

Superintendent's Update

October 2020



Mission:



It is the mission of the Orleans Central Supervisory Union to provide an environment that celebrates diversity and creativity, promotes inclusion and integrity, and partners with parents and community members to give students access to a 21st century education.

Vision:

All of our students will have choices for success throughout their lives.



Upcoming Dates

Boards	Teachers and Students
<p>High School Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nov. 2 – 6:15 pm – LR and virtual Nov. 10 – 5:00pm – Board Retreat - LR Nov. 16 – 6:15 pm – LR and virtual <p>Elementary Middle-School (EMS) Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nov. 9 – 6:00pm – virtual Nov. 19 – 6:00pm – Budget Meeting - virtual Nov. 23 – 6:00pm –virtual <p>OCSU Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nov. 4 – 6:00pm –virtual <p>Negotiations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nov. 5 – 5:30pm – LR 	<p>Nov. 10 – Early release for students, PLCs for staff</p> <p>Nov. 11 – Veteran’s Day – no school</p> <p>Nov. 25-27 – Thanksgiving break – no school</p>



From Bev's Desk:

We have now completed our 8th week of school for students and I'd like to acknowledge the efforts of all staff in a successful reopening. The hundreds of hours that were spent over the summer and during the first 8 days that staff returned, really paid off and we were as prepared as we could possibly be for welcoming students back into our buildings.

The planning continued this month as we developed plans for possible short-term closures. The result of this planning is the [OCSU K-8 Short-Term Closure Handbook](#) and the [OCSU Preschool Short-Term Closure Plan](#). Since Lake Region uses a hybrid model, they will be able to shift to all remote by expanding what they currently do on remote learning days to all days. We also have some preliminary plans for long-term closures in the event that the state makes a decision to have all schools go back to full remote learning. Our OCSU Remote Academy (ORA) will be a good resource for us, and we'll make time for ORA staff to meet with all of our other staff if we are told to go fully remote.

Each day continues to bring challenges as we navigate this situation. We've had a number of staff request leave under the Family First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA). This leave does not get deducted from their paid time off and is available to employees who need to quarantine or to care for their children who aren't able to be in school or daycare. Each day we get questions about staff and students with symptoms and whether or not they should be excluded from our buildings. We hear from parents, both those who are frustrated with the restrictions, and those who are complaining about other families that aren't abiding by the restrictions.

We've had a number of families ask that their children be allowed to switch between in-person, remote, and home study learning dispositions. At first we were mostly hearing from those who wanted to switch to in-person, but as the number of positive cases in our area increases, we are now hearing from those who want to switch to home study or remote learning.

Anxiety is increasing about the upcoming holiday season. People are concerned about traveling and the need to quarantine, as well as about the increased potential for the virus to spread as people gather for holiday celebrations. It is currently unclear about the impact that holiday travel may have on our system, we are continuing to monitor the situation.

As schools all around us deal with positive cases of COVID in their schools, we know it's just a matter of time until we, too, have a positive case. We have an extensive checklist outlining the steps to take when we're notified of a positive case; we are as prepared as we can be for such an eventuality.

As always we are "Proceeding with Purpose".

School Boards



At their Oct. 7th meeting, the OCSU board voted to contract with the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA) to facilitate the search for a new superintendent. The last time that OCSU worked with VSBA to hire a new superintendent was in the winter of 2014. That search ultimately ended with the hire of Don Van Nostrand. When Don announced in late spring of 2017 that he was moving on, there wasn't time to conduct a full search and the board hired me as the interim superintendent, with a one-year contract (17-18) to replace him. After that first year the board offered me another one-year contract (18-19), and then a two-year contract (19-21).

The scope of services for the VSBA superintendent search includes:

- meet with members of the school leadership team and educators to establish goals for the search process and to become familiar with the culture of the district and community;
- assist the Board to develop a written charge for the screening committee that identifies the specific roles and responsibilities for the current superintendent, school staff, students, and community members during the search process;
- work with the Board to identify priorities intended to assist the screening committee to recruit superintendent candidates who possess the necessary leadership skills, attributes, and experience level established by the Board;
- guide the development of selection criteria, salary/benefit range, and other details for the search process;
- assist with planning for the inclusion of internal candidates currently employed within the district;
- develop with the search committee a plan for disseminating advertising materials for the search pursuant to a plan approved by the committee, including the notices of the vacancy for identified websites, selected newspapers, education journal(s), as well as phone calls and personal communication to potential candidates. Costs associated with advertising are not included in this contractual agreement.
- help the screening committee and Board to keep the process legal and moving forward in a timely manner;
- assist the screening committee with the initial candidate review and recommending candidates whose credentials indicate they are well-qualified for the position and should be interviewed
- schedule first-round interview appointments and provide assistance during the interview process;
- help the Board and screening committee formulate legal questions, and manage an effective interview process that follows the provisions of the Open Meeting Law;
- guide the screening committee in conducting in-depth reference checks for finalist candidates that include, at minimum, telephone inquiries to their current employer, school board members, professional organizations, licensing board, and local teacher's union;
- schedule final interview appointments and provide assistance during the selection process;
- forward names and credentials of finalist candidates to the Vermont Secretary of Education's office for licensure compliance and reference screening;

- organize a school and community forum for finalist candidates to meet teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community members;
- forward the name of the selected superintendent to the Vermont Secretary of Education for advice pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 241, and a criminal record check pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 254, if applicable;
- send letters of regret and/or other correspondence necessary to complete the search process; and
- assist the Board and selected candidate to create a transition plan for the leadership team.

The cost for this scope of services is \$8,500.

Legislative Report

The Vermont legislature held a special session from August 25-Sept. 25 2020. During that session there were some bills passed that are specific to education policy, a few of which are highlighted below.

In addition to providing for the FY21 budget, H.969 – the Appropriations Bill also included appropriations from the Corona Virus Relief Fund (CRF) for PreK-12 education. Funds were allocated to cover expenses related to the pandemic, including \$13.5 million to improve air quality systems. This bill also addressed:

- Calculation of the average daily membership (ADM) for the 2020-21 school year establishing that the ADM would not be less than the count for the 2019-20 school year. This is important due to so many more families opting for home study this year (OCSU numbers increased from 33 to 110).
- Reduction of required student days to 170 (from 175).
- Waiver of the online teaching endorsement for those teachers teaching remotely.
- To allow school boards to approve using the Australian ballot system for any of their annual meetings or special meetings (typically that change would need to be approved by the electorate).

H.663 requires school districts to make condoms available free of charge to all students in grades 7-12 in locations that are safe and readily accessible to students, including the nurse's office.

There were a few other bills passed, but these are the ones that stand out to me as having a direct impact on OCSU.

Employee Absences

Our ability to staff our schools is a major factor in being able to keep schools open. This year is especially challenging since we have fewer subs available and we have less flexibility with rearranging classes and schedules. Below is a staffing report for October which shows the number of employees absent, and the number of positions we were unable to find a sub for. In many cases when there is no sub available, the principal ends up serving as a sub.

October 2020

Employee Absences

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Total: 27 Unfilled: 1	2 Total: 26 Unfilled: 5	3
4 Total: 27 Unfilled: 3	5 Total: 29 Unfilled: 2	6 Total: 34 Unfilled: 2	7 Total: 24 Unfilled: 1	8 Total: 11 Unfilled: parent conf. day	9	10
11 Total: 28 Unfilled: in-service	12 Total: 28 Unfilled: 4	13 Total: 31 Unfilled: 4	14 Total: 40 Unfilled: 1	15 Total: 31 Unfilled: 3	16	17
18 Total: 30 Unfilled: 4	19 Total: 28 Unfilled: 3	20 Total: 21 Unfilled: 1	21 Total: 26 Unfilled: 1	22 Total: 30 Unfilled: 3	23	24
25 Total: 30 Unfilled: 6	26 Total: 17 Unfilled: 3	27 Total: 20 Unfilled: 1	28 Total: 22 Unfilled: 3	29 Total: 30 Unfilled: 0	30	31

Total - number of employees absent who require a sub

Unfilled – number of positions where no sub was available

Enrollment

Total enrollment PreK-12 is 1054 (this does not include students in alternative placements)

Enrollment K-8										
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Albany	7	8	6	4	8	10	7	5	6	61
Barton	15	9	9	16	11	17	8	16	8	109
Brownington	4	5	7	13	10	9	10	11	11	80
Glover	4	9	6	9	13	13	10	15	13	92
Irasburg	14	10	7	14	4	15	7	14	15	100
Orleans	10	6	8	19	6	13	9	12	12	95
Remote Academy	8	19	9	8	17	9	11	9	6	96
CEC	1		3	1		1	5	2	1	14
Total K-8	63	66	55	84	69	87	67	84	72	647

	9	10	11	12	Total
LR Remote	5	15	13	17	50
LR In-Person	88	91	69	61	309
LR Total	93	106	82	78	359

Preschool	3 years	4 years	Total
Albany	6	4	10
COFEC	19	19	38
Total			48

Home Study 20-21			
	19-20	20-21 Enrolled	20-21 In Process
Albany	6	18	3
Barton	6	15	5
Brownington	0	6	5
Glover	3	6	1
Irasburg	6	19	5
Orleans	4	8	3
Lake Region	8	5	11
Total	33	77	33
Total Home Study 20-21			110

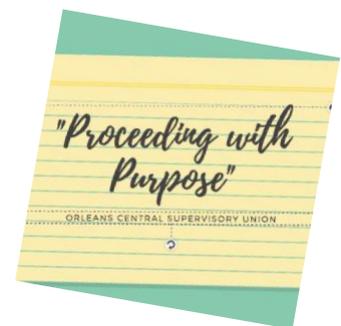
Special Education (10-30-20)		
	Students (includes CEC and alternative placement)	Percentage of Total Population
Albany	23	38%
Barton	40	37%
Brownington	14	18%
Glover	16	17%
Irasburg	24	24%
Orleans	24	25%
Remote Academy	26	27%
Lake Region	68	19%
PreK	14	33%
Total	249	26%

Superintendent's Report October 2020

Here are the tasks I worked on in October:

Fostering Educational Excellence

- Prepared board agendas
- Attended board meetings
- Prepared for and attended two negotiations sessions
- Attended two meetings of the Equity Team
- Attended a webinar on recapping the 2020 legislative session



Developing Quality Leadership and Staff

- Facilitated weekly meetings for central office administrators
- Attended weekly NEK superintendent meetings
- Attended weekly meetings with all superintendents and Dan French
- Planned for and facilitated weekly cabinet meetings
- Met individually with principals to provide support
- Attended part two of a training on hazing, harassment, and bullying procedures
- Attended two Vermont Superintendent Association meetings
- Participated in the OCSU in-service workshops and PLCs

Communicating with Stakeholders

- Managed the OCSU social media accounts
- Published the October issue of the Superintendent's Update
- Multiple meetings each week with the president of the Association
- Met with multiple parents to hear concerns
- Attended the VEHI annual meeting
- Attended the VSBIT annual meeting

Operational Efficiencies

- Met with Kelly Locke to discuss special education issues
- Met weekly with Lisa Worden and Niki Libby to discuss HR and other personnel matters
- Met with Mike Moriarty to discuss/plan for Titles funds
- Met with Heather Wright (often) to discuss finances
- Managed personnel issues