

Niswonger Foundation Board Update
Friday, May 5, 2017
Programs and Partnerships

Partnership Updates

Valleybrook Village

- A ceremony was held on Friday, April 28 to name *Niswonger Village at Valleybrook*.

International Storytelling Center

- A grant progress report is included in the Board materials. This completes the second year of a three-year partnership.

The Greene County Literacy Project (LIFE)

- A survey was conducted with district leaders, principals, teachers and para-professionals to determine perception of program success. There was 100 percent participation. Following are overall satisfaction results from the major categories:
 - Early Literacy Grouping (ELG) 100% satisfaction
 - Instructional Assistants 100% satisfaction
 - Extended Planning Time 87% satisfaction
 - Community/Parent Support and Participation 71% satisfaction
- In partnership with Penguin Press and the Rural School and Community Trust, the Niswonger Foundation donated over 500 books to the Greene County Magic Book Bus project. The books are valued at approximately \$5000.
- Amanda Carpenter, Niswonger Literacy Specialist, and Greene County reading specialists from the LIFE pilot schools, presented the LIFE project components to all regional reading specialists on April 7.
- Summer literacy events:
 - Place Based Learning training (2 days-June 5 and 6) will be held for Hancock Elementary and Carter's Valley Elementary. This is funded through the Annenberg grant.
 - Hancock County LIFE project will be initiated.
 - Professional Learning opportunities will be conducted for the Greene County Pilot Schools teachers and assistants: ELG training, Haggerty phonics training, class scheduling adjustments.
- Begin plans for the Fall 2017 "A Day in the Life" parent activity.
- Analyze easyCBM results for year-one and review other data sources for year-one.

Niswonger Online

- The spring online semester will end May 10, with final grades reported on May 12. Progress reports have been sent to schools throughout the semester for administrators and counselors to know how their students are doing and meet with any who need motivation. A final progress report was sent to schools at the end of April.

- After working with “Kick-Up” a student survey has been created to receive feedback from our online students. The survey will now be administered at the end of each semester to make sure we are meeting student needs and give us feedback for future reporting. This first survey was sent to students on April 24.
- The state of Tennessee recently mandated that all students take a Civics test before graduation. For most schools this test is being administered within their Government course. To help schools with this new mandate Gina worked with another Niswonger online teacher (Lindsey Weeden) and created a 50 question Civics test that was added to the online Government course. At the end of each semester, a final Government grade along with the grade on their Civics test will be sent to schools for state reporting.
- Gina is working with Law and two teachers at South Greene (Jeff Hartman and Derek Dyer) to create an online course that aligns with the CareerConnect program. This will be a project based online course that focuses on job opportunities, skills needed, personal finance, computer/tech skills, public speaking, and soft skills. This course will be ready for implementation for CareerConnect Fall 2017.
- Enrollment for summer 2017 has opened for schools. The bulk of enrollments will not occur until May. However, there are approximately 100 students enrolled.
- Gina is staying in communication with all schools to help with any needs they may have. She makes school visits, when asked, to help students one-on-one with technology concerns.
- In February, Gina attended the East Tennessee Administrators Tech Academy in Knoxville. She will be leading a session at the next conference that stresses the importance and need of online learning at the high school level and how the Niswonger Foundation is helping to fulfill that need.
- On March 4th, Gina attended and presented at CanvasCon at Science Hill High School. This was a professional development for blended learning that brought together teachers from Greeneville City, Bristol, Johnson City, Kingsport, and Elizabethton.
- Gina submitted 3 proposals to iNACOL (International Association for Online Learning) to lead sessions at their next international conference to be held in Orlando, Oct 23-26.

NiswongerCARE Online

- Students from rural settings outside Niswonger service region, Claiborne Co and Lauderdale Co, are progressing well through their courses. Gina is reaching out to both systems regularly to ask if they have any questions or needs.
- On April 5th, Gina conducted an online meeting with administrators, principals, and counselors from Hardeman County schools. They discussed program benefit for their students. While Hardeman may have a few enrollments this summer, fall is expected to have a significant increase.
- In mid-April, Richard and Gina began reaching out to additional rural counties.
- Written updates are being prepared for Mr. Davenport and the CARE Foundation whenever requested.

NiswongerCARE College and Career Advising

- **Path to College** - Advisors are working with each high school to organize *Tennessee's Path to College* events for spring semester. These include *College Planning Night* and

College Signing Day. The Path to College events are promoted across the state, and serve as a venue to inform students and their families of college options and the benefits of those options.

- **Student Contacts:**
 - Advisors have held over 2629 individual meetings with students since January 2017.
 - Advisors have assisted over 930 students in updating FAFSA information and completing the financial aid verification process required by higher education institutes.
 - Advisors have assisted over 620 students in completing scholarship applications.
- **Summer Programming** is designed to mitigate “summer melt” (the likelihood that graduating seniors will not matriculate in the fall). Advisors work to ensure that seniors have a post-graduation plan. First generation and underrepresented students often fall through the gap in support as they are no longer part of the high school community, but not yet part of the post-secondary community. Advisors will provide that support to students this summer through an innovative summer program, “*Big-Bright-Future*.” This program will utilize virtual advising strategies, modeling after the National College Advising Corp’s eAdvising initiative. NiswongerCARE Leadership team had the privilege to meet with their national coordinator of eAdvising in Chapel Hill, NC to discuss best practices and implementation. Once students have graduated, they will be assigned their summer program advisor who will be responsible for following this student throughout the summer months, and ensuring that all tasks are completed. Students will receive a weekly personalized message through Remind 101, an interactive texting platform. With Remind’s chat feature, students will be able to interact with their summer Advisor using their preferred means of communication. In addition, students can request virtual or live meetings with their advisors. Live meetings will take place in a public place, such as the college campus or a coffee shop. Through this program, students will receive support and encouragement throughout the summer. Contact with students will be continued through mid-September, once they’ve started fall classes. In addition, summer resources are now available to all graduating seniors through our website, www.niswongercare.com. Any student using the website can also reach out to our advisors with questions or requests for assistance.
- **NiswongerCARE Leadership Council** meeting has been set for Tuesday, May 9, 2017. Highlights will include a description of the summer programming and current data reflecting the impact of services. Council members will also be engaged in discussions designed to gain their critical input for programming improvements/changes for Year Three.
- Each Advisor is in the process of having a final performance evaluation completed for this year. A contract for an additional year will be offered to those Advisors with a satisfactory evaluation outcome.

- Recruitment and hiring for potential open Advisor positions is underway. Each of the region's higher education institutions were contacted to assist in identifying outstanding, soon to be, bachelor's graduates.

CareerConnect

- ***CareerConnect Receives National Recognition***
 - Law Loving attended the *America's Promise Summit*. Both CareerConnect and the Niswonger Foundation were represented on the national stage. Law Loving received a ***People of Promise*** award. CareerConnect was provided \$20,000 from AT&T.
- All monthly student Explorer meetings have been completed. The topics for this semester included communication and teamwork. There were presenters from John Deere who lead a work-based learning exercise around continuous improvement and incentive-based pay.
- Selection for the Class of 2020 is complete. Orientations for parents and students will be conducted the first two weeks in May.
- Planning for the Summer Experience continues. The dates are set (July 10-14, 17-21) as is the majority of the agenda for the two weeks. Along with Greene Technology Center staff teaching lessons in their respective fields, industry visits and visits to TCAT Morristown and RCAM in Kingsport are being planned. The ACT WorkKeys test will be given to students during this time.
- Scheduling for next fall is underway. Law is meeting with school contacts to set dates for monthly meetings for Fall 2017.
- Development of an online career exploration class is in progress with the help of Gina and teachers at South Greene High School.

Professional Development Activities

- **Leadership for Blended and Digital Learning (LBDL)** - The LBDL Celebration for the 2016-17 Principal Cohort was held on April 6 at the Bristol Motor Speedway. We have completed four of five sessions with a cohort of 33 principals. TASL Credit was sought, approved and awarded to the participants. The participants completed their digital road maps, made presentations to the judges, and celebrated their learning and leadership at the Winners Circle Awards Luncheon. We invited the school directors and the Niswonger Foundation Board to the celebration. Our thanks to Nikki Niswonger for joining us.
- **Niswonger School Leader Program (NSLP)** has led a cohort of first year principals and assistant principals (K-12) in 8 of the 10 modules of the New Teacher Center Leadership Program. The last NSLP day is May 5, moved due to the state testing window. This group of administrators has built a professional relationship through these days of training. Their support has extended to a principal that had a student death, another through a student's threats of suicide, etc., which are beyond the scope of the NSLP curriculum. But the support from this group has led them through many facets of school leadership. NSLP has also been approved for TASL credit.
- **2017 Niswonger School Success Symposium** is set for June 15 with keynotes Jan Burkins and Kim Yaris, leaders in Literacy instruction, and featured speaker Kiran Singh Sirah, connecting our oral literacy through storytelling. A school counselor and

administrative strand will be led by Tammy Pawloski, Ph.D., Professor of Education and Director, Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty, Francis Marion University. Poverty has a tremendous effect on brain development and ultimately on literacy. Dr. Pawloski's keynote for this strand will be in the lecture hall at 12:45 pm and lead into a double session. Registration for the 2017 Symposium opened April 3 and will end May 26.

- **AP Summer Institute Scholarships** - Niswonger Foundation in support of expanding Advanced Placement classes is assisting up to 20 teachers with \$1500 scholarships for the summer institute training costs.
- **AP Summer Academies July 2017** - Professional Development will be offered to AP teachers in July. Scott Lamie, AP teacher and technology leader at Tennessee High will provide the training. Teachers will be digitally recording AP curriculum, lessons and labs, to expand the AP content available to students.

Grant Activity

- A three-year grant in the amount of \$450,000 has been received from the **Walmart Foundation**. We are in receipt of \$150,000 for the program's first year. This will be used for the *LIFE* literacy program and place-based learning initiative in Hancock County.
- A grant of \$100,000 has been approved by the **Lenore Annenberg Fund for Children**. These funds will be used to purchase technology and literacy materials for Hancock County Elementary and Carter's Valley Elementary (Hawkins County).
- The Niswonger Foundation submitted three **Education Innovation and Research (EIR)** grants to the U.S. Department of Education on April 13. National organizations were sought to join us in two of the grants. The areas of focus for the grants are literacy (8 million), leadership development (4 million) and career development (4 million). Results are predicted to be received by the end of July.
- A \$20,000 grant was received from AT&T for the CareerConnect program. This was provided in recognition of Law Loving's award from America's Promise – *People of Promise*.

Boards, Committees and Activities

- Nancy attended the Tusculum College Board of Trustees meeting on February 17-18.
- Nancy attended the TICUA Annual Meeting, in Nashville, on February 20-22.
- Scott and Nancy are serving on the Tusculum College Presidential Search Committee.
- Niswonger Foundation assisted in hosting a Complete Tennessee Listening Tour session at the General Morgan Inn on March 8.
- Nancy served on the selection team for the Broadway Comes to Greeneville event in support of the Niswonger Children's Hospital.
- Richard and Nancy participated in the Superintendents Study Council on February 15.
- Nancy hosted the NiswongerCARE advisors for a luncheon on March 17. Special thanks to Nikki Niswonger for joining us for this event.
- Nancy spoke to the Newcomer's Club on March 23.

Publicity and Publications

- News clippings and press releases are available for review.

Special Note

The Niswonger Foundation celebrates the recognition of Scott M. Niswonger as the Humanitarian of the Year, presented by the American Red Cross. We also acknowledge, with pride, his becoming a recipient of the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award.

Congratulations Scott!