

Integrated Field Review Report

REPORT

July 29, 2019

Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union

Final Report

Site Visit: April 30, 2019

Compiled by the Franklin Northeast Visiting Team

Submitted by Marianna Charalabopoulos



Schools & Enrollment

School	Approximate Enrollment	Grade Span
Bakersfield Elementary	148	PK-8
Berkshire Elementary	218	PK-8
Enosburg Elementary	286	PK-5
Enosburg Middle/High School	444	6-12
Montgomery Elementary	154	PK-8
Richford Elementary	201	PK-5
Richford Jr.-Sr. High School	227	6-12

Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union (FNESU) participated in the Vermont Agency of Education's Integrated Field Review (IFR) on April 30, 2019.

During the full day visit, the Visiting Team participated in interviews of the Superintendent, Director of Instruction and Learning, Business Manager, counseling staff, intervention staff, teaching staff, students, parents, and administrators. In addition, the Visiting Team observed classroom instruction and other FNESU learning environments through observations and facilities tours led by students.

The Visiting Team gathered data regarding the implementation of Education Quality Standards across the system related to Academic Proficiency, Personalization, Safe Healthy Schools, High Quality Staffing, and Investment Priorities.

Visiting Team

Name	Role	Organization
Deb Boucher	Literacy Coach	Franklin Northwest SU
Jason Barney	HS Teacher	Franklin Northwest SU
Julie Kittell	Middle School Teacher	Franklin Northwest SU
Jess McPeck	Special Educator	Franklin Northwest SU
Jennifer McConnell	Music Teacher	Franklin Northwest SU
Angela Stebbins	Elem/Middle School Principal	Maple Run USD
Kelly Sargent	Guidance Counselor	Maple Run USD
Charlotte Brett	Elem. Teacher	Maple Run USD
Chris Mosca	HS Principal	Maple Run USD
Helen Lanthier	Literacy Coach	Maple Run USD
Lynne Manley	Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Technology	Milton Town SD
Amy Rex	Superintendent	Milton Town SD
Megan Smith	Middle School Principal	Milton Town SD
Frances Binder	MS Library Teacher	Milton Town SD
James Thurber	HS Teacher	Maple Run USD
Sarah Gates	Literacy Coach	Franklin Northwest SU
Kyra Barrett	Elementary Teacher	Franklin Northwest SU
Casey Provost	Elementary Principal	Milton Town SD
Michelle Spence	Assistant Special Education Director	Maple Run USD
Cathy Wilkins	Licensing Specialist	Agency of Education
Toni Marra	Dual Enrollment and Early College Coordinator	Agency of Education
Kevin Doering	Education Quality Assurance Coordinator	Agency of Education
Nancy Hellen	MTSS Coordinator	Agency of Education
Marianna Charalabopoulos	Education Quality Assurance Coordinator	Agency of Education
Josh Souliere	Assistant Director of Education Quality	Agency of Education

Ellen Cairns	ROPA Education Consultant	Agency of Education
Liza Hartlyn	Education Quality Assurance Coordinator	Agency of Education
Jenn Dale	Education Quality Assurance Coordinator	Agency of Education
Donna Stafford	Education Quality Manager	Agency of Education

Academic Proficiency

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize a coordinated curriculum in all subjects for each Supervisory Union/District that is aligned to the standards adopted by the State, instruction in all subjects and the transferable skills, a local assessment system for determining student achievement, multi-tiered systems of support for learners in meeting those standards and participation in the State assessment system.

Findings:

Curriculum Coordination

1. Lucy Calkins Reading and Writing Units of Study and Bridges Math Program is implemented consistently across the elementary schools.
2. Classroom teachers have multiple opportunities to collaborate on curriculum alignment within their buildings and across the SU using opportunities such as the “Academy” in which grade level teams meet to train in areas of Math, Literacy, Social Science and Science.

Instructional Practices

1. Observation data reveal various real-world instructional practices, including discussion techniques, clear learning targets, and project-based learning.
2. According to observations, K-12 classrooms incorporate Chromebooks, Smart Boards and online teaching platforms into classroom instruction.

Local Assessment System

1. Teachers report that data from formative and summative assessments are used to inform instruction.
2. Interviewees report that the SU uses the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) interim assessments to help prepare students for the summative assessments.

Proficiency-Based Learning

1. Evidence reveals that proficiency-based grading is implemented inconsistently throughout the SU.
2. Staff, teachers, students, and parents report inconsistent communication regarding the new proficiency-based grading and reporting system.

Commendations

1. Instructional evidence demonstrates the use of multiple research-based practices throughout the SU, including opportunities for choice, student discussion, and effective use and access to technology.
2. FNESU emphasizes the importance of curriculum alignment throughout the SU, which is achieved through multiple means, including the professional development “Academy” and intra-district collaboration.

Recommendations

1. FNESU should continue to develop and align coherent proficiency-based assessments, policies, and reporting systems across the SU.
2. In an effort to foster transparent communication with teachers, students, and parents, the SU should work to create clearly articulated written guidance regarding the proficiency-based reporting system.

Personalization

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize development of personalization through the creation and use of Personalized Learning Plans, flexible pathways to graduation, Career and Technical Education and instructional strategies that personalize learning for students.

Findings:

Personalized Learning Plans

1. A Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) template exists and is being implemented across the SU; however, the implementation process and level of parent/teacher/student involvement is inconsistent from school to school.
2. Interviewees express a lack of clarity around the PLP process and purpose.

Flexible Pathways

1. Students have multiple paths for learning and exploration of personal interests including career-based studies, extended learning and internship opportunities, job shadowing programs, dual enrollment, the collaborative diploma program through Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC) and after school and extended day opportunities.
2. Regular intervention time is intentionally built into schedules at FNESU schools.

Full Breadth of Courses

1. According to both parent and student interviews, a wide array of courses and programs of study are offered across the supervisory union; however, due to space and staffing limitations in some schools, offerings are inconsistent from school to school. For example, not all schools offer world language classes.

Student Voice and Choice

1. Evidence reveals many examples of student voice and choice, system-wide, from the implementation of student-led conferences and Restorative Practices to the surveying of students regarding schedules, enrichment opportunities, and programs of study.
2. Observational data highlight many examples of student voice and choice ranging from topics of study to flexible seating and goal-setting.

Commendations

1. FNESU intentionally supports student learning and growth by scheduling regular intervention time within schools.
2. FNESU offers students a wide range of flexible pathways for learning and exploration; these options are well-communicated to students.

Recommendations

1. FNESU should vet effective platforms for PLPs, to ensure consistent implementation across schools; this process should include relevant stakeholder input, including teachers, students, parents, and community members.

Safe Healthy Schools

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize the establishment of learning environments that promote the social and physical health of students, facilities that promote learning and security, support for preventing disciplinary infractions and responding appropriately when transgressions occur and engaging in inter-agency work to support students beyond the school day.

Findings:

Multi-tiered System of Supports

1. At many schools, intervention blocks are scheduled into the day; these may be designated: What I Need (WIN), Academic Time (AT), Intervention Time (IT), and/or flex time.
2. Evidence indicates that interventionists and support staff are available to support student instruction and intervention.

Social/Emotional Health

1. According to interviews, students report having a strong rapport with their teachers.
2. Evidence reveals that many schools in the SU are implementing Restorative Practices.
3. Parents and staff report an emphasis on social-emotional learning across the SU.

Physical Well-Being

1. Students and parents report that students feel safe and supported at school.
2. Observation and interview evidence indicates movement and mindfulness are intentionally implemented in classrooms through brain breaks, opportunities to stretch, and breathing exercises.
3. Students and parents report high satisfaction with available food options, including the meal and snack programs.

Physical Environment

1. Interviews and observations reveal a broad range of needs for the facilities across the SU. Some staff, parents, and students express concern over the lack of space in some buildings, and the need for major upgrades in others.

Commendations

1. Parents and students report they feel safe at the schools, are pleased with meal programs, and that teachers genuinely care for the well-being of students.
2. Schools throughout FNESU have focused on strengthening academic and social/emotional instruction and supports for students, including implementing designated academic intervention blocks and Restorative Practices.

Recommendations

1. FNESU should focus on developing a facility maintenance plan that will ensure equitable facilities, sufficient space and proper maintenance of buildings.
2. FNESU should continue to strengthen their core instruction and interventions, including ongoing assessment of implementation efforts.

High Quality Staffing

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize the role of all school leaders in improving student learning and establish the expectation that school leaders will have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities in order to focus on improving student learning by ensuring that professional staff are appropriately licensed, a system of appropriate needs-based professional learning is available and aligned with staff evaluation and supervision policies, continuous improvement.

Findings:

Professional Development

1. Evidence indicates various opportunities for professional development within the district, including topics related to executive functioning, optimizing student learning, Professional Learning Communities, proficiency scales, specific program trainings, restorative justice
2. Interviews and artifacts indicate that the SU offers themes in Professional development to ensure that all teachers use consistent instructional practices throughout the SU.
3. Observation and interview data reveal collaborative practices among staff and students.

Staff Evaluation

1. The SU offers the opportunity for students to evaluate staff and for teachers to evaluate administrators using a 360 survey.
2. FNESU Summative Evaluation provides a unified form to evaluate and give feedback to educators. It is a comprehensive model and provides teachers with commendations, directives, and recommendations. It also allows teachers a place to reflect on their evaluation and practices.

Leadership

1. Faculty and staff report feeling supported by their building and district leadership.
2. According to staff interviews, staff from all schools, including the technical center, are on the SU level leadership team.

Staffing

1. Staff, SU-wide, report concerns about teacher and staff turnover. Schools are finding creative ways to train and retain staff, and new teachers are supported as they build their capacity and tenure.
2. Staff report feeling well supported in their roles.
3. Parents and students report feeling connected with teachers and voice that staff are well supported. Staff report gladly taking on school wide duties and challenges outside of the classroom for the good of all students.

Commendations

1. Staff are well supported in within the SU. This is evident from interviews, observations and recorded findings across the district.
2. The SU is commended for their staff evaluation system, which is thorough, well planned out, generates data, and fosters teacher growth and student learning.

Recommendations

1. FNESU should continue to explore ways to recruit and retain school wide staffing needs in order to fully staff schools and meet the needs of students.
2. FNESU should continue offering common professional development throughout the district to ensure consistent instructional practices the SU.

Investment Priorities

The Vermont Education Quality Standards require that Supervisory Unions carry out their work in accordance with the fundamentals of accounting procedures, provide the full range and breadth of resources, and facilities to support student learning while doing so at a funding level supported by the local community and conduct the business of schooling in accordance with laws that govern education.

Findings:

Continuous Improvement Planning

1. Evidence reveals central administration's effort in using the mission/vision to guide the creation of the continuous improvement plan.
2. Evidence indicates disparity in the level of staff knowledge and involvement in the development of the continuous improvement plan, ranging from full participation in the plan to no knowledge of the plan.

Student Data System

1. Evidence demonstrates that the SU has invested in one central student data system that is used by all schools.
2. Evidence indicates that student data is used to inform instructional practices.

Financial Alignment

1. Some staff report the need for plans for building maintenance and/or upgrades in the future.
2. Interview evidence reveals that students believe they have the necessary resources needed for their education, including personal technology, equipment and materials.

Communication

1. Evidence reveals ongoing communication between home and school; however, some report a desire for increased and more targeted communication.
2. Interviewees report a desire for more communication around the budget and Act 46.

Commendations

1. FNESU is commended for supplying the resources needed for students to excel in their educational careers.
2. There is strong and positive community support across the SU for every individual school.

Recommendations

1. FNESU should improve communication about their continuous improvement planning and increase stakeholder participation in the process, especially at the school level.
2. FNESU should consider creating a long-term building project plan across schools.