

2013-2014 Opening of School Update
Pupil Services Department: Glenn McGrath

Staffing:

The department hired 18 new certified staff and opened school, Pre-K-12 fully staffed. We also opened with all of our para-educators and teaching assistant positions filled.

Summer Program/Extended School Year Services:

The district provided an extended school year (ESY) for 261 students Pre-K through 12th grade including students in the WAAVE post-secondary program. This six week program was highly successful and provided students the opportunity to maintain and expand their skills and learning. Mike Davis and Susi Holt's administration of the Summer ESY Program was commendable.

State Department of Education:

The district again received the highest determination level of "Meets Requirements" on the District's Annual Performance Report (APR) for the 2011-2012 school year. The district submitted all required (CSDE) data collection reports to the State Department (i.e. Restraint/Seclusion, Evaluation Timelines, Due Process data) for the 2012-2013 school year during the summer term. The State Education Resource Center (SERC) has developed a Professional Development (PD) Series for school administrators to support the unification of general and special education policies, procedures and practices to improve the outcomes for **all** students. The district is planning on sending a cohort of general and special education administrators for this professional development training. The district has been selected within a cohort of twenty-nine districts to participate in a statewide parent survey from the State Department of Education (CSDE) and the Connecticut Parent Work Group (PWG). The statewide survey will provide the State and the district with information on parental involvement and satisfaction with their child's special education program.

Priorities and Initiatives:

The Pupil Services Department's Development and Performance Plan (DDPP) for the 2013 - 2014 school year will continue its focus and work on the following initiatives.

- The continued implementation of Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) as an integral part of the district's SRBI Tiered Intervention. The PBIS model is presently being implemented across six elementary schools and two middle schools. Three schools are in their third and final year of training and five schools are in their second year of training.

Agenda Item:
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- The continued development of student-based individualized educational plans (IEP's) to ensure the effective alignment with the Common Core State Standards and assessments.
- The continued development and implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a framework for supporting and strengthening the differentiation of instruction and the access and accommodations to the curriculum utilizing Assistive Technologies.
- To provide professional development to support special and general education staff, Para-educators and parents in our collective work and practice to improve instruction and student learning. Training will focus on: Common Core Standards (CCSS), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Assistive Technology, Standard-based IEP's, Parent Partnership, Para-Educator Trainings, and the New Teacher Evaluation Model.
- To conduct a Program Review of the district's Speech and Language Therapy services (Pre-K-12) which will be presented to the Curriculum Professional Development Council (CPDC) and to implement the CPDC recommendations for the Physical and Occupational Therapy services. The department will also conduct and submit a self-assessment for NAYEC re-accreditation for our Early Childhood Programs at the Whiting Lane and Aiken Pre-schools.
- To continue to demonstrate compliance with the State Department's regulations and requirements and performance targets for the District's Annual Performance Report (APR).
- The Educational Planning Committee (EPC) will continue their work to examine and evaluate the delivery of services within the town-wide special needs learning centers, best inclusion practices, and the effective allocation and assignment of para-educators/teaching-assistant resources.
- To continue to promote parent partnerships in collaboration with SEPTA to strengthen and support parent participation, training and communication between home and school through forums, training and surveys.

School Counseling Department:

School Counseling Department Focus Points

The School Counseling Department has new leadership; Tor Fiske has begun his work in earnest getting to know our counselors and program. The department subscribes to a model of continuous improvement in order to enhance program standards, and align the delivery of counseling services in all schools grades 6-12 so that all students may achieve their full potential. The counseling program is developmental in nature, providing opportunities for self-exploration and inquiry in a systematic fashion through a combination of curriculum based lessons and individualized planning that occur in each grade. Department programs

and lessons will be formatted by scope and sequence in a grade 6-12 curriculum map across academic, personal/social, and college/career domains. In alignment with Connecticut secondary school reform requiring districts to create and implement success plans for all students grades 6-12, this map will serve as the basis of the West Hartford Student Success Plan. It also provides a framework for horizontal and vertical program articulation for counselors spread between five schools across the district.

Specific goals for 2013-14 have been outlined in a school counseling department development plan, that aligns with both the pupil service and district development plans. Within this plan, counselors will track and assess student progress towards specific annual goals, collecting and analyzing data as a means of informing future group and individual work with the same students over time. Counselors will utilize web-based Naviance technology to compile a portfolio of student explorations related to such items as learning style, early career exploration, interest and personality inventories. This portfolio of self-exploration will create a platform for informed college and career planning, delivered in detail through the intensive junior planning series. Viewed in totality, this serves as a departmental capstone experience: all students should apply for admission to at least one college, career, or technical program upon graduation. Accordingly, programming will need to expand to include a focus on students from low income and ELL households, as well as first generation college bound students. The counseling team will continue to build awareness of Naviance within the whole community, explore other expanded technology usage such as Twitter to improve communication with students and families throughout the college application process, and link to the National Student Clearinghouse in order to access and analyze college achievement data for WHPS graduates.

The department is committed to strengthening leadership, supervision, and support for counselors through focused professional development and adherence to CPDC program review recommendations. Through work with the new evaluation system, the role of the school counselor and other support service personnel will be clearly articulated, and a concerted effort to increase parental involvement through outreach programs will be met by creating advisory groups in order to provide direct feedback on the counseling program. Counselors will also be strongly encouraged to participate in both state and national professional associations, to further cultivate a culture of life-long learning and competency directly linked to student success and development.