



INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING MONTHLY

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Instructional Coaching: 2011–2012

The new school year is a time of change and new beginnings. For all educators, it is a time to reflect on past practices and refine those practices to better promote the learning and growth of all students. For the Wachusett Regional School District's instructional coaching program, this reflection and refinement means finding the most effective ways to support teachers and administrators as they strive to provide all students with high-quality curriculum and instruction each day. Several important changes have been made to the district's instructional coaching model to accomplish this goal.

During the 2011–2012 school year, instructional coaching will be available in mathematics, science, literacy and physical education. This expansion of coaching support means that each instructional coach will specialize in one curriculum area and one aspect of technology integration. Principals will be asked to identify school-based coaching goals for each content area so that instructional coaching activities may be tailored to meet individual school needs.

Fall Assessment Dates

AIMSweb (Grades K-4) - September 21 to October 14

DRA (Grades 1-5) - complete by November 4

WRSD Math Assessment (Grades 3-5) - November 1 to November 18

Instructional coaching responsibilities will be as follows:

- Bradley Clark – Physical Education, Health, and Wellness
- Charlene Griffin – Mathematics and iPad Integration
- Deborah LaBombard – Science Early Adopters and CPS
- Rachel Kodra – Literacy and Limelight

The instructional coaching schedule will also look different this year. Rather than being assigned to a few schools, each instructional coach will work in all schools to support his/her areas of specialization. Instructional coaching for physical education will follow a rotational schedule with coaching days assigned by school. Other instructional coaches will follow a rotational schedule, but coaching days will be assigned by town to allow coaches and teachers greater scheduling flexibility. Specific details of the instructional coaching schedule and guidelines for scheduling a time to work with the instructional coaches will be provided to teachers and administrators during first week of school.

Meet the Instructional Coaches

The changes to the instructional coaching model mean that teachers will have the opportunity to work with multiple instructional coaches throughout the school year. Read on to meet, or become reacquainted with, the District's instructional coaches.

Bradley Clark

Brad graduated from Keene State College in 2004, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education with Teacher Certification (K-12). Brad began his teaching career serving a one-year position as Director of Athletics and secondary physical education instructor at R.W. Traip Academy in Kittery, Maine. More recently, he taught physical education for five years at Mountview Middle School in the Wachusett Regional School District. Brad was appointed to the position of instructional coach for Physical Education, Health and Wellness in 2010. Brad's responsibilities include modeling teaching methods/strategies, co-teaching with instructors, and planning lessons and units in all district schools. In addition, Brad helps to oversee the three-year Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) grant. The grant has had a tremendous impact on improving the overall health and well-being of all students. Brad looks forward to working with both students and staff again during the 2011-2012 school year! Brad can be reached by email at bradley_clark@wrsd.net.

Charlene Griffin

This year marks Charlene Griffin's twenty-sixth year in education. She has experience teaching all grade levels from pre-K to grade 5. During most of those years, she taught in self-contained classrooms where she was responsible for instruction in all subject areas. Therefore, after the past few years' focus on literacy, she is excited to have the opportunity to turn her attention once again to math. Throughout her career, Charlene has been deeply interested in mathematics instruction. She spent numerous years serving on the Math Curriculum Committee for the Wayland Public Schools where she collaborated on developing curriculum, instructional practices and assessment. She has attended many workshops, institutes and courses about mathematics instruction including Math A Way of Thinking, Math Their Way, AIMS sessions, TERC Investigations in Number and Space trainings, Everyday Math trainings, and most recently a DESE math content and coaching course and the district's Intel Math course. She is looking forward to working with teachers and administrators around math and mathematics instruction. Charlene Griffin can be contacted at charlene_griffin@wrsd.net

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Meet the Instructional Coaches, contd.

Deborah LaBombard

Deb has a passion for both science and literacy. She was a teacher for nine years and has been coaching teachers for the last three years. Deb began her teaching career at a bilingual school where she worked as a classroom teacher creating curriculum including science units which were inclusive of a wide range of children including many who were English Language Learners. Deb also has a degree in and a strong background in special education. She has worked extensively to make science learning accessible to students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. Deb has long loved science even beginning her undergraduate studies as a physical therapy major immersed in science and science courses such as Biology, Chemistry, and Anatomy and Physiology. She is looking forward to working with teachers around the topic of science education. Deb can be contacted via email at deborah_labombard@wrsd.net.

Rachel Kodra

Rachel has been an educator for nine years. She began her career as a Special Education Teacher working with students with mild to moderate learning disabilities. During this time she embraced differentiated instruction and worked closely with general education teachers to optimize learning experiences for struggling students and began developing a repertoire of best teaching practices for all students. Rachel's passion has always been in the area of English Language Arts. She is an avid reader, loves talking with adults and children about their favorite books, and has been actively involved in the district's literacy initiative over the past several years. Rachel has a Master's of Education in both Moderate Disabilities and Reading and is currently pursuing her certification in educational leadership. She is excited to continue her work with teachers and administrators around Readers' and Writers' Workshop. Rachel can be reached by email at rachel_kodra@wrsd.net.

Welcome New Teachers!

The Wachusett Regional School District is delighted to welcome a number of new teachers to our schools this year. We are pleased that so many talented new graduates and experienced educators have chosen to join the District's teaching staff. Please read on to learn more about the resources available within the district to help make your first year with the WRSD a success.

Who Will Support Me As A New Teacher?

The district has a number of supports in place for new teachers. Whether you are new to the teaching profession or an experienced teacher who is new to the Wachusett Regional School District,

please do not hesitate to utilize the new teacher support systems that have been developed to ensure a smooth transition to the district and to help new teachers to grow as professionals.

Will I Have A Mentor?

All new teachers will be assigned a building-based mentor. This experience teacher can answer questions about school policies and procedures, offer support with planning, help locate resources and materials, and share classroom management strategies. Do not hesitate to take full advantage of the support and guidance that your mentor can provide!

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Welcome New Teachers! contd.

The district mentoring program is coordinated by Julie Collins, third grade teacher at Paxton Center School, and Scott Jaffe, fourth grade teacher at Glenwood Elementary School. If you have questions about the mentoring program, please feel free to contact Julie (julieann_collins@wrsd.net) or Scott (scott_jaffe@wrsd.net).

Who Can Provide Me With Feedback About My Planning and Instructional Practices?

Principals and assistant principals are always available to provide instructional leadership and guidance to new teachers. In addition, Jack Locke, formerly the district's Deputy Superintendent, will be mentoring new teachers this year. In this new role, Jack will provide non-evaluative guidance to new teachers through pre-lesson consultations, in-class observations, and post-observation conferences. Jack is also looking forward to working with new teachers as they map their curriculum for the year and plan individual units of study. Jack will follow a rotational schedule that will allow him to spend time in all elementary and middle schools. Jack will work with principals to develop school-based schedules that will allow him to meet with new teachers and visit their classrooms.

Who Will Answer My Questions About My New Teacher Portfolio?

Questions about the new teacher portfolio, including what types of evidence should be included, may be directed to Jack Locke.

Who Can Provide Me With Professional Development To Refine My Instructional Strategies And Develop A Better Understanding Of The District's Curriculum And Assessments?

The district's instructional coaches are available to provide on-going, job-embedded professional development to new and experienced teachers. This professional development can be customized to meet your specific needs. The instructional coaches can model focus lessons and assessments, assist with curriculum planning, provide guidance when reviewing student data and work samples, help with RTI documentation and intervention plans, and offer assistance with other instructional needs. A fuller description of the instructional coaching model and the names/curriculum specialty area of the instructional coaches can be found in *Instructional Coaching: 2011-2012* earlier in this newsletter. If you would like to schedule a time to work with one of the district's instructional coaches, please contact her/him via email.

Who Can I Ask About District Curriculum Guides and Policies or Professional Development?

Questions about district curriculum guides, curriculum policies and procedures, and professional development may be directed to Kelley Gangi, Director of Curriculum at kelly_gangi@wrsd.net or Catherine Schofield, Curriculum Supervisor at catherine_schofield@wrsd.net.

Have a wonderful school year!

If you have additional questions about instructional coaching in the Wachusett Regional School District, please contact Catherine Schofield at catherine_schofield@wrsd.net .