

TWO RIVERS SUPERVISORY UNION: BOARD REPORT

NEWSLETTER: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

NOVEMBER 2020

Curriculum and Instruction

Since July, we have been planning, structuring, and implementing curricular support for teachers and paraprofessionals with a focus on the implementation of a virtual learning scenario. This process has included ongoing training of faculty, staff, and students in the use of online tools, curation of resources for online teaching and learning, and best practices for creating learning experiences outside of the school building. Through our virtual learning experience this past spring and through feedback from TRVLA and VTVLC teachers and families, we have been able to plan continuing instruction which mimics in-person instruction as much as possible. While the schedule is shortened, it maintains a focus on high-quality instruction with clear learning targets. It also prioritizes services for our most vulnerable learners.

Please note that best practices for online instruction closely resemble best practices for in-person learners. This work has value regardless of whether we teach virtually or in classrooms.

Proficiency-Based Curriculum

In our ongoing work towards a fully articulated and aligned proficiency-based curriculum, we, a team of ELA teachers representative of grades k-12 and I, have completed the first full draft of an aligned ELA curriculum based largely on the work completed last year. We will revisit this in the spring as we continue to refine the work. Starting in January, we will work towards a fully aligned mathematics curriculum k-12. While much of the work has been drafted, a team of mathematics teachers and I will be meeting regularly through the spring to align this work. The goal is to have these two documents and rubrics fully drafted by the end of June.

Our Foreign Language proficiencies are now aligned with the National World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages. This work has been done by Tanya Case and Ethan Harris at GMUHS.

Coaching

Lisa Holderness (STEAM Coach), Michele Farrar (Instructional Coach), and I have worked with more than twenty teachers to provide curricular and instructional support. Lisa has been instrumental in providing STEAM experiences for elementary and middle school classrooms and has provided programming for TRAVLA.

Michele has focused on 7-12 instructional support. Her current project is the construction of a database of resources for secondary teachers and paraprofessionals. It is set up in the form of a Google Classroom. The Coaching Team will continue to build upon Michele's work as we explore virtual classrooms and learn from the work of others.

I have focused on support for elementary teachers and learners and have maintained some of my clients from last year at the secondary level.

Our current professional development is participation in a reading and study of *The Distance Learning Playbook* (Fisher, Frey, and Hattie 2021). This is a learning opportunity offered by the Southeast Learning Alliance (SEAL), a consortium of coaches in the Southeast Region of Vermont.

Mentoring

We have twenty-four mentors currently supporting our faculty throughout the Supervisory Union. The Mentor Advisory Board, made up of building leaders from each school, meets monthly (or more often if needed). Our purpose is to support our new faculty transition into the culture of TRSU and individual buildings as smoothly as possible. In addition, there is a concentration on the development of reflective practice in which teachers (and other mentees) consider their own work and its impact on learners (or clients). This sets the stage for the development of teachers who are also learners, who engage in self-analysis, who engage in the analysis of data, and who continue to refine their practice.

Professional Development

The Professional Development and Well-being Committee meets monthly (with a few exceptions). Our goal is to provide learning opportunities to support teaching and learning in our Supervisory Union. We will continue to plan throughout the year for our remaining professional development days, blending time for reflection and individualized work with workshops and other experiences that enhance instructional practice for all.

Our in-house Online Best Practices course (facilitated by Julie Parah and me) ran this fall. This is for 10 hours of professional development and can be included as part of the portfolio for endorsement (although the class itself does not count towards endorsement). This learning opportunity will be repeated in the winter (probably in early February). Other opportunities will be communicated through the monthly newsletter from the Curriculum Office.

We will continue with professional development for paraprofessionals. Most opportunities are around the support of IEP students. Paras will be receiving support around math instruction in some schools. In addition, I have done small group and individual training for

paraprofessionals and faculty members on the use of learning platforms and management systems, and individual needs from systems training to module development, assessment, and long-term planning.

Currently, I'm working on providing resources requested by each school to support our virtual work.

Communication

In an effort to create and continue clear lines of communication, we have the following systems in place:

- Weekly principal updates in writing and/or in person (except in the case of short weeks) which provide data on digital usage, updates on coaching and mentoring, and curricular and instructional concerns;
- Weekly updates to the Superintendent, both written and verbal;
- Monthly newsletters to teachers including instructional focus, professional development opportunities, and other pertinent information;
- Monthly newsletters to the TRSU board;
- Weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly meetings with:
 - Coaches;
 - Mentor Advisory Board;
 - Professional Development and Well-Being Committee;
 - Principal Team;
 - Administrative Team;
 - Senior Management Team;
 - TRAVLA; and
 - Tarrant Group.
- Professional development tracking shared with principals;
- Data collection and analysis shared with teachers, principals, and other administrators; and
- Individual and small-group meetings to address concerns as needed.