



NORTHWOOD SCHOOL

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Northwood School Annual Summary of Student Progress – Fall 2015

Hello! It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I offer to you this Annual Summary of Student Progress report in my second year as the Principal of Northwood School. With the blink of an eye, summer has ended and we are off and running here at Northwood School for another exciting adventure in 2015-2016. The past year has been a whirlwind for sure in my first year as Principal of Northwood School. I am increasingly impressed with the dedication, heart and student-centered approach of so many of our faculty and staff. They are willing to go the extra mile to support a struggling student or strengthen the relationship with the family. Times continue to be tough for many, no doubt, and this school has seen its share of challenges meeting the needs of today's learners. Change does not come easily for many, nor quickly in most cases. Day by day we continue to progress forward, at times with baby steps, as advocates for children, to offer them the best education possible with the resources we have. I am grateful to the Northwood community for the support shared with our school and for having faith in our programs, our faculty, our staff and our work.

The 2014-2015 year was a very busy one for Northwood School. Based on the work done the previous year by The Focused Monitoring (FM) team creating an action plan (with a focus on reading) for Northwood School, the whole school actively engaged in activities and action steps in support of the Focus Monitoring Action Plan for 14-15. By June 2014, the end of Year 1, the work of the FM team was summarized in the Focused Monitoring Action Plan for Year 2, 2014-2015. The work being done in Year 2 served as a roadmap toward improved student performance for ALL students. The plan identified four overarching goals for Northwood that served as the impetus for change in areas of professional collaboration, curriculum development, response to instruction (RtI) and support for internal processes for enhanced communication both within and outside of our school walls.

Examples of objectives within those four overarching goals include adopting and implementing a universal screening tool to facilitate effective school-wide intervention identification and delivery, developing a flowchart to depict a system of supports and referrals to those supports, establishing grade level data-based decision making practices in which student work is used, as well as ensuring that professional development is offered in Six Traits for all teachers and support staff K-8. Ultimately, the success of ALL students is at the core of this effort and the action plan will be a focal point for the coming year.

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In the Fall of 2014 and the Spring of 2015, our students in grades K-8 participated in the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessment program. Computer adaptive Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) are K – 12 interim assessments that measure growth, project proficiency on high-stakes tests, and inform how educators differentiate instruction, evaluate programs, and structure curriculum.

Our overall NWEA scores for grades K-8 from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015 are provided below (with all values representing percentages of students tested achieving at each level).

	<u>GRADES</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Reading - Fall 2014</u>										
Advanced		14.6	15.2	10.4	36.7	30.3	22.5	28.6	25.9	25.9
Proficient		24.4	21.2	16.7	32.7	21.2	25	20.4	27.8	29.3
Partially Proficient		31.7	21.2	18.8	14.3	27.3	20	28.6	27.8	34.5
Unsatisfactory		29.3	42.4	54.2	16.3	21.2	32.5	22.4	18.5	10.3
<u>Reading - Spring 2015</u>										
Advanced		19.5	25	10.4	40	29	29.3	25	16.1	27.3
Proficient		17.1	19.4	47.9	24.4	38.7	29.3	31.2	35.7	30.9
Partially Proficient		39	38.9	16.7	24.4	16.1	34.1	31.2	33.9	27.3
Unsatisfactory		24.4	16.7	2.5	11.1	16.1	7.3	12.5	14.3	14.5
<u>Math - Fall 2014</u>										
Advanced		11.9	17.6	0	31.2	30.3	20	8.2	18.2	25.9
Proficient		16.7	23.5	0	33.3	24.2	30	34.7	36.4	27.6
Partially Proficient		33.3	32.4	16.7	20.8	21.2	35	42.9	38.2	29.3
Unsatisfactory		38.1	26.5	83.3	14.6	24.2	15	14.3	7.3	17.2
<u>Math - Spring 2015</u>										
Advanced		19.5	25	16.7	31.1	22.6	22	33.3	12.7	22.2
Proficient		31.7	33.3	27.1	40	41.9	22	39.6	32.7	25.9
Partially Proficient		29.3	16.7	37.5	17.8	9.7	39	18.8	27.3	25.9
Unsatisfactory		19.5	25	18.8	11.1	25.8	17.1	8.3	27.3	25.9

While we have many gains in both reading and mathematics that are evident over the six months from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015, we clearly have some work to do as we continue to put things in place to enhance our efforts to provide the highest quality instruction that will yield the strongest gains possible over time for our Northwood students. Through the use of RtI, Aimsweb, PLCs (Professional Learning Communities), Six Traits training and other professional development opportunities, we strive to target the instruction to identify what students know and are able to do so we can better address what they do not know and are not yet able to do.

As the state of NH began the transition from NECAP testing to the Smarter Balanced Assessment in support of the Common Core State Standards, our school continued to put forth strong efforts on the most recent **NECAP** assessment, the Spring 2015 Science Test. In May of 2015, our 4th grade and 8th grade students completed the New England Common Assessment Program science tests, better known as the NECAP assessment. The tests are designed to measure student performance on standards adopted by the three states of NH, Rhode Island and Vermont. Specifically, the tests are designed to measure the content and skills that students are expected to have as they complete the K-4, 5-8 and 9-11 grade spans.

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Our Northwood scores are included below with a comparison to the state scores across 4 levels for each grade. The scores from 2013-2014, as well as the scores from 2014-2015, have been included. The individual student reports will be sent home 10/30/15 to our current 5th graders who took the test last May. Results for our 8th graders from last year have been given to CBNA for distribution.

	<u>Northwood School GRADE 4</u>		<u>State of NH</u>	
	May 2014	May 2015	May 2014	May 2015
Level 4 Proficient with Distinction	2%	0%	1%	1%
Level 3 Proficient	39%	55%	45%	48%
Level 2 Partially Proficient	49%	36%	44%	40%
Level 1 Substantially Below Proficient	10%	9%	10%	11%

	<u>Northwood School GRADE 8</u>		<u>State of NH</u>	
	May 2014	May 2015	May 2014	May 2015
Level 4 Proficient with Distinction	0%	0%	<1%	<1%
Level 3 Proficient	22%	23%	24%	24%
Level 2 Partially Proficient	66%	46%	55%	53%
Level 1 Substantially Below Proficient	12%	30%	20%	22%

The **Common Core State Standards** remain a clear focus for schools across forty-three states and ours is no exception here in New Hampshire. The Smarter Balanced Assessment was a focal point for us in 2014-2015 as the state brought us all through this new assessment tool with the first SBAC testing session taking place in the Spring of 2015. This was our first mandated testing year. Testing was conducted on the computers in the school and we were able to conduct the testing without major interference to classroom instruction, while still getting the testing completed in eight weeks. Once the results are analyzed in the Fall /Winter of 2015, we will determine the baseline from which our students will be measured against peers within the state. Our teachers in grades 3-8 worked through practice tests and tutorials, using the Digital Resource Library and doing what they could the first time through to ensure students were comfortable with the assessment and understood what is being asked of them, as well as how to demonstrate their understandings throughout the assessment.

In addition to NWEA, and NECAP, and the new Smarter Balanced Assessment which began in the Spring of 2015, we have also implemented the **AimswEB** system of benchmarking and progress monitoring. All students are assessed 3x per year, fall, winter and spring, with additional progress monitoring assessments given to those who fall below the identified cut points for their grade. We hope that through the use of this additional data we will be able to more specifically target students in need of intervention and offer the proper supports to them. Through bi-monthly data meetings, our teachers can identify where the greatest needs are and direct the reading interventions accordingly.

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2014-2015 was our first full year of implementation of a school-wide **Response to Instruction** model (i.e. RtI model) with the benefit of consultation support from Ms. Marianne Nice, as a part of our school-wide effort to improve the reading skills of all of our students. RtI is a multi-step process providing instruction and educational support to promote the success of all children. Our initial roll-out of this RtI model for 2014-2015 focused on reading skills. Through bi-weekly grade level meetings, a team of teachers identifies students, through the use of various data points, who would benefit from targeted interventions. The high quality instruction/intervention is provided, in addition to the classroom reading instruction, and is matched to students' needs. Individual children's progress is monitored and results are used to make decisions about further instruction and intervention.

Our teachers continued to collaborate vertically not only within our own building but also with content area teachers at Coe Brown Northwood Academy through **the Bridges Program**. These meetings offer the opportunity to communicate regarding curriculum standards, expectations of rigor and engagement in a way that will ultimately better prepare our students for the transition to high school.

Technology is an area in which Northwood saw growth over the course of the 2014-2015 year. During the summer of 2014, we were able to remove the old wireless network we had in place and replace it with a centrally managed higher output system that covers the entire school including the SAU pre-school. This allows us to further expand on our mobile technology initiatives. Also during the early summer, we made a commitment to stop replacing computer workstations with desktop units. From the summer of 2014 forward all computer replacements will be portable units including laptops and tablets. With this, the library and computer lab were refitted with 2 in 1 ultrabooks which increased the options available to teachers during instruction in these rooms. In the computer lab this would prove essential in the following summer's complete move to room 101. This year also continued our interactive projective device project. This year we rolled out 5 interactive projectors to classrooms as well as 3 interactive whiteboards to increase technology use in the classroom. The usage data will determine purchases over the next two years.

We are thankful for the support of the Northwood School Board and community for the funds needed to pursue the Student 1:1 Netbook Initiative for grades 7 & 8 and other efforts. The funds allowed us to provide 125 individual netbooks for all students in grades 7 & 8, to enhance instruction. Teachers began to utilize many other instructional tools and strategies knowing each student had an individual device to use in class. This 1:1 Netbook Initiative allowed us to free up the computer lab and the library computers for students in younger grades who had more frequent opportunities to access the technology through the course of the year. It was a win-win arrangement. We were also able to assess more students at the same time throughout the building with the 1:1 devices which enhanced the organization of both our Smarter Balanced Assessment and also the computer adaptive NWEA assessments. Based on the data from the program we are expanding into the 6th grade for 2015-2016.

An initiative to develop and utilize Google Apps was implemented this year. Teachers and students were given instruction on using the different features of different apps such as Gmail, Forms, Classroom, Docs, etc. It is hoped over the next couple of years all classrooms will be using Google Apps in some manner. Our Library Specialist expanded her role supporting the faculty and staff as a Technology Facilitator this year. With the addition of a part-time library aide, this new opportunity was used to help classroom teachers integrate technology standards into the classroom. We also had our 2nd Annual Technology Information Night this year. Teachers and staff members showed off technology tools and programs during short five to ten minute presentations to other teachers and parents. We hope that this event attracts more community members as we continue to expand it.

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Our teachers continued to work collaboratively to address the standards and academic expectations through their classroom instruction. We implemented a new **PLC (Professional Learning Community)** approach in 2014-2015, which provided teachers the chance to dig deeper into the area of student writing and address needs within as well as across grade levels, with the discovery of trends that emerge. To that end, the majority of our faculty, and support staff as well, were trained in the **Six Traits Writing** process and are now able to consistently utilize those beneficial techniques to support students in a variety of ways as they seek to better understand the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. Our entire faculty and staff are committed to offering the children of Northwood a safe, challenging environment that encourages all students to aspire to excellence.

In March 2015, our staff and faculty were thrilled with the passing of not only our operating budget for the 2015-2016 school year but also the Teachers' Contract and the Support Staff Contract. After years of not having that support, the school is thankful to the town and our Northwood community in general for recognizing the importance of building that strong, supportive partnership.

As we transitioned from one year to the next, we bid a fond farewell in June 2015 to four dedicated **educators who shared a total of 100 years**, yes 100 years, with the Northwood School District before retiring in June 2015! We feel fortunate to have had these faculty members giving their time, energy and expertise to the students and families of the Northwood community and we wish them all much success in the next chapter of their lives. Thank you very much to **Rita Dalle Molle** for eleven years of service from 2004-2015, to **Gale Lucey** for forty years of service from 1975-2015, to **Tracey Groskopf** for twenty-three years of service from 1992-2015, and to **Linda Kramas** for 26 years of service from 1989-2015. Many, many thanks are offered for their commitment to our Northwood students!

After weeks of meetings and interviews as part of our hiring process, we are pleased to have brought on eleven new staff members to complement our existing teams of student-centered educators. In August 2015, we welcomed Grade 1 teachers Ms. Harvey and Ms. Hathaway, Grade 3 teacher Ms. Smith, Grade 7 Math teacher Ms. Clemons, Grade 7/8 Social Studies teacher Ms. Kelly, Grade 8 Math teacher Ms. Feiden, Art teacher Mr. Olorunfemi, Music teacher Ms. Hashem, Physical Education/Health teacher Ms. Tyler, Speech/Language Pathologist Ms. Nelson and Assistant Principal Ms. Cremone. Since the first month of school, we have also welcomed new support staff members Ms. Ahlberg and Ms Dwyer as NECC tutors, Ms. Breslin and Ms. Fuller-Sattler as paraprofessionals, Mr. Wolf as a full-time custodian and Ms. Davis as a part-time Curriculum Director.

I am excited by all the active participation and energy within our K-8 school and look forward to continuing to lead the charge by immersing myself in this school community, engaging our students, supporting our teachers, connecting with families, collaborating with other school leaders and advocating for what is important to continue moving this Northwood community forward together. Thank you for your support.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy P. Despres, MAT, C.A.G.S

Principal, Northwood School

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