

Millis Schools Host Learning Tour

By J.D. O'GARA

On September 20th, Millis Public Schools got to show superintendents of Massachusetts districts just what they're doing right. The district, considered a "Catalyst" district leader for MAPLE (Mass. Personalized Learning EdTech Consortium), hosted a Learning Tour for coaches of 75 new Superintendents currently in the NSIP (New Superintendent. Induction Program). The full day included classroom visits, a faculty panel, a lunch discussion with faculty and Principals, students paired up with Superintendents to show what they know and can do and facilitation by Dr. David Dockterman, a Lecturer on Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education focusing on the translation of research into innovative and effective practice.

Some of the goals of the Learning Tour were to help clarify what "personalized learning" means, how technology can effectively add to learning and teaching, how teacher roles are changing and what teachers need to be supported, as well as how principals' roles and needs are changing.

"The Millis Public Schools truly are a bright spot in Massachusetts in their use of technology to personalize learning," says Ann Koufman Frederick, Chief Academic Officer at MAPLE.

"I am very proud of what the vis-



Millis 8th grade students paired up with Superintendent coaches to explain how they interact with teachers and use technology in the classroom in a Learning Tour Millis Public Schools hosted in September.

iting Superintendents saw and heard today!" says Nancy Gustafson, Superintendent of Millis Public Schools. "The classroom visits showed strong student engagement, deep learning and highly effective uses of technology to enhance learning. The teachers shared insights into what they do in planning personalized instruction to meet students' needs and encourage greater ownership of learning."

In addition to the classroom visits, faculty panel and lunch discussion, 24 students from Grades 5-12 met in pairs with the Superintendent coaches to discuss in depth how they use technology, how teachers personalize their classrooms and instruction, how teachers connect with students and how technology plays into their organization and learning.

"Our students spoke quite eloquently about how connected and

collaborative the culture is and how their teachers use technology to help them learn better," says Gustafson, who says the vision of personalized learning is clear and happening in Millis. "The proof is when students can explain the why and how of using technology to learn more, deeper, better."

MAPLE (<http://learnlaunch.org/maple-missionvision/>) is a public-private partnership between the LearnLaunch Institute and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to catalyze personalized learning in the Commonwealth with the purpose of better preparing students for their future. The vision of the Massachusetts Personalized Learning Edtech (MAPLE) Consortium is to catalyze personalized learning enabled by technology in K-12 public education.)