



**A Vision for the
Bethel Public Schools
A Living Document**

**Gary M. Chesley, Ed.D., Superintendent
Janice M. Jordan, Ph.D., Associate Superintendent
June 2008**

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Preamble

This document is designed to speak to the potential of the Bethel Public Schools. All of the aspirations contained in this document come from the imagination and determination of an extraordinary staff that is firmly committed to the improvement of student achievement and to providing learning opportunities that can shape the lives of individual children and the very future of this community. We fully realize that all of the component pieces contained in this document may not come to fruition. However, the broad strokes of this vision define the excellence for which we strive. Few reach greatness while aspiring to the ordinary.

Affixing a cost to these aspirations has not been our purpose in completing this complex exercise. Our primary goal is to make this a living document -- a measurement tool that assesses progress against our aspirations for greatness. Most parts of this vision come without monetary costs. They do however, come with a significant professional commitment and personal effort. Through this vision, the educators of this school system have set the goal to create the very best educational experience for each child.

Bethel Board of Education

Statement of Goals

The Bethel Board of Education will:

1. Implement a rigorous and current curriculum emphasizing literacy, mathematics, science, world languages, history, and the arts.
2. Assure that each teacher is fully-prepared to improve every child's achievement, to assist any student who needs intervention, and to inspire every student to be the best they can be.
3. Provide clean, safe, healthy, and well-equipped learning environments which are welcoming to students, parents, and community members.
4. Provide state-of-the-art technology integrated into teaching and learning, and used to communicate effectively with parents and the community.
5. Support every student's social and emotional development, including respect for self and others, teamwork, sportsmanship, truthfulness, and courage to stand up for what is right.
6. Prepare all students for living purposeful and productive adult lives.

Introduction

It is incumbent upon the leadership of the Bethel Public Schools to present annually to the Board of Education and to the community a vision of what the schools can become in the years ahead. Without having a valid and reliable exercise to cast an eye to the future, it is not likely that our fondest hopes and dreams for our children and staff will be realized. Our administration, through this report, examines current efforts and develops a vision for what can happen in the coming years. This document does not represent a strategic plan, but it does outline possibilities that will strengthen our school system. This document is intended to provoke discussion about our schools. With the collaboration and eventual approval of the Board of Education, for these vision statements, we can ensure that our aspirations are validated. The Board can develop long-term funding plans and the requisite support to meet the challenges of the years ahead.

Building on a Strong Foundation of Success

Beginning in 1998, we introduced the phrase, “our primary purpose is to improve student achievement,” into the lexicon of the Bethel Public Schools. That improvement meant more than an upward trend in test scores, which we have achieved. The Board of Education stated that one of its primary responsibilities is to provide opportunities for our students and staff to experience personal growth and to build upon skills in arenas outside of the classroom. Expanding our programs means that Bethel’s children can find a niche to build a future or to remediate skills essential to be competitive in later life.

To know where we should be going as an institution, it is essential to understand our system’s development and the programs currently serving our community. The following programmatic additions, improvements, or recognitions to the Bethel Public Schools were approved by voters via successful budget referenda since 1999 and through the initiative of the Board of Education, administration, or through the efforts of individual teachers:

The Board of Education earned the *Excellence in Leadership Award* in 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 07, and 09 after meeting the qualifications for this recognition.

The Board of Education approved the development of the Bethel Education Foundation in 2004 under Dr. Jordan’s guidance. The Foundation makes annual contributions to programs designed to support our teachers and students.

The Board of Education adheres to a textbook replacement cycle that ensures that our texts are up-to-date learning tools for our students.

The Board of Education maintains a computer lease program that ensures that our students and staff have up-to-date instructional equipment while providing a steady and reliable component in the budget process.

The Board of Education approved the Educational Specifications and the renovation plans for both Berry School and Bethel High. These renovated facilities serve the community with distinction.

The implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) insures the collaboration required to increase student success through the continuous improvement of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The teacher evaluation instrument calls teachers to account for the growth of their students through the inclusion of formative and summative instructional data in teachers' yearly reflections. The empowerment of faculty members encourages them to assume leadership within their PLCs or data teams which is essential to school and student success. The Faculty Leadership Cadre is an outstanding vehicle to train and mentor upcoming leaders. Our new teacher orientation process places an extraordinary emphasis on student learning, employing excellent instructional strategies, and understanding the professionalism that is instrumental to our community culture.

The accreditation of Bethel High School by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, completed with the 2009 site visit, indicated that the school is well positioned to serve the needs of all students, has a highly trained and effective faculty, and has leaders who have a strong sense of purpose and service to the community.

The Board of Education mandated a graduation requirement for Bethel High that includes 24 units of high school credit, 60 hours of community service plus an internship, a virtual class, or a college class taken during high school as a capstone project.

The 8 period-day at BHS gives students more curricular opportunities and a better chance to take electives or to participate in partnerships to earn college credits. The *TASK Alternative School* offers students an opportunity to attend high school classes in a smaller, personalized setting. It also provides opportunities for credit restoration.

The Board of Education approved the expansion of the Advanced Placement program from 6 to 14 courses, and, as a result, enrollment increased from 80 to 230 participants at Bethel High. A comprehensive post-secondary planning program, including the College and Career Center, provides extensive facilities and resources for students as they prepare to exist secondary schooling.

Bethel High School's Naval Junior ROTC program has an extraordinarily positive impact on BHS and the Bethel community. The Corps of Cadets have been awarded the Navy Distinguished Unit Award with Academic Honors every year since 2004. Eight BHS ROTC alumni have attended service academies and numerous others received four-year NROTC scholarships. The unit enrolls over 180 cadets, representing 20 percent of the student body at BHS.

An EMT course annually prepares Bethel High students to serve as certified Emergency Medical Technicians. A Cadet Teacher program places those aspiring to be teachers in our schools and provides them with valuable classroom experience prior to college enrollment. The Internship Program places students into the business and professional community in work situations where they are expected to contribute in productive ways.

Bethel Middle School was named a New England League of Middle Schools "*Spotlight School*." BMS is one of only 10 schools to achieve this distinction in the State of Connecticut. Since 2006, BMS has been recognized by the Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now as one of the *Top Ten Middle Schools in Connecticut* for closing the achievement gap.

Through a donation from the Bethel Education Foundation and Duracell, Bethel Middle School introduced an innovative physical fitness program called "PHYS TECH" which utilizes cutting edge gaming technology to build students' fitness.

The Bethel Public Schools has been selected four times as one of the *Best 100 Districts in Music Education*. This recognition has been based upon Board of Education's support, program scope, student enrollment, and student performance. The string orchestra program at Berry/Rockwell started in 1999 with 60 children in third grade. Now the program boasts over 400 children enrolled in grades 3-12. School musicals performed on the stages at Bethel Middle and Bethel High Schools have earned recognition for creativity and excellence in production.

The Bethel Schools have nurtured an outstanding relationship with Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) and Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC). Bethel High students enjoy a tuition discount of 40% when enrolling in WCSU courses as a junior or senior. Faculty also earns a tuition discount for advanced coursework. A number of Bethel administrators and teachers have received their doctoral degrees (Ed.D.) through the Western Connecticut State University program in instructional leadership. Bethel teachers are actively involved in the pre-service preparation of Western teacher candidates, and Bethel Central Office administrators regularly meet with WCSU to improve their elementary and secondary teacher preparation programs. The nationally acclaimed *Bridge Program* with the university has decreased the number of graduates requiring remedial college instruction. The program has also spawned a collaborative science fair between the university science department and Bethel Middle School allowing our young scientists to have their research critiqued by students and faculty from the university. The *Bridges Program* continues to expand with exciting options for our middle and high school students in writing courses and meteorology, and a special program called *Camp College* which provides middle schoolers with the exciting science and other learning opportunities during a week in the summer. Junior students annually tour NVCC to understand the options available for career education at an outstanding community college. Bethel enrollment in this school has doubled in recent years.

Johnson School was named a finalist as the Outstanding Elementary School in Connecticut in 2010.

The Bethel Public Schools website was awarded the *Best Educational Website in Connecticut* by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education. Channel 26 was started, and then programming expanded, making it the only educational network in the region to routinely feature the work of K-12 students. Later, studios were outfitted in each school to allow for local school productions. The station has won statewide awards for outstanding production.

The summer school started in 1999 with 35 children. Now, the program annually enrolls over 700 children into enhancement and remedial classes, making it the largest such program in the State. The *Summer Counts* program invites all incoming-kindergarten students to summer school for two or four weeks to ensure students will have a positive acclimation to school.

The Voice Reach phone notification system to parents was the first launched in Fairfield County by the Bethel Schools in the wake of the Columbine Tragedy. An emergency phone alert system allows schools to contact parents in real time during emergency situations. The Bethel Public Schools E-Newsletter, sent each Friday by the Superintendent, has become an invaluable tool to connect parents to the activities of all school and community programs.

The Bethel Schools launched a homework assignment website *Homework.net* for students and parents to monitor assignments on a routine basis. The system has been upgraded through the introduction of *PowerSchool* and the *Parent Portal* and provides up-to-date information on both academic progress and assignment completion.

Bethel Schools are connected through a Wide Area Network thus improving learning opportunities, network speed, and band width for each school facility. Students use cutting edge hardware and software as part of the *Digital Student* course for seventh and eighth graders. Bethel teachers enjoy technological flexibility at home and at school when they purchase Apple products at a significant discount using pricing negotiated by the Business Office.

Budget Sense, a district financial management software package provides detailed and timely oversight of school expenses. *Applitrack* is an on-line human resources application that allows for digital job applications and streamlines the application process significantly. A professional development tracking software, *Protraxx*, greatly simplifies the required tracking of CEU credits for professional staff and allows for the development and publication of PD programming in a standardized format. The Special Education Department employs a web-based application called *IEP Direct* for developing and monitoring students' Individualized Education Plans and includes a more informative parent progress reporting system.

Circle of Friends expanded the specialized programs available for preschool students as well as the number of openings for typically developing peers, including opportunities for more families to access the program. The Family Literacy program continues to strengthen the connections between school and the community for our English as a Second Language parents as they acquire the English language in our evening program.

Kindergarten Buddies is as an intervention program which provides extended instructional time each day for our ESL students and our struggling kindergarten students. This year, the new Extended Day Kindergarten Program provides three full days and two half days of learning for our neediest incoming kindergarten students. These students are also provided a variety of intensive supports from Speech and Language Pathologists, math coaches, and literacy coaches. In addition, elementary school children experiencing difficulties in reading and mathematics have the opportunity to attend before-school classes for additional practice and remediation.

We employ the *Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI)* model that places a focus on Universal Screenings of all students in reading, writing, and mathematics three times a year. The collection and monitoring of student learning data is used to place students in appropriate intervention programs (tiers) and monitor their progress. In all the Bethel schools, additional instruction in language arts and mathematics are provided to the identified students, and pre- and post-testing is used to monitor students' progress.

Students with disabilities are afforded opportunities to participate with their typical peers in social inclusion activities through the award-winning *BMS Bridges Program* and the *BHS Friendship Club*. The *PM Studies Program* at Bethel High School offers the first alternative schedule, small group instruction option for students, now with the opportunity for students take up to 7 credits a year. The *Steps toward Educational Progress Program (STEP)* at BHS offers special education students academic counseling and transition-to-adult-life services within the comprehensive high school setting.

A multidisciplinary Bethel Public Schools' *Assistive Technology Team* is available to evaluate students with disabilities for low and high technology solutions to support their learning. A Board Certified Behavior Analyst supports programming for students with autism. Parents with concerns about a very young child's development can participate in preschool screening sessions and consult with the Circle of Friends multidisciplinary team.

A partnership with Bethel's area pre-schools focuses on the sharing of expectations for incoming preschool students, improved kindergarten achievement, and professional development for pre-school teachers. This collaboration has helped our youngest children be better prepared for kindergarten rigor.

Looking Forward

The Bethel Public Schools continues to be a leading school district in Connecticut because of strong student achievement and committed, highly-skilled teachers and administrators. But the landscape is changing very fast in the United States with the ESEA reauthorization known as *Race to the Top*, and with the public outcry for much more detailed accountability for student learning performance and for high school graduates who are college and career ready. Unprecedented pressure is on all of America's schools to compete with schools across the world for pre-eminence in student academic achievement, college graduation rates, and leadership for the future. Bethel, and all of America's schools, *must* step up and show how we plan to re-take place as the world's leading "education nation," and never settle for second best. The competition for highest performance is not just with countries around the world, but also with private and public Charter Schools in this country and state. Parents are clamoring for new educational models with increased choices, and they want their local public schools to measure up. Bethel must measure up, and to do so, Bethel Public Schools must identify its greatest educational challenges and meet with innovative programming and excellence in teaching.

The greatest educational challenges for Bethel are:

- Managing student learning data for teachers and administrators to make progress monitoring of student learning easy for teachers, administrators, students, and parents;
- Monitoring curriculum delivery to ensure that all students learn what is articulated in each course curriculum;
- Addressing serious social problems, such as increased bullying and lack of motivation to learn, with programs for families as well as for schools and classrooms;
- Supporting every teacher so that they are the best they can be with innovative and effective supervision and professional development programs;
- Providing teachers professional learning to ensure they understand and can teach to the new expectations found in the *Common Core State Standards* as well as the state and local programs and curricula;
- Integrating technology as a ubiquitous complement to every program and curricula in order to prepare students for 21st Century global demands;
- Assuring that every Bethel graduate is college and career ready;
- Eliminating insular, backward thinking about what we should offer in our schools, and demanding ground-breaking and effective educational programs for every child in Bethel;

- Communicating to the public openly about the state of our schools, the mandated and anticipated changes we must address over the next three years, and the dire need of their financial support if we are to achieve our vision.

The Vision for Teaching and Learning

Dr. Janice Jordan
Associate Superintendent

Description and Implementation of the Vision:

- 1) To systematically collect, analyze, and plan using common student learning data at every grade level for the critical purposes of improving student learning and classroom instruction.**

We will continue to build schedules and create opportunities for teacher collaboration in SRBI data teams and Professional Learning Communities throughout the district.

Progress as of September 2010:

- Bethel High School has provided more meeting times for PLCs, and is committed to creating even more time this year. In addition, common planning and PLC time is now included in the school day for all of the Freshman Academy teachers (Social Studies and English).
- The purpose of department meetings and faculty meetings at all of the schools now focus on solving student learning problems rather than solely on administrative details, under our building administrators' leadership.
- Significant assistance is now available to principals as they improve their SRBI data teams and the operation of the Professional Learning Communities.
- The type of data being collected and the frequency of data collection have changed in all schools with tight focus on collecting the critical indicators of student learning.
- The purchase and use of *RTI Studio*, a data management system, will assist all teachers and administrators with the tracking of student learning data over time. The building of our data within *RTI Studio* is taking place right now.
- Student learning data is now a common part of administrator and teacher reflection conferences, performance observations, and evaluations. "Evidence of Learning" is part of the culture of our schools.

Due to the continuous changes in curriculum expectations with the publication of the *Common Core State Standards* (2010), we must support the curricular knowledge and instructional skills of our K-12 teachers with the following positions:

- Math Specialist (LIT) for the Grade K through Grade 3;
- Science Specialist (LIT) for Grade K through Grade 5;
- Reading Specialist (LIT) for the high school;
- Intervention Specialists for the math labs at the high school and the middle school;
- Return the Supervisor for Reading and Language Arts position to full time.

- 2) To use technology ubiquitously and innovatively to improve student learning.**

We will use technology more effectively to analyze district/school/classroom learning data.

- Every staff member will be trained on how to *RTI Studio* for progress monitoring their students' data. This program will be operational by January 2011.
- PLCs, SRBI Data Teams, and administrators will use *RTI Studio* regularly to track student learning.
- Classroom data collected by teachers will be organized in MSEXcel, and training for teachers will be delivered by the *Tech Champions* and Danna DeSimone.

We will structure technology improvements and professional development activities to ensure classroom teachers use a range of technology options to improve teaching and learning as a regular part of their instructional planning and delivery.

Progress as of September 2010:

- We used a self-evaluation for teachers of their technology skills that includes the NETS*T Self-Assessment (National Education Technology Standards for Teachers) for the past two years. This tool is attached to the teachers' summative evaluations. However, beginning in 2011, teachers will take this assessment on-line and receive a rating of their capability with technology with the specific strong and weak areas highlighted for them. They will be able to see their skills in comparison with teachers from their school and the entire district and state.
- We continue providing technology training programs on each professional development day and through additional PD workshops. The *Tech Champion* program at the high school was expanded to help teachers on-site with their use of technology for learning.
- We purchased more web-based curriculum programs for SRBI intervention and for library research purposes.
- We revised our cyber-bullying, Responsible Use Policies, and other technology-related policies to address misuses by staff and students. We also began special training sessions for staff to make them all aware of what is expected when they use technology. In addition, the Bullying Prevention Task Force just completed two parent workshops with Bethel Police Detective George Bryce and Youth Officer Ralph DeLuca, and they produced a television show for students and parents.
- We developed a new Technology Curriculum for Grades K through 8, with emphasis on digital citizenship, ethics, responsible cyber behavior, strong research skills, and skills for evaluating the authenticity and value of source material.
- The wireless system for the schools has not been put into place yet, but we can expect to see it in the high school by the end of winter 2011.
- More classroom computers are needed at all grade levels, both in classrooms and in additional computer labs. The elementary schools need at least two computers in each classroom—ones capable of running the programs for reading and mathematics interventions in a small center within the classroom.
- We are interested in expanding the use of SmartPhones and other hand-held devices for instructional purposes.
- We are interested in having high school students bring their own laptops to the school as part of their learning day.

- We want to expand the quality of the electronic report cards at the secondary level so that they are standards-based.
- 3) **To assure that Bethel’s teachers and administrators are the best in Connecticut, and to support every teacher and administrator with effective, personalized professional development and supervision.**

Progress as of September 2010:

- We refine our teacher supervision model yearly with continuous training for the administrators each summer and throughout the school year given by Dr. Chesley, Dr. Jordan, and consultants. Dr. Chesley and Dr. Jordan interact almost daily with every administrator, they meet weekly with the Administrative Council, and they meet individually with each principal monthly.
 - Dr. Chesley and Dr. Jordan complement the new teacher orientation program with expanded features such as book study groups, group Learning Walks with debriefings, and special workshops on important instructional problems.
 - Dr. Chesley and Dr. Jordan observe each new teacher and every untenured teacher yearly to be sure that they are meeting district expectations.
 - Administrators are required monthly to provide evidence that their teachers are worthy of tenure using their student learning data and through their supervisory documents.
 - The Teacher Evaluation Task Force is charged with improving the teacher supervision model each year, and in 2010-11, they will put their attention squarely on “providing evidence for student learning” as an essential component of the teacher evaluation process.
 - Extensive professional development is provided for our teachers based on their identified needs. We have four professional development days as well as early dismissal opportunities to learn more. In addition, through outside workshops, mentoring, curriculum writing, summer workshops, etc. teachers continue their professional growth. Professional development in all forms is a priority in the district.
 - A TEAM Coordinating Council is ready to assist mentors and new teachers with the TEAM program. All of Bethel’s mentors were trained last year on the new TEAM program. Now, all TEAM Coordinating Council members are being prepared to assess beginning teachers’ module reflection papers since our district has committed to in-house scoring of the modules.
- 4) **To address serious social problems—such as bullying and lack of motivation for learning—with programs for families as well as for schools and classrooms.**

Progress as of September 2010:

- The district’s SRBI initiative—Scientific Research-Based Interventions—includes the implementation of data-based decision-making with trained data teams in all of the schools—including data on attendance and behavioral interventions. Positive Behavior Supports is in degrees of implementation within Johnson, BHS, and BMS and it measures student behavior and school climate indicators. This year, under

the guidance of Mrs. Linda Pica, the school counselors, social workers, and school psychologists are adding an important component to our SRBI initiative by developing an SRBI system for tracking Social and Emotional Learning. The district's PPS staff is in the process of identifying those students with behaviors in need of interventions, and they are quantifying the efficacy of interventions and the growth of Social and Emotional Learning.

- Interventions for students who are suspended for cyber-bullying are developed and are ready for implementation at BMS and BHS. These include a special on-line program for eliminating bullying on-line and for developing Digital Citizenship skills.
- The Bullying Prevention Task Force is very actively pursuing parent involvement in their children's on-line behavior through workshops such as *"How To Do Facebook Safely"* given with the help of local police, the Bullying Prevention Task Force members, and the television show alluded to above. Presentations for middle school and high school students are planned for the winter and spring on how to protect one's on-line identity, how to maintain a mature, positive digital footprint, and how to address other safety concerns in a digital environment.
- Dr. Jordan presented *"Maintaining Positive School Cultures and Engaging in Daily Role Modeling in Order to Keep Everyone Safe Using Technology"* to the entire teaching and paraprofessional staff so that they will be aware of the new regulations and policies governing cyberbullying and other misuses of technology.
- Experts in the field of student behavior will assist teachers in how to motivate and how to sustain engagement through the professional development sessions offered this winter.

5) To eliminate insular, backward thinking about what we should and can offer in our schools to all students, and to support ground-breaking and highly effective educational programming for every child in Bethel.

We will support varied collaborations between regular education and special education teachers in order to impact special education student achievement in regular education classes. We assist all teachers in providing advanced levels of learning for those students who need differentiated materials and lessons because they are gifted learners. We will specific components of the *Whole Child Initiative* so that our students' physical health, emotional well-being, and character are an integral part of our district's vision for its children. We will integrate ESL students fully into our regular classrooms.

We will avoid at all times the negative thinking that keeps the status quo in place, and we will reinforce the kind of thinking that sees the possibilities for innovation and great programs.

Progress as of September 2010:

- Bethel's SRBI initiative Plan—Scientific Research-Based Interventions—outlines what we need to do to meet the needs of all students. The plan looks different within each school as their needs are different, but the core of the plan includes implementing data-driven decision-making with trained data teams at the PLC and school levels. The Positive Behavior Supports program is now implemented in three of our schools—BHS, Johnson, and BMS—the others to implement in future years.

Many new reading software programs and other materials have been purchased and used with success in order to provide additional practice and remediation for students.

- This year, new mathematics materials for interventions K through 8 have been purchased, and all teachers will be trained to use these web-based materials by mid-November. These materials can be accessed at home and in the mathematics computer labs. They can also be used within classrooms for additional practice and remediation for students.
- Our administrators are charged with assuring that excellent Tier I instruction (regular classroom instruction)—such as differentiation practices and the use of student groupings for instructional purposes—are happening in all classrooms. Many of our interventions for Tier II are being fully implemented in some of the schools—and they include increased learning time for students whose learning data show gaps in their achievement. Those students receive targeted, additional remediation designed to close their achievement gaps.
- Special consultant assistance for high school, middle school, and Johnson staff is available this year to make certain that SRBI practices are correctly done and are efficacious.
- We continue to support collaboration between regular educators and special educators using the co-teaching model and other special education instructional support models. Special training on co-teaching and on effective instructional practices continues for teachers committed to addressing students' learning needs in regular classrooms. Many of the special education personnel, such as Speech and Language Pathologists, are in the process of changing their roles and moving into regular education classrooms helping students with special learning needs.
- We are committed to including the English Language Learners within regular classrooms K-12 with in-class as well as pull-out support. Mrs. Rockwell continues to build the capacity of the ELL Tutors, and the quality of their knowledge base and intervention repertoire continues to improve in effectiveness as noted in the ELL sub-group achievement scores.
- We will seek out innovative, “out-of-the-box” thinking about scheduling in all the schools to accommodate Intervention Blocks. We will aggressively pursue special learning experiences provided for our students using Bridges from Western Connecticut State University and other resources (i.e. meteorology, writing seminars, Camp College, WCSU science fairs). We will continue to seek out the best materials—hard copy and software—to integrate into our curricula.
- The Language Arts curriculum K-8 will be updated with new materials, new pacing charts, and new assessments.
- 21st Century Skills preparation will be consciously included as part of all curriculum documents.

6) To provide each teacher with professional learning about the *Common Core State Standards* in Language Arts and Mathematics K-12.

Progress as of September 2010

- Dr. Jordan will be presenting an introduction to the *Common Core State Standards* for all teachers and administrators in December 2010 during the Professional

Development day. However, a core of staff members are now very familiar with the new standards as the standards were included in their curriculum revisions this summer and this fall. Teachers are aware that the standards will impact language arts and mathematics curriculum and instruction in very specific ways, but they are not all aware of just how dramatic some of the changes will be.

- Teachers will be responsible for not only knowing what the *Common Core State Standards* are, but for knowing how they must be implemented within their subject areas and how they are to be assessed. The teachers also need to understand the impact of the standards on existing curriculum, instruction, and assessments.

7) To assure that every Bethel graduate is college and career ready.

Progress as of September 2010

- The school counseling departments in grades 6 through 12 are working to develop *Student Success Plans*, and we have purchased the additional software we need to make these plans happen. Mr. Derek Muharem formed a committee to address the *Student Success Plans* at the middle school so that they complement those at the high school. A consultant is also working with the high school and middle school personnel to coordinate efforts in this regard.
- See other sections of this document for more information on college and career readiness programs in the district.

The Schools: Looking Forward

BETHEL HIGH SCHOOL

The Vision for Bethel High School

Progress as of September 2010

Patricia Cosentino, Ed.D.
Principal

Assistants Principals: Gary Lawlor
Christopher Troetti

1) To improve student achievement and programming for student learning.

Progress as of September 2010

School-wide

- Additional time is available for PLC work on curriculum and student achievement monitoring by scheduling early dismissals and providing time at faculty meetings.
- Teachers understand how to write higher-order type questions and open-ended questions focusing on critical thinking skills.
- All content area teachers administer two *Reading for Information* assessments to their classes. Data is being collected and analyzed.
- *Learning Walks* focus on teacher questioning and student engagement. Observation feedback is shared with staff to facilitate improvements in these areas.
- A school-wide data team meets every month to review student learning data and interventions.

- A school-wide *Data Showcase* was held at BHS on June 2, 2010, and it will be repeated this June.
- Consultants are working with high school staff to understand what data to collect for SRBI, how to implement Tier I teaching practices that are research-based, and how to develop true interventions that are targeted to close specific learning gaps and provide additional learning time.

Applied Studies

- The Applied Studies Department coursework (following the Career Pathways model set forth by the State of Connecticut), includes many new and completely revised courses, and significant upgrades have been made to the DECA program.
- Students in the *Digital Media Movie-Making* course, the sophomore year component of the *Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences program*, were invited to work with the PBS news hour, and personnel from PBS are mentoring the students on their video production and journalism.
- Internships and Cooperative Work Experiences have increased many options for seniors who want to integrate what they are learning in actual work environments.
- The Business Department and the Video Production department are working with the town of Bethel to develop a marketing campaign to help recruit businesses to the Town of Bethel.

English

- *AP Language and Composition* and *Digital English* courses are new to the department with dynamic curricula.
- Baseline assessments of *Response to Literature* skills and *Editing and Revising Skills* were given this fall and analyzed, and students in need of support were identified. Teachers developed and implemented comprehensive intervention plans including specific lessons to close learning gaps in both areas.
- Two reading intervention classes continue to assist 9th and 10th grade students with literacy skills.
- Freshman Academy teachers still participate in *Hands Up!*
- *SMARTBoards* are now part of the Freshman English course. All teachers are trained and ready to use this wonderful innovation in classes.
- *Wildcat Word*—the new on-line newspaper—in loved by students and receiving recognition from the community already. The journalism class is now a full year course, and these students are joined by additional students after school who want to write for their school newspaper.

Mathematics

- Sophomore courses in Geometry were revised this summer, along with the college preparatory Calculus course, and the Advanced Placement Calculus courses. The new State of Connecticut Algebra program became the basis for a new Algebra I curriculum too.

- PLC teams in the Math Department are organized by subject so students are held to the same expectations have similar experiences in the course, and are assessed using common assessments developed by the team members.
- Students learn time management strategies so they use time effectively when doing CAPT problems – 3 minutes for grid-ins and 5-8 minutes for open ended questions – to help students not run out of time on the actual test.
- CAPT assessment components are included on Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, Essentials and Patterns exams.
- The after-school CAPT prep class continues this year.
- CAPT Prep is a fall semester course for sophomores identified by their teachers and serves a number of students at-risk for failing the CAPT.

ROTC

- The Navy acquired the Einstruction Technology Classroom Performance System and distributed it to all Navy JROTC units. This system allows the entire NJROTC four year curricula to be presented as an interactive PowerPoint presentation, with cadets engaged using assigned remote devices which register and calculate their responses. AT BHS, this system will be fully operational second semester.
- Newly developed course objectives have increased experiential learning and cause students to fully think-through and apply what they have learned.
- The cadets placed an increased emphasis on peer mentoring/tutoring in an effort to improve grades and to reach those struggling in dysfunctional or challenging social environments.
- At BHS, 26% of the males are NJROTC cadets; 13% of the females are NJROTC cadets. The total enrollment represents 66 freshmen, 63 sophomores, 27 juniors, and 24 seniors, or 19% of the student body.
- Students continue to exhibit success in their academic courses and to develop an interest and commitment to the school community-at-large through their leadership and service activities.

Science

- The Physical Science and Biology teachers are working with Oxford’s science department and the Connecticut Academy for Science consultants to assess each grade level science expectation for both courses and to teach to any weaknesses found in that data. In addition, these science teachers will receive professional development in building lessons to target student weaknesses in the curriculum.
- In all science classes, teachers applied CAPT strategies and open-ended CAPT style questions for laboratory activities to give all students experience with this type of assessment.
- Teachers continue to give extra help after school and to provide individualized attention to students who do not show adequate progress.

Social Studies

- A new course “Facing History and Ourselves” was added to the department offerings. This course will provide an interdisciplinary approach to citizenship

education, and it connects history to the moral questions students must confront in their own lives which are related to identify, ethics, power, responsibility, and conformity. Two years ago, the department added “Advanced Placement Human Geography” to the offerings, and last year 100% of the students enrolled in the course achieved AP credit.

- This year, a Model United Nations Club started within the department. Students in this club take on the role and perspective of other countries, and they are looking forward to competing with regional Model UN schools.
- The teachers updated, revised, and administered *Reading for Information* assessments and achieved terrific results on the CAPT 2010!
- Teachers increased administration of *Reading for Information* tasks being assigned and tracked within PLCs.
- Teachers focused their grade 9 SMART Goals on the CAPT skills of writing an introductory paragraph, writing a thesis statement establishing a position on the topic and writing a CAPT style persuasive essay.
- They focused their grade 10 SMART Goals on students being able to compose a thesis statement and write a CAPT style persuasive essay.
- Created common formative and summative assessments within Freshman Academy and grade 10 PLC to address the above CAPT skills.
- Teachers improved 9th Grade Formative Assessments that involve thesis and essay writing.
- Teachers kept writing folders for 9th grade students that are passed on to 10th grade teachers.
- Teachers scored freshmen practice CAPT Interdisciplinary Writing and Editing and Revising Assessments.

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

Although more time was allocated this year for PLCs, more time is still needed. Teachers continue to need time to collect data in a meaningful way, analyze and interpret data, and discuss strategies to improve student achievement. Teachers need more training in how to write higher-order thinking questions in multiple-choice and open-ended format to be used in class and in RFI’s. Additional time is needed to discuss how to assess student work using school-wide rubrics. Teachers need to create exemplars for various formative and summative assessments to assist students with performance tasks. We need to provide more opportunities to assist our Level 3 and 4 students with CAPT skills with an emphasis on critical thinking. We also need to support students who are in the proficient level and assist them in reaching goal.

2) To implement SRBI and to provide interventions for students who need extra support.

Progress as of September 2010:

School-wide

- A homework detention system for freshman was implemented last year.
- Some staff members are paired up with students needing a personal connection to assist them in improving academically or behaviorally during learning labs and after school. This is a positive intervention program.

- Rubrics are being revised through our Rubrics II committee whose charge is to revise them to align them with the new 2011 standards from NEASC, clarify language and format and find a way to report results out to all stakeholders. Teachers continue to use course specific and departmental rubrics as part of their daily work.
- Although there is never enough time for PLCs, we have more this year than ever but it has morphed into data team meeting time. The administration has made a concerted effort to carve out time for the data teams to meet. We still need time for the subject level PLCs to meet, which is happening more during department meetings.

Applied Studies

- Teachers have begun logging interventions, both academic and behavioral, to share with the school-wide data team.
- Teachers in the Applied Studies Department continue to log behavioral concerns as well as academic data such as *Reading for Information* scores which were given twice this year and scored collaboratively. Two areas of additional data collection are the Marketing and Early Childhood Education state CTE testing. This year was the first year in which we tested students in Early Childhood Education with 100% of the students reaching goal. Our CTE scores in Marketing also increased from 13.6% (2006-7), 15.63% (2007-8), 21.05% (2008-9), to 37% in 2010.

Art

- The art teachers collect and record students' responses for *Reading for Information* assignments in Art 1 classes.
- Art students continue to win awards in local, regional, and national art competitions.

English

- The English Department collects data in three specific areas: *Reading for Information*, *Response to Literature* (CAPT prompts), and ICE (Incorporation of Critical Evidence). The data is recorded on Excel spreadsheets in the shared department folder. Data is frequently analyzed and discussed during department meetings and PLCs. The 9th and 10th grade teachers currently participate in the "Hands-up" program. Here, they identify students who are struggling and discuss a course of action to assist that student.
- Two reading intervention classes were created in the spring of 2010 to assist 9th and 10th grade students with literacy skills.

Math

- 100% of Advanced Placement Calculus AB and BC students achieved AP credit last year. Teachers revised curricula for Calculus at all levels, and adopted new texts.

- The math vertical team for teachers in grades 7 through 9 worked cohesively to revise the Algebra 1 curriculum based on the State of Connecticut model algebra program.
- The Geometry team works closely to track student learning data and to intervene on behalf of any student with gaps in their mathematical understanding. Data is tracked closely on these students.
- The Algebra I team is reporting their results to the school-wide data team as part of the initial implementation of SRBI. There are five data teams Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Pre-calculus and Calculus 42 in place, devising assessments, collecting and analyzing data, providing interventions within the classroom, and recording their efforts in notebooks. Each department member is on one data team and shares information with other members of their learning community as well as team members who are not on the data team for that subject but teach the subject. Although we have had more time for this purpose than ever before, it is still a challenge to provide enough time for subject PLC teams to meet for planning and preparing materials, common formative and summative assessments, etc., as everyone has been focusing on data.
- The BHS Math Lab was instituted with great success. Math teachers are assigned to the Math Lab as their duty. We have publicized the Math Lab, including our after-school peer tutoring, and the after-school help available from all of our teachers in the newsletter, on Channel 26, and through announcements and posters in classrooms. Students have more opportunities to get extra help in mathematics than ever before.

Media

- The Writing Center and Math Lab are offered throughout the school day for extra help in English and Math courses.
- The Library Media Center is one of the busiest areas of the school with students studying, researching, using the Math or Writing Centers, and relaxing with books or magazines! The data bases available to students for research improve every year, as does the technology available for students' use.

ROTC

- An emphasis has been placed on the increased use of note-taking sheets and instructional games as a means to increase engagement and achievement.
- Instructors initiated the *Classroom Performance System* and give students curriculum updates. The system allows statistical tracking of student progress.

Science

- All the science teachers use the science pre-assessment to identify weakness in experimentation and content for their discipline.
- The science department is working with the Connecticut Academy for Science to assess specific areas on the Physical Science and Biology Grade Level Expectations, and they will be using this data to target weaknesses and create lessons for improvement.

Social Studies

- Freshman Academy teachers meet during common planning time to collaborate on lesson plans, unit assessments, and teaching strategies.
- Freshman Academy Social Studies and English teachers host a homework detention three times a week. When this system was implemented, with fidelity, teachers report an improvement in student responsibility.
- Continued meetings, departmental and interdepartmental, are in place to discuss data collection, analysis and instruction modification.
- The Grade 9 “Hands-up” and Grade 10 “Hands-up” program has been effective in enhancing communication about students in need of more attention..
- Scheduled one-on-one teacher meetings with at-risk students have improved student accountability for their assignments.
- Increased PLC meeting time to discuss common formative and summative assessments at the upper grade levels has had a very positive effect on student work.
- Department interventions that have been shared and implemented include:
 - Lesson differentiation (content, process, and product) is underway.
 - Increased opportunities for historical inquiry projects along with an increased emphasis on concepts rather than content ("big ideas") are reshaping the instructional approach of the teachers in the department.
 - The department increased its emphasis on connections between historical content and its contemporary applications.
 - Individual teachers are employing various means of incorporating technology through advance uses of *Moodle*.
 - Student-created rubrics, self-scoring, editing and revising strategies continue to improve student writing.

Special Education

- Three special education teachers were trained to teach the general education reading comprehension program, *TextConnections*.
- Three general education English teachers work with the special education teachers to present *TextConnections* to general education 9th or 10th grade students.
- General education and special education teachers provide one-on-one supervision for two periods a week for students at risk.
- One special education math co-teacher monitors the Math Lab for one period a week.
- Two special education teachers each presently teaching a *TextConnections* class for 9th graders.
- Use of “Hands-up” in Special Education Department meeting to identify students who are having difficulty despite specialized instruction. PPTs are scheduled for review of their programs.

World Language

- The World Language Honor Society students established peer tutoring times for both Spanish and French.

3) Improve student engagement with a concentrated focus on “Rigor, Relevance and Relationships.”

Progress as of September 2010:

School-wide

- *Administrative Learning Walks* are very productive. Observations focus on student engagement, questioning, and methods of teaching. Department chairs and administrators from BMS also conduct Learning Walks. Data related to Learning Walks is reviewed at faculty meetings.

Applied Studies

- The *Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences* program has expanded to include Digital Moviemaking. Last year, it culminated at the *Connecticut Student Innovation Exposition*, where Bethel High students took home four of the five possible awards: Best Science Content, Best Presentation, Best Web Site and Best Virtual Exposition Booth.
- The DECA program at BHS began another very successful year integrated into the Marketing classes and is an increasing powerhouse in DECA competitions. Student teams from Bethel swept all of the Virtual Business Challenge awards for Sports & Entertainment, Marketing and Retailing and three teams participated in the State Competition in May 2010, with one team placing fourth in their category. In addition, BHS was awarded a Gold Level Membership for increasing its membership numbers in 2009-2010.

Counseling Department

- The department made group presentations to 8th graders and individual counseling to upper classmen during the course registration process last year. There was a strong emphasis placed upon having students take the most challenging courses of which they are capable, but also to balance their overall academic program for a manageable work load.
- Individual department members assisted and counseled individual students as they entered their course selections directly into *PowerSchool*.
- During small group Junior Conferences, counselors stressed the importance in the college admissions process of taking academically challenging courses during their senior year.
- Counselors continue to build their contacts with higher education admissions offices, and they are visiting more colleges this year to add to their list.
- Counselors are also working on building the *Student Success Plan* progress for every BHS student.

English

- The department members works extensively on writing skills. Each teacher gives ICE assessments. This is an assessment that analyzes a student's ability to incorporate critical evidence (a quotation) into a piece of writing. During department meetings and PLCs, teachers look at student writing and discuss how we would grade/score certain pieces. We also do more timed writing in class. In addition, we ask students to write a research paper every year.
- More technology projects have been incorporated throughout our curriculum, and we are especially proud of the use of *SMARTBoards* in *Digital English* and in *Freshman English*.
- The department developed a new public speaking requirement as part of the curriculum. Students are now required to write and deliver a formal speech in English class every year.

Math

- Three members of the department attended a workshop on Differentiation Strategies in Mathematics in December. The same speaker conducted part of the workshop for the high school in February. This year, the speaker, Mrs. Maryann Cavanaugh, will be working one-on-one with the mathematics teachers to increase their ability to differentiate mathematics lessons.

Media

- The after-school availability of the Media Center has increased by one hour.

ROTC

- An increased emphasis on students' planning and execution of in-class activities and school-wide events has improved engagement significantly.
- Upperclassmen developed class procedures to include daily presentation of: student accountability, upcoming school/unit events, current and forecast weather and astronomical data, word of the day discussions, etc. This procedure aids significantly in the development of confidence, poise, and oral expression skills.

Social Studies

- Teachers wrote curriculum to revise and realign the 9th, 10th, and 11th grade topics this summer. They also wrote the new curriculum for "Facing History and Ourselves."
- Department members continues the use of DBQs (document-based questions) for 9th, 10th, and 11th graders to better prepare them for CAPT and AP writing expectations.
- The department completed cross-curricular connections between AP Art History and AP European History.
- The department focused a grade 11/12 SMART goal on student engagement with

textual reading and students' ability to make meaningful connections with historical content.

Special Education

- The department created a PLC Special Education Data Team SMART goal that addresses the need for student IEP instruction. It states, "By the end of the senior year, at least 75% of all students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will have reviewed their IEPs and will be able to identify, for themselves, one strength and one weakness." Instruction will emphasize the student's awareness of his/her disability and how to participate at the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting.
- Teachers held a joint PLC meeting/professional development for special educators and paraprofessionals to share SMART goal implementation, "Encouraging Student Self-Advocacy Skills."
- Various department members provided professional development for paraprofessionals on "Behavioral Strategies for Paraprofessional in the Secondary Classroom."
- The department completed the development of an SRBI Strategy Matrix (March 2010).
- Department members provided professional development for paraprofessionals on "Behavioral/Instructional Strategies for Paraprofessionals: Working with Students with Diverse Needs."
- All Special Education teachers (9) teach at least one class individually, as well as work in collaborative classes. This affords each teacher the opportunity to be individually responsible for student grading, lesson planning, and assessment.

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

Teachers in all disciplines must continue to find ways to embed technology in their curriculum. There is a school-wide need to evaluate curriculum to make sure that the content is relevant and meaningful. Teachers must find ways to extend learning across many disciplines by collaborating between subjects and find new and exciting ways to facilitate collaborative group projects in the classroom. Students need to learn how to establish healthy working relationships with their peers through team-oriented projects.

4) To increase the number of students enrolled in Advance Placement courses (or other college credit equivalency).

Progress as of September 2010:

School-wide

Currently, Bethel High School offers 14 Advanced Placement courses. We expect to administer 225 Advanced Placement exams to our students this school year. In addition, five courses were offered for college credit through WCSU and UConn Early College Experience (ECE) programs (enrollment is 103). Through Virtual High School,

students have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement courses that are not currently offered by Bethel High School. .

- The school added A.P. Language and Composition Course to the junior year.
- The Art Department implemented Drawing II class to improve student portfolios for the A.P. Studio Arts class.
- In coordination with BMS, we added two freshmen honors Biology courses – allowing students more access to A.P. Science courses in later years.
- There has been an increased emphasis placed on Virtual High School course opportunities. As enrollment increases, students will be encouraged to take A.P. courses virtually. In the 2008-2009 school year, we had one student take and receive a score of 5 on the A.P. Psychology exam. We currently have one staff member teaching a course for VHS; in turn, this increases the number of seats we are allowed for our own students.

Art

- Added Drawing II to increase A.P. Art enrollment and preparation and investigating the possibility of offering Drawing as part of UConn ECE program.

English

- Developed the A.P. Language and Composition course for the 2010-2011 school year. This will be offered to 11th grade students.

School Counseling

- The department encourages all qualified students to sign up for A.P. courses in areas of interest and capability.

Science -- Physical Science and Biology

- The department created Power Standards in Physical Science and Biology disciplines and aligned curriculum and assessment to those Power Standards has been accomplished. Each of the science disciplines has a pre, mid, post common assessment that is used as a means to maintain the integrity of the curriculum power standards and monitor student growth. An analysis of the data allows us to recognize the weaknesses and strengths in areas of skills, content, and concept knowledge. In addition, our mid and final exams are common in the science disciplines. Reviewed and reevaluated our common assessment alignment to our curriculum.
- In terms of differentiated instruction, an additional section to the monitoring of the curriculum has been added to reinforce Bloom's learning domains (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor). Each science teacher has reflected on how they differentiate the lesson into these domains.
- Essential questions were established in Physical Science and Biology.
- Physical Science teachers initiated SRBI data on validity in experimentation.

Science – Chemistry

- Teachers revised the honor's curriculum to better prepare students for the SAT II's in Chemistry.
- The chemistry teachers continued the *Science Horizons* requirement in order to provide a true scientific research element to the curriculum.
- Each instructor used a minimum of 2 *Reading for Information* assignments for all levels.
- Chemistry teachers shared professional development time to assess student progress in formative assessments.

Science –Physics

- The physics teachers created Power Standards in all the science subject areas, including the optional courses.
- They used a common assessment to test students' knowledge in Physics at the beginning of the year and then will use it two more times to assess students' progress.
- Physics teachers designed instructional strategies to differentiate for students learning styles. Some of the formative assessments offer differentiation in students' presentations.
Other assessments, especially the summative ones, require college type effort from the students.

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

Critical needs in this area include the continuation of strong Vertical Teams for the Math, Science, and English Departments and the establishment of these teams for other departments. School-wide goal of increased rigor for all students regardless of level should be encouraged. To address the discrepancy of college credit opportunities from department to department, more UConn ECE programs and Advanced Placement courses should be investigated.

5) To embed technology in all disciplines.

Progress as of September 2010:

School-wide

- *PowerSchool*, the new students' data base, provides both parents and students with access to student's progress and grades. It will enhance communication between the school and families.
- Use of *Kindles* in some reading classes proved to be very motivating.
- A one-to-one teacher laptop initiative has been very successful. Virtually the entire English and Social Studies departments received these machines which allows teachers to plan units of instruction at home and connect to their network folders once at school.
- Professional Development at BHS has at least one day for technology integration, with a series of a la carte workshop offerings by the Tech Champions and technology staff.

Workshops on podcasting, *Moodle*, *Discovery Education*, and more were available for staff members to pick and choose.

Applied Studies

- A Robotics class and club were piloted in 2009-10 and are now a full year course, including participation in the VEX robotics competition.
- With creative use of Perkins funding, all classrooms within the Applied Studies Department were equipped with *SMARTBoard* technology in the fall of 2010. Staff members received training in the use of the board and are integrating them into daily lessons.
- The *Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences* program, focusing on the integration of STEM skills, is very successful and was expanded to the sophomore year.
- Beginning in the fall of 2010 a focus turned to growing the Information Technology career pathway at BHS, including the addition of a Computer Science club and the exploration of new technology courses to offer.

Art

- Art staff presented a professional development workshop in *Photoshop* for English and Social Studies departments.
- One teacher attended a digital photo class combined with *Photoshop*.

Counseling Department

- The department expanded the use of *Naviance* for career exploration, college searches, and college application tracking. Spring 2009 was the first time we held workshops to introduce freshmen to *Naviance* and give them sign-in codes.
- Counselors now complete the Secondary School Report of the Common Application online through *Naviance*.
- Seniors now complete the senior exit survey through *Naviance*.
- The department is in the process of shifting to sending e-docs with college applications once connection between *PowerSchool* and *Naviance* can be set up.
- Department members redesigned the School Counseling website to be updated and more user-friendly.
- The district made remote desktop access available to counselors so that they could choose to work at home during the peak times, and for the college application season.
- A new junior workshop created and offered on college admissions testing and the college search.

English

- The *Digital Senior English* class debuted this year.
- Many teachers received professional development training in *iMovie*, podcasting and *Photoshop*.
- All Freshman English teachers received *SMARTBoard* training.

Math

- The department continues to expand the use of *Moodle* for instructional purposes beyond just posting homework. Several members of the department have or have had this as a professional learning plan goal.
- We now have four *SMARTBoards* in the department that are being utilized constantly by the teachers who have them. Everyone else wants one and is excited by the possibilities it holds for their instruction.
- ALEKS is being used as a vehicle to provide the TASK students in the alternative program a way to recover math credit.

Media

- *Moodle* is used effectively to communicate research tips and MLA citation guides to students has been increased.

ROTC

- A new Weather Station was purchased and is fully operational.
- A new Flight Simulator was purchased and is fully operational.

Science

- Most teachers utilize *DiscoveryEducation.com* (formally known as *United Streaming*) clips and videos in many classes.
- Laptops and projectors are in use in most courses for presentation of materials.

Social Studies

- The department and school leadership expects all teachers to utilize *Moodle* as a means to organize instruction.
- Department members encourage student interaction through the journal and forum application of *Moodle*.
- The Tech Champion modeled the use of *SMARTBoard* technology in social studies through the department.
- Department members participated in professional development training in the use of podcasting, digital photography, *Photoshop*, digital collages and *iMovie*.
- Teachers continued to advance usage of *PowerSchool* technology for attendance, communication and grading purposes. Many teachers utilize *PowerTeacher* online grade book to record all grades.
- Department members utilized *DiscoveryEducation.com* (formally known as *United Streaming*) clips and videos in many classes.
- Teachers utilized laptops & projectors in most courses for presentation of materials by teachers and students.
- Differentiated assignments were devised to better utilize the use of video, *Animoto*, *iMovie*, *PowerPoint* and other technology resources.

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

Although the majority of staff members received mobile laptops by the fall of 2010 there is still a shortage of projectors to accompany them, requiring that some staff members share. Although there has been an increase in the number of *SMARTBoards* in the building, there is still not enough for all staff members that wish to utilize them. A continued plan to add new boards to the High School should be encouraged. The wireless network is not yet in place.

As more technology is becoming embedded in coursework at BHS there is a shortage of computer labs and/or portable laptop carts for teachers to utilize with their classes. As we plan for additional technology at the high school this needs to be a primary focus.

6) To implement standards set by Connecticut State Department of Education “High School Redesign.”

Progress as of September 2010:

Applied Studies

- During the 2009-10 academic year, new courses were offered exploring higher level subject matter such as Robotics and MOS Microsoft WORD. The Applied Studies Department continues to explore and redesign its course offerings in this career pathways model.
- We developed Internship Program Standards based on the Connecticut State Department of Education Cooperative Work framework goals and performance standards.

Art

- Art classes make use of digital cameras and Photoshop for non-tech courses and for the A.P. studio art (digital submission to the College Board).

Counseling Department

- We created and delivered a new workshop which was delivered to juniors in December, 2009: “Introduction to College Admissions Testing & the College Search”.
- Our department is in transition as we seek to align more closely with the new state school counseling curriculum and the NEASC report recommendations and to streamline/reorganize our delivery of services.
- The collaboration with a university educational consultant continues with creation of a Procedures Manual, a calendar of departmental activities spanning the year, and a repetition of the “NCAA” workshops. The “Transition of LD Students into College” workshop was postponed to fall 2010 due to low parent response.

Math

- The department is reviewing the Federal *Commons Core Mathematics Standards* and the recently passed legislation that includes High School redesign to access implications for curriculum and new courses needed in the future.

Science

- A Virtual Astronomy course was introduced.
- Honors 9th grade biology (biology11) has been put into place.

Social Studies

- The department revised the 9th, 10th, and 11th grade curriculum making it concept-based, with an emphasis on the application of history to contemporary contexts.
- The department revised the 9th, 10th, and 11th grade curriculum to ensure realignment with state and national standards.
- Teachers used student data to determine lessons, assessments and differentiated instruction has increased very significantly.

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

There is a need to plan and prepare for a Capstone project for students at BHS and eventually increasing HS graduation requirements to 25 credits. To do this, we will evaluate the number of credits students are graduating with now at BHS.

We will review the new 2011 NEASC Standards.

- 7) To reshape the senior year as a means to allow students to demonstrate that they are responsible citizens who are prepared to meet life's challenges.**

Progress as of September 2010:

School-wide

- The school administration took the Junior Class to visit NVCC in March, 2010.
- Adding a *Digital English* class for seniors allows students a more 21st century approach to schooling.
- Adding a more formalized work study component begins our effort at crating a true capstone experience.
- Increased emphasis was placed on Virtual High School courses. As enrollment increases, students will be encouraged to take A.P. courses virtually. We currently have one staff member teaching a course for VHS; in turn, this increases the number of seats we are allowed for our own students.
- The administration restructured the Independent Study process where students have frequent contact with the coordinator and a more meaningful experience.
- The school is in the process of reintroducing the mentoring program.

Art

- The department members continue to make students aware of and encourage them to take advantage of classes and courses offered by colleges, museums, and arts and crafts centers and elated scholarship opportunities.

- We continue to exhibit student's art work in local, state, regional, and national competitions.

Counseling Department

- The department created a new workshop: "Introduction to College Admission Testing & the College Search."

Internship Program

- The Internship Program Standards are based on the Connecticut State Department of Education Cooperative Work framework goals and performance standards.
- Western Connecticut State University will discuss the BHS Cadet Teacher Program and the university's teacher preparation program.

Special Education

- New "Senior Seminar" course for juniors and seniors in special education meets one day a week to work on skills needed for post-secondary success.
- All senior special education students participate in their PPTs.

World Language

- The department added two new courses that earn three college credits each through the University of Connecticut's Early College Experience program. These courses are Spanish Composition 3178 and Spanish Conversation 3179. Also A.P. Spanish earns six UConn college credits as well as the credits earned for passing the A.P. Spanish exam.

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

We need increased opportunities for senior students to demonstrate a positive influence on the school. Seniors will have the opportunity to participate in a capstone project/senior seminar class in the spring of 2011. Additional stipends would be beneficial to provide mentors for some of the capstone projects and additional clubs at BHS. We are working on having seniors serve as mentors in freshmen and sophomore advisories. We are looking into the senior class completing a "class legacy" (i.e. tree planting, bench building, painting, school montage, etc.) project to leave their mark on BHS.

8) To increase teacher retention and build capacity among the staff.

Progress as of September 2010

School-wide

- The administration conducts Learning Walks with administrators and department chairs to observe and talk about teaching and learning.
- There is an effort to provide more PLC time for collaborative work.
- There is common planning time for freshman and sophomore teachers.

- The school leadership conducts New Teacher Workshops which encourage teachers to freely discuss concerns as well as areas of need.
- Departments host departmentalized breakfast program which helps to improve school climate.
- The administration has encouraged teacher inter-visitation programs among the staff.
- School-wide leadership teams have been instituted, where teachers are encouraged to work on school improvement topics and submit ideas for consideration to the Cabinet (i.e. scheduling, clubs).

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

We must work to provide support within the building related to the new TEAM program which was initiated for the 2010-2011 school. We must re-evaluate/revamp our new teacher training sessions to help reflect the changes made to the program by central office administration. This includes providing time based specific models for teachers to follow in all areas related to completing their professional responsibilities (paperwork/evaluations).

- 10) **To build a strong Student Government Association (SGA) that allows students a voice and promotes participation within the school community.**

Progress as of September 2010

School-wide

Bethel High School has made great strides towards the revitalization of the Student Government Association (SGA). The SGA has been restructured to include Student Council, Renaissance and Principal's Advisory. In addition, the organization is working towards a vertical integration between BMS and BHS. Teachers continue to encourage their students to take part in school government and to seek leadership opportunities within clubs and activities. A formal application process has been set up to ensure that all members of SGA are prepared to be committed members dedicated to school and community improvement.

- The administration created a program called *Spotlight On*:
 - One student per grade highlighted each month for their achievements.
 - Information related to each student's achievements is posted in the cafeteria.
- Administrative approval has been secured to restructure Student Government to include more the class officers and unify BHS clubs and activities.
- Task-oriented sub-groups within the Student Government were created.
- The school implemented a formalized Student Government representative application requiring teacher and administrator approval.

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

Our school is working to improve participation school-wide. It is important to bring class officers and student council together as one student government group. Representatives want to visit successful programs around the state and will try to both attend and host a conference on student leadership. We will institute a Vertical Student Government meeting with Bethel Middle School. We will create contracts for elected officers outlining their responsibilities and

establish a dress code, behavior, leadership, and community service requirements for all and hope that SG members lead by personal example.

We will encourage all SG members to Form a conduct review board, made up of senior SG members, that handles all minor school-wide misconduct. We will recommend that all SG members serve as academic mentors/tutors. It is also our intent to refine the logistics of absorbing Principal's Advisory including taking over the Honor Roll Reception and Student of the Month. Lastly, we will hold a summer "team building" exercise to encourage leadership.

11) To create true alternative programs that meet the needs of those students who struggle with a typical high school model.

Progress as of September 2010

Schoolwide

- Bethel High School's Alternative program, Project TASK (Teamwork Achieves Success and Knowledge) is a program that is rooted in the belief that all students have unique strengths and needs. Our core values are commitment to achievement, respect for the individual, and to become competent and contributing members of society.
- There is an effort to continue to modify assignments for students when appropriate and required, and send assignments to students who are being home tutored.
- The school intends to continue the PM program after school with courses in various subjects. This program allows students one more opportunity to receive credit in a course and graduate on time. However, student attendance is always an issue.
- Staff members plan to provide tactile training and education experiences for students.
- The ROTC has collaborated with Tech Ed. to begin a Bridge Building Project that will draw in many students who learn through hands on experiences. The more we can do in the tactile arena of education, the fewer problems we will have with students who may need "alternatives".

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

A component of the TASK Program is the opportunity for students to restore credits. Additional hours are needed for tutoring. Individual and group counseling are key components of the TASK program. More opportunities in the schedule are needed for guidance groups and individual counseling.

12) To build upon a school climate that reflects a safe, respectful, and positive environment that connects all students to the school community.

Progress as of September 2010

School-wide

- The school hosted Jo Ann Freiberg from the State Department of Education who conducted a three hour presentation related to the impact of positive climate on student achievement.
- The school instituted Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS) as a means to improve school climate and to lower incidents of disruptions both in and out of the classrooms.

- Bethel High instituted a new cyber-bullying policy and the bullying policy was updated to meet the State’s definition of bullying.
- “Rachel’s Challenge,” a school-wide presentation used as a follow up to *Names Can Really Hurt Us*.
- PBiS strategies were presented to staff at the start of the 2010 school year. The school will utilize advisories as times to instruct students.

Art

- An art teacher attended BPIP workshops, observed programs in other high schools, and created guidelines and materials for a BHS initiative that will be known as “Bethel Rocks”.

ROTC

- The unit implemented school-wide activity period once monthly to allow students to develop a sense of belonging and opportunity to participate in activities of their choice.
- The ROTC instructors established manufacturing lab for use by all ROTC Cadets and Tech Ed. Students.

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

We will place continued vigilance on instances of bullying through re-enforcement activities in Advisory and classes. We will create better awareness among students, staff and parents about cyber-bullying. It is our intention to implement school wide PBiS initiatives and continue to develop the PBiS program within the school. We will decrease the number of tardies and class cuts. We will teach the bullying policy to students, staff and parents and take measures to prevent cyber-bullying.

13) To personalize the BHS experience for students.

Progress as of September 2010

- The school began an activity period during the school day.
- During the third year of the Advisory program the regular scheduling and timing has taken hold, which allows for the addition of flexibility in programming. Advisory now includes the dissemination of school-wide information for all students at one designated time. This affords advisors time to answer any questions that students may have. It also guarantees that students have received it.
- Themes discussed during this school year.
 - Courage
 - Integrity
 - Diligence
 - Honesty
 - Respect
 - Responsibility

Summary of Needs as of September 2010

The data from the June 2010 survey will be used to revise the Advisory program for 2010-2011, with particular emphasis on new resources for student discussion and planned activities for each session.

**Bethel High School
The Vision for the Athletic Program
Progress as on September 2010**

Mark Goodwin
Athletic Director

Vision Statement: The Bethel High School Athletic Department will provide a comprehensive, diverse, wholesome, and dynamic program consistent with the basic philosophy of the Bethel School District.

- 1) **To ensure a positive experience for those students who choose to participate and to provide all student-athletes with an opportunity to learn the importance of ethical behavior, good sportsmanship, positive values, and a realization of their self-worth.**
 - The Bethel High coaching staff works very hard to achieve proper sportsmanship at all contests. Crowd behavior is addressed at each sports event. A new banner in the gym affirms this message as well.
 - All BHS teams strive to be the best that they can be. All of our fall 2009 teams qualified for post season play, the first time this has occurred in over 20 years.
 - Our teams strive to be the best. The volleyball team won the SWC championship in 2008. In addition, many other teams reached post season play. The success of the 2009 football team in the state finals affirms the positive direction that Bethel has taken.
 - Male and female teams are treated equally. Our new baseball scoreboard is also used for the field hockey program in the fall. All teams are on a cycle for program uniform updates.
 - BHS hired a strength and conditioning coach, who established off-season programs for all teams. Many athletes/programs take advantage of this program. The Athletic Director, working in concert with head coaches, ensures that off-season conditioning programs are in place for all sports.
 - Bethel High does follow the CIAC guidelines for eligibility. BHS also requires students to strive to achieve best performance in the classroom. In order to remain eligible, students are allowed no more than one failure each quarter.
 - An increased number of athletes have been selected to All SWC and All State Teams. Multiple teams also captured SWC Sportsmanship Awards at the completion of their seasons.

- 2) **To employ a professional staff that takes great pride in both preserving and promoting the welfare of each athlete. The staff is to be cognizant of the tremendous influence a coach has on an athlete and is committed to instilling the highest ideals and character traits in our students.**
 - The job description of the Athletic Director underwent a review. The current athletic director has begun to work with staff members, in anticipation of his retirement, to train them to potentially assume the role of Athletic Director.
 - All head coaches meet with the eighth graders annually, to give them an overview of the program, and watch at least 2 BMS athletic events. Additionally, each head coach maintains, through the Athletic Director, on-going communication with the coaches involved with children in Parks and Recreation as well as other local leagues.

- Coaches are subject to a rigorous selection process. The program has become stable and attracts highly qualified coaches who are evaluated annually. More coaches have been hired from within the school system. Almost 60% of our coaches are Board of Education employees. All coaches receive yearly training for their Connecticut certificates. This training keeps all in line with current safety and athletic standards.
- 3) **To provide a safe environment for athletes and spectators. To encourage fans, the student body, community members and alumni to attend sporting events and support our teams.**
- Equipment and uniforms are safe, well-maintained, meet the needs of each sport, and reflect our approach to athletics. Annually, all coaches provide the Athletic Director with a list of what they require to run a first-rate program. A uniform inventory allows all programs to meet their yearly needs.
 - All game and practice facilities are safe, well-maintained, and reflect an approach to athletics which represents our commitment to sports. The BHS gym and wrestling room both mark positive steps forward for the athletic programs. In the fall of 2010, a new eight-lane track and storage facility was constructed with the funds from a sizeable donation made by Yvonne Grimes and her family.
 - BHS encourages fan support. A Super-fan Club has obtained BHS gear and spectator buses have been provided to select games. The All-Sports Booster Club works very successfully at promoting BHS athletic clothing. Students, parents, and community members wear Bethel High spirit wear as a means to show their pride in the program.
 - Alumni are an active part of the athletic program and make financial donations to improve the program. BHS graduates are involved in the ASBC and recently worked with BHS on the new scoreboard project. A project of All-State Plaques in the gym hallway is complete.
 - Booster organizations actively promote the athletic program and involve parents in the lives of their children and in the school community. We have a viable parent booster organization. The ASBC works hard to promote the BHS athletic programs. They are involved in many activities each season and finish each year by hosting a Senior Banquet.
 - Bethel High athletes earn athletic scholarships that reflect their abilities and many of our athletes have continued their athletic careers at the college level. The interscholastic sports program is respected for not only strong athletics, but for creating responsible citizens (both the athletes and fans). As an athletic program we work at being the best performers while at the same time realizing the proper perspective of the positive athletic experiences. We stress the importance of being a student athlete!

The Vision for Bethel Middle School

Dr. Kevin Smith
Principal

Assistants: Pamela Chapman
Derek Muharem

Vision Statement: All students will engage in meaningful educational experiences that will prepare them for future challenges. Bethel Middle School will provide a student-centered, nurturing environment in which all students are challenged to think and perform at high levels, to take risks, to explore new ideas and experiences, and to make choices that will aid them in achieving healthy self-actualization.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

- 1) **To develop and maintain a culture of authentic collaboration between and among Professional Learning Communities.** We will maintain and fully utilize common meeting time, implement the use of protocols for examining student work, and increase the frequency of interdisciplinary unit instruction. We will continue to identify ways to make the school schedule more flexible, and model best practices at faculty meetings.

Progress as of September 2010:

All PLC's at BMS currently utilize specified protocols to drive their meetings. At the start of the school year PLC's established team norms. These norms guide team interaction and provide the format for examining data and student work. PLC's utilize an Essential Standards grid to plan common assessments and spreadsheet software to record and analyze assessment data. Each PLC needs to increase its frequency in examining student work while making this practice a habit that more fully drives instruction.

The school schedule is revisited frequently. The schedule was amended to keep students "on team" as much as possible. As a result, grade level teams have been able to flex their schedules to accommodate different needs. This is a relatively new practice for teams. It is our goal to continue to practice flexing their schedules so that this, too, becomes a habit. We are concurrently examining ways to redeploy some of our specialists so they can be used in a more flexible way and be better able to meet the needs of students.

- 2) **To develop and demonstrate a shared vision of high quality student work, behavioral expectations, and understanding of academic rigor.** We will regularly use our meeting time to present models of exemplary student work on each grade level and in each discipline. Through shared conversation we will develop consensus about what academic rigor and high quality work look like, and what appropriate behavioral expectations are. These will be clearly defined with concrete examples so that as new staff enters the building they have immediate models of what is expected.

Progress as of September 2010:

We have made limited progress on this goal. To date, BMS has implemented mid-terms and final exams in science, social studies, and mathematics. These exams, in addition to regular unit assessments, create a benchmark for content knowledge mastery. The Assured Research Experience in which students in grades 6 and 7 participate is another benchmark for rigor in the curriculum. We have utilized faculty meeting time to discuss the concept of rigor, examine student writing, and further the conversation about high expectations; more work needs to be done in this area.

BMS convened a Homework Committee to review all aspects of homework in the school. A survey was conducted, and the committee is currently working on proposing a new school-based homework policy.

It is evident from multiple data sources that there is a clear understanding of appropriate behavior standards. We have witnessed a dramatic decline in the number of discipline referrals made to the office as well as a significant decline in the number of student suspensions.

- 3) **To continue the expansion of a rich and varied curriculum.** One of the key elements of a high quality middle school program is the evidence of rich curriculum offerings. We will continue to use professional development time to assess current course offerings and develop new courses that are reflective of the times and that meet the needs of today's middle grade child.

Progress as of September 2010:

BMS expanded its course offerings to include a comprehensive music history program and Business Enterprises for 8th grade students. Sixth grade students were able to study sign language, Spanish, French, and television production. Plans are in the works to offer mini-courses in study skills, test-taking skills, and academic-success skills. Through a grant from the Bethel Education Foundation, BMS is now able to offer "Phys Tech." This is a physical education course that utilizes the latest in gaming technology to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

- 4) **To create a meaningful pyramid of intervention for students in-need.** Not all students enter middle school prepared to succeed. Through the development of the *Response to Intervention* model, we will be equipped to quickly identify students-in-need, diagnose the issues, and respond with appropriate, effective interventions. Pupil Service staff will be part of the multidisciplinary team that works together to increase student achievement, and enhance personal, social and emotional growth. Pupil Service staff will have an active role in providing proactive strategies and direct interventions with students and families who are in need of service.

Progress as of September 2010:

Our pyramid of intervention continues to be a work in progress. A clear referral process has been established through our "Hands Up" program. Multiple tier II interventions for reading and mathematics were implemented. We experimented with a Student

Assistance Team as a tier II response, but not yet set what mechanisms are triggered when a student demonstrates no growth through Hands Up. Our primary goal for the coming school year is to establish high quality Tier I interventions through the use of differentiation and formative assessment. We will be implementing the district plan for the roll out of SRBI.

- 5) **To ensure that all classrooms are student-centered, minds-on, and interactive.** The teacher in the classroom is the primary factor for promoting student learning. We will continue to hire and train the highest quality teachers possible and support the current teaching staff so that they are equipped to provide an appropriate, engaging classroom experience for all children. We will provide high quality professional development opportunities and continue to send staff to observe teaching in our own classrooms and in other high performing schools.

Progress as of September 2010:

Generally speaking, we are very pleased with the high quality staff that we hired and trained. We attended job fairs in Fairfield County and at UConn to continue to identify the highest caliber teachers. Within the school, all teachers conducted multiple peer observations and discussed these in their PLC's. The professional development opportunities within the district were of high quality and focused on supporting district and school initiatives.

BMS provides mentors for all new teachers. New teachers meet weekly with their mentors and submit meeting notes and reflections at the end of each month. In addition, BMS administrators meet regularly with all new teachers to address a variety of topics related to teacher induction.

- 6) **To develop true partnerships with parents and community.** We believe that these partnerships ought to be school initiated. We will continue to seek parental input about school programming and to identify greater opportunities for parent involvement in the life of the school. We will continue to identify opportunities to bring in guests, and to support the philanthropic work of numerous community agencies.

Progress as of September 2010:

BMS has had a high level of success with this goal. Through *Business Enterprises*, numerous local entrepreneurs visit our students and provide them feedback on their business plans. Each spring community volunteers teach an economics curriculum to all of our 8th grade students through Junior Achievement. The Women's Center of Greater Danbury visits the school annually to present wellness workshops to all 7th and 8th grade students. A number of clubs provide outreach opportunities. "Helping Others" conducted a number of fundraising and donation campaigns to support local charities. The BMS Darfur club was very active in raising awareness and funds to support the relief efforts in that country. Our PTO supports the work of teachers through their "cluster copying" program, their monthly "staff treat" program and the numerous parent v. staff volleyball and basketball games. The PTO also supported community involvement by funding several high quality speakers to address the student body on various topics.

An active mentoring program provides community volunteers the opportunity to work with at-risk BMS students.

BMS provided a number of opportunities for parents to come into the school and see the quality work students are producing. The musical in the fall, the band, chorus, and orchestra concerts that take place biannually, the Science Fair nights, and Curriculum Expo are examples of this effort.

Finally, Bethel Middle School and Bethel Public schools developed a partnership with WCSU. Through this partnership select students from each grade level have an opportunity to present their Science Fair projects to the science community at WCSU. In addition, pre-service teacher candidates spend two weeks observing and participating in classroom activities at BMS.

- 7) **To create a physical environment that reflects and promotes the values of hard work, high standards, collaboration, and meaningful engagement.** The school building will mirror our academic and social values. We will be a welcoming, safe environment. We will display and spotlight current high quality student work throughout the building. We will continue to meet regularly with our custodial staff to promote and ensure standards of cleanliness.

Progress as of September 2010:

Bethel Middle School is a clean, safe, and attractive building. Bulletin boards were purchased and mounted outside of each cluster area to showcase student work. Current, high quality student work is on display in many areas of the building including the front entryway. The custodial staff is attentive to the demands of keeping this building clean and does a fine job. During Spirit Week students work collaboratively in clusters to make creative, thematic displays. Currently, plans are underway to better showcase student work through the creation of an “art gallery” in the rear atrium of the building and quarterly displays of student artwork throughout the building to better showcase student art work.

- 8) **To continuously improve student achievement and demonstrate that achievement in multiple measures.** Quality formative assessment is critical to the learning/teaching process. Through the improved use of small formative assessments over time, teachers will focus instruction and use data to measure and improve student achievement. In addition, in assessing student achievement, we will attend to individual learning styles and preferences and provide students opportunities to respond in multiple ways. Therefore, we will continue to promote authentic assessment through the use of writing, interdisciplinary projects, art, music, public speaking, technology, and other forms that are aligned with individual learning styles.

Progress as of September 2010:

Learning style inventories were utilized at the start of the school year to assist teachers and students in gaining a deeper understanding of the diversity of learning styles. The Digital Student course utilizes the *DISC* learning profile inventory to teach students how to group problem solve. An array of project opportunities exists for students to demonstrate their acquired skills and knowledge. These include performances, pod/vod

casts, writing, public speaking, various types of art projects, and musical compositions to name a few. These were highlighted at our annual Curriculum Expo. All Core teachers utilized an Essential Standards planning grid and spreadsheet software to plan common assessments and analyze assessment data. As BMS fully implements SRBI, teachers will be further developing their skills differentiating instruction and using small formative assessments.

- 9) **To increase student investment in school by increasing valid student participation in classroom and co-curricular activities.** BMS will be a place where all students want to be. Through the implementation of an advisory program we will ensure that every student has an adult advocate. This advocacy will create opportunities for students to develop deeper connections to school. In addition, we will continue to expand our co-curricular offerings with the aim of providing “something for everyone.” We will continue our efforts at making BMS a genuine student-centered learning environment. We will accomplish this by providing opportunities for students to have a voice in decision making within the school. We will improve our practice by ensuring that students know what is expected of them, and what they need to do to achieve success at the start of every learning experience. We will also begin the process of initiating student-led conferences at our parent-teacher meetings, so students have the opportunity to demonstrate their own learning, and articulate follow up goals.

Progress as of September 2010:

This year BMS implemented an Advisory program. This program was well-received by students and teachers. The faculty met in April to discuss and revise the Advisory program. Changes will be made for the next school year to better utilize this program to meet students’ needs. BMS is very proud of its 96-97% daily attendance rate. We consider this a significant indicator of school climate.

Beginning in next school year, BMS will fully implement student-led conferences at report card time. In addition, we will implement an advocacy program for our learning disabled students. This will be spearheaded by our PPS department.

The Vision for Ralph M. T. Johnson School

Kathleen Gombos, Ed. D, Principal

Vision Statement: The R.M.T Johnson School community will demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the improved student achievement of all students. Each student will have the opportunity to be part of an academic program that is based on the principles of differentiated instruction. All students will be consistently engaged in meaningful and accountable work. Teachers will work to their full potential, motivated by their commitment to student achievement, their engagement in professional learning, and the evidenced effectiveness of their colleagues.

Description and Implementation of the Vision:

- 1) **To utilize technology on a consistent basis in classrooms to further support the learning objectives.** We will clarify our expectations for what students and teachers will be doing

with technology to improve teaching and learning. We will increase the availability of effective technology in each classroom.

Progress as of September 2010:

All of Johnson's classrooms have SMART Boards. This allows students to have access to SMART technology on a regular basis. Throughout the day, in various classrooms, instruction is enhanced through the use of technology. The grade level PLCs are compiling libraries of relevant resources and lessons for use in all classrooms. Our Tech Champions have been attending workshops and doing research on other emerging technologies for classroom use. Throughout the year students regularly use the Internet to research, and podcast presentations. Some teachers have accessed the MOODLE technology to engage students. There will be a continued focus on the integration of technology to improve teaching and learning.

The professional development focus for the integration of technology will be on the differentiating of instruction, both content and process, using technology. A second focus for professional development will be the use of technology to monitor student progress. All staff has been trained on the use of SMART boards in the classroom.

- 2) **To sustain a dynamic, highly effective special education program.** We will continually collect data that will inform instruction and improve achievement for individual students. We are continually building special education delivery models around the identified student needs.

Progress as of September 2010:

During the 2009-2010 school year, we had a great increase in our use of data to plan interventions for special education students. We successfully monitored students using a variety of assessments and routine progress monitoring. An intervention program was researched and implemented to address the needs of our struggling readers, including our identified special education students. We currently run a reading intervention program for all students (special education or not) who are not meeting grade level expectations. We are consistently working on Tier I strategies to address the identified needs of students.

Special education teachers were provided with support from Central office with extensive professional development this year around instructional strategies to increase achievement and progress monitoring. Teachers are provided time to conduct peer observations and co-plan with their partners. The focus for next year will be the improved use of data to identify students' areas of weakness. There will be a continued focus on the implementation of interventions that are designed to target identified needs with specific instructional strategies.

- 3) **To sustain a dynamic, highly effective English Language Learner program.** We will continually collect data to inform instructional practice and to improve achievement for individual students.

Progress as of September 2010:

During the 2010 school year, we had a great increase in our use of data to plan for intervention with English Language Learners. We successfully progress monitored students using a variety of assessments. An intervention program was researched and implemented to address the needs of our struggling readers, including our identified English Language Learners. Intervention teachers worked together in a PLC to identify strategies for addressing the identified needs of students. The ELL model included both push-in and pull-out services.

Teachers of ELL students were provided with opportunities to receive professional development regarding the best strategies to use when instructing ELL students. Teachers are encouraged and provided time to conduct peer observations. The focus for next year will be the improved use of data to identify students' areas of weakness. There will be a continued focus on the implementation of interventions that are designed to target identified needs with identified instructional strategies. This will take place for all struggling students.

- 4) **To undertake a comprehensive study of the *Danielson Framework for Teaching* by administration and staff as a means to reach a mutual definition of good teaching and assessment practice. We have included in our faculty study this year, *Teach Like a Champion*, by Doug Lemov.**

Progress as of September 2010:

The study of the Danielson "Framework for Teaching" has continued through the teacher evaluation system. Teachers regularly engage in conversation around the framework to identify areas of strengths and challenges in their classrooms. As of December 1st, the entire Johnson faculty will begin a direct study of the book, *Teach Like a Champion*, by Doug Lemov. This will provide teachers with knowledge of strategies and techniques to improve teaching and learning. Teachers do have the text. The conversations around the definitions of good teaching strategies and assessment practices will take place in various venues with teachers.

- 5) **To build strong professional learning communities that will form the foundation of improved student achievement.** Teachers will invest time to analyze student work in a peer group setting. We will begin a peer observation program to seek out best practices within our midst. Our professional learning communities will monitor their achievements and be a part of creating SMART goals for all. We will create a professional learning community structure for specials teachers. We will develop a system to showcase or support excellent teacher work.

Progress as of September 2010:

The PLCs at Johnson continue to increase the scope and intensity of their inquiry work. Each PLC has put a focus on looking at student work. They will be incorporating an organized schedule into their meetings next year to preserve student time on task. The PLCs will receive explicit professional development in this area and based on their goals

this year. There will be a professional development focus on looking at student work to inform progress monitoring and differentiation of instruction.

A peer observation program was implemented. Teachers are assigned observations of their peers. They give feedback to their peers and also report on what they took away from the observation. This has had a positive impact on the PLC structure.

- 6) **To expand upon existing co-curricular academic programs for our students.** We will expand the after-school academic support to meet student needs.

Progress as of September 2010:

As of September 2010, we have an Afterschool program designed to help parents with childcare, provide homework support and enrichment activities for students. We have about 20 students a day attend the program. We also implemented an afterschool "Learning Lab". This is a program in which struggling students are invited to attend, up to four days a week. The students have the opportunity to receive small group instruction in the areas that have been identified as their needs. We currently have an average of 25 kids a day taking advantage of this program.

The *Odyssey of the Mind* program had 35 participants this year competing on 5 teams. We will continue to focus on increasing the number of participants. This year we did have each team put on a performance of their long-term problems for the entire school.

We have continued to expand our Career Day to include a research piece for students. We have also increased the variety of presenters. After-school this year, students were invited to participate in the "Green Team", Art, community service and the fifth grade variety show. We once again had over 150 students participate in the science fair. We also started a bowling club this year for special education children and typical peers.

- 7) **To receive elementary school recognition.** Johnson School staff took on the task of completing a survey study and the extensive application to be Connecticut's Elementary School of the year.

Progress as of September 2010:

Johnson school was nominated to be one of the two schools for, 2010 Outstanding Connecticut Elementary School. Unfortunately, we did not win, though it was a great honor. We have received an award for Exemplary School Climate, an award only given to a handful of schools.

The Vision for Frank A. Berry & Anna H. Rockwell Schools

Kristen Brooks, Ph.D.
A. Brian Kirmil
Principals

Vision Statement: All students at Frank A. Berry School and Anna H. Rockwell School will be engaged in purposeful work that is differentiated, challenging and engaging. We will use data-driven decision making to inform our lesson planning, intervention programs and delivery of instruction in all curriculum areas. Students and educators will be held to high standards to think creatively and critically, as we learn together. Character pillars of trustworthiness, responsibility, and kindness will be taught, modeled, recognized, and expected, as we strive to excel academically, and continue to grow socially, and emotionally.

Description and Implementation of the Vision:

- 1) **To ensure that Berry and Rockwell Schools demonstrate consistent and purposeful student focus and support.** We will ensure that our actions and the school's established goals and objectives accurately reflect the school's vision, student needs, and high aspirations for all students. Data-driven goal-setting will be the norm. We will improve our use of data to better understand and support students and to accommodate their needs. We will always serve the various developmental needs of students and their ease of transitions from grade to grade and school to school. Our school facility will be accessible for students and others with disabilities. We will ensure that the special education demands for instructional modifications, assessment, etc. are closely monitored and adjusted as necessary.

Progress as of September 2010:

We continued to conduct weekly Professional Learning Community meetings and bi-monthly extended PLC's, grade level meetings and monthly faculty meetings to closely monitor the reading progress of the students involved in our SRBI intervention program. Data was collected every 6-8 weeks on our struggling readers at each grade level and appropriate action was taken to set goals, monitor progress and intervene at an appropriate level of service. Our ELL and SPED students were also involved in this process and we provided before school intervention programs, in class support, small guided group instruction in and out of the classroom and time for the students to work on the LEXIA computer program designed to meet the individual needs of the students in regards to their phonics skill levels. We also provided a Kindergarten Buddies program for our ELL and struggling AM Kindergarten students. We used the data from our ongoing assessments with these students to pinpoint areas that needed additional reinforcement. Our data from all grade levels shows significant progress from our students at all grade levels. A number of students no longer required these intense intervention programs and we are monitoring their continued progress in their own classrooms. We have coordinated our efforts in providing a smooth transition for our third grade students as they prepare to join the Johnson School community with a Moving Up Day, Pen Pal program, tour and Picnic at Johnson School and a visit to both

elementary schools by current fourth graders to answer student questions. We also plan to have our reading teams meet with the Johnson team to review student progress and identify students for continuing intervention services.

- 2) **To ensure that the school's organization and culture is always that of a caring community that supports continuous learning.** We will build sustained and caring relationships among students, teachers, and other adults, as well as promote a healthy peer climate among the students. Our hiring practices and assignment of staff will reflect this priority.

Progress as of September 2010:

Hiring practices include staff from various areas (i.e. classroom teachers, special area personnel, paraprofessionals) in an effort to include all stakeholders in the process. Our developmental guidance program aims to teach students about friendships and appropriate social interactions, the importance of not bullying others, and many other critical developmental skills. Additionally, we help to teach character education (i.e. responsibility, respect, trustworthiness, citizenship, etc.) through our monthly assemblies recognizing students who possess these traits. A comprehensive teacher orientation and mentoring program are in place to support our new staff. Additionally, a district leadership cadre was developed for aspiring leaders or those who demonstrate leadership qualities within the building/district.

- 3) **To uphold challenging standards and curricula that engage students in their learning.** We will teach curriculum that calls for high levels of achievement and significant content awareness, citizenship, and interpersonal and workplace skills. We will provide for differing student academic needs and student progression to more challenging work.

Progress as of September 2010:

Our Power Standards reflect state and national curriculum standards and are constantly scrutinized by committees under the directions of Dr. Janice Jordan, our Associate Superintendent. The Social Studies curriculum is currently undergoing a systemic revision. Common Assessments are given at grade 1-3 three times a year along with DRA, Writing Prompt, DSA, fluency assessments and unit tests in mathematics. This data is used to provide feedback to the teachers in regards to organizing guided groups to address the mastery levels within flexible intervention groups. Our professional development programs have been designed to meet the needs of the staff in the areas of writing instructions, center activities, guided reading instructions, differentiation strategies, grade level mathematics curriculum development, technology use, etc.

- 4) **To be a model of active teaching and learning.** We will exhibit purposeful decision-making governing all aspects of the teaching and learning program. We will employ teaching practices that support student-initiated learning and responsibility for contributing to individual and peer group learning and achievement. We will make extensive use of learning resources beyond the traditional textbook.

Progress as of September 2010:

Teachers developed common pre and post assessments to support Units of Study. Formative assessments were also developed based on SMART goals from our data teams. Data is collected every 6-8 weeks to determine progress. Teachers use research-based strategies such as Nancy Boyles' comprehension strategies in reading and Empowering Magical Writers strategies in writing. Inquiry-based science experiments are performed, as students are expected to follow the scientific process. Whole group, small group, partnership work, and individual conferences are utilized daily. Additionally, the teacher evaluation process grounded in the work of Charlotte Danielson supports student-initiated learning and responsibility.

- 5) **To better integrate technology in teaching and learning and providing opportunities that produce technology-capable students.** We will use technology as a tool to foster higher level outcomes in a variety of disciplines. We will also integrate technology to improve management and program efficiency and effectiveness.

Progress as of May 2010:

The classroom teachers and computer instructors collaborated to create "Assured Experiences" at each grade level and the computer program coordinated with classroom curriculum to provide learning experiences for the students in learning ways to incorporate technology in to everyday teaching and research. Extensive technology professional development opportunities were offered and our Technology Champions were very effective in raising the bar in our classrooms by conducting workshops for the staff and providing daily support for the use of technology in lesson implementation. The vast majority of classrooms have a laptop and projector available to them as they plan their lessons and implement them using this effective technology tool. Once again, the BEF funded some grants that will enhance the use of technology in our elementary buildings.

- 6) **To be a professional learning community.** We will focus on continuous professional staff development to support improved student learning. It is our intention to develop a collective capacity to analyze student work to effectively improve the school's curriculum and instructional strategies. The professional learning community will continue to review student work, monitor instruction and assessment data, and plan for improvements. Intensive summer curriculum work will be done in all areas to provide new and experienced staff with detailed units of study, materials, and assessments.

Progress as of May 2010:

Weekly PLCs and monthly data teams meet to analyze student work, set goals, adjust instruction, and create/revise assessments to measure student learning. Additionally, teachers work to score assessments together in order to calibrate their scoring criteria to ensure expectations are similar. An advisory data team was created to review school-wide data and determine strengths, areas of weakness, and trends we see across grade levels. Grade 2 and Grade 3 math work continues to focus on creating common formative assessments and aligning what we are teaching to the current grade level

expectations as determined by the State Department of Education. Social studies curriculum work is being revised at the elementary level as well.

- 6) **To lead the school community in a meaningful and respectful manner while demonstrating educational vitality.** We will engage the school community in continuous school improvement focused on high levels of student achievement, current needs, and future challenges. Those in leadership roles will focus on achievement of the school's vision/mission and engage the internal and external stakeholders in leadership and decision making. We will ensure a participatory school improvement process fostering a culture of student-centered success using current information about education to promote continuous improvement.

Progress as of September 2010:

PTO meetings are schedule regularly to support our school programs and initiatives. Character building activities continue to be implemented to reinforce the concepts of kindness, respect, responsibility, achievement, etc. Our Site-Based Committees work to support the school initiative and enhance the climate in our school. We have the PLC concept securely in place and we strive to make sure the students mastery what they are taught and we plan vigorously to identify and intervene with students who do not meet the expected criteria. We constantly review academic data, CMT results and our behavior plans with students who are experiencing extreme emotional and social challenges. Our LIT works closely with our Reading Team and Kathy Rockwell, our Reading/Language Arts Supervisor to keep us on the cutting edge of literacy instruction and our standards and expectations are very high. Our ongoing data shows us that the majority of students are reaching our goals and those set by the state department.

- 7) **To develop school, family, community, and business partnerships that recognize the important role they play in supporting learning.** We will increase parental participation in the education process by encouraging parents to understand the curriculum, set high expectations for their children, and make education a priority in each and every household. We will always involve families in their children's education and support the needs and concerns of families. We will seek out resources in the community to extend learning opportunities for students, teachers, and families.

We will hire additional ELL staff and add educational opportunities for adults so that they are more adept at reinforcing skills at home. We will improve our efforts to communicate more effectively with this growing population. We will improve our ELL training for all staff and review current effective instructional programs/strategies.

Progress as of September 2010:

Junior Achievement is utilized throughout all grade levels to support our social studies program. Monthly PTO meetings and family events are scheduled to strengthen partnerships. Parent support is evident in many of our classrooms. Community businesses also recognize the importance of supporting our schools, as they partner with us in fundraisers or provide a venue for us during our poetry slam. During Open House, conferences, and meetings, the school and families share important information to better assist our students. Weekly newsletters from teachers and administration are

disseminated to inform parents of units of study, school/district expectations, etc. Additionally, we have student-led conferences in third grade making students responsible for goal setting and in charge of sharing their own learning.

Translation software was installed to better communicate with our Spanish and Portuguese populations. Evening parent workshops to support English Language Learners becoming proficient in the language are held weekly. Additionally, our district has created an ESL improvement plan to better meet the needs of this population.

- 8) **To measure our progress and to share our indicators of success with our constituents in a meaningful manner.** Our primary purpose is to improve student achievement. To that end we will hold high academic standards and have a school-wide assessment strategy that measures student growth. We will communicate assessment data to parents and to the community in a clear and coherent manner and use these results to understand and improve student and school performance.

Progress as of September 2010:

Our Open Houses focus on the expectations for academic progress and student motivation and parents are shown examples of the expected level of mastery in reading and writing. We present academic data to engage the parents in the education process and make them fully aware of the grade level expectations by presenting models of expected student work. Examples of student work are also shown to parents during conferences along with current assessment data for each child. Brief presentations have been made at PTO meetings to reinforce the importance of analyzing assessment results and the expectations we have for parental support and student participation in their own learning. The SRBI process has been explained at a variety of venues and we live by the phrase, "Our Primary Purpose is to Improve Student Achievement "and to develop kind, respectful and responsible young people. Our newsletters also contain helpful hints on how to support student learning at home.

- 7) **To outline a full day kindergarten program.** Full-day kindergarten, designed in many instances for specific groups such as urban, suburban, and rural populations, is linked to solid improvement in academic achievement.

Progress as of September 2010:

Each school has 1 all-day kindergarten made up of 11 children in need of additional services to reach grade level expectations. Further budgetary and academic study of this issue is underway.

- 8) **To undertake a facility study of Rockwell School that will consider the changes in student population, programming changes, instructional strategies and cosmetic appeal:**

Progress as of September 2010:

The Board has begun the facilities study process. New furniture has been received in Grade 3. Entrance doors that meet handicapped accessibility requirements have been installed. Video surveillance hardware for the front doors has been installed. Additionally, the installation of ceiling fan downstairs has been completed.

System-wide Programs and Services

The Vision for Special Education & Pupil Services

Linda A. Pica
Director of Special Education and Pupil Services

Elizabeth DiBiase
Supervisor of Special Education

Vision Statement: Quality special education services will be woven into an integrated educational system in which identified students learn effectively in the least restrictive environment. Pupil services staff will be part of a multidisciplinary team that works together to build and sustain student achievement, foster students' social and emotional growth and sense of competence. Pupil Personnel Services staff efforts will focus on proactive and preventive interventions that serve students and parents.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

- 1) To ensure the knowledge, skills, and competencies of all who teach students with disabilities.**

Progress September 2010

- Special education teachers participated in most school-based professional development programs.
- An ongoing relationship was established with the staff from the State Education Resource Center (SERC) to provide training and technical assistance to general and special education teachers at each school in co-teaching, including topics of establishing and maintaining the co-teaching relationship, co-planning, effective teaching strategies, and the provision of special education services.
- The SERC program director for co-teaching worked with special education administrators and key special education support staff in an assessment of present service delivery models and IEP development.
- Paraprofessional training was continued on topics such as reading, math, writing, behavior management, accommodations and modifications in the general education classroom.
- Special education teachers received training in the development of formative assessments, transition planning for high school students preparing for employment and postsecondary education, differentiation, and reading strategies.

- 2) To increase the performance of special education students on district and statewide assessments.**

Progress September 2010

- A comprehensive structured language program [Language!] was purchased and utilized at the Middle School with both general education and special education students. Training on the implementation of the program was provided to staff. The program was used for teaching students whose reading achievement was

significantly below grade level, as determined through both district and state assessments.

- Training and technical assistance was provided to all special education teachers and administrators on the use of a new alternate assessment version for students with IEP's called the Modified Assessment System [MAS] for CMT and CAPT in math and reading.
- Further training was provided for teachers who use the CMT and CAPT skills checklist for assessing students with more significant cognitive impairments.

3) To increase inclusive practices at all levels.

Progress September 2010

- Technical assistance was provided to teachers and related services staff to better increase the inclusion of students with cognitive and multiple disabilities with nondisabled peers.
- Students with disabilities were provided with opportunities to participate with typical peers in after-school activities, including the assignment of paraprofessional assistance to those who require it to participate.
- Students with disabilities enjoyed extracurricular social opportunities through activities sponsored by staff at our schools and through a Park and Recreation program for high school students.

4) To provide a wide range of options and specialized programs along a continuum of services for students whose disabilities require more intensive programming.

Progress September 2010

- Changes were made to the programs for Students with Autism.
 - A paraprofessional position was created this year to allow the district to provide quality instructional services based on the principles of applied behavior analysis to students with autism spectrum disorders who have more intensive learning needs. ABA Providers have expanded roles, receive ongoing competency-based training and supervision, and provide consistency for students by working with them in the extended school year program.
 - The number of students identified as having autism increased this year, particularly at Circle of Friends Preschool.
 - The district's behavior analyst provided both day and evening monthly workshops for parents with children with autism. We are planning a parent survey to assess our effectiveness and parent input on services.
- STEP Program for Students with Emotional /Behavioral Needs
 - The Special Education Department initiated a review of this existing program, looking at the practices, instruction, resources and needs of the program at BHS serving students with emotional and/or behavioral learning needs.
 - Curriculum development for transition skills is planned for this summer.
- Transition Services for Students 17-21
 - The program continues to provide expanded opportunities for students to learn employment and independent life skills in both school and community based settings.
 - A Parent Transition Services Workshop was held by the transition specialist allowing parents to meet and speak with representatives from agencies

including Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, the Judge of Probate, Kennedy Center Mobility Services, CT Developmental Disabilities Services, Social Security and Disability Services. The response from parents was very positive. Thirty-two individuals attended the evening program and dinner.

- We have 6 community training sites; 5 job coaches providing hourly services; multiple students and work sites within Bethel High School; speakers monthly on topics related to independent living and working; visits by the Department of Labor Express Van; and participation in the Junior Achievement Program. Our students participate in high school sports, social clubs, and school arts performances.
- The Bethel High School Transition Specialist has established positive collaborative working relationships with adult agency providers, affording our students the best opportunities for a seamless transition from high school.
- Assistive Technology
 - The assistive technology team initiated an assessment process and has outfitted a lab with hardware and software allowing for assistive technology evaluations to be conducted in district. A district occupational therapist and a speech language pathologist earned certificates in assistive technology.
 - Consistent with the aims of the district's Technology Plan, students with disabilities were afforded greater accessibility to computers and programs through the purchase of desktop and laptop computers, software, projectors, and cameras. Special education teachers and therapists use technology resources to enhance progress monitoring, communication with parents, and evaluations of students.
 - Assistive technology resources also facilitated communication, language, mobility, and learning for several students who require technology to learn and function in the school setting.

5) **To maintain an open dialogue and mutual respect among parents and school staff who assist each other in supporting students' growth and development.**

Progress September 2010

A collaborative relationship is maintained with the Special Education Parent Teacher Organization. Together, we cosponsored parent workshops, addressed parents' concerns and shared information about special education programming with parents.

6) **To continue the focus of the pupil services staff (nursing, counseling, social work, and school psychology) on proactive and preventative outreach in their work with students and their families.**

Progress September 2010

- Pupil services staff are members of school teams that identify students with social/emotional needs and work proactively with students and parents to promote student growth in academics, social interactions, appropriate school behaviors and dealing with the requirements of school.
- Pupil services staff will continue to be involved in the provision of interventions within the SRBI model at each school.

- 7) **To ensure that Circle of Friends Preschool continues as a model public school preschool program offering high quality early childhood experiences to eligible students and their non-disabled peers.**

Progress September 2010

- COF increased the diversity of the children accepted for enrollment. The program has applied the criteria for free and reduced lunch programs to allow for enrollment of children who otherwise would not be able to afford the tuition costs. Children at COF speak multiple languages and have varied ethnic backgrounds.
- While no support groups formed for the general population of families at Circle of Friends, support for families is provided through home visits; outreach by the school social worker; consultations by teachers and related services staff. Support for families of children with autism has been provided through the teachers, related services staff and Dan Smith, behavior analyst via consultations, home visits, and parent training programs.
- Circle of Friends staff provided an evening workshop for parents through the Bethel Special Education Parent Teacher Organization titled, “The Special Education Program at Circle of Friends”. Parents of children in the Birth to Three process were also invited to attend.
- Circle staff continues to consult with Little Wildcats. Staff provided observations, consultations, ongoing parent and staff communication and problem- solving around child development concerns. Two students enrolled at Circle also attended Little Wildcats last spring with the support of COF staff. COF had 2 BHS interns assigned to the program this year.
- COF staff provided observations, consultations with preschools and families who have concerns about community children’s development. This includes community preschools such as: St. Mary’s Preschool, Little Friends Preschool, Sandbox II, and others.

The Vision for the Language Arts Program

Kathleen Rockwell
Supervisor of Reading & Language Arts

Vision Statement: Bethel students will have an exemplary literacy program which addresses students’ needs, encompasses their interests, and is based on their abilities. All staff will be responsible for teaching literacy skills that are foundational for acquiring knowledge and are essential for life long success.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

1. **To implement a rigorous language arts curriculum that is reflective of the ongoing research in this content area.** We will pursue professional development which will guide teachers as they face the challenges of delivering a multi-faceted curriculum to students of varying abilities and needs. We will base program decisions on proven research data coupled with the ever changing demands of our students as well as national standards. We will have a cohesive language arts program from K – 12 which

imparts the skills and knowledge needed for students to achieve in all aspects of their lives.

Progress as of September 2010:

Pacing guides aligned the Grade Level Expectations and Power Standards to each unit of study were implemented. Based on what students needed to know and be able to do, grade level common assessments for each unit of study were created. Data from these formative and summative assessments, as well as student work, were analyzed to differentiate instruction. This ensured that teachers were addressing the varying student needs and abilities within their classrooms.

Assessment data was also used to determine effectiveness of the language arts curriculum. Common Benchmark Assessments were administered three times a year as well as a variety of other district assessments. For example, the results of the data from the Developmental Spelling Assessment indicated growth in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics and word work.

District initiatives, teachers' input along with data analysis, guided professional development opportunities during the past year. Additionally, teachers participated in book club discussions. Topics included boy writers, phonics and guided reading. Current research continues to guide and steer Bethel's rigorous Language Arts curriculum.

- 2) **To target instruction based on students' needs on student performance data.** We will explore new ways to monitor and document student progress. We will search for ways to uncover the learning challenges of our youngest students so that these challenges can be addressed as early as possible. We will provide teachers the resource of time to work collaboratively in a Professional Learning Community to investigate student achievement and to create shared understandings of best professional practice. Collaboratively, we will work together to differentiate our instruction for our students.

Progress as of September 2010:

Data teams in all schools utilized information derived from multiple assessments in order to determine students who needed specific interventions in the various areas of English language arts. Classroom teachers and specialists worked collaboratively in this decision process. Together teachers monitored student progress utilizing various methods. New this year was the ability to progress monitor students via technology. Reports related to specific skills and usage were generated for each student who utilized the Lexia program. With the increased amount of assessment data, both historical and current, Bethel Public Schools are continuing to explore and evaluate technology to aid in the storing of historical data for each student as well as how best to progress monitor student achievement.

- 3) **To hire a Literacy specialist for BMS and BHS.** We will seek highly qualified, certified reading personnel in order to support adolescent literacy instruction in grades 6 – 12. We will utilize these personnel to reinforce professional growth in literacy for all teachers in every content area. We will employ these personnel to make the literacy vision a reality in every classroom. We will build the capacity of every teacher in the area of literacy due to the leadership of a knowledgeable reading consultant and, thus, improve student achievement.

Progress as of September 2010:

Bethel Middle School was fortunate to have the part-time services of a highly qualified literacy specialist. At BMS, one of her many duties was to facilitate Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). During PLCs, she guided the teachers to address curriculum needs and assessment issues. Additionally, she was able to provide professional development for teachers in such areas as formative assessments. Under her tutelage, the capacity of all English Language Arts teachers improved.

- 4) **To develop literacy leadership capacity.** We will allocate time and resources for advancing the knowledge and skills of our reading teachers and L.I.T.'s. We will continue to value and recognize the ongoing professional growth they provide to classroom teachers in the area of literacy. We will cultivate their leadership skills so that every teacher will utilize these resources and seek out their knowledge. We will polish their skills so that each student will be impacted as a result of reading personnel's literacy leadership.

Progress as of September 2010:

Building literacy leadership is a recurring challenge. New research in reading continuously changes what needs to be done within each classroom. Bethel's literacy team are the people responsible to meet this challenge and then move forward all teachers. The Reading Team, both individually and collectively, attend professional development opportunities which enhances their knowledge and skills. One of the most meaningful professional development opportunities this year was the presentation by Dr. Jan Richardson, author of *The Next Step in Guided Reading*. During the next school year, knowledge derived from this professional development and book will be shared with classroom teachers so that guided reading instruction becomes more targeted on student needs. Various members of the Reading Team also provide professional development to staff. The following is a small example of the extensive professional development the Reading Team presented to Bethel teachers: "Using Student Assessment Data to Provide Targeted Literacy Instruction," Teaching Literacy Response in Grade 2." "Fluency for Middle and High School Teachers" and "Are We Closing the Achievement Gap?"

- 5) **To provide the resources required for an exemplary language arts program.** We will evaluate current programs so that new text books can be purchased in order to provide students with the resources necessary for high academic achievement.

Progress as of September 2010:

Several new reading intervention programs were instituted this year. At the middle and high school, **Text Connections** was implemented for students who were identified at risk. One of the major focuses of this program was the explicit teaching of comprehension. Teachers who delivered this program participated in several days of professional development to build their knowledge of the program as well as modeling of teaching strategies. Ongoing evaluation of the program and analysis of student impact was assessed during PLC meetings. **Lexia**, a computer-based program, was available for students in kindergarten through the middle school. This program offered practice on phonological awareness, phonics, and comprehension. Since this program is Internet based, students had access to this program from home. **Lexia** was an integral part of the before-school program in grades 1 – 5. **Leveled Literacy**, an intervention program for at-

risk students in kindergarten through grade 3, was determined to be highly successful and motivating based on end of the year data. Reading programs are continuously evaluated for their efficacy.

- 6) **To reach out to preschools to enhance their knowledge of changes at state level.** We will continue to ensure a seamless transition from preschool / home to kindergarten. We will be a vehicle to communicate with local preschools the new State of Connecticut initiatives, such as the Universal Preschool Expansion Initiative and the School Readiness Grant. We will invite local preschool personnel to professional development and training opportunities for preschool staff.

Progress as of September 2010:

Bethel Public Schools was able to provide several professional development sessions for the area's preschools. "Developing Oral Language in Preschoolers" was the topic presented to preschool directors in the fall. At that time, other areas of interest were discussed. As a result, Jonathan Costa presented "21st Century Skills and the Preschooler" early in February. In mid-March, preschool staff and Bethel personnel shared information on "Fine Motor Skills, Social Development, and Academics Through Functional Activities." At each session, information was exchanged that enhanced how best to support each other in the mutual pursuit of educating the children of Bethel.

The Vision for English Language Learner Program

Kathleen Rockwell
Supervisor of Reading & Language Arts

Vision Statement: Every ELL in Bethel will have optimum opportunities to learn. Bethel's ESL program will have the resources to address the wide range of English Language Learners' backgrounds and experiences. Their cultural diversity will be woven into and enrich the Bethel Community.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

- 1) **To hire certified ESL personnel.** ESL students in Bethel will acquire the language and content knowledge so that they meet success in Bethel's classrooms. We will ensure they have the skills to pursue further education beyond Bethel's boundaries. We will reach out to ESL students so that they are active participants beyond the classroom and are involved in all aspects of the school's community. We will provide programs outside of the school day which will address both academic and social needs. We will identify resources that are able to translate and communicate with the wide diversity of the dominant languages of Bethel's families. We will make certain this happens due to the guidance of certified ESL teachers who will facilitate and guide the ESL program as well as be a 'go to' resource for all teachers.

Progress as of September 2010:

Due to budgetary constraints, certified ESL personnel have not been hired.

- 2) **To provide research based ESL professional development for all staff.** We will continue to provide exemplary professional development for all staff. We will expand the

professional development opportunities so that all staff will be aware of strategic, research based teaching expectations as they strive to make content comprehensible for ESL students. We will increase and extend the knowledge of teachers who have previously participated in this in-service. We will seek ways to identify ESL students who may also be special needs students based on current and ongoing research as the result of acquired knowledge via professional development.

Progress as of September 2010:

Bethel's ESL instructors participated in several high-level professional development sessions during this past year. The State of Connecticut extended the opportunity to take part in CALI ESL sessions in the fall. This two-day training outlined the importance of incorporating ESL strategies into every lesson. Advance ESL CALI training took place in the spring and all six of the ESL instructors engaged in this training. Knowledge was shared with classroom teachers via the monthly ESL Moment at faculty meetings. Also, as the "go to" ESL person in each building, they utilized every opportunity to build the ESL capacity of classroom teachers. Late in the spring, two members of the Reading Team attended a two-day conference presented by the nationally recognized ESL expert, Jo Gusman. Next year, these two members of the Reading Team will continue to acquire knowledge in the area of English as a Second Language so that they can provide ongoing professional development to all staff.

- 3) **To strengthen our outreach program for ESL families in order to help them acclimate to Bethel and the greater community.** We will continue to work collaboratively with area agencies to provide programs that will reach out to the non-English speaking families in our community. We will support their involvement in our schools by providing opportunities to learn English and by supplying information that will contribute to their family's wellness. We will value the richness of their cultures. We will believe that their diversity will strengthen and enhance our community.

Progress as of September 2010:

Bethel Public Schools continues to work in conjunction with WERACE to provide evening instruction for parents to acquire English. In addition to learning English, school information was shared with the parents. For example, if parents needed to call to make an appointment for Parent-Teacher conferences, they were given the knowledge and support to successfully do so. Information about school and family activities was also made available. In order for this program to maximize its impact, child care was made available during that time. To further reach out to ESL families, the ESL instructors initiated contact to encourage ESL families to participate in evening sessions on such topics as Reading Book Celebration, Open House Night, and CMT night. ESL instructors fostered parental engagement by attending conferences, PPT meetings, and as needed, Data Team meetings. When appropriate, an ESL weekly newsletter was created and sent out. This included a "tip" on helping their child academically.

The Vision for Music Education

Maureen DeBlois
Music Coordinator K-12

Vision Statement: To build a comprehensive music program that includes skills and experiences that promote musical understanding and the opportunity to develop a life-long appreciation and involvement in music.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

1) **In auditing our current curriculum and performance opportunities, we believe that the following should be completed to rank Bethel among the elite performance districts in the nation:**

- Enhance the existing standards-based string curriculum for grades 3-12 which also includes a string orchestral opportunity in both the middle and high school levels. We will provide for one half-hour lesson a week in grades 3-12 to help improve the string student's musical skills and literacy.
- Add a guitar class at both the middle and high school levels to better serve our student population.
- Improve the standards-based choral curriculum in 4th-12th grade, and offer two sections of concert, treble, and chamber choir at the high school level to accommodate all students who wish to participate. We will offer individual and group voice lessons at both the middle and high school levels.
- Build upon the standards-based band curriculum 4th-12th grade and in addition to the half hour lessons for grades 4th and 5th grades, we will add one half-hour instrumental lesson per week for middle and high school students.
- Further develop the standards-based keyboard classes at both the middle and high school grades and add a level two section at both the middle and high school.
- Develop appropriate music courses like the Music Lynx class offered as part of the unified arts courses in the middle school.
- Provide improved modified, adaptive and peer modeling music classes in the elementary, middle and high school levels. These classes offer social interaction, language stimulation and physical assistance to students who face profound cognitive, physical, medical and emotional challenges.

Progress as of September 2010:

String program – We offer a half hour weekly lesson in 3rd, 4th and 5th grade. In the other grades 6-12 we currently do not have the staffing to offer a half hour weekly lesson. These lessons would be pull out lessons. Presently the string teachers offer extra help to groups or individual students when time allows. We are presently addressing the issue of enrollment at the different levels. A report detailing some changes we can make to address this issue will be coming shortly.

Guitar lessons- presently we do not have the staff to offer these lessons at the High School or the middle school. We are exploring the possibility of offering guitar as part of the seventh grade Music Links program in the middle school.

Chorus- The music department added a second concert choir slot. This addition was very helpful and allowed more students to take chorus. Again, if it is needed and all the students cannot be scheduled for one concert choir slot, the high school will offer an extra concert choir slot. A keyboard section would be cut to accommodate the chorus slot.

Band – Presently we offer ½ hour weekly lessons in the 4th and 5th grades. We do not have the staff to offer ½ hour weekly lessons in the 6th- 12th grade bands. In the middle and high schools, the band instructors offer lessons to individuals and small groups, before and after school, as their personal time allows. These lessons are above and beyond their regular schedule.

Keyboard- This year in the high school, we added a keyboard level II class. The enrollment for both keyboard I and keyboard II is high. The students are assessed regularly and also perform a recital for their peers. The middle school offers several sections of a year- long keyboard class. Each student works at his/her own pace. The students play for the parents on student curriculum night. All classes have a high enrollment.. This course is like having a level 1-11 keyboard program because the course is all year and not just one semester.

Adaptive music classes- We continue to offer the award-winning adaptive music class at the middle school but we do not have the staff this year to offer such a class in the high school. Next year, we hope to offer a similar class in the high school so our special needs students can share a music experience with some of the other students. In the elementary school, the special needs students attend regular music classes. The lessons are modified and adjusted for their ability.

2) **To incorporate music technology experiences into all areas of the music curriculum.**

- In the elementary general music programs, we will incorporate software programs that will provide the students with more opportunities to improve their music literacy and enable them to compose different types of musical selections.
- In the middle school, we will further develop and build a music technology standards-based curriculum that enables the students to use appropriate hardware and software so that students will analyze, arrange, and compose musical/audio compositions and be able to incorporate these compositions into the larger multi-media context such as power point, pod cast, vod cast, video, film scoring, and web casts.
- In the high school we will develop a standards-based technology curriculum as well as a music technology lab that will allow students to continue and expand on the music technological capabilities.
- A music technology specialist will teach the music technology courses a percentage of time at the high school, a percentage of time at the middle school and a percentage of time servicing the rest of the district.

Progress as of September 2010:

In technology – we are working on using a computer program to assist the students with music notation. Students are also using “Garage Band” to make pod casts and for self and group evaluations. Students also use the super-scope for student recordings and evaluations. In the middle school we are on target and continue to improve our use of

technology. Students use the computers to improve music literacy, analyze, arrange, and compose musical/audio compositions and incorporate these composition into larger multi-media context such as power pint, pod cast, vod cast, video, film scoring and web casts. In the High School, we will draw upon the help of our technology department to develop a program that we can maintain at the high school.

The Vision for Art Education

Maureen Berescik and Anne Bogart
Art Coordinators K-12

Vision Statement: We will expand the depth and diversity of the Visual Art Program to include more opportunities and skills that promote the development of creativity and critical thinking.

Description and Implementation of the Vision:

- 1) **To reorganization of the Art curriculum so that it parallels the Connecticut Standards for the Visual Arts K-12.** This will include the design, development, and implementation of appropriate new classes, such as a High School Advanced Drawing class and curriculum changes for art programs at all of the Bethel schools that reflect changing technology and population needs.

Progress as of September 2010:

Grades K-8 are continuing to implement the curriculum as it parallels the Connecticut Standards for Visual Arts K-12 and the National Standards for Visual Arts K-12. During the 2008-09 school year BMS implemented technology via iPod as a vocational example of technology and the arts for possible job consideration. BMS eighth graders are piloting the lessons under consideration for the current task force concepts being reviewed by the State Department of Educations for Visual Arts Assessment.

- 2) **Further preparation of students for life beyond High School, whether they intend to immediately work or continue their education.** This will be accomplished through the development of creativity and critical thinking skills, time management skills, problem solving and original idea development. These skills will be introduced at the Elementary level and continued and expanded as the students advance to the Middle and High Schools.

Progress as of September 2010:

Teachers share possible art careers with students on a regular basis as an extension of each specific art skill and technique. Art as a real career possibility is discussed with each lesson and the extent of art related careers are brainstormed and shared via the internet with students. The knowledge that as technology grows, so too are the possible career opportunities, allows students to consider new and different avenues. A connection is made between art and the expectations with art lessons to use writing across the curriculum, math skills and science concepts with art lessons K-8.

- 3) **To involve students in an expanding variety of art media tools and technology, inclusion of more master and contemporary artists and art history in projects where**

appropriate to foster a life-long interest in art, and to make students aware of the relationship of art history to what was, and is, happening in the world.

Progress as of September 2010:

Students at BMS begin each art quarter training their eyes to “copy” a Master Artist on exhibit within the art room. Additionally, at BMS, students view the Sunday Morning museum visits of current artists in major cities such as New York City, Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles on a regular basis as taped by Ms. Berescik. Many students share the fact that they have seen or plan to visit the exhibit with their families. Students are encouraged to share a visual diary of these visits with their peers. Eight grade students always connect their class trips to any museums along the way that exhibits the work studied within art classes, too. They are proud of these moments!

Students also view specific videos on artists whenever possible to utilize the techniques students are learning in their study of principals and elements of art. The goal is to make students comfortable and knowledgeable in connecting their work with that of Master Artists and become an expert in the style of a particular artist. It is our goal to have them enter a museum or gallery and make that connection both visually and verbally.

- 4) **To development assignments designed to expand art vocabulary, and incorporate reading and writing assignments that support the K-12 school’s missions, the CMT, and the CAPT.**

Progress as of September 2010:

Students continue to write their own reflections and analysis they interpret their work and Master Artists as examples within the art room. Pre and post arts assessment reviews are given at BMS for each quarter. Art vocabulary is introduced and referred to within each lesson so previous learning is built upon for future work. Whenever possible, connections to the K-12 school missions and CMT work is noted as another example within the art lesson, too.

- 5) **To attain an art computer lab at the high school dedicated to the visual arts with a large format printer, lockable cabinets and an appropriate amount of related supplies and equipment for student enrollment.** It is important for our students to work with industry standard equipment so they have marketable skills.

Progress as of September 2010:

The Art Department now has a MAC lab dedicated to the Visual Arts. The Photoshop software has been updated to a more current version, (CS3). More cameras are needed for the Digital Photography course. We are still in need of a large format printer. Teachers have to use Costco or other print services for student works for competition and AP Studio Art exam submission, and they are not always compensated for the costs.

*One metal shelving cabinet has been retrieved from storage, but more storage is needed for equipment, supplies, reference books, and for storage of student work.

- 6) **To embed technology throughout the Art Department classes, including inter-network communication and further sharing of student achievement.**

Progress as of September 2010:

Within BMS technology is embed into the curriculum by use of research for both classwork and homework; SMARTboards to utilize examples of specific artwork via museum sites and gallery exhibitions; and the icart for individualized lessons such as ipod vocational studies. We are sharing student art-work from exhibitions and art shows on the BMS school site for all parents, teachers, students and community visitors to view. These gallery shows also include the work on exhibit of the Bethel Blooms from April 18 and 19, 2009. Additionally we included art work from our classroom and the BMS art show in April.

- 7) **To develop an accelerated art class for highly motivated students at Bethel Middle School that would serve as a feeder class for the Bethel High School art program.** These classes will include two-dimensional art, ceramic and sculpture. This goal will allow high school students to generate more complex and individualized art work at an earlier age and create a more professional portfolio as a senior student.

Progress as of September 2010:

Ms. Berescik is offering a pilot accelerated class during lunchtime for highly motivated eighth graders on specific art projects. This class is run as a studio class. Each interested student chooses a project to work on. During a four-week period students selected clay for their projects and at one point we had students in all stages of clay prior to firing and glazing their work. Currently individual students are utilizing this time-frame to complete more complicated and extensive classwork that is of exhibition quality.

- 8) **To increase instructional time for art classes within the K-5 grades by a minimum of ten minutes per class.**

Progress as of September 2010:

This request was made to the respective administrators but our understanding is that SRBI may impact the instructional art time from grades K-5 for the 2009-2010 school year. We are discussing the situation with Dr. Jordan, Associate Superintendent of Schools.

- 9) **To increase contact hours with students in grades 6-8 from a quarter semester to half a semester per student.**

Progress as of September 2010:

This request was made to the BMS administration prior to the 2008-09 school year, but the answer was that it not possible with the current schedule.

- 10) **To create a chapter of the National Art Honor Society at Bethel Middle School.**

Progress as of September 2010:

Although a budget freeze in the 2008-2009 school year impacted our funding and ability to become a chapter of the National Art Honor Society, students were invited to exhibit their work at the annual CAEA (CT. Art Education Association) art show at The Hartford in Simsbury, Connecticut in March 2009. It was the first time our students were included in this prestigious show with students from the entire State of Connecticut.

- 11) **To expand on the annual art exhibitions by going beyond each school to community and/or college environment for a district-wide exhibition.** Contact will be made at

Western Connecticut State University to sponsor an exhibition. We will expand on opportunities for student exhibitions at the state level Youth Art Show Hartford, Connecticut

Progress as of September 2010:

The Art Department K-12 increased the visual art exhibitions opportunities of all students for the 2008-2009 school year. Some of these exhibitions included the Youth Art Show at the University of Hartford, The Hartford, Simsbury, Connecticut, Bethel Blooms, and the invitational Mud Show, New Canaan, Connecticut.

- 12) **To provide opportunities for artist-in-residence visits at all schools on a regular basis.**

Progress as of September 2010:

Although Ms. Berescik submitted a grant to the Bethel Educational Foundation for this request, to date we were not granted this opportunity. Therefore the teachers K-8 are attempting to enlist the expertise of area artists for the future. This is an on-going process.

- 13) **To incorporate art technology experiences into all areas of the Art curriculum.**

- We will make available in the Media Centers K-8 software programs on specific artists, art movements and art techniques for students to utilize for their individual skill improvement and verbal and written presentations.
- We will increase the technology equipment available to students and teachers within the art rooms K-8 i.e. Smart Boards dedicated to art rooms on a permanent basis.
- We will expand upon teacher training in the use and integration of technology especially with Smart Boards, research sources and software programs.
- We will incorporate digital technology of art techniques into other required computer classes at Bethel Middle School.

Progress as of September 2010:

For the 2008-2009 school year all of these technology experiences were offered on various levels to the students of Bethel schools. Art teachers in grades K-8 will expand on these opportunities for the 2009-2010 school year.

The Vision for Physical Education

Erin Tegmier
K-12 Physical Education Coordinator

Vision Statement: Through a comprehensive physical education program, students will receive the support and guidance necessary to achieve lifelong fitness. The exposure to different forms of physical activity will allow every student to implement plans for lifelong healthy and balanced living.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

- 1) **To maintain and enhance a comprehensive physical education program that includes a variety of activities to provide opportunities to engage in regular physical activity in and out of the school environment.** The healthy and balanced living framework is the

foundation of our curriculum. We will provide physical activities for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and social interaction. We will provide the opportunities for every individual to explore different physical activities that meet the needs of all our students in order to engage in lifelong wellness.

Progress as of September 2010:

Teachers in the Department of Physical Education had several professional development opportunities to attend, thus allowing the knowledge of new and innovative games and activities to be learned. This allows us to enhance our curriculum by exposing our students to new opportunities of physical engagement. The staff has been creating opportunities to provide the chance for students to explore different physical activities for lifelong wellness in school. After school activities have been offered to allow the expansion of physical activity. We will continue to ensure that the staff is current with the changing profession of Physical Education and creating opportunities for our students to be physically active. We have submitted a proposal to rewrite our curriculum this summer for Physical Education. This will allow our curriculum to be current with the state standards. The emphasis of all staff members is to continue with professional development activities offered specific for Physical Education and learning new activities to incorporate into our units.

- 2) **At all grade levels Physical Education will be maintained at the current hours of instruction. Based on the availability of time and resources the hours of instruction will be expanded to enhance the physical education curriculum. We will create a stronger foundation to promote fitness concepts beginning in the elementary grade level. We will then build upon these concepts through all grade levels.**

Progress as of September 2010:

This has been the greatest challenge for our department. Time is a huge factor to create in order for physical education to be expanded beyond the hours of instruction it is currently at. Right now, this is not feasible, however, we are taking a different angle at this statement and will continue to work towards the original goal. At the elementary level students are engaged in physical education every four days. Students also are engaged in a period of recess time every day. The staff has been and will continue to emphasize to students the importance of being physically active during recess. The key to this is maintain. With the time and resources available we will strive to increase the hours of instruction. Currently what we are doing to ensure that our students are receiving the most physical activity with the time we currently have is to monitor our Connecticut Physical Fitness Scores. This will allow us to see the areas that are in need of improvement to really focus lessons and units on those components.

- 3) **To increase the access to various resources in order to achieve personal overall wellness.** We will provide resources, including those of a technological nature, for each individual to take ownership of their own wellness plan allowing each individual to make educated and realistic plans for a lifetime of well-being. With the knowledge of the core concepts, movement concepts, and strategies and tactics each student can achieve and maintain healthy levels of physical fitness.

Progress as of September 2010:

At the elementary, level the students are learning the important aspects of their fine and gross motor skills. The results of the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment(CPFA) allows the elementary staff to link each student's ability on the four components of health (Cardiovascular, flexibility, upper arm strength and abdominal strength), allowing the students at the younger age to strive for optimal fitness. The CPFA is conducted again at the middle school and high school levels. Each staff member has the data on the students to help track their progress. We are continuing to work with the technology staff to create a more efficient way to track the data from grade level to grade level.

At the Middle School, we received a grant from Duracell and the BEF foundation for our PhysTech room. This has created a huge technology jump for our Physical Education Department. This opportunity has also allowed the chance for each student in this PhysTech program to analyze their heart rate results and clearly understand the importance of being in ones target heart rate zone based in the assessment forms they need to follow during this unit.

At the high school level, there are several opportunities for the students to be involved in the fitness unit. The curriculum is geared to understanding one's personal health and how to maintain and strengthen their personal fitness.

As a department, we will continue to provide resources allowing each individual to strive for their personal best in optimal health.

As a department the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment is used to track all students on the four components of fitness. This allows us to create the resources necessary to help each individual student improve. The application for the PE/Health curriculum work is in the process. If it goes through this will allow the department to look into how to have the student own into their own personal fitness plan and really put this standard into motion beyond just the high school. At the middle school we have also budgeted for a new station to add to the PhysTech room to increase our class size by 2-4 students.

- 4) **To ensure that there is a safe environment for the process of engaging in physical activity.** The physical education department will ensure that there will be a positive learning environment for all students to engage in physical activity. This will include safe practices, adherence to rules of the activity, positive encouragement from teachers, cooperation among peers, and respect of individual differences in ability levels and physical characteristics.

Progress as of September 2010:

All grade levels in the Physical Education Department have created and will continue to create a positive learning environment for every student. The staff adheres to all safety rules of an activity and creates positive encouragement to engage in physical activity even out of ones comfort zone. The respect of our students' differences in ability levels and physical characteristics is clearly portrayed through modification in lessons to the rapport between staff and student. The staff continues to be involved in professional developments on differentiation. This is an ongoing process throughout each school year. The physical and emotional environment of the Physical Education classes are always considered for the highest safety of all students.

The Vision for Health Education

Erin Tegmier
K-12 Health Education Coordinator

Vision Statement: Through a comprehensive health education program, students will make connections and apply skills for a lifetime of health and wellness. The curricular outcomes will allow students to adopt a healthy approach in areas of personal, interpersonal and environmental well-being.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

- 1) **To ensure a comprehensive health curriculum that allows students to be advocates for themselves.** We will assess curricular offerings to develop courses reflective of the needs of our students. We will adhere to high quality lessons and engaging activities to allow student investment into the curriculum. Students will be provided with the foundation of knowledge to make smart choices in their lifetimes. Topics will include but are not limited to: human growth and development, community/environmental health, injury and disease prevention, human sexuality, mental and emotional health, nutrition and physical activity, and alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

Progress as of September 2010:

The health curriculum is aligned with the state standards as well as Bethel's power standards. The health curriculum reflects the needs of our students. The lessons were created to engage students to their fullest in activities. Students are exposed to courses in human growth and development, community/environmental health, injury and disease prevention, human sexuality, mental and emotional health, nutrition and physical activity, and alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Professional Development opportunities will continue to ensure this standard is met. The proposal to update the Health curriculum has been submitted. If it is accepted we will take the health curriculum and update them to the current health state standards. Professional Development opportunities as well as individual research will allow the staff to keep the curriculum innovative and active for all students. One focus to enhance this standard would be a professional development specifically for targeting the intellectually advanced students.

- 2) **To increase the access to various resources to enhance the ability to detect and identify health issues. The access to valid health information is important in the process in prevention and early detection of health problems. The analysis and understanding of valid health resources will increase student investment.**

Progress as of September 2010:

SMARTboards have been a great asset in the middle school health classes. The SMARTboard allows the teachers to show valid and reliable internet resources to turn to. Across the district, local resources are discussed as means to obtain and understand detection and prevention methods. Local resources are also being used in our curriculum to allow our students the access to these resources.

Along with the personal fitness plan for physical education, this would be a good time to tie in how to utilize local resources, which can be looked at over the summer.

- 3) To strengthen our health program by engaging our elementary students in health education more frequently. We will create a stronger foundation of knowledge for health concepts by increasing the number of instructional minutes spent in health education at the elementary level. Through the increase of devoted time to health instruction at the elementary level, we will improve upon establishing positive health behaviors.

Progress as of May 2010:

For health education this is the biggest challenge right now. It is extremely important that the elementary level receive the knowledge about HIV/AIDS as well as alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. We are working with the principals of the elementary schools to ensure that the students are getting the necessary health education needed at this level. As of now, we have gone through Bethel's power standards for health education at each grade level. There are only a few areas at each grade level that are in need of further revision.

With the hope and intent of revamping our health curriculum this will give our department the opportunity to create at least the mandatory lessons/units by the state to involve the elementary levels, the discussion of which staff members to teach this material will need to be looked into. The power standards for each school at the elementary level for health has been looked at and will be a starting point as to what is not covered at the elementary level that needs to be covered.

- 4) **To ensure all classroom settings are engaging and designed for each individual to demonstrate *the ability to use critical skills in every day life.*** *The awareness of health factors and their relation with society will be clearly evident.* The influences of family, peers, community, media, culture, and technology impact an individual's belief systems. We will design lessons and units that will allow our students to be aware of the influences, analyze, problem solve, communicate, make decisions, and set goals in order to promote their growth as responsible citizens. This knowledge and instruction will transfer into students living a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Progress as of September 2010:

Professional development opportunities allowed the staff to stay current with the profession. Conferences allowed the expansion of our lessons to create and emphasize the creativity of "real world" connections. Students have a positive teaching atmosphere at all levels to teach children to understand influences in their lives, problem-solving, making decisions and setting goals for their personal growth. We will continue to create and engage our students to ensure they meet this vision statement.

As a department, we reflect on the community and health decisions of our students. We have enhanced "our choices and consequences" unit to further embed the awareness of individuals choices and consequences to live a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

As a staff we reflect on health areas that are prominent in our community to ensure that students are able to know the facts and make positive decisions and be advocates for themselves.

The Vision for Technology

Daniel DeBlois
Director of Technology

Vision Statement: Technology will be a catalyst for the improvement of teaching and learning, communication, and data management.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

- 1) **To ensure that all students, upon graduation, and all professional staff, master appropriate instructional, communication, and data management technologies.** We will include assured technology experiences K-12 for all curriculum revisions and revise the K-8 technology curriculum annually. We will provide technology tools for use in the classroom (computers, projectors, and SMART Boards) that can improve instructional practices. The department will drive professional development for all staff by identifying essential skills and providing learning experiences as required.

Progress as of September 2010:

Curriculum development has been a focus in the K-8 technology area. The K-5 curriculum was revised with the assistance of our Tech Champions, Media Specialists and Technology teachers to reflect integration with core area skills. These projects were piloted, refined and expanded throughout the school year. The Digital Student courses at BMS are annually revised to stay true to its original model ... to investigate emerging technologies that can then be pushed into the core area classrooms. To this goal, technologies such as podcasting are now used school-wide across all disciplines.

The purchase of additional projector/laptop carts for instruction in the classroom includes five carts in both Berry and Rockwell, four in Johnson, and four in the High School. This access increased the use of teacher-infused technology lessons. The High School also received four SMARTBoards as well as a four-hour training session with 30 staff members to help kick off the use of SMARTBoards in the core areas of Math, Science, Social Studies and English.

The systematic increase in the use of Moodle, most notably at the High School, where all teachers were required to create courses to replace Homework.net, allowed for an improved communication vehicle with parents and students. This model will increase next year as all teachers will be required to make their courses "interactive" through journals, forums, quizzes, wikis, etc. During the summer of 2009 the district Moodle system will be upgraded and integrated with eLGG and LAMS, two additional software applications that will allow for student ePortfolios and individualized learning "pathways."

Additional software, such as RealeBooks, increased spreadsheet availability for data collection and analysis. Senteo and Notebook software have also increased the technological exposure of both our students and staff.

The Tech Champion program, most notably in grades 6-12, was a great success with each teacher focusing on a technology-related project that they would become experts on.

These projects ranged from Robotics, to SMARTBoards, to incorporating podcasting and digital video in English class. These Tech Champions also worked to develop their fellow staff members through both formal and informal workshops and one-on-one assistance.

- 2) **To sustain a culture of technology innovation.** We will collaborate to develop an online school community (Moodle) as a resource for staff/students to access a library of reference documents; for staff to meet and work collaboratively on projects; to develop online courses for professional development and for students.

Progress as of September 2010:

Moodle has grown to impact staff and students district wide. At the K-3 level, all staff received professional development on using Moodle to access resources and collaborate as part of the “K-3 Community” courses. Vertical teams have been created for use with the Technology K-12 and 6-12 PLCs and are actively used to post PLC minutes and collaborate across buildings on curriculum needs. The Business Office received training in maintaining their own resources section of Moodle to be developed for personnel, budget and other staff-related issues. The Teacher Evaluation documents will be migrated to Moodle over the summer of 2009 and further development of the system for use in SRBI and data teams is being investigated.

At the High School, the entire staff utilized Moodle throughout the NEASC accreditation process to access reports and comment on the work of committee members. Chairperson used Moodle to collect drafts and assemble and post final documents prior to voting on their acceptance. As a result of this collective process, the staff at BHS is well situated to use Moodle for collaboration with staff and students.

- 3) **To provide more technology tools to administrators.** We will streamline teacher evaluation, assessment of student data, and professional development through the use of online forms using Excel, SASI, IEP Direct, and ProTraxx. Laptops and Palm Pilots will be made available to maximize administrative effectiveness. We will maintain effective communication systems (web site, parent phone notification system, email notification system, homework.net) at all times.

Progress as of September 2010:

All administrators received Macintosh MacBooks configured with VMWare to allow for PC virtualization, effectively giving them access to the majority of software their teachers use in the classroom. As part of this initiative a series of training sessions was provided on the hardware and software applications they contained.

The use of Moodle increased the ability of High School teachers to communicate with students (and parents) on class resources, assignments and messages, replacing the homegrown and outdated Homework.net system. At the K-8 level Classwebs have been used to create cluster or classroom web sites. The VoiceReach system is up and running and used for quickly messaging our community members. Our district and school web sites continue to inform and celebrate our achievements.

- 4) **To provide the necessary resources to realize this technology vision.** We will continue the prudent management of our technology resources and use the e-rate and lease funds to expand the management, assessment, and classroom options for our users.

Progress as of September 2010:

Bethel continues to look for innovative ways to finance technology needs on an ongoing schedule. eRate funds have been used to purchase a district-wide backup system to maintain the integrity of our data. A plan is in place to install a wireless system at Bethel High School to allow for increased Internet access across the building. Fifty additional laptops have been purchased as part of our lease plan to replace classroom desktops at BHS. This will allow teachers to be mobile with their technology and prepare lessons at home to be used in the classroom. The classroom desktops will be re-utilized to create additional sign out labs for student use.

The network architecture is in the process of being redesigned and streamlined for better performance, including the combining of the admin and student networks. This work will continue into the next year.

The Vision for Channel 26 and Video Communications

Karen Fildes
Coordinator of Television Production

Vision Statement: Use the full potential of the educational access Channel 26 and video communications to improve the effectiveness of instruction, educational information, and school/community relations.

Description and Implementation of this Vision:

- 1) **To further develop the Johnson School (JS-TV) program to advance student skills through a collaborative experience with students in BMS-TV.** We will schedule an activity period at Johnson School for 5th graders to participate in JS-TV and 4th graders to participate as web site reporters and photographers, building the prerequisite skills in writing and general photography. During the course of the year, JS-TV students will work collaboratively with BMS-TV students at the middle school to create a television show on the transitional experience of students from Johnson to BMS. Johnson School TV crew members will also attend and work with BMS-TV students to film a daytime musical performance in the spring to expose them to auditorium "live performance" tapings as a new skill. A joint field trip will also be planned taking both JS-TV and BMS-TV students to an appropriate professional venue.

Progress as of September 2010:

Fifth graders at Johnson School are now eligible to participate in JS-TV through an activity period. Students in this program meet twice a week for 30 minutes to write and produce studio shows for Bethel Education Television.

- 2) **To further develop the Bethel Middle School (BMS-TV) program to include additional technical and on-air experiences to a wider range of students.** We will better involve students in planning, researching, writing, and filming of television programs and the expansion of the BMS-TV program by developing a BMS-TV class rather than simply an after-school activity. Student writers and hosts will be responsible for pre-interviewing guests and researching the background on the topic for the show they will produce.

These additional skills will enable BMS to challenge our students not only on the technical aspect of television but also the academic aspects of good script writing, interview techniques, and guest preparation. Students will also be exposed to and involved in the set design and coordination for shows filmed, expanding upon our current studio look. The addition of a teleprompter and new, more sophisticated camera equipment will challenge the students to learn more technical skills as they transition from BMS to BHS. Students will also have the option of participating in the more structured and rigorous Fox 61 Student News program.

Progress as of September 2010:

All sixth grade students participate in an 18-day program of enrichment in the BMS television studio. Students work collaboratively to produce a show to be aired on the district television studio. This program provides exposure to all students to the skills involved in working in a television studio.

Teachers are receiving professional development on using the television studio within core classes, which should increase its use by non-IT staff.

- 3) **To modify the BHS video production track to include opportunities at the freshmen level for students who are entering the school with previous experience in the BMS-TV and JS-TV programs.** We will develop new courses for incoming freshmen. These courses will provide students with hands-on experience at all the major roles of a local TV studio. Each level will bring with it, increasing responsibilities, opportunities and demands on technical and artistic skill development. Students will learn by doing, spending a majority or their time in a working studio, producing shows to air on BETV.

Progress as of September 2010:

Beginning in the fall of 2008 incoming freshmen were offered a new course in technology education entitled BeTV Video Production which built upon the experiences of the Digital Student course at BMS and offered students more exposure to studio work through a series of video based projects. Beginning in the spring of 2010, a second level class entitled BeTV Video Production II was offered that explores the skills necessary for professional film shorts and documentaries. In the fall of 2011 a third course in the series, BeTV Video Production III will offer students an advanced course focused on the post production process.

Bethel High School is one of two schools in the State of Connecticut that piloted an innovative interdisciplinary program with the Center for 21st Century Skills at Education Connection called the *Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences*. This program explores the world of science through emerging technologies in a project based, experiential model. Students in the program take a science course and a technology course. During the 9th and 10th grade years video production and multimedia play an integral role in the program. Students in the program produce video submissions to the Connecticut Student Film Festival. In the first year of the Academy program, the students created a documentary video focusing on the role of a combat engineer in World War II. During the second year of the program, students will be creating videos in a wide array of genres, including Public Service Announcements, Fictional Shorts, Documentaries, Animation and New Reports.

Students in the 10th grade Academy class have been selected as one of three schools in Connecticut to participate in the PBS NewsHour Reporting Labs program where students will be mentored by the PBS NewsHour and CPTV professionals to develop new reports that will be aired on their national web site and television show.

- 4) **To build a video-on-demand system district-wide to allow easy distribution of content created by our video production teams (both live and taped) as well as for use in the case of an emergency notification broadcast.** Once the “fiber WAN,” our high-speed school network is fully operational, we will take advantage of it in ways we may not have not have thought of as digital. We will implement a centralized digital video on demand system. This type of system will allow us to broadcast commercial, local, and internet video through the digital cables throughout the school system to the computer systems for use independently on demand.

Progress as of September 2010:

As a test for this system, we built a prototype that allowed us to broadcast the Presidential inauguration simultaneously to all buildings using the WAN.

- 5) **To introduce a distance learning program for homebound students.** When a student in the K-5 is projected to miss class for an extended period of time, we will make “web cam” technology available and overcome the technical “firewall” safety issues. In this way, a student who is homebound for an extended period will use the computer to connect to the classroom.

Progress as of September 2010:

Steps have been taken to test various programs that will enable distance learning including Skype, Jabber and Oovoo. Students at Bethel High School regularly use Skype to communicate with professionals in industry and global teachers as a way to support curriculum. In Johnson school it has been used to have classroom “meet” students from a sister school in Australia.

The Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences program at the High School have also used Second Life to collaborate with students in their sister schools, Metro Biz in New Haven, and will soon be working with their peers in Brookfield High School as well. This is another program that can be investigated as a way for homebound students to collaborate and interact with students in their class.

- 6) **To increase the communication flow from our administrative team using Channel 26 and the video-on-demand system.** We will increase the capacity for school administrators to speak to both staff and community about current events and educational concerns. The goal will be to keep the communication current. The taping will be done at each building and then compiled into a 15-minute weekly segment aired at a fixed time. It will be coupled with a short slide show with pictures of accolades and events.

Progress as of September 2010:

We are broadcasting building administrators TV shows about these topics. The broadcasts are not on a fixed schedule at this time.

- 7) **Hollywood East** Following the state's initiative to bring more jobs into the state by promoting the major motion picture industry and recognizing one of the obstacles to this initiative is the lack of trained film and field production crews, we need to include in our video track, course work, activities and opportunities for independent study that will equip our students with the vocational skills needed to enter this industry.

Progress as of September 2010:

As part of the Applied Studies Department curriculum revision process, career pathways are being established for students who have strong interest in pursuing video as a career. This will include the development of internship and work-based programs for students to explore these career fields in addition to the creation of rigorous coursework to prepare for these opportunities. The Digital Media & Movie Making class (year two of the Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences program) includes a rigorous curriculum, which includes experiential experiences with such professional groups as PBS NewsHour and CPTV as well as mentorship and professional feedback on videos produced. These students will also have the ability to submit their work to the CT Student Film Festival in May.

- 8) **The BHS Commercial Production House** The local cable TV station broadcasts commercials of local merchants on nationally broadcast shows. The commercials are only shown locally and "on air" cost reflects local advertising costs even though they are on nationally broadcast shows. The "ready for air" tape is created at a professional production house with writers, singers, actors, and a studio with a crew. Our high school could develop the capacity, within its academic departments, to provide this service to the local community and as a guided experience for our students.

Progress as of September 2010:

Coupled with the revision of the video production curriculum this is a program that we hope to phase in to Bethel High School over the next two years. The addition of a "commercial" project is teaching the students in our video classes the component skills necessary to operate a production house on site. The first project incorporating this model involves a DVD being produced for the Town of Bethel Economic Outreach Committee to be used as part of a marketing campaign to draw businesses to the town.

Progress as of September 2010:

We are broadcasting administrators' TV shows about these topics. The broadcasts are not on a fixed schedule at this time.

The Vision for the Business Office

Theresa D. Yonsky
Director of Fiscal Services

Vision Statement: We will support the administration and staff of Bethel Public Schools in both the routine and critical areas of business and to do so in a user-friendly environment.

Description and Implementation of the Vision:

- 1) **To continue the professional growth of all members of the Business Office.** We envision a well-trained and professional staff prepared to take on change and challenges. We will practice what we preach in our schools. We will be life-long learners. This will be accomplished in two ways: First, through internal cross-training so that no function is completely reliant on one individual, and second, through continuing education for each member from secretary to director.

Progress as of September 2010

In highlighting this by specific Business Office member, we will begin with Trisha Dee, Administrative Assistant. Trisha has spent time with each existing staff member to learn her position and how it interfaces with each position in the department. Trisha has attended the annual *BudgetSense* conference to expand her knowledge in that area. Trish has taken complete control over “projects” in the department such as Free and Reduced and the HRRR recycling task force participation for Bethel Public Schools. Trish will be attending formal training in Free & Reduced Lunch with the State Department of Education this summer. Trisha is also learning to utilize *PowerSchool*

Deb Demuth has been cross trained in Accounts Payable by Camille Watson.

Camille Watson attended the *BudgetSense* conference and participated in the CASBO book club.

Nancy Renz has learned all the new requirements for 403(b) plans through the implementation of OMNI as our 403(b) Third Party Administrator.

Laila Rudinas attends the State Department of Education and Shipman and Goodwin seminars on Human Resource topics. Laila attends the annual *BudgetSense* conference and is an active participant in CASBO leadership series. Laila has been an active participant in non-certified labor negotiations. Her growth in the bargaining unit arena is significant. Most importantly, Laila has re-entered WCSU to complete of her Bachelor of Science, Business Administration Degree.

Rick Missimer has been cross-trained in the budget preparation process and the ED001. Rick participated in the negotiations with the paraprofessional bargaining unit to observe and learn the details of this process. Rick attends CASBO seminar days including the leadership series.

Teri Yonsky has taken a leadership role as a liaison in CASBO. Teri is nearing completion of her MBA at Post University.

A commitment to life-long learning has been established and the members of this department will continue to grow and develop each year.

- 2) **To establish the Business Office as a true service organization with a focus on building relationships with school-based personnel, Town of Bethel personnel and the townspeople of Bethel.**

Progress as of September 2010

The original vision items #'s 2, 3, and 4 placed a focus on service to others. This goal is now embedded in the culture of the department and is evidenced in all we do. These can now be considered complete. The greatest evidence of this accomplishment is when the Board of Finance commented publically that this was the "most transparent" budget ever presented.

- 3) **To establish an annual calendar of the recurring business functions.** We believe that we can improve the management of the business functions by documenting the processes performed on a recurring basis. This will help plan the workload more efficiently in the Business Office.

Progress as of September 2010

The department has been using Google Calendar for one year for this purpose. Progress has been made but each member of the department must make use of this tool on a regular basis to have it be effective. More emphasis will be place on making this routine.

- 4) **To continue to streamline the flow of accounting data.** The implementation of *Budget Sense* simplified and streamlined the accounting processes. The Personnel and Accounting Supervisors will better use all of the functions within *BudgetSense*. Accounting rules and internal controls are adhered to, but we will make the processes simpler wherever possible for the district staff. Many of these improvements will focus on use of the website. A link dedicated to employees will house many documents and instructions. This website expansion will involve a coordinated effort between the business and technology staff.

Progress as of September 2010

Progress has been made in this area. Many of the business department and human resource forms have now been uploaded to Moodle. Growth will continue.

- 5) **To improve employee access to personnel information.** We will create a user-friendly human relations site for employees. We will provide information available at the convenience of the staff while reducing the level of routine transactions in the Business Office. The information will relate to benefit and leave plans – but could be expanded.

Progress as of September 2010

This effort is related to #6. With the transition to CIGNA much of this was postponed. The transition to CIGNA was labor intensive for HR but smooth for the employees. Now that this transition is complete more focus will be placed on achieving this goal.

- 6) **To develop and implement recruiting and retention plans for certified staff.** The improvement of student achievement is the mission statement of the Bethel Public

Schools. The most critical contribution that the Business Office can make to achieve this goal is to aid in the hiring and retention of good staff.

The first step is to expand relationships with several universities as a means to attract quality candidates for internships and employment especially in the shortage areas.

- We will further develop our relationship with the University of Bridgeport and Sacred Heart University to take full advantage of their internship programs. The Personnel Supervisor will continue to clearly articulate our math and science needs at the secondary level. The universities will continue to send us their coveted math and science interns.
- The Superintendent will continue to grow the relationship with WCSU, especially in the area of teacher training.
- We will establish a relationship with the University of Connecticut TCPCG (Teacher Certification Program for College Graduates) on their Waterbury campus.
- We will forge stronger links with Fairfield University and other universities that the administration deems to produce solid candidates for employment.
- We will attend job fairs held at colleges and include our teacher alumni from these institutions to foster the connection.
- We will explore other sources of certified staff such as the "Troops to Teachers" program.
- We expand our review of the Connecticut REAP web site to see which potential candidates have posted resumes.

An integral part of this process, we will further promote Bethel as a high value school system. We will gain a better understanding of what draws staff initially to Bethel and further promote those programs. The website will be redesigned to be a better tool for recruitment. It must be easy for potential candidates to obtain information regarding our hiring process and to be "wowed" by the presentation of who we are.

Progress as of September 2010

Great strides have been made in this area. Relationships have been forged and nurtured with several of our Connecticut Universities. After the second year of participating in job fairs, we have evaluated the results and have made plans for a more dramatic presence at these events. Laila has pushed for school administrators to participate in these job fairs. With the administrators in attendance, the job fairs have yielded good results. We believe that this is the one area where the Business Office can truly have a positive impact directly aligned with the mission statement of Bethel Public Schools. The feedback from the school administrators has been very positive to date.

We have gone live with Applitrack, an online, paperless application process. We have already seen a reduction in the recurring processes in the Business Office and we have already experienced the effectiveness of immediate access to candidate information by the Administrators. Laila Rudinas is to be credited with this streamlined and effective implementation of Applitrack.

- 7) **To develop a true health and wellness program for staff.** This was identified as lacking in a survey of our staff. We will utilize CIGNA's wellness programs to assist us in developing

this asset for our staff. We will involve guest speakers, more incentives to quit smoking and to exercise daily, and will improve the food offerings in our school cafeterias.

Progress as of September 2010

Significant progress has been made in this area. Segal & Associates has prepared and presented to us an inventory of the most common health issues facing our employees and the wellness initiatives we have available through our existing medical plan. We also reviewed an in-house survey conducted by Ms. Jagush which confirmed the health issues that exist with our staff. The next step in this process is that Segal will present to us a plan for regular communication to our employees to prompt and assist them in living healthy and seeking proper medical attention when needed. CIGNA has begun rolling out their wellness initiatives to our staff. CIGNA has frequent mail and phone contact with employees and dependents under medical care for targeted issues such as smoking cessation, heart health, diabetes and high blood pressure.

In the food service area, Mrs. Yonsky worked with Sodexo manager, Amanda Riley, regarding raising our cafeteria offerings for staff and students to a more healthy level. A new menu of offerings was piloted for staff at the Middle School. A breakfast program was piloted at both the High School and Middle School.

- 8) **To implement an asset management system.** The Board of Education approved the purchase of this software. The Business Office will purchase and then implement the system in a way that is efficient and not a record-keeping burden for our school staff.

Progress as of September 2010

This project has seen significant progress. Records have been established of fixed assets above a stated dollar threshold in the district. By December 31, 2010 assets will be tagged and a photo inventory of each school will be taken and documented for insurance purposes.

- 9) **To update the policies and procedures of the Business Office.** The existing business management policies and procedures were done on a typewriter. We will update those that clarify the regulations under which we operate and document the processes of the Business Office. These policies and procedures will be included on the website with access to our Bethel Public Schools staff.

Progress as of September 2010

Progress continues on this goal. Each staff member has begun to update policies related to their function using the old "typed" policy manual as a guide. As each section is complete it can be placed on Moodle. Of all our goals this was the lowest priority, but now that other goals have been completed work on this will be more focused.

The Vision for Facility Operations

Robert Germinaro
Supervisor of Facility Operations

Vision Statement: To provide and maintain a beautiful, clean, safe, and healthy campus environment where school buildings and grounds are maintained at required standards mechanically, electrically and structurally for the use and enjoyment of the students, staff, and the public in support of our primary purpose, "To Improve Student Achievement"

- The campus grounds, ball fields, and walkways are to be ecstatically pleasing with controlled vegetation and mature planting.
- Establish a clear departmental understanding for the ownership and budget responsibilities for school buildings and campus grounds maintenance.
- Improve interior and exterior site security and building surveillance.
- Improve classroom environmental conditions. Air quality, increased lighting levels, temperature, and humidity controls.
- Be 85% green compliant with the use of chemicals and building materials while supporting a district recycling program.
- Collaborate with school and town administration to assess and plan the future facility needs of the district.

Progress as of September 2010

On July 1st 2010, the Town Comptrollers office returned the operating control and administration of the school building maintenance account known as the 460 account, to The Bethel Board of Education. This will provide the administration with the ability maintain, plan and administer the school facility maintenance program.

- 1) **To develop a horticultural planting and care plan that will ensure each species throughout the campus receives the correct care and maintenance. This plan will also include a "die-off" and budget replacement plan as needed per year.**

Progress as of September 2010

The return of the operating control of the 460 account will again provided us the ability to maintain a budgetary line item control for the lawn care and property management of the campus. An important component of this property management plan will be the horticultural oversight of the campus grounds. Detail recommendation for greenery replacement, planting care, and budgetary quotes are to be provided to us by the service contractor support to build a solid strategy for horticultural care.

- 2) **To compile a priority list of mandated code compliance items and or issues within each school building. First, this list will address any immediate ADA (American with Disabilities Act) or OCR (Office of Civil Rights) issues. Next, start a plan to systematically upgrade school restrooms fixtures, classroom door hardware, and out dated and worn classroom furniture.**

Progress as of September 2010

Within the 2010-2011, 460 budget accounts are a sub section identified as “406 – School Building Maintenance and Repairs account.” The focus will be the upgrade and replacement of student restrooms. Many of the facilities have student toilets, urinals and sinks in need of immediate attention and code compliance update, some for student with special handicap needs. Each year the 460 accounts has sections that focus specifically on facility mandates and code compliance requirements and needs.

- 3) **To obtain from the Board of Education a written directive that outlines in detail the scope and responsibilities expected of the Supervisor of Facility Operations. This outline will address which budget or department the responsibilities for school building maintenance, campus grounds, and property management should be charged.**

Progress as of September 2010

Great strides were made by the Bethel Board of Education, The Superintendent of Schools along with the Facilities Sub-Committee clearly defined the scope of duties, maintenance oversight of the buildings and budgetary planning and control of the S.F.O. position. Additional re-alignment of various components of the SFO position may be required, possibly obtaining the aid of additional labor resources needed to effectively perform the building maintenance aspects of the position.

- 4) **Install interior protective glass wall entry foyers for each school entrance. These security doors will be controlled by electric lock systems and monitored by close circuit TV systems. The exterior of each building will receive high output security lighting.**

Progress as of September 2010

Completed.

- 5) **Engage an aggressive energy audit program to determine a cost effective plan to update:**
 - **Outdated and inefficient classroom thermostats devices.**
 - **Fluorescent lamp conversion to high output, low wattage fixtures.**
 - **Inefficient leaky plate glass windows to emergency efficient thermal layer replacement window.**

Progress as of September 2010

Beginning July 1st 2010, several energy conservation steps commenced, two of the older elementary schools are to receive new classroom thermostats that will greatly improve atmospheric conditions within the classrooms and the school. This will also reduce energy costs for the Town. Other immediate benefits will be the reduction of the mechanical wear and tear of the equipment from over use.

During the 2010-2011, school year the district will start the conversion from fluorescent lighting to high output low energy consumption LED light technology. This new lighting technology will reduce energy cost and retrofit in the existing fluorescent fixtures currently in use. Also these LED's lamps will eliminate mercury waste in the schools.

- 6) **To earn the school district state recognition for our efforts and education in recycling and the use of green compliant products.**

Progress as of September 2010

Good progress has been made achieving and improving recycling efforts for the school district. One of the most important steps, have been Mr. Germinaro's appointment to HRRRA Task Force. Involvement with HRRRA has provided the opportunity to network with other school districts and to develop working collaborations with state and local authorities yielding me valuable exposure into new and cutting edge programs that could be beneficial in removing large amounts of recycling materials from the waste streams of our school and town buildings.

- 7) **To establish a working collaboration between school administration and town officials to map out strategies for property and asset maintenance management.**

Progress as of September 2010

Marked improvement has been made growing this new shared teamwork environment. New lines of communication have been re-established between the several Town's departments which will help foster collective strategies in property and asset maintenance management. The lines of responsibilities are becoming defined to include budgetary allocations of maintenance funds. Much work is still needed to refine the work order process and the supporting paperwork to track and trend progress and identify areas to further succeed.