

2017-2018 Opening of School Update
Pupil Services Department: Gretchen Nelson

Staffing:

The department hired 18 new certified and professional staff to replace teachers who have retired or left the district. The school year began with a full Pupil Services workforce. We are in the process of recruiting teaching assistants for new students who moved into the district. I am very pleased to report that Ms. Melissa Caballero and Ms. Ronda Merriman have joined the Pupil Services Leadership Team. Ms. Caballero's primary responsibilities will focus on Pupil Service Leadership at four of our elementary schools: Duffy, Morley, Norfeldt, and Wolcott. Ms. Merriman (.2) will provide leadership to the STRIVE/STEPS and Post-secondary program.

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 2015-2016 school year. Highlights of the report included participation and performance rates on state assessments, increases in regular class placements, and increase in students reaching target for Early Childhood Outcomes (Use of Knowledge and Skills and Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs). The report highlighted areas for growth which include increasing graduation rate with a standard diploma and decreased placements in separate settings.

All required (CSDE) data collection reports were submitted to the State Department (i.e. Restraint/Seclusion, Evaluation Timelines, Due Process data) for the 2016-2017 school year during the summer term.

Additionally, we maintained our NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accreditation. This is a reflection of the excellent work accomplished at our preschool programs.

State of Connecticut Mandates affecting Pupil Services:

One new mandate warrants attention and focus this school year as it relates to students who access specialized instruction and/or related services. Physical Restraint and Seclusion training requirements have been amended and now require the establishment of a "Crisis Team" in each school, training for the members of the "Crisis Team" and other staff members deemed appropriate. In addition, the district must maintain a log of Crisis Team members and evidence of training. This legislation represents a reduction in requirements previously mandated by the state.

Priorities:

In response to the needs of our students, The Pupil Services Department's Development and Performance Plan (DDP) for the 2017-2018 school year will continue its focus and work on the following priorities:

- I. Continue implementation of standard-based IEP's (PLAAF and Goals & Objectives) aligned with the CCSS with a focus on educational benefit and progress monitoring via training with the SERC IEP Rubric, CSDE IEP Manual, and CREC Blueprint.
- II. Monitor and assess district data and eligibility compliance with Federal and state regulations for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) 504 with a focus on disproportionality.
- III. Implement recommendations and action plan based on comprehensive Curriculum Council Program Review of the Post-Secondary Program (2016-2017). Focus on delivery model with an emphasis on providing services (vocational development, worksite experiences, community access, and Adult Daily Living Skills (ADL) in authentic learning environments in compliance with the [Transition Bill of Rights](#).
- IV. Review the Specialized Instruction Resource Model through a comprehensive Curriculum Council Program Review. Develop an action plan based on the program review and recommendations. Focus on delivery model with a focus on providing effective services (co-teaching, push-in services, pull-out services, Content support), progress monitoring, and transition process from level to level (preschool-elementary-middle school-high school-post secondary).
- V. Continue to implement new curriculum (Creative Curriculum) and monitor student growth through implementation of a new assessment system (Teaching Strategies Gold) at the Early Learning Center (ELC).
- VI. Address mental health issues with specific focus on Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) and executive functioning. Continue partnership with the Bridge, UCONN, and other community providers to maximize access to research-based interventions, training, and stakeholder supports.
- VII. Implement professional development plan aligned with department priorities.
- VIII. Implement para educator and teaching assistant training and evaluation model.
- IX. Engage parents in assessment of prioritized needs and continue to support parent training and partnership in collaboration with SEPTO. Enhance communication and collaborative partnerships with parents and guardians.

Summer Program/Extended School Year Services:

The district provided an extended school year (ESY) for 315 students Pre-K through the Post-secondary program (33 classes). Forty certified staff 154 non-certified staff worked collaboratively for six weeks (4 days per week) to provide our students the opportunity to maintain skills and continue momentum for emerging skills and learning. Mike Davis' and Susan Holt's administration of the highly successful Summer ESY Program was commendable.