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CONVAL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVED FOR “FIRST IN THE NATION” ASSESSMENT AND FRAMEWORK IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SAU #1 is First School District in US to Use Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Technical Support to Improve School Services and Educational Quality for All Students

Peterborough – Even good school districts can improve. That is the philosophy behind a new assessment and improvement plan being implemented at the Contoocook Valley Regional School District. The Superintendent’s office recently applied to a national technical assistance program called SWIFT. Program leaders recently contacted SAU #1 that SWIFT has agreed to work with the district on ways to improve all aspects of its public education programs without any cost to taxpayers.

Over the next several months, SWIFT will assess every component of the educational programs at ConVal Schools: administration and leadership, educational supports for teachers, family and community engagement, school culture, curriculum and extra-curricular activities. From there, SWIFT will work with administrators to find ways to use existing resources to improve schools.

“We are confident we have all of the pieces of the puzzle to ensuring that our school district can provide quality support to all students, but the SWIFT framework guidance will show us how to fit those pieces together in a better way to improve our service to students and their families,” says Superintendent Kimberly Saunders. “This is a multi-year effort that has shown incredible results in schools around the nation. We are honored to be the first school district in the country to apply this approach to boosting quality.”

The district wide assessment will provide SAU leaders with the tools to evaluate district activities and programs and chart a course for how to build on what the district is doing well, and improve in areas that are underperforming. SWIFT programs have been applied to schools all



around the country, but this is the first time it will be applied to assess and improve the framework and operations of an entire school district.

SWIFT is a national K-8 technical assistance center based at the University of Kansas that helps schools better provide academic and behavioral instruction and support for all students, including students with disabilities and those with the most extensive needs. SWIFT has been working with schools around the country for over a decade.

“Our goal is to create a district-wide culture where all community members value what happens in schools and participate in decision making,” explains Cari Christian-Coates, Assistant Director of Student Services for SAU #1. “We want parents and community partners from all nine towns in our district to join us in this district-wide planning process because they are important stakeholders in public schools and we would value input from the community.” Coates invites any member of the community interested in participating in the SWIFT process to email her directly at ccoates@conval.edu. The Contoocook Valley Regional School District is made up of 11 schools representing 2,179 students in 9 towns: Antrim, Bennington, Dublin, Francestown, Greenfield, Hancock, Peterborough, Sharon, and Temple.

“This framework review will help us see what we do really well from the classroom all the way up to the administrative offices, and SWIFT advisors can show us how to better leverage those strengths to meet the changing needs of children and families,” says Dr. Ann Forrest, Assistant Superintendent of ConVal Regional School District. “We are most excited to identify where and how we can improve different areas in the district.”

“This is like getting a complete check-up for no charge with specific guidance on how we can improve everything we do at ConVal,” says Superintendent Saunders. The review process and adjustments to the district’s framework plan will take time and the SWIFT assessment could take between two and five years. “This is not about making lots of changes all at once. This is about working with everyone in the district and brainstorming ways to boost quality of education for every child at every school for long term growth and success. This is very exciting and we are thrilled to see what improvements are in store.”