

Director's Report to the Board of Education August 2009



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Item #1:



This past June, the CDC sent four of its students to the National SkillsUSA Competition and Leadership Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Students, Corbyn Loomis, Shelby Hunter, Clint Davendonis, and Ian Hulbert qualified for the national competition by becoming the Vermont State Champions for the second year in a row

in the Health Knowledge Bowl Competition.

I am pleased to report to the Governing Board of the Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District that this team became our first **NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM!** Competing against state championship teams from across the United States, our team not only won the gold medal in their competition, they also set a SkillsUSA record by becoming the first team in national competition to score three out of four perfect rounds. Congratulations to these students and to their teacher, Ms. Kathy Slade.

Item #2:

I am pleased to announce that the CDC's Perkins Grant application has been approved for the 2009-2010 school year. This year's grant is in the amount of \$173,504. Thank you to Bob and Greg for their hard work.

Item #3:

In the FYI Department:

The Slow Food USA Blog

[Bennington College students and young Blooming Chefs](#)

Posted on *Tue, July 14, 2009* by *Jerusha*
by *Slow Food USA intern Reece Trevor*

Slow Food USA will profile a number of our 2008 Slow Food in Schools Micro-Grant recipients in the coming months. Look out for these profiles, along with best practice suggestions for Slow Food in Schools projects from our 2008 Micro-Grant recipients, which will be housed on the Youth Programs page this fall.

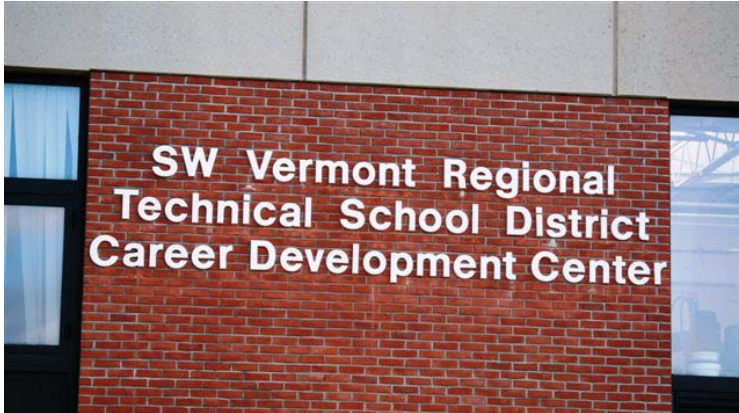


For nearly three years, kids in Bennington, Vermont, have been getting a kind of education that doesn't—sadly—appear in most school curricula. [The Blooming Chefs program](#), sponsored by Bennington College's [Quantum Leap educational lab](#), takes an ambitious approach towards reconnecting young people with their education, their food, and their planet. Blooming Chefs takes an active role in the Bennington Student Community Garden, a local teaching garden where kids can get their hands dirty and learn where the food on their plates came from. Its leaders have started classroom gardens at a number of nearby elementary schools, making sure that teachers can easily incorporate food education into their daily lesson plans.

Blooming Chefs is certainly part of the sweeping trend of community gardens, but its work doesn't stop there. Director Carol Adinolfi writes that her organization aims to promote “active, responsible citizenship” from every possible angle. Practically speaking, that means that Blooming Chefs also addresses how food plays into literature, history, culture, and art. Like most Slow Food in Schools projects around the country, Blooming Chefs relies heavily on volunteer support, and the Bennington community certainly hasn't disappointed. Local businesses have offered financial aid, parents weed and harvest alongside their children, and Bennington College students help out as volunteer interns.

With support from [Slow Food USA's Garden-to-Table](#) micro-grant program, Blooming Chefs recently published a cookbook drawn from its students' experiences. The cookbook is impressive on its own, but even more so because it's the result of a community working together. Blooming Chefs' biggest strength is that it gets a remarkable cross-section of the Bennington community united to teach kids about good, clean, and fair food. Adinolfi herself puts it best: "this is a powerful inter-linking of organizations working towards common goals."

Item #4:



We got the permit and we've put new lettering on the side of our building. It looks great! It's our



way of identifying ourselves so that visitors know who we are and what we do. We got a great price from a local contractor, Turcotte.

Item #5:

The main office staff and the custodians have been working very hard all summer to get the school ready for the teachers' and the students' return. We completed many necessary tasks including the 2009-2010 student handbooks (which you have in your board packets) and the 2009-2010 staff handbooks (which will be available to staff in hardcopy and to the greater CDC community electronically on our website).

Item #6:

We have just received word that Paul Smith's College has accepted David Dence's proposal for dual enrollment credits. This articulation agreement is the culmination of David's persistence for recognition of the rigor and relevance of the Forestry/Heavy Equipment Program at the Southwest Vermont Career Development Center. Congratulations, David, and thank you for your hard work and dedication to the students at the CDC!

Bob Montgomery

Item #7:

On June 25, 2009, the District's business records were moved back to its own server. We are now enjoying network access, as opposed to internet access, thus streamlining our work, and minimizing down time.

Immediately after this milestone event, Debby Carey began processing the CDC's payrolls. Debby has done a very commendable job learning the complex Unifund / Budgetsense payroll module. She has brought us to a new level of independence, with the seamless payroll transition, which was virtually transparent to employees. Debby's meticulous work throughout the conversion process was of great benefit to the District, and kudos is in order.

At this writing she has processed four payrolls, and has completed the second quarter filings for (teacher and municipal retirement, state and federal tax, and unemployment). Because of the timing of the conversion, Debby had to bring leave balances forward, and ensure their accuracy. The payroll configurations were pretty much left as they were when the SVSU payroll clerk had them. Some tweaking may be in order as we move forward, so that our unique needs can be better met.

The business office knows that in-house technical support is ever so more critical now, and some concerns have been recently addressed. As always, prompt responses to the needs of the business office are appreciated.

In addition to payroll, we have assumed all human resource functions, and have acquired most of our employee's records. SVSU will release CRC (Criminal Records Check) after we have been certified to process our own. Once certification is obtained, Sandy Redding will be processing the requests for CRC's.

Other human resource functions that we have taken over include: benefits management, teacher's horizontal movement, salary scale placement.

The assumption of Payroll / HR / Superintendent services allows us complete control of the functions and their associated costs. It was really the final step for complete autonomy.

Item #9:

We were able to sell our excess school bus as per board directive last spring. We were hoping to get \$6,000 for it; expected to get \$5,000 for it and got \$4,900. Thank you to Greg Lewis for his efforts in securing the sale....PS, the van we bought to replace the bus has been working out great.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Frank J. Barone