

## **PPS Update**

April 29, 2016

The Board of Education completed the process of filling the Coordinator of Secondary Special Education position several weeks ago and the Pupil Personnel Services Department would like to welcome Jon Goodison as the Coordinator of Secondary Special Education. Jon comes to the Wallingford Public Schools with prior experience as a high school general education and special education teacher. He most recently served as the Director of an Approved Private Special Education Program in eastern Connecticut as well and brings a great deal of experience in post-secondary transition planning to the Wallingford Public Schools. His experience developing standards based IEPs will also serve the PPS Department well as the CSDE moves in this direction. Please join the PPS Department in welcoming Jon to the Wallingford Public Schools.

Additionally, The PPT Department continues to focus on program improvement and expansion initiatives for the 2016 -17 school year, and has begun the process of filling several open special education teaching and related services positions. In an effort to identify potential candidates for these openings in Wallingford the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel and Director of Pupil PPS recently attended the recruitment fair at UCONN. The Assistant Superintendent for Personnel also attended additional recruitment fairs in order to identify potential high quality applicants.

The PPS Department continues to work closely with district central office and building administrators, general and special education teachers and interventionists in developing a multi-year plan to improve reading performance for all students with a focus on students with disabilities in grade three. A twelve member district team continues its collaboration in developing a District Action Plan to address the need to increase staff capacity in the identification, assessment and intervention process for students with deficits in the area of reading. Ongoing teacher professional development and progress monitoring will occur during the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school year to assist the District with ongoing planning decisions. Ongoing information regarding our District Action Plan in this area will continue to be shared.

The District Climate Management Team has recently overseen the completion of staff and parent climate surveys while student climate will officially close on May 6. Once all surveys are completed school climate teams will be asked to review and analyze results of their surveys and will revise their building level goals accordingly.

The STEP Management Team is presently completing its identification process for the 2016-17 school year. Recently all grade three, five and seven students completed the Otis –Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT), to assist the management team in determining students eligible for the STEP program.

The PPS Department is proud to announce that four of our colleagues have been recognized as the Teacher of the Year in their respective buildings. Karen Durr, speech pathologist at Moran Middle School, Brittany French, special education teacher at Parker Farms Elementary School, Chelsea Polletta, school social worker at Yalesville Elementary School and George Bikakis,

STEP teacher at Dag Hammarskjold Middle School have received this honor for their continuous dedication and commitment to the betterment of the lives of our students.

Finally, I would like to wish Christine Takores, high school special education department head, Mary Williams, LHHS special education teacher and Barbara Besitka, Dag Hammarskjold Middle School special education teacher a happy and healthy retirement as they complete there final weeks in the Wallingford Public Schools. These three professionals enriched the lives of countless students with disabilities and will be missed by the PPS Department.