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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Education Commissioner Vilaseca Visits Lamoille North

Vermont Department of Education Commissioner Armando Vilaseca visited Lamoille North Supervisory Union on July 9. Superintendent Dr. Debra Taylor invited the commissioner to LNSU to have a dialogue regarding a variety of educational issue, to highlight important progress being made in the supervisory union, and to visit two of its facilities - the Green Mountain Technology & Career Center and Hyde Park Elementary School, representing a modern newly constructed facility and a school whose facility represents several challenges.

Dr. Taylor and Commissioner Vilaseca discussed a wide range of topics from early education, summer and after school programming, requirements of No Child Left Behind to the use of ARRA (American Reinvestment Recovery Act) stimulus funds. Challenges were noted and successes highlighted including an impressive high school graduation rate, special education students achievement gains, successful implementation of co-teaching, and sound fiscal status of school budgets. Dr. Taylor shared that LNSU established a long range plan which focuses on coordinated systemic PK-12 improvement in curriculum, assessment, and instruction based on researched based practices and targeted measures, and professional development of administrators and teachers. Improved student achievement is the number one priority at Lamoille North.

Dr. Taylor shared information concerning the LNSU long range plan for schools in the supervisory union. The focus is upon systemic change that leads to improvements. She remarked, quoting from the work of Wiggins and McTighe in Schooling by Design, “schools exist to cause learning that is intellectually vital, generative in future self-directed learning, personally meaningful and productive, and socially valuable.” Dr. Taylor exclaimed, “We are excited about the work that lies ahead.”

Armando Vilaseca is the new Education Commissioner as of January 2009. He has over 29 years of experience in Vermont education, having spent his entire professional career in Vermont schools as a teacher, principal, and superintendent.

Following the meeting at the Lamoille North central office in Hyde Park, Commissioner Vilaseca visited the Green Mountain Technology and Career Center, hosted by Director Joe Teegarden and then to Hyde Park Elementary School where he received a tour by Principal Shelley Mathias. The commissioner saw two very opposite sides of the coin during his field trip with regard to the facilities. The Tech Center is a new state-of-the-art facility boasting a modern look and advanced technology while the Hyde Park Elementary building represents challenges and requires significant repair. The main part of the building was constructed in 1898 with additions in 1951 and 1994. The HPES Board has appointed a facilities committee which is investigating issues including the age of the structure, safety concerns, space constraints, and major maintenance needs.

"I was very impressed by the work they are doing to unify the curriculum SU-wide, including hiring a curriculum coordinator," said Commissioner Vilaseca. "This will ensure that student outcomes are the driver. I was also impressed by the technical center, both the facilities and the programs. This stood in stark contrast to the condition of the Hyde Park Elementary facilities, which needs to be addressed."

GMTCC is projecting a 40% increase in enrollment next year and a new network technology class is being offered. Hyde Park Elementary School is looking forward to an enrollment of 235 next year, up from 220 students.

Lamoille North Supervisory Union proudly serves the six towns of Belvidere, Cambridge, Eden, Hyde Park, Johnson, and Waterville with five elementary schools, the Lamoille Union Middle School, Lamoille Union High School, and the Green Mountain Technology and Career Center. Student enrollment is 2,045 and 450 staff members are employed. GMTCC receives students from five sending high schools serving the sixteen towns within the boundaries of Lamoille North, Lamoille South, and Orleans Southwest Supervisory Unions. Dr. Debra Taylor has served as Superintendent of Schools since October 2008.

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If you would like more information, please contact Superintendent Dr. Debra Taylor at 851-1178 or email debra@lnsu.org