Regional School District #10 is reaching for new heights! The administrators and staff have engaged in many new initiatives this summer to prepare for a renewed energy and focus towards academic excellence and personal growth for all students. In my short tenure, I have recognized the many talents of RSD#10 students, teachers and administrators and I wish to celebrate those talents and provide the vision necessary to foster excellence for students and staff alike! I plan to share our vision for excellence and progress with you in each issue of the School Bell.

This summer many members of our staff took part in professional book clubs to deepen their understanding for how students learn best. One very popular title was “Mindset” by Carol Dweck. This new learning has begun to change the way staff views their interactions with students of all ages. Through the study of this research, teachers and administrators have discovered the relationship between our words and actions and how children think and feel about themselves. The beliefs children have about intelligence, effort, and struggle impact the choices he/she will make about learning. Dweck’s research highlights two contrasting beliefs about intelligence: Children with a *growth mindset* believe that intelligence can be developed. These students see school as a place to cultivate their abilities and think of challenges as opportunities to grow. Therefore, mistakes are welcomed. Children with a *fixed mindset* believe that intelligence is fixed at birth and doesn’t change or changes very little with practice. These students see school as a place where his/her abilities are evaluated, they focus on looking smart over learning, and they interpret mistakes as a sign that they lack talent. Therefore, teaching a growth mindset creates motivation and productivity that instills a belief that we can grow and learn to do most anything! To learn more visit: [www.mindsetonline.com](http://www.mindsetonline.com). I am looking forward to a more growth minded environment in our schools!

We are also excited to engage children in higher levels of inquiry learning and promoting problem solving at a higher levels. This summer staff attended Confratute at the UCONN Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development to learn from the best: Joseph Renzulli and Sally Reis and many more. These elementary teachers came back energized and ready to share their learning with colleagues so that we can appropriately plan to stretch and challenge our most talented learners. In addition to Confratute, teachers across the district also attended Inquiry Learning workshops at the CT Science Center and Coding Workshops to learn about implementing coding and computer science for students in elementary, middle, and high school. This all fits beautifully into our vision for STEM learning in Regional School District #10. Stay tuned to learn more about this exciting initiative.

One last item to share is a renewed focus and energy for authentic reading and writing instruction for our students in grades PreK-12. Teachers have begun to transform the language arts classroom to reflect student choice, engagement and real world tasks for readers and writers. Students will take part in a workshop approach to language arts instruction. This philosophy embraces what research everywhere confirms- students become better readers by reading and better writers by writing. Instruction is centered on the skills and strategies that good readers and writers do by providing direct modeling and explicit instruction from the teacher to advance children’s competency everyday. Students will read a book that is “just right” for them to allow for natural differentiation and enrichment opportunities with teaching focused on the work of the reader not the content of the book. I would be happy to share more with you about this approach and please check our website for parent information and resources.

I hope that you feel a positive energy for teaching and learning in our schools and that your child(ren) are happy and engaged learners. Please plan to join me at my first *Coffee with Cheri, Discussion on Student Learning in Region 10* to be held in the BOE conference room on Thursday, October 15, 2015 at 8:00am additional details to follow.