**NHS School Council**

**April 9, 2024**

**Attendance:** Renee Ames, Jim Antonelli, Jessica Buchman, Chris Cain, David Clay, Stacy Gijsbers, Declan Hocheiser, Priya Kaur, Laurie Kench, Rourke Lee, Mike Testa, Andy Wulf

1. **High School Updates**

* NHS Schedule Update for 24-25 School Year
  + Andy Wulf explained that all course requests have been reviewed and course section counts have been determined
  + He further explained that over April break scenarios of the master schedule of courses will be built with the goal of tweaking the schedule during the month of May so that counselors can meet with students to fill any gaps.
* Budget Updates
  + Andy Wulf shared how the school committee held their budget hearing on Monday, April 1.
  + He explained how the Peterson School funding and the Pathways Coordinator were still currently part of next year’s budget proposal.
  + Andy Wulf noted:
    - The State has accepted us into the program which helps justify or necessitate the Pathways Coordinator position (For environmental pathway)
    - Our school’s first meeting with the state is tomorrow around next steps for the grant and other funding we can apply for now that we are designated pathway school.
  + He also shared that the Humanities position is currently removed from next year’s budget proposal.
  + The school committee will Vote on the budget Tuesday, April 23rd.
* Portrait of a Graduate:
  + Andy Wulf explained how the faculty and planning have been moving along with determining how best to actualize the Portrait of the Graduate. He summarized:
    - March 29 PD with middle/high teachers and students, worked on making “I can” statements to help build a tool for teachers to use in the classroom.
    - The Instructional Leadership Team will finalize the “I Can” statements so that teachers can pilot them in their classrooms during the final month of school to offer feedback around the final product.

1. **Handbook Policy Review**

* Andy Wulf thanked the council for the feedback from the March School Council meeting. He then explained that the administrative team had updated proposed changes based on the discussion held. These updates were reflected in the links shared by Andy Wulf in his late March message home.
* Before approving the proposals, he asked the team to review the meeting summary from the March 12th meeting.
* The team took five minutes to review the meeting summary.
* Andy Wulf explained for each proposal he would ask if the council had concerns. If no concerns, the proposal would move forward to have the recommended changes. Below shares the result for each proposal outside of dual enrollment and the waiver policy which are both still in discussion.
  + [School Use of Breathalyzers](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zrcsJZTFndY89rOGH9fylVfst4he0IPujgNluABknh8/edit): Council expresses **No concerns** - Andy Wulf notes to move forward with updated policy
  + [MIAA Chemical Health](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UF7pd5mefOIRwchjNj0LAcxpoXR1hFkYx7JM63tgabc/edit): Council expresses **No concerns** - Andy Wulf notes to move forward with updated policy.
  + [Spectators at School Events](https://docs.google.com/document/d/17SdyXAkUZ546a33em6rPJ4ANgSghcyx71n6nlaSuFwk/edit): Council expresses **No concerns** - Andy Wulf notes to move forward with updated policy.
  + [Attendance for Participation in Extracurricular Activities](https://docs.google.com/document/d/13YgbpWp0ApJoG4CRgsh5JjrBNQ0jQK3qLTDWwIqFRLM/edit): Council expresses **No concerns** - Andy Wulf notes to move forward with updated policy.
  + **Attendance Policy Reduction of Unexcused Absences from 9 to 7 For a Student to Lose Credit in a Course**: Council expresses **No concerns** - Andy Wulf notes to move forward with updated policy.
  + [School Nurse Dismissal Guidelines](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wmafAXM65syIRRaTCsrAIAD7jspUS9RatO5NBzBRez4/edit?usp=sharing):
    - Some points of clarification about a parent dismissal. Mr. Testa shared that if a nurse does not feel the student needs to be dismissed the parent can still have the student dismissed. This would not qualify as an excused dismissal.
    - Council expresses **No concerns** - Andy Wulf notes to move forward with updated policy.
* **Dual Enrollment Discussion**
  + Andy Wulf provided the team with a guiding question for the discussion:

***What parameters might we recommend for students taking dual enrollment courses at NHS?***

* + Before starting the conversation, Andy Wulf shared feedback received from the Google Feedback Form that had been sent out during the mid-march message home. The feedback is copied below.

**From Feedback Form relative to Dual Enrollment:**  *“I think the answer to this is limit the number of dual enrollment classes a student can take each semester - to maybe 1 or 2. My son has told me of seniors who are taking the majority of their classes through dual enrollment including common classes like English.”*

* + After reviewing the feedback, Andy Wulf summarized the discussion from the March 12, 2024 meeting. He noted how members commented on how rigor varies amongst dual enrollment classes as well as AP classes. He also stated how Newburyport has a range of AP offerings along with 3 different options for dual enrollment. He described the 3 dual enrollment programs (see below).
    - **Northern Essex Community College (NECC)**: These courses are taken off-site, are 1 semester in length, students can select a range of courses to take through NECC’s program of studies. Newburyport has a partnership that reduces the cost of a course and students can apply to earn an Associates Degree while in high school.
    - **Endicott College**: Newburyport High School offers 3 courses a year. The classes are subsidized by the NEF. The courses selected enrich the high school’s program of studies. These courses are 1-semester in length.
    - **Concurrent Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) Courses**: These are courses taught by NHS teachers. To have these courses at NHS, teachers participate in a rigorous application process to align a class to that of one at SNHU. For example, the NHS Environmental Field Studies course is completely aligned with a field studies class that is offered at SNHU. If an NHS teacher’s course application is accepted, they are partnered with a professor at SNHU who serves as an advisor to the course across the school year. These courses run the length of the school year like an AP class.
  + Council members noted how NECC and Endicott courses are for 1 semester while SNHU and AP classes run for the full year. Andy Wulf acknowledged the different course length and stated that currently regardless of the course length, all dual enrollment (DE) courses count as a full year credit. He noted that this may be an area to explore further regarding how credit is assigned.
  + Stacey Gijsbers commented how said parents had reached out regarding the ½ year DE courses versus the full year AP and that this may not be fair.
  + Council members commented on the motivation for students taking the DE courses. Andy Wulf mentioned that this year 38 students are taking at least 1 DE course. Students noted that sometimes students take a DE class as they may not be able to get into a class that only runs 1 period in the schedule. Students discussed various reasons for students taking a DE. These ranged from the sense that DE can be easier for students to students being strategic about taking classes that align with their interests and future studies. Students noted that some students may take the DE to help with their GPA and expressed that there should be some parameters in place to ensure DE classes are taken for the right motivations.
  + Chris Cain stated how as a school we should be looking at DE as building skills for beyond high school especially where students need to work more independently. There will be some who look at school as a competition, but “I’m not sure the weight really matters.” Dave Clay noted that for some students academic is their area where they can be competitive.
  + Andy Wulf commented that possibly as a school, we can provide better education around the purpose of the School Profile. He explained how this is the tool colleges use to decide on the rigor of a student’s high school transcript when comparing students across schools. The Newburyport High [School Profile](http://sign@na1.conga-sign.com) can be found on the school’s website within the guidance tab. In the end, how a school weighs their courses is not as important as how the school profile portrays student performance.
  + Andy Wulf also noted that in listening to the discussion there are few areas that need to be considered in the proposal, one of which is the amount of credit awarded for the semester based DE classes versus the full year. He also noted that we want to make sure students are taking NHS courses that are part of our core curriculum especially as faculty aligns skills in the classes with the Portrait of the Graduate. The council noted these areas of focus for the policy may help students/families in their decision making around taking DE classes while also giving counselors more guidance.
  + Andy Wulf noted that the administrative team will have a draft policy for review at the May meeting.
* **Course Waiver Policy**

Andy Wulf reminded the council that a team of faculty members will develop a draft policy for this in the late spring. A draft will be shared at the first meeting of next school year. Andy Wulf also shared feedback received from the Google Feedback Form that had been sent home in March.