NHS School Council

November 12, 2024

MEETING SUMMARY

Attendance: Amber Barbere, Chris Cain, Jeane Coffey, Stacey Gijsbers, Priya Kaur, Rourke Lee, Richard Pace, Erin Seaton, Cady Seaton, Mike Testa, Andy Wulf

A) High School Updates

- Opening of the school play. The Play that Goes Wrong (starts November 16)

- Red Cross Club: Veterans Discussion Panel for 11/13/24 during Clipper Block

    - Andy Wulf shared students will be able to sign-up during Wednesday's Clipper Block to participate in the panel discussion.

    - Andy Wulf also shared how students part of the Red Cross Club have become certified CPR trainers. They have a mission to help every restaurant in Newburyport have at least one employee certified in CPR.

- National Art Honor Society: Auction December 7, 2024

    - Andy Wulf explained this a great event to check out student artwork.

- Katie Greer: Cyber safety/social media presentations throughout the school day 11/14/24, multiple smaller groups rather than whole school assembly.

    - Andy Wulf explained the juniors would be continuing their conversations around the dangers of social media and addictive digital habits.

- Katie Greer, an expert in the area of social media and its legal implications will be at the school on Thursday to work with the Juniors in small groups.

  ○ Video production lab building project. Demo/facilities work to begin December 2024.

    - Andy Wulf updated the team on work that will be done to give the high school a state of the art video production facility on the first floor.

    - He thanked the NEF for their partnership and funding to make this happen.

    - Andy Wulf explained that a main objective is to create a pathway that can lead to Radio and Broadcasting certifications for our students.

- Overview of mental health awareness student project through social media resources

  - Students had responsibility for coming up with action projects based on their work with the book, Accountable. A group of students created a resource with mental health support around addictive behaviors especially as it relates to social media.

  - Bring Change to Mind and Morgan's Message, 2 mental health awareness groups at the high school will support the project to make sure it continues.

B) School Improvement Plan Tuning

- Andy Wulf shared that the primary objective of tonight's meeting is to provide feedback on the draft of the School Improvement Plan.
- He explained the draft was created last spring and into the summer using feedback from last year's accreditation review.
- A team from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges will be back in the fall of 2025 to review progress based on their recommendations.

- Andy Wulf also explained how the plan includes performance areas based on our student achievement results.

TUNING THE PLAN - Andy Wulf told the team for each goal of the plan they will provide questions and wonders. This information will help the high school's administrative and Instructional Leadership Team to make adjustments around this feedback.

Before breaking into 3 smaller groups that consist of a student, parent, and teacher, Andy Wulf facilitated the protocol using Goal 4 with the entire group.

Newburyport High School has a building redesign plan that creates flexible and collaborative spaces designed to integrate curricular areas and promote student creativity.			
NHS Strategies/Activities	Person(s) Responsible for Implementation	Outcomes and Measurements	Timeline
Convene a group of teachers and staff to provide feedback on ways to improve building space as it relates to curricular and programmatic goals/objectives.	Interdisciplinary Bldg Team Facilitated by Admn	Meeting agendas and minutes	2024 - 2026
Develop and share a plan that rethinks the design of basement spaces to help integrate arts and technology across the curriculum.	Admn + Bldg Team	A draft plan	2024 - 2026
Begin cross-curricular planning with arts and the core academic areas.	ILT	Written curricular units that show integration of the arts into curricular areas.	On-Going
Through the above actions, NHS will increase the number of units that blend curricular areas with the arts to promote student creativity and problem-solving by 5%.			

Overview of Discussion Around Above Goal and Plan

- Questions:

  Does the arts only include visual arts? - The Admn. Team explained "arts" is meant to include all areas such video, visual, performance, design.

  What is meant by integration? - The Admn. Team explained how this summer the Visual Performing Arts Instructional Lead worked with several core academic curriculum teams this summer to develop units that integrated a component of the arts but allowed for student creativity, choice, and expression.

How does the building design plan allow for this integration? The Admn. Team explained how a primary objective of redesigning the basement is to make open space around the art classroom areas so that students and teachers can collaborate.

What is the driver of this? - Andy Wulf explained the driver is to increase student engagement through integrated curricular units.

How many units is 5%. - The Admn Team explained a course curriculum usually consists of 6-10 units. Within the core academic areas, there can be over 250 units. Andy Wulf stated that 5% seemed reasonable as it would be approximately 10-15 units. This summer Ms. Phillips worked with 3 different curriculum teams to redesign 3 different units.

- Wonders:

In summary, based on the questions and discussion around this part of the plan, the team wondered if it makes sense to keep the building redesign separate from the objective of increasing units in the core academic areas that integrate creative opportunities for students. The team felt that though the space redesign may support this, the curricular integration actions may be more appropriate in the area of the improvement plan that focuses on increasing student engagement.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN TUNING CONTINUED

The Council organized into 3 teams. Each team went to a table in the library and used chart paper to provide feedback on the remaining three goals and action steps.

Below summarizes the team's discussion for each goal. The final pages of this document has a copy of each goal.

Goal 1: **Increase student engagement by incorporating the Portrait of a Graduate (POG) across NHS programming. This will be measured through the DESE VOCAL and the NHS Internal School Climate Survey.**

Through the strategies and activities written in the plan, the NHS VOCAL student engagement score will increase to the mid-upper 50s. The average engagement score on VOCAL over the past 2 years has been 49.5 which is the high end of the "somewhat favorable" student engagement level. A score of 51 and higher is considered "favorable" student engagement level.

Questions	Wonders
How is the POG geared towards a student as an individual?	How will MCAS vote impact how students think about the relevance of the curriculum?
How best to use the POG as a resource for self-discovery?	Wonder how this goal connects to Goal Number 4. Will increased creativity lead to engagement.
How well is POG integrated into the curriculum?	How does the iPAD Enhance vs at times distract ?
How are ambassadors chosen?	How to balance pen a paper with technology?
Understanding measurables - Learning - Personal, Mental - Wellness - Health	How can we optimize the iPAD as a tool in the classroom?
	Is there space to add "student voice" to the NHS Strategies/Activities Column?
	How should we incorporate student feedback and suggestions with the POG?

Goal 2: **All students graduate with a post-secondary plan and are able to showcase their story relevant to their interests and the skills part of the Portrait of the Graduate. This will be measured through high school completion results.**

Through the strategies and activities written in the plan, NHS will continue to meet or exceed targets in the high school completion category of the DESE Accountability Report.

Through the strategies and activities written in the plan, all students will be able to showcase their work relative to the skills identified within the District's Portrait of a Graduate.

Questions	Wonders
How much choice do students have?	Does the career path exploration feel limiting/stressful?
How do we know these strategies are working?	Do students feel pressured with the need to make a career choice before graduation?
How do we focus post-secondary planning in a variety of ways beyond the POG place-mats? ● Seminars ● More Internship opportunity	The POG program provides a variety of post-hs opportunities for traditional learners and non-traditional learners. I.E. Art colleges, Structured Gap Year, Vocational, Certification options.

Goal 3: **Improve academic achievement across all student groups as measured by MCAS, internal assessments, and student collection of work.**

Through the strategies and activities written in the plan, NHS students will meet or exceed achievement targets as indicated through performance on MCAS.

Questions	Wonders
More intuitive way to present information? - Columns and rows aren't fully aligned (i.e. achievement vs instruction)	"Collection of work" - What, Why, How do these demonstrate skills/growth.
	With new policy around MCAS requirements, how is MCAS

Is there data around what instructional practices produce best results/data? Tracking methods? What factors impact progress aside from instruction? Is there less pressure to do well on MCAS which allows to "slow down" and teach study habits and content?	integrated? If we aren't teaching toward the test, how are we teaching tools to prepare for the test? Teaching both the study habits plus the content? Are there alternatives to testing to enable students to demonstrate mastery? Can we get curricular units/activities from RVCS/other . . . not just Nock (Ex - RVCS reads Animal Farm in grade 7 - NHS reads it in grade 10.)

WRAP-UP DISCUSSION SUMMARY

- Plan relates to 2 different learners - Non Traditional and Tradition - There are opportunities through the College and Career Center (i.e. Gap Year Programs, Certification Options)

- Will need to come up with ways to motivate students to take the MCAS given the change in requirement.

- Be sure to maintain projects such as the expo. This should fit into the work of integrating curricular areas with the arts. Students have choice. They design presentations.

- Should the school be thinking about a capstone project that allows for student choice and creativity around an area of interest.

- Andy Wulf noted he would review feedback from tonight with his team and make adjustments to the plan.