

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

The Portsmouth School Department's Wellness Committee has been meeting since last March and has a number of action steps it hopes to accomplish this year. In order to facilitate regular communication, this page of the Superintendent's Update will be used to update all.

5-2-1-0 GOES TO SCHOOL

In order to encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyles, we will introduce the concept of 5-2-1-0 in our K-8 schools. The campaign suggests guidelines and encourages students to:

- **Eat at least five (5) servings of fruits and vegetables each day.**
- **Limit screen time (computer/TV) to no more than two (2) hours per day.**
- **Engage in physical activity for at least one (1) hour per day.**
- **Avoid soda and sugared drinks—Zero (0).**

The committee has a number of ideas to create student engagement and understanding about this idea. The kick-off event will be on October 27th when Dr. Rogers visits our community (see upcoming events) and will run November through April. More to come.

CHEFS MOVE TO SCHOOLS

This year, inspired by First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative, 100 Club Executive Chef Mark Segal and Food Service Director Pat Laska are working to bring the expertise of area chefs to our schools. As an initial effort, on Wednesday, October 27th, we will have a **Fall Harvest Lunch** at our elementary schools.

UPCOMING EVENTS, KUDOS AND DISTRICT DOINGS

NICHINAN, JAPAN VISIT

On Sunday, October 3rd, the Portsmouth School Department, along with city officials, will welcome students and teachers from Nichinan, Japan to Portsmouth. Students will stay with families through Thursday and have the opportunity for a cultural exchange. A welcome reception will occur at the Wentworth by the Sea Hotel on Sunday, October 3rd at 3 pm.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN OCTOBER

Friday, October 8th will be a building-based professional development day. There will be no school for students. Teachers will work on PLC goals, SINI plans and NEASC work. **Wednesday, October 20th** will be a delayed opening.

ALERT NOW COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

This year, the district will implement a rapid notification system that will permit us to contact students and their families, as well as staff, in the event of emergencies or school closings. In early October, we will send a test message. If you wish to change your contact information or would like to be removed from the list, please contact your school secretary after receiving the message. We will announce the date of the test.

DR. ROGERS SPEAKS OCTOBER 27th

On Wednesday, October 27th, we will officially kick-off our **5-2-1-0** Campaign with a presentation from Dr. Victoria Rogers, Director of the Kids Clinical Outcomes and Outreach Program from the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital. Dr. Rogers, who has successfully implemented this health and wellness campaign throughout Maine, will speak to staff at 3:30 pm on this day and to parents, students, area physicians and community members on Wednesday evening at 6:30 pm at the Portsmouth High Little Theatre. Please save the date.



Superintendent's Update

October 2010



**Portsmouth
School
Department**

Educating all students by challenging them to become thinking, responsible, contributing citizens who continue to learn throughout their lives.

SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

This year, in response to the School Board's goal, the Portsmouth School Department will work to implement a new system of supervision and evaluation for professional staff. Last year, a working group of teachers from the Association of Portsmouth Teachers, namely, Janet Lovering, Andrea Heath, Meg Ronchi and Linda Briolat met with a group of administrators, specifically, Jeff Collins, Charlie Grossman, Joanne Simons, Steve Zadavec and I to look at how best to re-design and implement a meaningful and workable system. There are three key elements to the process: 3 minute walk-throughs, annual appraisals and reflection.

THREE MINUTE WALK-THROUGHS

While probationary staff will still participate in a clinical observation model, continuing contract staff will see administrators visiting classrooms more often and for shorter periods of time. Typically, administrators visit for 3-5 minutes and observe the curricular and instructional decisions a teacher makes. The purpose of these brief visits is to gather data and make supervision more informal and collaborative. While each administrator will determine what form the feedback will take, follow-up will occur only on occasion and not after every visit. We are hopeful such visits will lead to reflective questions at the convenience of both parties; however, feedback could lead to direct suggestions for improvement as well.

ANNUAL APPRAISALS

School Board Policy JBO, *Evaluation of Professional Staff*, notes that the Superintendent will cause professional staff to be evaluated annually.

The committee looked at the work that had been done during the Strategic Planning process of the 1990's, as well as the language captured in the teacher contract. The committee agreed to continue to use Charlotte Danielson's four domains to craft the teacher job description as well as the appraisal instrument. Specifically, the domains or key performance areas are:

Planning & Preparation *The Classroom Environment* *Instruction* *Professional Responsibilities*

A copy of the appraisal instrument will soon be available on the district's website @ cityofportsmouth.com/schools/index.htm by clicking on the new employee link.

Under the timeline detailed in the teacher contract, the appraisal year shall be considered April 1 through March 31. Administrators will go through the process with staff beginning in January and concluding in March. A four point scale will be applied against each standard. Staff will be asked to use the document to do a self-assessment as a key part of the process.

REFLECTION

The final piece of the process will be a written reflection on how the teacher participated in the professional learning community initiative. Teachers will be asked to: 1) discuss student data, SMART Goals and team activities for the year; (2) share how the PLC monitored progress and celebrated success; (3) share your growth as an educator over the past year and (4) outline next steps for professional growth to share with the building administrator.

I would like to thank the committee for their work. All agreed the intent is to provide teachers meaningful feedback on performance within a framework that is doable on behalf of administrators. We will survey staff later next spring for feedback on the process.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

The Department of Education requires districts to update and revise their Professional Development Master Plans every 5 years. Last year, the district's Curriculum Council worked to bring our plan more in line with current district goals and a vision for continuous improvement. The group crafted the following response to the question "*What is professional development?*"

Learning- Increasing knowledge base

Staying current in content and pedagogy
Re-energizing and enriching teaching
An ongoing growth process

Refining best practices to increase student learning

Supporting the 21st Century classroom
Increasing individual and group capacity
Driven by evidence
Aligned with student needs
Focused on individual and group goals
Planned and sustained
Job-embedded/connected

Specifically, our plan will require activities to align with current PLC team and building goals, as well as increase content area learning. The plan will also embed the practice of reflecting on the *learning* from professional development activities. Once approved by the state, we will roll out the plan this year with an emphasis on phasing in any significant changes to our current plan. In order to be ahead of that roll out, we will visit each of the schools this fall to further explain the new Professional Development Master Plan