

# Tiogue School singled out by regents

## Education group, state commissioner applaud teachers for NECAP results

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COVENTRY — As part of their plan to make their meetings more visible, the Rhode Island Board of Regents and Commissioner of Education Deborah A. Gist held their monthly meeting at Tiogue Elementary School in Coventry, this Thursday night.

Part of the reason that Coventry was chosen was because more than 70 per-

cent of students at Tiogue and Western Coventry Elementary School scored proficient in the science section of the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) over the last year.

As the meeting opened, the Tiogue gym was full of at least 50 teachers and staff from the district.

Gist commended Coventry Public Schools for having the highest percentage of teachers with National Board Certification in the state and

praised Tiogue for being a Blue Ribbon School.

She was so impressed with the district when she came for the beginning of the year kick off, Gist added, that she asked Superintendent Kenneth DiPietro, "If this whole Commissioner thing doesn't work out — can I come work in Coventry?"

The camaraderie and support of teachers in the Coventry School District make it a noteworthy place, she

said, as her audience chuckled at the remark.

As part of the scheduled meeting, the Board of Regents Chairman Robert G. Flanders, Jr., Esq. allowed some of the Coventry administration and elected officials to speak.

DiPietro spoke briefly, thanking them for coming to the district.

Tiogue Principal Denise Richtarik spoke on behalf of her school and Western Principal Janet Sullivan, de-

tailing the reasons that Tiogue and Western Coventry have succeeded in attaining such high proficiency in their science scores.

The three components to the success are that student achievement is a whole-school effort, professionals in the district are accountable, and student confidence is promoted, Richtarik said.

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# Board of Regents meets at Tiogue

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“Everyone in the building is involved in teaching and learning — assistants, social workers, parents, psychologists and even the custodian,” she said. “100 percent of students in a fourth grade math class met the standard according to NECAP test results.”

The reason for this high success is that “science is not taught in isolation but rather as part of reading, writing, math, technology and critical thinking,” she added.

For the school committee, member Nancy Sprenghelmeyer introduced each member to the board.

As a former teacher in the district — who was hired by the first superintendent in the district — Sprenghelmeyer has seen Coventry through the years, she told the Board.

“When I say that this district has been on the forefront of reform, that is not propaganda, that is a fact,” she said.

School Committee Chairwoman Katherine Patenaude is a scientist, Sprenghelmeyer said, noting that this perspective is very helpful in school committee discussions; Vice-Chair Ben Perra is a fire marshall, member Lisa Tomasso is a long-time PTA member and Thomas Hetherman — who could

not attend on Thursday — is a local business owner, parent and his wife is a community business leader.

After introductory remarks, the Board of Regents went on to approve some small changes to school nutritional standards as well as discuss implementing a statewide educator evaluation standard.

Having the board at her school was a real honor, Richtarik said afterwards. “I loved it. It’s just a very proud moment when you get to have your school shine and your district recognized for excellence, that’s just outstanding; to have your work validated is wonderful.”

The regents will be visiting as many districts as they can over time, said Rhode Island Department of Education Spokesperson Elliot Kreiger yesterday. “They want greater input from the public, to hear from members of the public to hear about regent’s actions and public education and they want people to be more aware of the work that the regents and the commissioner and department do. So they are both bringing the meetings out to the public so the public can see what they do and giving members of the public a chance to be heard.”