

Integrated Field Review Report

REPORT

May 15, 2020

Caledonia Central Supervisory Union
Final Report
Site Visit: February 13, 2020

Compiled by

The Visiting Team of Caledonia Central SU

Submitted by

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Schools & Enrollment

School	Approximate Enrollment	Grade Span
Barnet School	195	PK-8
Cabot School	176	PK-12
Danville School	379	PK-12
Peacham School	60	PK-6
Twinfield Union School	334	PK-12
Walden School	71	PK-8
Waterford School	150	PK-8

Caledonia Central Supervisory Union (CCSU) participated in the Vermont Agency of Education's Integrated Field Review (IFR) on February 13, 2020.

Prior to the IFR, the Visiting Team reviewed artifacts provided by CCSU. During the full day visit, the Visiting Team participated in interviews of the Superintendent, Student Services Coordinator, Curriculum Directors, counseling staff, intervention staff, teaching staff, students, parents, and administrators. In addition, the Visiting Team observed classroom instruction and other CCSU learning environments through observations and facilities tours led by students. Peacham School's physical building was not visited, although Principal Ashley Gray was interviewed at Walden School.

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	Role	Organization
Jenn Lawcewicz	Director of Special Services	Essex North SU
Emily Cooney	Special Educator	Essex North SU
Christopher Miller	Dean of Students	Kingdom East SD
Becky Lawson	Teacher	Kingdom East SD
Janis Chamberlain	Teacher	Kingdom East SD
Peter Smyth	Teacher	Kingdom East SD
John Castle	Superintendent	North Country SU
Jessica Applegate	Learning Design Director	North Country SU
Diane Nichols-Fleming	Early Education Coordinator	North Country SU
Samantha Stevens	Equity and Community Outreach Coordinator	North Country SU
Shelly Lanou	Neuro-development Specialist	North Country SU
Todd Rohlen	Principal	North Country SU
Amy Newton	Music Teacher	Orleans Central SU
Josh Souliere	Assistant Director of Education Quality Division	AOE
Jenn Dale	Education Quality Assurance Coordinator	AOE
Kevin Doering	Education Quality Assurance Coordinator	AOE
Karen Abbott	CFP Grants Manager	AOE

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, multi-tiered systems of support for learners in meeting those standards and participation in the State assessment system.

Findings:

Curriculum Coordination

1. Evidence indicates there is an adopted curriculum across all schools.
2. Interview evidence indicates there is coordination between the central office and the school districts in regards to the implementation of curriculum.

Instructional Practices

1. There is common use of technology in instruction across grade levels.
2. There is evidence that teachers are utilizing current best practices to personalize learning outcomes.

Local Assessment System

1. There is an SU wide assessment calendar that teachers are familiar with.
2. There is an active practice to utilize data from assessments to inform instruction and guide interventions.

Proficiency-Based Learning

1. There is a wide variability between the three high schools with the implementation of proficiency-based learning and reporting.
2. There is the capacity and commitment to developing a shared understanding and common practices across schools and grade levels related to proficiency-based learning.

Commendations

1. There is a common adopted curriculum and assessment calendar used by schools across the SU.
2. There is a unified commitment to furthering proficiency-based learning in conjunction with sound instructional practices.

Recommendations

1. CCSU should examine their common understanding of proficiency-based learning and reporting to ensure a consistent understanding with all stakeholders.
2. CCSU should continue to allow schools to utilize the practices with which they have experience while the new SU focuses on determining best practices to be implemented across the district following the creation of the new SU.

Personalization

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize development of personalization through the creation and use of Personalized Learning Plans, flexible pathways to graduation, Career and Technical Education and instructional strategies that personalize learning for students.

Findings:

Personalized Learning Plans

1. Interviews and artifacts evidence indicates personalized learning plans are being developed by students, however there is an inconsistency both within schools and across the district with the platform being used to house personalized learning plans.
2. Some students and teachers reported that they developed personalized learning plans but did not use them to measure their learning and progress.
3. Staff reported they hoped for more ongoing training about the use and maintenance of personalized learning plans.

Flexible Pathways

1. It is evident through interviews and artifacts that students have numerous opportunities to learn in settings outside the traditional classroom, such as with internships, technical education centers, online offerings, college classes, etc.
2. Collected interview evidence and artifacts showed that numerous flexible pathways are offered and also embedded in traditional secondary classes. Transferable skills are being utilized in both programs interchangeably.

Full Breadth of Courses

1. Through interviews with students, parents, and staff, and classroom observations, some schools offered a variety of courses and enrichment, while others offered limited opportunities for courses beyond the standard curriculum.

Student Voice and Choice

1. Artifact and interview evidence consistently indicated there are a wide range of opportunities for students to have their voice heard through the crafting of their educational experience.
2. Evidence from students, staff, and parents noted that student agency, leadership, and empowerment for making changes personally, academically, and in the world is an educational priority in CCSU schools.

Commendations

1. CCSU should be commended on valuing/providing opportunities for student voice and choice in the creation of their educational experience.
2. CCSU should be commended on the amount of flexible pathways opportunities students have access to.

Recommendations

1. CCSU should consider providing additional district-wide training and support for effectively using personalized learning plans to encourage student goal setting, and provide ongoing support to help

teachers in guiding students to monitor and adjust their goals and identify and showcase their unique learning style.

2. CCSU should examine their flexible pathways offered to ensure equal opportunities between all schools.

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, support for preventing disciplinary infractions and responding appropriately when transgressions occur and engaging in inter-agency work to support students beyond the school day.

Findings:

Multi-tiered System of Supports

1. Evidence indicates that all schools have Educational Support Teams that utilize academic and behavior data to drive intervention.
2. Evidence indicates that students have access to several types of interventions, both academically and behaviorally, and that schools have the staff available to provide these supports.

Social/Emotional Health

1. Schools have a wealth of social-emotional focus and supports in place, including Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Mindfulness, kindness practices, community building activities, and recognition ceremonies.
2. Parents, students, and teachers report feeling welcomed in all schools, and that buildings represent a safe and strong sense of community.

Physical Well-Being

1. Students report they understand the safety protocols that are in place which supports them to feel safe in school.
2. Evidence indicates that schools intentionally integrate wellness and physical activity into their instructional practices.

Physical Environment

1. Evidence indicates there is a strong sense of pride in their school buildings, with both indoor and outdoor space, and that students take ownership of their schools.
2. Some interviewees reported although schools make the best of the space they have, some feel they would appreciate more space for indoor academics, including appropriate office space for staff.

Commendations

1. Schools across CCSU are student centered in their approach to supporting the physical, academic and social emotional needs of all students and interventions and supports that are in place.
2. CCSU schools' focus on providing school communities where parents, students, teachers, and community members feel welcome and safe.
3. Evidence indicates that students have access to several types of interventions, both academically and behaviorally, and that schools have the staff available to provide these supports.

Recommendations

1. While all schools make use of the space they have, CCSU should consider examining physical space needs within some schools.

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, continuous improvement.

Findings:

Professional Development

1. The development of the new SU is still in progress and the academic calendar and professional learning opportunities are not yet aligned. However, evidence indicates professional learning is aligned with school and staff needs.
2. Teacher interest and school/student data drive professional development at the local level.

Staff Evaluation

1. The mentoring programming is occurring SU-wide for new teachers. Some staff interviewed mentioned that expanding the mentoring program for other teachers to access would be appreciated and beneficial regarding certain practices.
2. Interview evidence indicates the Danielson model was used in the past, and the current model being used is loosely related to the Danielson and less structured. Staff interviewed report preferring the older reevaluation model that had more structure.

Leadership

1. Evidence indicates school based administrators are accessible and visible in the schools.
2. Administrators, both in school and at the SU level, are visible and spend time with their staff. All schools report having leadership teams.

Staffing

1. Per teacher and administrator interviews, informal support and collegiality relationships are supportive and appreciated and veteran teachers support new staff.

Commendations

1. CCSU demonstrates a comprehensive ability to utilize minimal resources to meet student needs in creative ways, including a deep dedication of all personnel to support the students, staff, families and communities.
2. Despite several changes in systems and supervision at the SU and individual school levels, the school staff continue to persevere with their work and dedication to the families and communities they serve.

Recommendations

1. CCSU should consider focusing on further alignment and collaboration at the SU level to allow for aligned professional development, grade level teaming time, a consistent calendar, and a common shared vision.
2. CCSU should consider including staff in the decision making processes regarding staff evaluation model selection and mentoring structures to ensure consistency of practices across the SU.

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, 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. Artifact and interview evidence indicates substantial staff and administration input/involvement with the development of Continuous Improvement Plans, however most parents interviewed stated they had no knowledge of this work.
2. Given the recent merger evidence accrued, the newly configured SU is working on developing a system wide Continuous Improvement Plan, however at this time schools report significant differences in their approaches and goals for their plans.

Student Data System

1. CCSU is using a variety of data tools, including LIFT, STAR, SWIS and PowerSchool.
2. Evidence indicates that all the schools are utilizing data systems to monitor behavior, academics and social emotional learning and are using this to guide interventions and academic planning.

Financial Alignment

1. Interview evidence indicates school and SU leadership is struggling with increasing challenges and work/time necessary to apply for and access Title funding under the Consolidated Federal Programs.
2. Interview and observation evidence indicates a significant disparity in technology and individual school maintenance and facility budgets.
3. Interview evidence indicates there has been a lack of transparency between central office personnel and some school administrators regarding budgeting and finance issues in the past, but see that changing under new leadership and the new CCSU.

Communication

1. There is substantial evidence which indicates that the newly configured SU is building an improving communication network. and most interviewees expressed satisfaction with the communication within their schools and new central office.
2. Although many interviewees expressed satisfaction with the communication within their schools, there was some evidence based upon parent interviews that indicated a lack of understanding of some of the happenings within their school.

Commendations

1. CCSU is commended for aligning and improving communication and improvement efforts throughout the recently developed SU, including at the central office level.

2. CCSU is doing exemplary work using collected data to guide their academic and social emotional work.

Recommendations

1. CCSU encouraged to evaluate some of the perceived and expressed inequities between their schools and work to improve the alignment of resources across the SU