

*Annual Report of the
Coventry Board of Education
and
Coventry Public Schools
2010 – 2011*



2010-2011 Annual Report

Coventry Board of Education and Coventry Public Schools

Board of Education

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Coventry Public Schools is to provide all of its students with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to learn as well as to contribute and to participate in a culturally diverse, rapidly changing society and to live a productive life. By working in concert with the family and community, an educational partnership will assist all children to achieve these skills and knowledge.

We work to ensure that all children will reach their individual potential with an appreciation of the lifelong learning process. We support the premise that learning is challenging, rewarding, and fun. We encourage teachers to provide opportunities for participation in the democratic process and the development of democratic values and ideas. We encourage family and community involvement in support of our schools.



District-wide Goals, Annual Objectives and Subsequent Achievements 2010-2011

1.0 Improve outside resources, partnerships, and revenues, consistent with district objectives.

1.1 Continue development of Coventry High School's Project Opening Doors initiative.

- Coventry High School staff members serve in leadership positions in this statewide effort. We have continued to increase both the numbers of advanced placement courses offered and the number of staff members involved in advanced placement training. In addition, we have increased the number of students enrolled in these courses, as well as the number of students scoring well on the exams. Plans are in process for the development of an advanced placement Psychology course for the 2011-2012 school year.



1.2 Work with Police, Fire, and Town agencies on simulated emergency responsiveness.

- Coventry Public Schools continues to improve its multi-agency emergency preparedness. Regular meetings with all agencies are held with school staff representatives. Plans and coordination procedures are ongoing and were seriously tested during this very trying "winter of snow (WOS)"! I'm very pleased to report that our long-term interactive training and discussions resulted in a much more successful resolution to our winter challenges.

1.3 Expand improvement of student achievement on district assessments training (CALI) with EASTCONN, the State Department of Education's agency, to include grades K-12.

- Extensive work has been undertaken again this year in working with the Connecticut Assessment and Learning Initiative (CALI). All schools have coordinated their efforts with Coventry's Regional Educational Service Center (RESC), EASTCONN. Staff and administration are to be commended for their diligence in expanding and enhancing this very complex and exhausting work.



1.4 Use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funds to develop supplemental programs to increase achievement.

- Pupil and Staff Support Services (PSSS) has used stimulus funds to better meet student needs. In addition, the ARRA funds were used to maintain programs that would have otherwise been cut during last year's difficult budget season.

1.5 Work within the Discovery Grant to address early childhood student needs and program development.

- Our School Readiness Council coordinates both the Discovery Grant and the interaction between the Coventry Early Childhood Center (CECC) and the school district. Its efforts with the Coventry Grammar School principal to enhance services to youngsters prior to their kindergarten experience are commendable. Their collaboration and quality interactions with the staff of the Graustein Foundation should serve us well through this application evaluation process.



1.6 Revise school use facility policy and lease charges; recommend Educational Facilities Use Fees Fund use requirements.

- What a project this has been. There are so many layers of public reaction, formula development, implementation challenges, and community effects. The Policy Committee has received significant input, worked very hard as a team, and should be presenting the final policy recommendations to the Board this spring.

1.7 Expand information to the Board regarding use of outside resources, partnerships, and revenues as practicable.

- Administrators and staff members have worked very hard this year to provide timely and comprehensive information in a very dynamic and changing environment. The most notable improvements have been in the Business Office area where the information flow to the Board is strikingly improved. In addition, the WOS provided many opportunities to increase our use of the ALERTNOW, e-blast, and website systems for information exchange. The economic, political, and legal climate is demanding ever greater levels of speed and yet the need for accuracy is paramount.

2.0 Promote efficient functioning and consistent refinement of subsystems within the larger organization.

2.1 Continue enhancement of Food Service operations to improve quality food initiatives, including the new Point of Sale program.

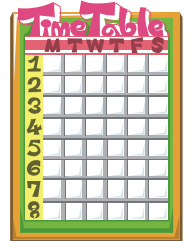
- The Food Service Department was extensively reorganized to provide for better quality services at reduced costs and continues to operate at seriously increased levels of efficiency. Radical improvements in service delivery are notable. Staff took on different roles and responsibilities as



they worked collaboratively with new teams to modify the way business was conducted. Although there were several start-up struggles, the Point of Sale system was implemented during this school year.

2.2 Implement second year of grades 6-12 schedule coordination and evaluate the effectiveness and recommend refinements.

- Staff and administration, as well as the Technology Resource Team, collaborated to make this happen and the student programming has been very well served. This schedule alignment is seen as essential given these economic conditions, as it enables the resource coordination in so many ways across the grades 6-12 levels. The administration is designing a mid-term evaluative process that will further enable schedule modifications and enhancements.



2.3 Implement processes and practices that further increase academic achievement.

- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and CALI continually focus staff on curriculum and instructional practices that improve academic rigor for students. Teachers are individually and collectively addressing program changes and adjustments made necessary by the annual administration of the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). The extensive work executed on behalf of the ABC curriculum coordination project is a large part of increasing instructional efficiencies.

2.4 Implement Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) programmatic modifications and practices at all sites.

- The implementation of Tier I, II, and III interventions is ongoing and requiring a great deal of staff development and focus. The further implementation of the Response to Intervention (RtI) practices is making very large scale changes in Coventry Public Schools. Administrators are working in teams developing compliant student interventions, assessments, and record keeping as they manage their progress. Coordination of these efforts with the schools and Pupil and Staff Support Services (PSSS) is ongoing and very extensive. The speed of the changes, as well as the complex implications, is so critical.

2.5 Expand vocational educational opportunities for high school students.

- Under the direction of our high school staff and administration, vocational collaborations are expanding and becoming more integrated into our high school curriculum. Of particular note is the expanded Coventry Alternative Learning Program (CALP) program's vocational opportunities for students. In addition, the staff is integrating vocational relevance throughout many of their curricular experiences.

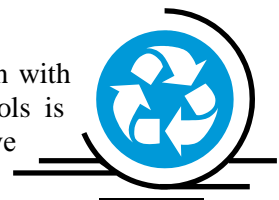


2.6 Improve and expand security and safety procedures.

- Under the supervision of the Physical Plant and Facilities staff and the Administrative Council, many additional security and safety procedures were implemented this year. A student supervisor was hired at the high school. The safety committee coordinates with the Chemical Hygiene Officer and the Safety Officer. They work with staff to insure compliance in areas that need attention. In addition, staff implemented more security cameras this year, which turned out to be very useful during investigations.

2.7 Improve and expand environmentally friendly "green" activities.

- Thanks to the efforts of Physical Plant and Facilities, in coordination with various student groups and staff initiatives, Coventry Public Schools is "greener" than ever. The disposable cafeteria trays at all schools have



been replaced by non-consumable trays. The district saves money and the environment by its ever expanding recycling program. Our participation on the town's energy committee has resulted in a better "green" integration with student science and curricular programs.

2.8 Analyze and modify current business and fiscal management systems.

- Unbelievable! That would be the only word to describe the Business Office's systemic modifications of protocols this year. Under the supervision of new staff, the analysis and restructuring of procedures is beyond notable. It is anticipated that this improvement of efficiencies and operations will continue.

3.0 Provide clear and regular communication to all constituencies, building a support base for school programs.

3.1 Extend the collaboration between town Finance and school Fiscal committees.

- The collaboration between the town Finance and Board Fiscal committees continues to provide information between the groups like never before. Again, the restructuring of the Business Office, has facilitated this collaboration. Staff members are to be commended for the provision of accurate and timely information.



3.2 Expand Board and public information regarding department and school goal achievement, including technology and curriculum.

- We continue to provide information via many sources and venues. A Channel 17 video regarding maintenance of our school buildings is in development for presentation in May. Board presentations this year included goal setting and achievement presentations by the Technology and Curriculum Resource Teams for the first time.

3.3 Use staff evaluation results to develop staff development programs and initiatives.

- The Administrative Council regularly addresses the skill set as reflected in staff evaluations. This input regarding staff development needs is then addressed by the Curriculum Resource Team. Following a design and development phase, the Curriculum Resource Team, often in conjunction with other system subgroups, develops the staff development plan.

3.4 Ensure that the town has facilities' needs information.

- Leadership and staff worked to provide Capital Improvement Plan information in a very detailed way. Serious efforts were expended regarding the roof repair and replacement project. Beyond that, the WOS provided exceptionally extensive opportunities for ensuring that the town had facility information. A joint meeting was called of the Board of Education and the Town Council to address such issues. Further conversations regarding school structural issues will involve both the town and school organizations.

3.5 Expand school programs and opportunities serving as resources for parents.

- Of the many opportunities that are provided for parents, the one-to-one communication with staff members still serves as an instrumental force in developing young people. Parents validate again and again how helpful our staff is to them as they take on the challenges of parenthood. However, technology is dramatically changing the ways in which information flows in all organizations. Although conferences with teachers continue to be an important vehicle, the use of the abalancedcurriculum.com and mygradebook.com websites is ever-increasing.



3.6 Improve public information regarding school budgets and financial transactions.

- As noted, this was another area of exponential growth and change this year. The Business Office and the Business Manager are to be commended for their timely and responsive operations as they have provided to the public more and more financial information.

3.7 Implement second year of Mygradebook.com with consistency.

- Our staff is to be commended for its management of mygradebook.com in this second year. We have continued with refinements and have demonstrated greater consistency of implementation. This effort requires a level of technological sophistication by staff as well as time and effort with increased expectations for student assessments and grade recording. There are plans underway to potentially increase the implementation to the middle school.



3.8 Improve timely notices to parents by continuing with the second year of ALERTNOW notifications.

- This is an exceptionally powerful and valuable initiative. Parents can now immediately be alerted regarding emergency notices. In addition, evaluative input is resulting in the snow call being changed to an earlier morning time for the 2011-2012 school year. Beyond that, for the first time, the staff will use the ALERTNOW system for snow calls and the decades old “phone tree” will give way to technology. Once again, staff is to be applauded for working with their changed roles and responsibilities.

3.9 Improve school sites’ physical “welcoming” logistics by providing clear instruction and signs to visitors.

- The Administrative Council addresses issues of welcoming environments on a regular basis. This year, improvement initiatives have included changes in conference rooms, hallway signage, landscape upgrades, and murals. There are plans underway to seriously review and improve the front of Coventry High School, as it requires the most work in order to be perceived as welcoming.

3.10 Provide information regarding the Roof Replacement Project.

- There has been so much information exchanged regarding the roof replacement project compared to building committees in years passed. The building committees before the age of technology simply updated political groups as needed. Now, every decision and bid package nuance goes out in hyper speed via technological capacities. The information regarding the roofs in this district is more attended to than so many other aspects of the organization.

3.11 Provide family seminars to assist with child development.

- One of the ways families learn about child development initiatives here in Coventry are the presentations made at Board of Education meetings, now that they are televised. More people are watching these Board meetings than one might have ever projected. In addition, we have modified our channel 17 procedures as we coordinated with town staff to increase variability and reduce redundancy. Family seminars are held at the school level as well as the community conversations held with the Superintendent.

4.0 Implement curriculum programs and practices that improve student educational performance, ensuring alignment with state standards.

4.1 Continue curriculum and assessment development for the newly revised world language program at the Capt. Nathan Hale School.



- The administration and staff are to be commended for taking on this world language curriculum and program modification, which was enabled by the change in the 6-12 schedule. The initial implementation feedback from staff, parents, and students is quite positive. More students are capably addressing advanced levels of the language when they enter high school. The next revision task will be to address the expansion of foreign languages to include Asian languages for global relevancy.

4.2 Expand efforts in academic rigor including programs such as Future Problem Solvers.

- The extension of Future Problem Solvers' activities is assisting the district in developing higher level programs. The Future Problem Solvers' teams continue to be award winning at an astounding level considering the size of our district. Higher order thinking standards have been integrated into the significant tasks, via the ABC website. This has resulted in improved levels of curriculum delivery at the schools. The curricular coordination efforts at all schools between teams of teachers increases the probability of students learning at more competitive levels.



4.3 Increase development, monitoring, schedule modification, and the student achievement results of our Academic Assist Programs.

- With the increase of documentation mandates related to SRBI, the daily life of student instruction has significantly changed. Administrators have modified staff schedules at all levels. In addition, the staff monitoring of student growth is now documented via a standards based report card and its related assessment system. In addition, benchmark and universal assessments continue to be developed. Building principals work with the staff and the school Superintendent to review these programs and make continuous progress adjustments for each succeeding year.

4.4 Provide more program alternatives (including Coventry Alternative Learning Program; CALP).

- The continual development of alternative programs is a reflection of students staying in school longer and the very seat-based, high tech mandates of instructional programs. Being locked into a program of limited physicality is not the right answer for some students. The staff continues to modify schedules and opportunities for students in order to continually engage them and have them reflect success in school. CALP students work off campus in the afternoons in vocational education settings and this newly developing special education initiative is showing early signs of success.

4.5 Continue to improve curriculum alignment coordination between classroom offerings, grades and departments, and state standards through A Balanced Curriculum program.

- We continue to refine our ABC curriculum coordination project, which turns out to be one of the best initiatives of this administration. Grade level teams and departments across the district are refining their curriculum, identifying issues of curricular duplication or absence, and making instructional and curricular modifications to further attend to state standards. This is a complex and demanding project that is comprehensive and extraordinary in its scope and ramifications. The staff is to be commended for their diligent and focused efforts as we continue to approach the ever moving target of student achievement standards.



4.6 Expand curriculum offerings by providing additional online coursework and distance learning opportunities.

- Coventry High School belongs to the EASTCONN Virtual High School Connecticut Consortium. The virtual programs are currently being integrated into the high school's tutoring center, providing flexibility to students and increasing efficiencies for staff.

The further development of this on-line course work will be essential as we customize the student experience.

4.7 Increase transition efforts between schools (Pre-K to K, 2nd to 3rd, 5th to 6th, and 8th to 9th) in order to enhance resource utilization and student achievement.

- Teachers are regularly visiting with other teachers to address curricular complications and issues across grade levels. The rotation of building administrators has further expanded the coordination between buildings. This very integrated administrative team is central to making progress between schools. Staff and administration are regularly addressing curriculum and instructional preparedness of students transitioning from one school to another. Joint faculty meetings, joint goals, and joint staff development has been important to these initiatives.

5.0 Improve the implementation of technology systems for educational and administrative use.

5.1 Increase the integration of curricular technology projects and district technology support systems.

- By rubric specifications, grade level units need to reflect curricular integration. With the assistance of the Technology Resource Team, we have increased the number of computer stations this year in several places. In addition, we have increased the software capacity quite significantly. These two initiatives, along with related staff development are making strides in our curricular integration of technology focus.



5.2 Document further integration of technology including assistive technology in curriculum.

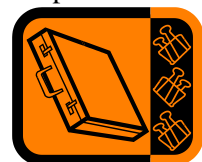
- Research is validating that the use of smart boards and other assistive technology devices are correlated to improvements in student test results, if the engagement of students is objective-based. We have continued to install and use smart boards in order to further engage students in the learning process. Teachers are making significant strides in integrating technological requirements into their students' class projects. The pressure to have students demonstrate technological literacy is intense. Customized and IEP-specific projects are made possible by assistive technology. This area is ripe for continual diagnosis, debate, and review, as we analyze integration of roles of student and roles of machines.

5.3 Increase the use of instructional technology, including computer labs, in classroom technology, and interactive white boards, in order to enhance student achievement.

- Across the district there has been a continuous increase in the use of instructional technology, including computer labs, in-classroom technology, and smart boards, in order to enhance student achievement. There is a huge learning curve happening as staff works with administration to ensure that these educational innovations are used in a very tightly coordinated way. Their use will really enhance student achievement results if the lessons are aligned to state standards. It is worth the use and focus as properly engaged students learn and retain more information in their long-term memory.

5.4 Refine and further develop the Capstone Project (student portfolio system) at Coventry High School.

- The high school staff has modified its procedures and practices related to student portfolios. In particular, there are more extensive orientation efforts with the ninth graders and more support sessions for students after school. The revised portfolio system, focusing on furthering the quality of the student work collected, is challenged by staff contractual limitations. The students will continue



to showcase their work at a “portfolio night” as a part of their graduation requirements. This portfolio project is a model for other high schools.

5.5 Reduce costs and increase efficiencies by having internal staff assist with technology support.

- The maintenance staff members are the “go to” people in this district. They are at the hub of every operation in every school. This under resourced system has had to call on people from all divisions to assist with this growth in technology use. The maintenance staff is to be commended for “stepping up to the plate” when needed.

6.0 Compile and use data to evaluate and improve programs and practices.

6.1 Improve the use of site data teams by evaluating and modifying programs as connected to results.

- Student data teams focus on student achievement results as they relate to state standards and clearly defined objectives. The attention given to enhancing student achievement can be seen in the improvement of district student assessment results at many levels. Our major strides in curriculum development also assist with these data team procedures. When the principals present their goal achievement reports, they will provide the Board samples of these data analysis efforts.

6.2 Continue work with the web-based Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and Response to Intervention (RtI) Direct programs in order to document student growth.

- The further development of the Response to Intervention (RtI) practices is making very large scale changes at Coventry Public Schools. Administrators are working in teams developing compliant student interventions, assessments, and record keeping as they manage their progress. Staff has been assigned to further work with web-based protocols for special student needs. Samples from this web-based RtI software system are available.



6.3 Use technology developed data to track and be better informed regarding utility and facility expenses and usage.

- Our staff, under the skilled guidance of Physical Plant and Facilities, is making serious inroads in the area of utility efficiencies. Continual cost/benefit analysis and historical trending work is being done by the Director of Physical Plant and Facilities in conjunction with the new Business Manager. The system uses data to implement changes in utility and facility related operations.

6.4 Collect data required for bid packages and related supplemental costs.

- The Business Manager has worked in a most integrated fashion with the town finance services as related to health insurance and oil bids. He has also used data from a variety of sources to reduce costs in the district, including our printer and copier cost this year. In addition, he works with Physical Plant and Facilities in a variety of bid areas and was a part of the building committee roof bidding project. He has been instrumental in using bid data at several levels.

6.5 Collect student and parent data related to the pilot K-5 standards based report card.

- The K-5 staff and administration continues to collect data related to the standards based report card system. While some information was presented to the Board of Education early-on, additional charts and data will be presented during the principal’s goal achievement reports this spring.



- 6.6 Continue evaluation and refinement of school improvement plans (includes Adequate Yearly Progress; AYP) based on analysis of assessment data.
- The school improvement efforts based in student data collection continues across the system and in all departments. Significant changes were made at Coventry High School in the area of CAPT preparation in particular. School improvement plans and evaluation efforts at the other schools resulted in additional instructional modifications, supplementary program initiatives, and the further customization of small group and individual programs.
- 6.7 Develop a procedure to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and teaching strategies as a result of data analysis.
- This RtI direct Project is a huge undertaking and significantly changes the ways in which student progress and program development are implemented. The RtI software is being used across the district for the first time. Training continues to facilitate this new direction. Our professional learning community is assessing student progress and making curricular changes related to this highly evaluative model.
- 6.8 Expand the use of CTReports.com to customize instruction, revise curriculum and improve achievement.
- CTReports.com is a powerful resource for our staff. Under the leadership of our Testing Coordinator, staff has had additional training in the use of this web-based capacity. Once the data is used by staff, the patterns are evident, and then the modifications of classroom practices and materials follow. The power is in the seeking and understanding of these student achievement patterns and results. Samples of CTReports.com are available for Board review.

