



Superintendent's Report October 22, 2013

- 1. FY 14 Budget Approved:** With the vote in favor of the additional assessment by Bolton's voters on October 16th, the FY 14 NRSD Budget is finally approved. Many thanks to all that attended in Bolton and approval of the motion for the \$200,188 additional assessment funds.
- 2. Instructional Student Support Plans (ISSP):** Students whose Spring 2013 MCAS scores fell within the range of Needs Improvement or Warning will be receiving an ISSP from their student's teacher(s). The ISSP is a working document with the student, parent and teacher that targets strategies that will be employed in the coming year to assist in addressing areas of weakness and providing overall confidence to perform better on the next round of assessments. Feedback will come during the course of the year through the report cards and for elementary students at parent / teacher conferences. Parents of ninth graders should monitor student progress through the PowerSchool Portal and talk with their student about how to change or maintain the progress seen to date.
- 3. Personalized Learning:** Each of the three middle schools have developed *Advisory Programs* to enable students to identify an adult in the building that will get to know them academically, socially and emotionally. The premise of research is that students who feel teachers know them and can feel more comfortable talking about issues that impact learning will do better in school. Additionally, the times together build teamwork, collaboration and communication skills. All three middle schools are using a program entitled *Developmental Design* as a foundational component to the model that they have built.
- 4. Educator Evaluation Update:** Evaluators and educators are engaged in the evaluation process. Evaluators are working to meet deadlines around the mini-observation and observations for first year developing educators. Additionally, the sub-committee that is monitoring the implementation meets again on November 5th and our work begins around helping to provide guidance around exhibits of evidence on goals and standards. The district is using Baseline Edge as our software for collecting the evidence, providing feedback to educators and recording the educator's plan. The company has been very responsive to our requests for changes to customize the software with our overall plan. It is a work in progress.
- 5. NEASC:** I will be participating in a NEASC visit at Drury High School in North Adams, MA, on October 27, 28, 29, and 30. As members of NEASC we are encouraged to participate on such teams every two or three years. My last visit was four years ago at Saugus High School.
- 6. School Bus Safety:** All of our students have participated in a school bus safety evacuation over the past two weeks. It is important that they know how to respond in the event of an emergency. This is a requirement on an annual basis.



7. Vacancy on the School Committee: The vacancy on the school committee has been posted locally in the Town of Bolton and on our website. The meeting to consider applicants for the position will be jointly held on October 24th between the Bolton Board of Selectmen and including Nancy Federspiel (representing the school committee and as the remaining member of the contingency from Bolton.) After being sworn in by the Town of Bolton Town Clerk, the new member should be in attendance at our next meeting on November 5th.

8. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics): We are gearing up for our science curriculum to be revised by a team of teachers and administrators. Martina Kenyon will be leading this initiative. The final curriculum framework is not approved by the Board of Education but it is expected to be addressed in November. We plan on having the first organizational meeting in November to get started.

9. District Determined Measures: The Early Release on October 25 will focus on working with teachers to identify the standards they believe critical and that can show growth by students that will inform instructions. They will then see what common assessments already exist or that need to be designed that can be used to assess student progress. The results of these assessments can be used to inform instructional practices, teacher skill(s) and the evaluation process. All educators must have two common assessments determined by the district that will measure growth and inform the evaluation. In many cases at least one assessment already exists (MCAS, DRA, Aimsweb), but where they do not exist they will be designed by teachers and administrators working together at the remaining early release days and our professional development day in October.

10. Transportation: The State's Department of Transportation will be working on the Route 495 ramps and Route 117 in Bolton beginning October 21st. Our buses, staff and students should take note and plan alternate routes or additional time to make it to their respective school on time. The work is expected to take a month and when finished will have additional turn lanes on the exit ramps and on Route 117. The lights will also be programmed to be more aligned for better traffic flow during peak times.

11. Board of Education Meeting: I will be attending the State's Board of Education Meeting on Tuesday, October 22, to hear more about the Commissioner's agenda around Teacher Evaluation and District Determined Measures. The timeline set out by the Commissioner is considered very aggressive and without additional resources, many districts are struggling to address the work in a thoughtful, collaborative manner. The Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents has asked that a representative group be in attendance at each Board of Education meeting either to be ready to speak on the topics on the agenda, or to report back to the roundtables in our counties.

Have a great weekend.