



July 2016						
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Educator Services

Teachers' Top Three from ESE - July 2, 2015

1. **Get Involved: Apply to be on ESE's Educator Effectiveness Teacher Advisory Cabinet**

What do current members say about their experience on the Cabinet? "The Teacher Advisory Cabinet has given teachers **the unique opportunity to play a key role in education at the state level.** As a special educator, it is refreshing to have a voice in decisions that impact all students. It has also given me the opportunity to have open discussions and share ideas with some of the most brilliant and accomplished educators in our state. I am able to take that information back to my district to help them make decisions that directly impact what is happening in our classrooms." — Tim Tichacek, teacher, Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District

Learn more about the advisory cabinet, and apply today! The application link and supporting materials are [available online](#). **Applications are due Monday, July 27th.**

2. **In the news:**

This week, a team of juniors at Apponequet Regional High School and their teacher, Rob Powers, made national news with a history project on longtime Boston organized crime boss, James "Whitey" Bulger. As part of a National History Day project, the students [created a website](#) detailing Bulger's legacy and wrote to him at the high-security prison where he is serving two consecutive life sentences to ask what he thinks his legacy is. To their surprise, he wrote back in a personal, page- long letter.

Mr. Powers, who is also a member of ESE's Teacher Advisory Cabinet, said, "This project certainly took all of us by surprise. It has been a remarkable experience to support my students as they take a creative risk such as this one. What pleases me the most about this project is that our students have gone beyond the mere receiving of historical interpretation and contributed to the history themselves. This kind of authentic learning is what we need more of in our classrooms. I move on from this experience even more committed to well-structured, project-based learning than ever before."

You can watch coverage of the story on WCVB-5's website, and the Christian Science Monitor wrote about how the project relates to teaching historical understanding. Connect with Rob on Twitter at @RobPowersEDU, and use #TeachersTopThree to join the conversation online.

3. **Spotlight on Teacher Leadership: Boston teachers participate in Learning Lab with USED and National Board**

In February, a group of middle school educators from Boston Public Schools participated in the U.S. Department of Education's Teach to Lead Summit, where they worked with other teachers and education leaders from across the country to turn their teacher leadership idea into a reality. After the summit, they built a teacher-run blog that showcases strategies for how teachers can use writing to improve understanding, especially for English language learners and students with disabilities.

Their idea was one of a handful chosen to receive extra support and attention from both USED and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards by hosting a local "leadership lab" where Massachusetts teacher leaders and policymakers pledged to support their work. David Buchanan, assistant director of the Office of Humanities and Literacy at ESE's Center for Curriculum and Instruction, was in attendance to offer support and advice. He said, "The presentation of what the teachers have achieved was absolutely inspiring. It was a testament to the power of both fostering student voice through writing and empowering teachers to address the challenges they and their students face every day."

Jenn Dines of the Gardner Pilot Academy in Boston was one of the project leaders. She said, "One of our

goals with this project is to show that teachers are intellectuals. We can be leaders of our own learning, which benefits our students, our colleagues, and ourselves."

Check out their blog, [Writing is Thinking](#), to learn about the strategies they've tried and to offer to [contribute your own](#).

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