

HRHS Principal's Report

December 2019

SCHOOL/PROGRAM UPDATES

NEASC Update

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges recently wrote to me commending our college and career readiness. They would like additional information about the implementation of our technology integration by January 2, 2020, which I will complete within the next month. It is important to maintain our accreditation status by NEASC because it signifies that HRHS is a competitive, rigorous, and safe school for our students.

Instructional Rounds

Program leaders and I are conducting instructional rounds within departments. Instructional rounds are non-evaluative and revolve around a positive goal or problem of practice. The theory is based off of medical rounds where doctors learn from one another. So far, the science department and math department have participated in instructional rounds and common these were inquiry-based instruction, collaborative group work, student perseverance, and two-way communication. Other department rounds are scheduled within the next month.

Leadership Development Program

In partnership with Springfield College, Hampshire Regional is offering a leadership development program for junior students. The program was open to all juniors to apply. In total, thirty student participants are enrolled and they are all involved in at least one extracurricular activity. The second meeting will take place on Monday and is taught by Masters level students from Springfield College. Their curriculum was developed with support from Mr. Plourd and me with a focus on critical thinking, advocacy for self and others, and situational leadership.

BUDGET

First Finance Committee Meeting

The finance committee met for the first time tonight, discussing proposals for the FY21 budget. As it is a negotiation year, some of the anticipated increases are unknown. The proposal that was put forth includes the recommendations from the principal for high quality and diverse academic and extracurricular programming. It is my understanding that all recommendations will not be funded, but it is my responsibility and obligation to bring the comprehensive list forward.

Grant Update

The safety grant is still not complete, but it is scheduled to start this week. The contractor will be creating the hole in the window on Thursday and installation will begin next week. We will be sharing an alternative entry plan while this work is being done. The head custodian and administrative team will ensure that there is health and safety measures in place. Classes may be interrupted for a short time, and teachers will plan to work through this project. As a reminder, the installation needs to be complete by December 31, 2019.

Capital Plan

The capital plan has been updated with all relevant information for FY21 moving forward. It may be in the committee's best interest to determine if any of the projects should be moved to town warrants during any upcoming annual town meeting instead of being folded into the HRHS capital plan due to funding being so limited.

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MAINTENANCE

Concerns about heating/cooling systems

On the capital plan, you will note the need for a new control board. This control board will be updated to get an accurate reading on the temperature in each classroom. Right now, there are many univent systems that need maintenance, but parts are no longer made, so our head custodian is working diligently to come up with a reasonable and efficient solution. This may need to be reviewed at some point in the near future.

Contract out for month of December

With the challenge of finding a suitable candidate for the night time custodian vacancy, we have contracted with a cleaning company for the month of December. This allows for additional time for the interview process and relieve the current staff of taking on the vacant position's responsibilities.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

November and December Professional Development Half Day

On November 8 and December 6, students were dismissed at 11am and staff engaged in meaningful professional development. November 8th professional development was focused in interdisciplinary, grade level teams where educators reviewed and tuned the gradual release model, set to be rolled out to the community in August of 2020. In December, departments worked collaboratively on improving and supporting their professional practice.

PowerSchool Professional Development with Team

Assistant Principal Hotz, MS Counselor Katie Watkins, HS Counselor Patti Richmond, and I will attend a PowerSchool Training later this week. In addition to getting additional training on how to produce more efficient and effective master schedules, we hope to gain insight as to how to customize the Parent Portal. I have received some helpful feedback to develop pointed questions for this training.

SAFETY

Threat Assessment Training

Assistant Principal Biagini and School Adjustment Counselor Jan Sniffen recently went to a seminar on re-developing threat assessments to a more holistic and proactive approach. We are implementing the strategies learned at this training and will be rolling it out to staff in January of 2020.

Note: In an effort to increase communication and transparency, I have spoken to community members who would appreciate this report being sent to town selectboards. I plan to do so after the school committee meetings to give school committee members an opportunity to discuss the report first. Please let me know if you have questions or concerns about this.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Smidy
Hampshire Regional High School Principal