

NHS School Council

November 14, 2023

Attendance: Renee Ames, Amber Barbere, Jessica Buchman, David Clay, Chris Cain, Stacey Gijbsbers, Priya Kaur, Laurie Kench, Emerson Leahy, Rourke Lee, Andy Wulf

High School Updates

- HIGH SCHOOL SHOWCASE

Andy Wulf provided an overview of the High School Showcase. This event provides an opportunity for grade 8 families to come and learn about the many offerings and activities at the high school. It will take place on Dec. 6 from 6:00 - 7:30 PM. He explained that its timing is scheduled to happen after the open houses of other school's in the area.

- THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

Andy Wulf shared the fall play will be happening this week, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time. He also shared the book is currently being read by grade 7. Grade 7 will come to see the play on Friday morning.

- OCT 21 SAFETY DRILL AND NEXT STEPS

Andy Wulf provided a summary of the Oct. 21 Safety Drill. He explained it involved all three first responder agencies: Police, Fire, and EMS. The drill provided an opportunity for the agencies to discuss coordination in the case of an incident/emergency happening at the high school. All participants also ran through drills with different scenarios.

- A council member asked if other communities were involved. Mr. Wulf shared first responders from closeby areas such as Amesbury and Salisbury also participated.
- A council member asked, "Will Safety Drills happen in the other schools?" Mr. Wulf shared that the idea is for drills to happen in the other buildings of the District. Mr. Antonelli, who is spearheading the work, will be able to update the council at the December meeting regarding future planning and drills around school safety.

- EXPANDED STUDENT GROUP PERFORMANCE ON MCAS

In response to a question at the October meeting around student MCAS performance. Andy Wulf provided the Council with a performance table that showed subgroup performance in ELA, Math, and Biology alongside non-subgroup performance.

[Expanded Student Group Performance Spreadsheet](#)

- BREATHALYZERS

Andy Wulf solicited feedback from the Council around use of Breathalyzers at school events. He explained a concern had been brought to his attention regarding the announcement to students prior to the playoff football game in regards to process and communication.

Summary of discussion:

- From the parent perspective, we are glad it is happening. Kids can make bad decisions and we would prefer a call from the school to pick my student up versus having them involved with the police. Its clear your announcement sent a message. You could feel the difference at the last home game. We think it is a good idea for students to be aware that if there is reason to believe they are under the influence that they can be breathalyzed while also understanding that school events are an extension of the school day. Since many students drive to and from events, having the preventative measure can keep students safe.
- From the student perspective, "I feel more safe because we breathalyze students before dances. This helps us know the people around us are safe. We also recognize, admin is not trying to get kids in trouble. It is preventative.
- A general discussion continued around student drinking in general outside of school. It was recommended that the school work with the NYS Speaker Series around the topic of substance use. The team also acknowledged the need to update the handbook to be more explicit about how and when breathalyzers are used and what would happen should a student test positive.
- Andy Wulf noted that during the Council's spring meetings, a primary focus will be the handbook. His team will have a draft of the language based on tonight's discussion. He also noted that if a student were to have a positive screen. The procedure would be to call the parents to come and pick the student up.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

I. UPDATES ON CURRENT HAPPENING WITH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

A. Portrait of a Graduate: Andy Wulf explained how implementing the Portrait of the Graduate(POG) is a priority within the School Improvement Plan.

- He summarized how a team recently attended a workshop around best practices with the POG. From the workshop, the team developed an action plan to help the faculty envision how the POG plays out in their classroom and curriculum.
- Andy Wulf mentioned how we have different assessments and projects happening throughout a student's experience here that involve building academic and life skills. The Sophomore Exposition was given as an example.
- Students present spoke about their experience with the Expo. Students discussed the rigor of the project and acknowledged the complexity of managing all of its components. Students also summarized that it hits on many life skills such as oral and visual presentation as well as research skills. Additionally, they mentioned how the Expo takes them out of their comfort zone.
- Based on the student input, Council members asked if there is an opportunity for students to provide feedback on the project. Student's did not recall offering feedback, but also noted the project presentation happens at the very end of the year.

B. Exploring Career Pathways: Andy Wulf summarized planning happening around career pathways for students.

- He summarized how the College and Career Center recently held a session for students with [the Peterson School](#). The Peterson School

provides licensing courses in many vocational areas such as; Electrical, HVAC, and Plumbing.

- Andy Wulf also discussed a meeting that was held with the Peterson School to explore the building of a pathway at the high school similar to the current Dual Enrollment Program with colleges. The idea is that students entering into spring their Junior year would be able to take beginner level courses so that their senior year would focus on the licensing course that aligns with the hours needed for example to become an electrician. Andy Wulf further explained that once logistics with the Peterson School are finalized, the high school will look at its program of studies to identify courses in grades 9-11 that will support students interested in attaining a vocational license.

II. REVIEW THIS YEAR'S IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A. Clarify Objectives and Actions

- Andy Wulf explained the process in which the [School Improvement Plan](#) had been developed with last year's School Council. He stated that the teams objective will be to read through the plan and then provide feedback on the current objectives, measures, and actions.
- Clarifying questions from the Council.
 - How was the decision made on increasing by 5% in the achievement, advanced coursework, school climate data?
 - Andy Wulf responded that the team had decided on 5% last school year as a reasonable growth target in these areas. He also noted that with the school climate data, NHS is on the threshold for being considered a favorable school climate. A 5% improvement goal will put the high school closer to being considered a most-favorable school climate as defined by the state.

B. Discuss Additional Objectives/Actions to Consider

- Andy Wulf shared feedback from the Accreditation Process that will need to be reviewed along with the updated School Improvement Plan.
 - Create a structure that supports faculty voice with school climate and professional development
 - Improve building spaces that support current programs and goals.
 - Implement the Portrait of the Graduate
 - Develop stronger response to student intervention protocols
 - Continue to implement teaching and learning with teacher curriculum teams and determine ways to increase their frequency.

- The council acknowledged that outside of faculty voice and building space the other 3 recommendations from the Accreditation Process are part of the school improvement plan.

- The council also recommended being more explicit about adding actions that include ways to gather voice from all students. The team noted that the internal climate survey may be one way to do so.