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Messalonskee RSU No. 18

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Communiqué



District Vision, Values & Beliefs Defined

Since the beginning of our new school system members of the RSU No. 18 community have been working to define the district's direction. In March 2010 we hosted a formal process, called a Future Search, to start defining that direction.

Approximately 80 students, teachers, parents, administrators, business & town leaders came together to participate in a facilitated process. Over twelve hours of work resulted in eight major themes used to write a draft vision statement. (Cont. Pages 3 & 4)

October 1st Workshop Day Plans

Grades 6-12 Staff

At Messalonskee High School

Understanding the RISC Model

Training: Presenter: John Davis, former Superintendent in Bering Straits, Alaska

Grades PK-5 Staff

At Messalonskee Middle School

PK-2 Writing Agreement Training:

Presenter: Jennie Marshall, Literacy Consultant

Grades 3-5: Literacy Agreement Revision:

Facilitated by Administrators & Literacy Specialists

Re-Inventing Schools Coalition (RISC)

The Re-Inventing Schools Coalition (RISC) is a nonprofit foundation committed to re-inventing schooling as we know it, so that all students are successful in school and life.

The RISC Approach to Schooling is the first comprehensive school reform framework set up as a performance-based system. Schools and districts in several states are already implementing this framework.

According to Robert J. Marazano, a leading educational researcher, "The RISC Approach to Schooling is the most comprehensive and well-articulated approach to standards-based reform in the country." The RISC philosophy supports an educational approach in which time is the variable and learning is the constant.

A 2001 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award winner, the Chugach School District in Alaska created this system and has been producing extraordinary results in student achievement ever since.

To learn more about RISC please visit the organization's website at: www.reinventingschools.org/



What is RISC Training?

The Re-Inventing Schools Coalition has been providing training across the State of Maine since the spring of 2009. Several administrators and teachers from RSU No. 18 have attended those trainings. The trainings are designed to help participants understand the RISC framework and to provide them with tools that help them implement some of the key concepts. A list and short description of some of these trainings are provided below.

Understanding the Model: first level of training introduces the RISC framework and some useful tools to help implement parts of the framework.

Beacon Teacher Educator Training (BTTT): second level training, trains teachers in the use of tools to engage students in creating a shared vision, a shared code of conduct and classroom procedures and how to facilitate student input about their own individual learning process.

Advanced Beacon Teacher Educator Training: third level of training. Further develops the four components of RISC: Shared Vision, Leadership, Standards-based Design & Continuous Improvement.

Administrator Training

Standards-Based Instructional Design Training

Assistance in Using Standards-Based Reporting Software

Guide Training: will train educators to become leaders of the RISC effort, including strengthening their ability to communicate the RISC philosophy and framework to others.

RSU No. 18 Fall Professional Development Calendar

9/28 Maine Course Pathways Syllabus Writing Training

9/29 & 9/30 Beacon Classroom Follow-up Visits

9/29 School Board Retreat

10/1 Workshop Day

10/4 RISC Cohort Curriculum Work

10/5 RISC Cohort Curriculum Work

10/12 RISC Cohort Curriculum Work

Messalonskee RSU No. 18 Mission & Vision

RSU No. 18 is a community where...

All students are prepared to succeed in society by demonstrating mastery of a common set of rigorous standards. Parents, educators, business leaders and community members are cooperative partners to help guide learning.

All students are creative problems solvers, critical thinkers, self-directed learners, effective communicators, collaborative workers, environmental stewards, and productive, healthy citizens. Students have a voice in their education and share in the development of ongoing, individual learning plans guided by a dedicated and passionate staff.

All students engage in creative and innovative learning strategies. Students use technology and other tools to connect to the world outside the classroom.

Students pursue multiple pathways, inside and outside the classroom, to achieve their learning goals. Learning takes place without boundaries of time and space.

Students are prepared to succeed as leaders and contributors to their community, nation and world.



What is our Mission Statement???

A specific mission statement has not been selected yet, but we have narrowed our choices down to a select few. If you feel strongly about one of the choices listed below, please email your choice to Linda Laughlin at lLaughlin@rsu18.org

- Engaging Students – Strengthening Communities – Creating Global Leaders
- Unlocking The Possibilities In Every Learner
- RSU 18 With Students, By Students, Creating Tomorrow

Core Values & Beliefs

Learner Centered Educational System

- We believe that clear and measurable standards should exist for all students and our curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development should all be aligned with these educational standards.
- We believe that a standards based system should measure each student against this set of clear and measurable expectations.



Flexible Learning Schedules

- We believe that school schedules should be flexible, allowing us to educate students without boundaries of time or space.

Individualization

- We value a wide variety of personalized educational opportunities for all students. These include using individual learning plans, multiple pathways, flexible grouping and standards based programming.
- Rather than being grouped by their age/grade levels, we believe that students should be grouped by their proficiency levels.

Technology Leader

- We value students and schools using cutting edge technology effectively to enhance their learning experience.

Preparation For Real World

- We believe that RSU No. 18 should prepare all students with the “21st century” skills necessary to be productive citizens in our global society.

Health & Wellness: Whole Child

- We believe that health, wellness and safety are essential components of a student’s complete educational experience.
- We believe that an RSU No. 18 education should address the values of rigorous and relevant academics, healthy lifestyle, good citizenship and ethical and moral behavior.



Teacher-Student Relationship

- We value staff and students working together as collaborators within a student-centered learning environment.

Community/Education Partnerships

- We believe that schools and businesses should work together to offer mentorship, job shadowing, and business apprenticeships and that these types of experiences should become a regular part of the students’ educational experience.
- We believe that this type of community collaboration will provide students with relevant, real world applications of their learning.



Summer 2012

Several teachers and administrators participated in weeklong RISC trainings in August. Approximately 30 attended the Summer Institute to help us plan how we should proceed in developing the RSU No. 18 Model of student-centered, performance-based programming.

Later in August teachers and administrators traveled to Milford to participate in Beacon Teacher Training.

2012-2013 Curriculum Committee

We are in the process of defining our PK-12 Vertical Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment (CIA) Committees in all content areas. We will send three members from the ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, & 21st Century Skills committees to work with similar members from the other five schools districts in the State's RISC Cohorts. The other RISC Cohort school systems are RSU No. 2, 15, 57, Milford & Jackman.

Our committee representatives will work with Bea McGarvey, Marzano Research Labs, to create curriculum documents with clear standards, which will be brought back to our vertical teams to adjust and adopt as our RSU No. 18 Curriculum.



Beacon Trained Teachers

The following teachers have been “Beacon” trained. “Beacon” training is a 4-day level 2 RISC training. It better prepares teachers to implement strategies that make their classrooms more student-centered.

Dave Boardman, Lois Bowden, Dan Bowers, Jen Brown, Paula Callan, Bobbi Farrell, Elizabeth Firnkes, Valerie Glueck, Cheryl Godfrey, Cathy Gordon, Julie Hanauer-Milne, Kathy Harris-Smedberg, Mark Hatch, BJ Kemper, Kathi King, Nanette Kroemer, Linda Laughlin, Karen Mayo, Carrie Merrow, Deb Michaud-Alexis, Jon Moody, Shelly Moody, Tammy Pullen, Kristin Ramsden, Kirby Reardon, Nancy Reynolds, Steve Rice, Bonnie Sammons, Julie Sanborn, Cathy Sears, Anita Smith, Janet Trembly, Holly Tupper, Melanie White, Heather Wilson, Jody Workman

A Five Year Journey

We have been working hard to understand the RISC framework because it is a successful model, but our intention is to create the RSU 18 Messalonskee Model for student-centered, performance-based programming.

As we continue to develop our own model and figure out how to meet the demands articulated in our vision statement, we must keep in mind that this is at least a five-year journey...



What's the Goal? Oct. 15th

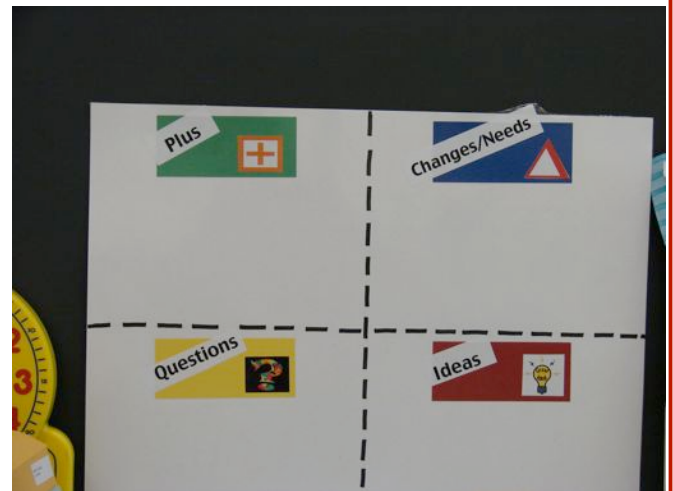
Last May we started a collaboration with one of our neighboring RISC Cohort school districts. RSU No. 2 includes the high schools of Hall-Dale, Monmouth & Richmond, and they have are working toward the same goal of developing a performance-based system.

We submitted a grant application with RSU #2 last spring in an effort to secure a planning grant that would help defray the costs of our work.

Our application has moved into the third of four phases this fall and includes a site visit from the Nellie Mae Foundation on Oct. 15th.

As part of this third phase we brought together 30 high school students, teachers, parents & administrators on September 14th to help us answer the final series of questions required of our grant application.

Between the two school systems we have four different high schools, which will be the focus for our visitors on the 15th.



District Leadership Team to be Selected by Early November

It is our intent to create a District Leadership Team of between 12-15 teachers, administrators, support staff, students, parents, & school board members.

The charge for this team will be to provide leadership for the transition to a successful student-centered, performance-based system.

More details will be sent out in October.