

Integrated Field Review Report

REPORT

December 19, 2017

Windham Northeast Supervisory Union

Final Report

Site Visit: October 25, 2017

Submitted by Josh Souliere



Schools & Enrollment

School	Approximate Enrollment	Grade Span
Athens/Grafton	72	K-6
Bellows Falls Middle	242	5-8
Bellow Falls UHSD	361	9-12
Central Elementary	164	K-4
Saxtons River Elementary	98	K-4
Westminster Schools	189	K-6

Windham Northeast Supervisory Union (WNESU) participated in the Vermont Agency of Education's Integrated Field Review (IFR) on October 25, 2017.

During the afternoon of the IFR training, the Visiting Team reviewed artifacts provided by WNESU. During the full day visit, the Visiting Team participated in interviews of the Superintendent, Director of Curriculum/Grants Manager, Business Manager, counseling staff, intervention staff, teaching staff, students, parents, and administrators. In addition, the Visiting Team observed classroom instruction and other WNESU 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	Title	From
JeanMarie Oakman	Principal	Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union
Karen Woolsey	Director of Student Support Services	Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union
Margaret Dunne	Math Specialist	Mill River Unified Union SD
Julianne Eagan	Curriculum & Assessment Coordinator	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
Meg Alison Powden	Superintendent	Two Rivers Supervisory Union
Michael Eppolito	Curriculum Coordinator	Two Rivers Supervisory Union
Tyler Weideman	Assistant Principal	Mill River Unified Union SD
Jaime Alvarez	Special Needs Coordinator	Windham Regional Career Center
Anne Doran	Career Center Counselor	Windham Regional Career Center
Frank Kelley	Elementary Teacher	Two Rivers Supervisory Union
Julia Doiron	Elementary Teacher	Mill River Unified Union SD
Kurt Johnson		Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
Kathryn Mason	Academic Support Teacher	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
Dawn Grobe		Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
Christine Bourne	Elementary Principal	Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union
Martin Butler	Elementary Teacher	Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union
Josh Souliere	Assistant Director of Education Quality Reviews	Vermont Agency of Education
Lori Dolezal	Education Quality Assurance Manager	Vermont Agency of Education
Toni Mara	Work Based Learning Coordinator	Vermont Agency of Education
Tom Faris	MTSS Coordinator	Vermont Agency of Education
Marianna Charalabopoulos	Education Quality Assurance Coordinator	Vermont 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, proficiency-based learning and grading, and participation in the State assessment system.

Findings:

1. Track My Progress is utilized as a tier one universal tool to gather baseline data and monitor student progress.
 2. Per teacher interviews, schools are not consistent their implementation of the curricula prescribed from central office.
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1. Evidence shows that staff have varying levels of expertise with proficiency-based learning and grading, from having limited knowledge to championing efforts within the schools.
 2. Based on observation and interview evidence, many teachers give immediate and aligned feedback to students on their learning and progress in the classroom.

Instructional Strategies

1. In most classrooms observed at the elementary level, the use of differentiation was a common instructional practice to meet student needs.
 2. Students have regular and equitable access to technology as a part of their learning, i.e., Smartboards and Chromebooks.
Some learning objectives were visible and posted in elementary classrooms observed; however, students who were interviewed stated they were aware of what they were learning and why.
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1. A variety of formative, summative, and performance-based assessments are used to monitor student progress over time, i.e., Track My Progress, Fountas and Pinnell, Foundations, running records and PNOA.

Commendations

1. WNESU has utilized formative, summative and performance based assessments and a consistent data driven processes to monitor student progress and drive instruction.
2. WNESU schools, teachers, and students share equal access to technology for instruction and learning purposes.

Recommendations

1. WNESU should consider developing a guide and/or process that supports consistent use of the curriculum in all schools throughout the system.
2. WNESU should continue to support the implementation of Differentiated Instruction and the use of Learning Targets to ensure all schools are implementing these practices consistently across the SU.

Personalization

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize development of personalization through the creation and use of Personalized Learning Plans, flexible pathways to graduation, offering a full breadth of courses available to learners and student voice/choice in their education.

Findings:

Personalized Learning Plans

1. The use of personalization and personalized learning plans are developed and steps have been taken to support implementation at the middle school; the SU is in the beginning stages of implementation at the high school.
2. Most teachers and parents interviewed report having limited to no understanding or participation in Personalized Learning Plans grades 7-12.

Flexible Pathways/CTE

1. Grades 7-12 have developed flexible pathways that include dual enrollment, early college, online classes, independent study, virtual learning, early college admission, VT Adult Learning, life skills, access to two technical centers, and others to allow students to have choice in completing graduation requirements.

Full Breadth of Courses

1. Traditionally taught courses have decreased over time at the middle school, driving a change from teacher directed learning to online programming and facilitation of learning.
2. Per student, teacher, and parent interviews, students have a variety of courses and learning opportunities; however, there is variation in course offerings and learning opportunities across elementary schools.

Student Choice/Voice

1. All schools have designated time built in for students to get support, enrichment, or choice of learning.
2. Elementary schools had varying degrees of choice for academic activities and projects.

Commendations

1. WNESU middle and high school students have access to a variety of course options and flexible pathways for learning.
2. WNESU has implemented a personalization and personalized learning plan framework at the MS level, is in the beginning stages of implementation at the high school level, and there are aspects of personalization that can be seen at the elementary level.

Recommendations

1. Learners at all levels have access to a breadth of courses and flexible pathways; however, WNESU should continue to monitor equity of programs and accessibility between all schools.
2. WNESU should engage all students, parents, and teachers in the development of personalized learning plans and provide additional professional learning to educators and parents, and more opportunities for student voice in the process.

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, social-emotional learning and multi-tiered system of support for learners.

Findings:

MTSS

1. While there are a range of support and intervention programs and styles, there appears to be no formal MTSS framework across the SU.
2. Overall, there appears to be successful pockets of intervention/enrichment programs across all schools in the SU; however, there are no uniform structures and/or entrance and exit criteria.

Social/ Emotional Health

1. SU schools showed strong evidence of positive behavior support programs as evidenced by interviews and observing teachers giving positive reinforcement to students, and other social-emotional programming; however, some teachers expressed their desire for additional professional learning and interventions related to behavior management and social-emotional learning.

Physical Well Being

1. SU has clear protocols around safety, including secured entrances to buildings, practice drills and communication around safety, as evidenced by student, teacher and parent interviews.
2. Staff and students felt strongly supported by their school nurses and counseling teams.
3. Students report that they feel safe and valued at their schools.

Physical Environment

1. Observation and interview evidence suggests that most school buildings were clean, well maintained, warm, cheerful, and welcoming.

Commendations

1. WNESU has a strong commitment to the physical structures of their buildings, as they were safe, well-maintained, welcoming learning environments.
2. WNESU has committed to the physical well-being and social emotional needs of their students as evidenced by the appreciation for the nurses and school guidance services across schools.

Recommendations

1. While there is a range of support and intervention programs across the WNESU, they should develop a formalized MTSS guidelines that can be implemented with consistency across the SU.
2. WNESU should continue to implement their programs focused on behavior management and social emotional learning and ensure they are providing professional learning opportunities to all staff in these areas.

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.

Findings:

Professional Development

1. Coordination of professional development opportunities and content occurs at the SU level as well as school level, where teachers have some input into their professional learning needs.
2. Some teacher feel there are inequitable professional development opportunities, depending on what subject you teach.

Staff Evaluation

1. There is a performance evaluation system with a focus on instructional excellence based on the Danielson Framework; however, per teacher interviews, the system not implemented consistently throughout all schools.

Leadership

1. Per staff, student, and parent interviews, the approachability of administration varies greatly among schools.
2. There is a mentoring program for all incoming educators to support their transition into working within WNESU.

Staffing

1. Per interviews and observations, most teachers actively engage the students using non-judgmental, positive reinforcements that promote student growth and productive relationships between and among students and adults.
2. Per observation and interviews, there is adequate staffing to support student learning.

Commendations

1. Most WNESU teachers actively engage students using non-judgmental, positive reinforcements that promote student growth and productive relationships between and among students and adults
2. WNESU offers ongoing professional learning opportunities and collaborate with educators across the SU to determine local professional learning needs, as well as SU-wide focus areas.

Recommendations

1. WNESU should examine their professional learning offerings to ensure all educators have equitable access to high quality professional learning opportunities.
2. WNESU should work to increase consistent implementation of the staff evaluation process, as well as promote the value of the evaluation process itself.

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, develop and implement Continuous Improvement Plans 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 from interviews points to inconsistent implementation of school-based leadership teams as decision-making bodies across the SU; however, interviews suggest a strong leadership team structure at the SU level.
2. Evidence from observations and interviews indicate a lack of teacher participation in the development of Continuous Improvement Plans and communication of the plan's content.

Student Data Systems

1. All schools K-8 use Track My Progress as a universal screener, and teachers expressed concern that the data doesn't always align with other data sets they're analyzing.
2. There is a common student information system used throughout the SU.

Financial Alignment

1. Programs serving students with intensive needs have been implemented consistently in the elementary, middle, and high school.
2. Technology is well resourced and schools, teachers, and students report having equitable access throughout the SU.

Communication

1. The SU uses Facebook, websites, email, weekly newsletters, and robo-calls to communicate, and parents find these to be effective.
2. Parents feel that the schools in the WNESU are responsive and welcoming places.

Commendations

1. WNESU has equitable and reliable access to technology to drive instruction and for student use in learning.
2. WNESU schools are welcoming places and are responsive to the needs of parents, communicating with parents, and designing and implementing programs to meet student needs.

Recommendations

1. WNESU should examine their implementation and use of school-based leadership teams across the SU to ensure equitable input and share leadership from all members on continuous improvement efforts.
2. WNESU should continue to examine the ways in which continuous improvement plans are developed and implemented across the SU to ensure alignment with goals, actions and resources to support implementation.