for students, as we see more students dealing with anxiety, divorce, substance abuse, depression, suicide, and mental health issues. The letter is a request for an additional staff person that is primarily designed to give more support for students in our K-8 schools.

Letter of Support

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zSB4Gd_sOrdNWMnwiGzFoMAqC8VFxa2V/view?usp=sharing

Discussion of Evaluations

We invited Attorney Craig Meuser to our morning session of our January 30 Administration meeting to discuss ways to improve the quality and effectiveness of teacher and staff evaluations. There was a very honest and deep discussion about the topic. Several of the administrative team reported that it was one of the best sessions we have had on the topic, particularly as we consider legal issues related to evaluations, improvement plans, and possible terminations.

This month, I will be meeting with each of the principals, Lisa, and Carl to discuss their mid-year evaluations and progress towards their goals.

I will be sharing my mid-year progress on my goals as Superintendent at the February 26 ABC Meeting.

Strategic Plans for School Improvement

The Administrative Team will also be working together in February to update the Regional Strategic Plan, so that the 2020-2023 Plan reflects a continuation of our work in the region and any future planned ways to ensure continued progress. Once this plan is agreed upon, each of the schools will use the Regional Plan as a foundational one for their school to build from.

CCS Principal Search

Additionally, the search for the Cornwall School principal is in full swing. The Search Committee has been established and we are in the process of reviewing all of the 33 candidate applications. Interviews dates are established for March.