

Mercer Island School District #400
Board of Directors Meeting

February 11, 2021

Full Governance Process Monitoring—Board Policy 1800 Operational Expectation 01 |
Fundamental 3- Level 2

Fundamental 3: Develop self-awareness, empathy, emotional/social intelligence, responsible decision-making and citizenship.

As part of the Board's annual planning calendar found in Policy 1008P, this monitoring report focuses on Board Policy 1800 Operational Expectation 01, Fundamental 3, which states: “Develop self-awareness, empathy, emotional/social intelligence, responsible decision-making and citizenship.”

This report and the included data describe the work in our schools to meet Fundamental 3. The instructional team considered the superintendent’s interpretation of Fundamental 3, which was originally approved by the Board on January 10, 2013. The interpretation was most recently revised and approved by the Board on February 14, 2019. The most recent superintendent's interpretation is attached for reference.

This report includes both quantitative indicators from the Developmental Asset Survey (DAS) and the Educational Effectiveness Survey (EES), as well as qualitative indicators from our schools.

The six schools, learning services, and other departments in the central office provided qualitative inputs to demonstrate progress toward Fundamental 3. This is a change in practice from previous monitoring reports when the data was derived almost entirely from the schools. The majority of the qualitative indicators center on the ways in which the organization responded during the COVID-19 pandemic.

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

Previous boards considered numerous quantitative factors from the Asset Survey and the Educational Effectiveness Survey and the following items were selected to highlight implementation of Fundamental 3. To the extent available, prior year’s data are included. All of the *Educational Effectiveness Survey (EES)* results come from the additional *Student Skills and Beliefs Survey* (a survey of student engagement, motivation and 21st century thinking and learning skills) first offered in 2013 and significantly revised in 2014. The *Developmental Asset Survey (DAS)* is given to high school students in alternate years. The next scheduled

administration is fall 2021, but this could be postponed due to changes in other assessment cadences.

As a reminder, the HYS is a collaborative effort of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Health, the Department of Social and Health Service's Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, and the Liquor and Cannabis Board. The survey provides information on trends in the patterns of behavior of youth over time. It is administered in alternate years across Washington state to students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12. The fall 2020 administration of the HYS was postponed and a new data has not yet been published.

Survey	Indicator	SY	SY	SY	SY	SY
		15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
Developmental Asset Survey Results – given to MIHS (9-12) students inf alternating years	Average number of Developmental Assets (40 possible) reported by MIHS students	22.3		19.9		20.9
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Self esteem”	47		38		35
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Positive view of personal future”	73		64		63
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Sense of purpose”	60		49		47
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Personal power”	45		44		38
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Restraint”	39		31		36
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Peaceful conflict resolution”	65		64		65
	% of students who agree that “Helping other people” is important.	67		68		85

	% of students who agree that “On the whole, I like myself”	81		72		69
	% of students who agree that “All in all, I am glad I am me”	81		74		69
Education al Effectiveness Survey Results – given to students in grades 4 through 12 each spring (3rd grade students in 2018)	% of students who agree “I am hopeful about my future”	88	86	86	85	87
	% of students who agree “I am a responsible student”	85	83	83	84	88
	% of students who agree “I take responsibility for working on my goals”	87	85	85	87	90
	% of students who agree “I pay attention to how I feel”	81	78	77	79	79
	% of students who agree “I can resist doing something when I know I shouldn’t do it”	77	79	84	83	86
	% of students who agree “I can calm myself down when I am excited or upset”	74	72	71	73	77
	% of students who agree “I am a hard worker”	86	84	85	85	89
	% of students who agree “Setbacks don’t discourage me”	62	67	67	67	68
	% students who agree “I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt”	86	85	88	90	92
	% student who agree “I am comfortable interacting with people from a different racial or ethnic background	92	91	94	94	95

	% students who agree “When my solution to a problem is not working, I try to figure out what went wrong”	81	81	81	83	86
	% of students who agree “Most students are respectful of others at this school.”	62	59	58	61	68
	% of students who agree “In my school, I feel that I belong to a group of friends.”	79	78	79	79	80
	% of students who agree “I am treated with as much respect as other students.”	80	78	77	78	83

The District partnered with the Center for Collaborative Engagement and administered an SEL survey to collect student perceptual data related to their experience in the pandemic. Elementary students completed the survey asynchronously and voluntarily. The middle school administered the survey synchronously with all 8th grade students. To date, our 9th and 10th graders have completed the SEL survey and 11th and 12th graders will begin in the coming weeks. While this particular instrument is not one the Board selected for this monitoring report, it is being provided given the circumstances of COVID-19.

QUALITATIVE INDICATORS:

The following qualitative data provides evidence in the form of learning vignettes to support Fundamental 3 – Develop self-awareness, empathy, emotional/social intelligence, responsible decision-making and citizenship. The Fundamental has been divided into four themes, which are connected to the Superintendent’s Interpretation:

- Theme 1: Develop self-awareness
- Theme 2: Emotional/social intelligence including empathy
- Theme 3: Responsible decision-making
- Theme 4: Citizenship

Some of the vignettes apply to multiple themes within Fundamental 3. However, these qualitative descriptions have been matched with the theme they correlate with best.

The six school teams will be at the February 11, 2021 Board meeting to engage in a conversation with the Board.

Theme 1: Developing Self-Awareness

Elementary Second Step Curriculum

Second Step has continued to be the Social/Emotional curriculum for our elementary students even during our remote instruction. *Second Step SEL* is a program designed to help students succeed in class, connect with peers and staff, and develop/promote a safe and respectful school climate. The program consists of four main units at each grade level (Skills for Learning, Empathy, Emotion Management, and Problem Solving) that will be taught early in the year, and maintained through common language throughout the school year. Second Step quickly provided adapted lesson materials to support SEL learning in remote/virtual settings, and our teachers have continued to prioritize SEL instruction during this time.

Student Seminars- IMS

Islander Middle School has been hosting Friday seminars for the students during their asynchronous learning time. There have been a wide range of topics that have been covered during these seminars from Pacific Northwest Foraging to a Holocaust Center Virtual Tour. Several of the seminars have covered topics that have supported the students' development of self-awareness. These topics include Choosing to be Kind, Learning your Human Rights and Self Care. In order to develop the students' sense of citizenship, the counseling team presented a seminar on Anti-bullying and how to be an Upstander.

SBIRT - IMS

In partnership with King County, Islander has received a Best Start for Kids grant to participate in the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment) protocol. During the 2020/2021 school year, all 7th graders at IMS will have the opportunity to be screened and receive followup intervention. IMS will use the *Check Yourself* tool, a screener designed by Children's Hospital and the Children's Research Institute, to screen students in the areas of mental health, substance use, lifestyle and adverse childhood experiences. Following the screener, each student will receive individualized feedback ranging from information about healthy choices to counselor intervention or referral to community resources. We are excited for the opportunity to join over 45 other schools in the region to screen and provide support for our students.

MIHS

- Islander Hour: Following an incident of online hate speech, students, teachers, and administrators partnered to provide information and to support student discussion about the impact of the incident and ways that we can improve our school as a great learning environment for all students. Table talk questions were distributed to families, and campus leadership has used these ideas and feedback toward school improvement.
- Student Group on Race Relations: Developed Islander Hour lessons and daily teachings during Black History Month that honors the history, the reality, and the hope for Black Americans.

- No Place for Hate: Revitalized through direct connections to the ADL and our Islander Hour teacher team, NPFH provides teaching for students, teachers, and families. They convene regularly to provide an ongoing forum.
- Drama 1 & 2: At the end of each unit, students conduct a self-assessment and reflection using rubrics and previously established goals. The process promotes personal growth and awareness by identifying strengths, weaknesses and performance goals for the next round
- Crest students engage in student-led parent teacher conferences following the first and third quarters. This is an opportunity for students to own their learning, demonstrate progress, and share their progress with the faculty and their parents.
- Crest Genius project-students become experts and present on their idea to share their knowledge
- ELL students examined the events of January 6, 2021, when rioters stormed the United States Capitol. Rather than using media coverage from the United States, students sought out sources from their home countries. The students shared perspectives from around the world based on their home country's perspective.
- English: Revised reading lists in 9th and 10th grade English have been designed to broaden the perspectives of authors, characters, and overall narration about the human experience.
 - English 9
 - American Born Chinese-specific focus on acceptance, identity, culture, race, racism.
 - Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe
 - The Alchemist
 - English 10
 - Catcher in the Rye
 - Purple Hibiscus
 - Night
 - The Kite Runner
 - English 11 & 12: Courses use various reflective assignments where students review their developments as writers, identify areas of strength + areas that need growth, + make plans to move forward. Some teachers do this through an individualized assignment, others use actual one-on-one conferencing to discuss writing goals and past assignments/assessments.
- Social Studies: Students have partnered with Social Studies teachers to develop lessons around anti-racism and historical bias.

Partnership Between Mercer Island School District and Mercer Island Youth and Family Services (YFS)

The school-counselor collaborative partnership between MISD and MIYFS tentacles into all four of the superintendent's themes in the interpretation of Fundamental 3. Though highlighted in Theme 1, it should be noted that student benefits may be observed in the other three themes as well. Each school in the Mercer Island School District has a Mercer Island Youth and

Family Services (YFS) mental health counselor who provides social-emotional support, education, and enhancement to students as well as consultation to staff, parents and administrators.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on the Mercer Island City budget, the seven MIYFS counselors were furloughed either entirely or for a portion of their contract. The counselors worked collaboratively to continue connecting with students and families. Slowly, counselor FTE was restored and as of the beginning of January, 2021 all seven counselors are once again full-time.

Theme 2: Emotional/Social Intelligence including Empathy

Emotional Management—Elementary Schools

Every grade level spends an entire Second Step unit focused on *emotional management*. During these five to seven lessons, students develop their metacognitive awareness about their own emotions. Through discussion, reflection, and observation, students learn to: recognize what they feel in their bodies; manage frustration; calm themselves when confronted with strong feelings; handle their emotions when having to wait; recognize anger; bounce back when they are knocked down; navigate feelings associated with being worried; recognize test anxiety; handle accusations; address hurt feelings, avoid jumping to conclusions, and resist revenge.

Student Zone of Regulation awareness - LR

The special education staff at Lakeridge work daily with students to identify their current Zone of Regulation. This helps foster our student's self awareness of their feelings and their mood to better help them understand how those emotions impact learning. Students are allowed to share with each other their feelings as they come into class and offer each other social emotional support at times when emotions or feelings are dysregulated.

Kindergarten students begin learning about Kelso's Choice. y Lakeridges MIYFS Counselor Julie Mattson works with students to develop strategies for conflict management. The program also helps students build character and discern between big problems and little problems. This program promotes pro social behaviors for our youngest learners as they are acclimating to in person learning.

West Mercer Weekly Counselor Webinar

Anna Orton, the West Mercer MIYFS counselor, has weekly social emotional virtual webinars this year to support all students with strategies for taking care of themselves and strategies for improved mood regulation. During these difficult times due to the isolation brought on by the pandemic, we felt these lessons were vital for our students. The "Monday Mornings with Miss Anna" have proven to be very popular with both students and staff. With staff reporting that they themselves started getting outside more regularly once they heard Anna's lesson on how nature is a natural mood regulator, for example.

West Mercer Virtual Friday Announcements

To keep the Wolfpack connected during our remote learning time, every Friday morning we host a virtual webinar. The announcement time is used to promote our Wolfpack Way, our virtual Principal lunches for students, events that are promoted by our Student Council such as spirit days and Great Kindness Challenge initiatives. Guest announcers have been our Specialists and members of the Student Council.

West Mercer Principal support of student transition to In Person Learning

Right before students from the grade level return to school for in person learning each class was visited by the Principal to share the excitement of the return and answer questions that students may have. The intent of the visits were to calm any student fears about returning to the building and to highlight the changes that students should expect, as well as the reason for the changes so that students were not surprised or worried about why we are doing things differently. This gave students the opportunity to voice any concerns and get answers to questions that they might have, from someone who has been on campus already for many weeks and has seen other students happily engaged in the classroom and the playground.

We Thinkers! PLP Curriculum

The Personal Learning Programs (PLP) is using the We Thinkers! curriculum to build foundational social competencies and essential life skills. We Thinkers! utilizes stories, lessons and play activities to help students gain a better understanding of themselves and others. Topics include: developing self-awareness, perspective taking, social problem solving, social-emotional learning, relationship building, classroom learning and academic performance. The materials are designed to be used with both typically developing children and those with social emotional learning goals. The materials can be used on-line and in-person.

Island Park - Weekly Wrap Up

Each Friday at Island Park, the administrators connect with students in a *Weekly Wrap Up* video session. A “word of the week,” is shared. The word highlights a character trait or connotes a universal attribute like friendship, stewardship, empathy, etc. It is defined and used in a school context. A book, available in the school library, that incorporates the concept is shared. Personal stories from the principals are also told. Finally, musical selections and poetry, germane to the theme, are often played or recited.

The Great Kindness Challenge - Elementary Schools

All four elementary schools participated in the international Great Kindness Challenge this year. At the heart of the Great Kindness Challenge is the simple belief that kindness is a positive and powerful force that, when repeated, is habit forming and becomes common practice. While the events were not exactly the same as they have been in the past, we were able to host school wide webinars (in place of assemblies) and promote the checklists through digital sources.

Resiliency Workshops- IMS

The resilience workshop, offered by IMS Counselors, offers students instruction in gaining social intelligence and empathy over the course of 6 weekly sessions (one group for 6th graders and another for 7th/8th graders). Due to an overwhelming response, we divided interested students into two groups of approximately 30 students each and have a waiting list for another future group. Through a combination of videos, small group discussions, readings and artistic expressions, we help students learn new skills they can apply to their everyday lives. This workshop is designed to help students develop a greater sense of confidence and self-worth, identify their personal strengths and abilities, provide guidance to students as they learn to set goals for their future, teach students to understand adversity and utilize healthy coping strategies. The goal of these workshops is to provide opportunities for students to learn how to feel a sense of empowerment as they make their own decisions and build resilience.

MIHS

- Islander Hour:
 - Growth Mindset: MIHS and MIFYS counselors developed lessons around social-emotional wellness, which have been offered to students throughout our MIHS Islander Hour time. Teachers and counselors have led sessions addressing topics around the value of learning, learning from mistakes, and developing a growth mindset.
 - School-Life Balance: As part of our school improvement plan, our goal of reducing stress and anxiety through our school-wide efforts to eliminate homework over breaks will continue to be discussed and analyzed through our Islander Hour as well.
 - GAS: Teachers and counselors continue to have conversations with their IH students based on GAS (grades, attendance, and social - how/what students are doing socially in their lie-clubs, volunteer efforts, sports, college choices, etc).
 - Microaggressions: Working with the ADL and No Place for Hate, Islander Hour provided lessons and table talk topics to develop awareness and empathy around microaggressions that prevent a fully inclusive school.
- Drama 2: Performed *The Outsiders*, and spent numerous class periods discussing and speaking about the disparities in social class and learning about perspective taking.
- Crest: One of Crest's pillars is healthy relationships. Staff uses Islander Hour to explicitly impress upon students the importance of building community through playing games, having discussions, and ensuring everyone is included in the social fabric.
- Crest: Delivers weekly lessons around self advocacy and social skills for application in and around the broader community.
- English 12: Students screened parts of the HBO film, "Between the World and Me," a dramatic reading of Ta-Nehisi Coates's memoir of the same name. Before viewing the film, students read "Letter to My Son," an excerpt of Coates's work. The work was written in response to "the week [Coates's son] learned that the killers of Michael Brown would go free" (11). The film is currently available to screen for free from HBO. Upon the completion of the film and after the reading, students wrote their own letters, detailing a social issue of importance to them, a story or an experience from their own life that

taught them about the world. They also shared thoughts about the reading / the film on a Padlet, where students responded to questions or quotations from Coates. For example, Coates says, "At The Mecca I saw how we had taken their one-drop rule and flipped it. They had made us into a race. We had made ourselves into a people" (14). Who are "they," and what does Coates mean in this declaration?

Theme 3: Responsible Decision-Making

Elementary Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (P.B.I.S.)

Schools have created digital tools and processes to support the continuation of P.B.I.S., even in a fully remote or partially remote school setting. P.B.I.S. is a school-wide system of support that includes proactive strategies for defining, teaching and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Through proactive teaching, modeling and reinforcement, public posters, assemblies, classroom discussions, positive tokens (school-wide slips), and public recognitions, students become aware of and internalize desired behaviors. Expected behaviors for classroom and other public spaces are posted, taught and referred to when working through student behavior issues.

“The Wolf Way” - West Mercer

The Wolf Way has continued at West Mercer, even during our remote instructional time. Our PBIS team created posters that could be used at home by parents to support our 3 expectations (be safe, be respectful, be responsible) as well as HOWL tickets that parents could use to acknowledge students positive behavior. In addition, posters were created for both primary and intermediate classrooms that teachers used in the remote classroom to support “the Wolf Way”. Finally, HOWL tickets were converted to a digital file and fun videos were created to allow teachers to acknowledge positive student behavior in a more visual format. Here are a couple of examples:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1D2bPDKhB8ywVP32wuQH23Z5laHnjdR8d/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kaFjYAaz9fQU43z4lywnYOGjTc18WSBr/view?usp=sharing>

“Be the Three to Grow Our Hearts and Minds” - Northwood

At Northwood, the school wide PBIS is known as “Be the Three”: Be safe, be respectful, be responsible. This year, our PBIS team amended and clarified the positive behavior expectation matrices to support learning behaviors in the remote learning environment. PBIS teacher leaders also created digital Soaring Owls, along with a variety of ways to share these Soaring Owls with kids and families in the virtual classroom. Northwood infuses this positive behavior belief system in all that we do; from classroom management to recess expectations; from common language in all Northwood spaces to our Soaring Owls’ Nest Story Time. Our students strive to Be the Three so that all who attend Northwood, whether remotely or in person, have the opportunity to be a part of a supportive and collaborative learning community.

Northwood has posters displayed throughout the building and posted within the teachers' digital slide decks reminding students of common expectations and once a month, two students are recognized from each classroom who have exemplified our "Be the Three" goals. These students are invited to attend a virtual Soaring Owls' Nest Story Time with the principal to celebrate their efforts and listen to a story read aloud over Zoom. This Soaring Owls' Nest Story Time occurs during the common afternoon asynchronous learning block, so whether students are learning remotely or in-person in the morning, they can all celebrate their Soaring Owl successes together. As more students have transitioned from remote to in-person learning, we have seen evidence of the communities that were built remotely. Students have very quickly adjusted to in-person learning routines and translated their remote friendships to in-person friendships, and teachers have leveraged the relationships they built remotely to rapidly cultivate positive and cohesive in-person classroom cultures.

Character Trait of the Month - Northwood

Northwood's school community focuses on a different Character Trait every month; September - Resilience, October - Cooperation, November - Gratitude, December - Review, January - Kindness, February - Empathy, March - Patience, April - Perseverance, May - Generosity, June - Honesty. Our school has monthly screencasts that highlight each of the individual character traits. We highlight the character trait during the Friday Virtual Announcements, students are acknowledged for displaying the character traits by staff members, and staff source and share myriad multi-media resources to support student understanding and development of these character traits. This year, we opened our school year with a school-wide Zoom Assembly focused on the character trait of Resilience. Students experienced a story, *Sticks* by Diane Alber, about a stick whose life changed unexpectedly and how he learned from others to think differently about his situation and adjust his thinking to move forward toward success. Students then created a "Resilience Stick" to keep near their learning space at home as a reminder to cultivate their own resilience in the face of pandemic-related challenges.

Lion PRIDE (Schoolwide PBIS) - Lakeridge

Lakeridge's school-wide PBIS program is known as "Lion's PRIDE". The three pillars of Lion's PRIDE are 1.) Our motto "Work Hard. Be Kind."; 2.) Our Character Traits of the Month; and 3.) Our school-wide expectations of "Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible" referred to more simply as "Be the 3". We teach, model, and positively reinforce what Lion PRIDE looks and feels like every day and in every common space including homeroom classrooms, our cafeteria, playground, hallways, bathrooms, specialist classrooms and for assemblies. Our Lions PRIDE motto and expectations are displayed in every hallway, classroom and shared space throughout the school. We celebrate desired behaviors through PRIDE slips that recognize individual achievement; Lions Den Lunches that honor the best examples of our Character Traits of the Month; and 10,000 PRIDE Ticket Challenges that recognize our collective efforts toward school-wide goals. Student council members read two PRIDE Slips that highlight Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible every day in our morning

announcements. Our morning announcements also include daily inspirational quotes and/or positive reinforcements of all aspects of our Lions PRIDE (PBIS) as well.

Character Trait of the Month - Lakeridge

Lakeridge students and staff focus on developing and demonstrating positive character traits each month. These character traits help define Lion's PRIDE and "The Lakeridge Way". September is Gratitude, October is Cooperation, November is Generosity, December is Resilience, January is Patience, February is Kindness, March is Honesty, April is Empathy, and May is Perseverance. Every month, 2-3 students from each classroom are invited to join the principal for lunch in the "Lion's Den" where students are honored as being the best representatives for the school of that month's character trait.

Positive Behavior System - Island Park

Island Park's PBIS system comprises a variety of elements including S.O.A.R. recognition slips and announcements, Mindfulness, Second Step and Zones of Regulation. Staff are encouraged to weave S.O.A.R. into class discussions, literature choices, and all areas of study as well as draw connections during class meeting opportunities.

S.O.A.R is Island Park's positive behavior recognition system that acknowledges students who are demonstrating one of the following behaviors in the classroom, common areas, lunchroom, restrooms, and at recess: Safe, Respectful and Responsible.

During remote learning the system was adjusted whereby students reflected on their own on-line behaviors and awarded themselves digital recognition tokens when they practiced desired on-line behaviors that exemplified safety, responsibility and respect. Behaviors included following proper Zoom protocols, punctuality, muting and unmuting at appropriate times, etc. Upon returning to school, classes discussed shared behavior expectations that address COVID-related concerns (social distancing, mask wearing, etc.).

PBIS/SEL Tier 2 Intervention - Elementary Schools

As part of our continuing work to develop Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, all of our elementary schools have established Tier 2 Intervention processes to support students who demonstrate a need for additional support beyond the Tier 1/Universal school-wide PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) and SEL (Social Emotional Learning) instruction. Each school has identified staff to support students using a research-based "Check-in, Check-out" process. This intervention builds a positive, supportive relationship between the adult and the child, with a focus on moving toward student-specific goals. The adult engages the child in a daily check-in to focus on the goal for the day, followed by a check-out to review how the child fared that day. Students are recommended for this support using our Student Study Team process, and data is collected and reviewed to monitor the child's response to the intervention.

Goals are adjusted as needed during this process. The intervention is designed to last between nine and twelve weeks, and it provides an additional layer of instruction and reinforcement for the Tier 1 social emotional learning. While these interventions have looked different in the varied school environments and schedules during the pandemic, these interventions have continued and we are finding new ways to engage and support our learners.

- Check-in & Check out PALS program is occurring in Zoom classrooms and in in-person classrooms
- Small Group Pods of learners were identified for in-person supports to access the Zoom instructional environment
- Power Student Support Team process was used to quickly identify and consider interventions for students demonstrating significant struggle in the fully remote environment.

Elementary Mindfulness

Mindfulness supports students in developing self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy and fosters a moment-by-moment awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, sensations, and surrounding environment. It respectfully teaches students how to meaningfully “pay attention”. Current research states mindfulness leads to *heartfulness* in that it nurtures positive mindsets such as kindness, compassion and empathy.

DBT Groups- IMS

The IMS, MIYFS Counselor Harry Brown and the MIYFS Intern Audrey Phillips are facilitating 2 ongoing groups using the curriculum **Dialectic Behavioral Therapy Skills Training for Emotional Problem Solving for Adolescents (DBT STEPS-A)**. DBT STEPS-A is a universal social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum designed for middle/high school students in educational settings. The DBT STEPS-A curriculum is designed to help adolescents develop self-awareness, perspective taking, coping strategies and decision-making abilities under emotional distress. The DBT STEPS-A curriculum is based on the skills of comprehensive Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) that have shown to be effective with both adults and adolescents experiencing mild to severe levels of emotional and behavioral difficulties. The STEPS-A program is also used in one of the Special Education Program to support Social Skills instruction.

PBIS and the Islander Way MIHS

This year the high school staff, guided by the high school PBIS team, started the initial work around developing systems and conducting a review with our staff around commonalities and expectations for school-wide behaviors in teachers' classrooms and throughout the school building. Early this winter, students and staff analyzed the existing “Islander Way” developed for 9th grade students several years ago and looked for ways to update and strengthen the focus of what it means to be an MIHS student and positive behaviors we seek. Instead of “rules”, students and staff are creating school-wide behavioral expectations through characteristics or traits we value as a school community.

PBIS: Early Childhood

The Early Childhood staff has participated in the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children. The Pyramid Model is a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development. The Pyramid Model builds upon a tiered public health approach to providing universal supports to all children to promote wellness, targeted services to those who need more support, and intensive services to those who need them. School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS) refers to the implementation of a multi-tiered approach to social, emotional and behavior support within schools. Like SW-PBIS, the Pyramid Model is a multi-tiered framework comprised of a continuum of evidence-based practices that are organized in a three-tiered continuum of promotion, prevention, and intervention. However, the Pyramid Model is uniquely designed to address the needs and contexts of programs serving infants, toddlers and preschoolers including children in public school early childhood classrooms and early childhood care and education programs in the community. The implementation of the Pyramid Model within early childhood programs is often referred to as Early Childhood Program-Wide Positive Behavior Support (PW-PBS) or Program-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PW-PBIS). When schools are implementing PBIS and want to include preschool classrooms, they may use the Pyramid Model to define the practices appropriate for use with young children and their families.

MIHS

- Islander Hour: Teachers have taught organization tools and techniques that support students executive functioning.
- CARE Team: With support from the campus administration and counselors, classified staff was reallocated during remote learning to contact and remain in contact with students that were referred by students, faculty, staff, or parents, as well as those with poor grades and attendance. The purpose of this was to support students in their own self-advocacy, to connect them with counselors when necessary, and to connect them with teachers and staff that could develop students' executive functioning.
- "Pods": Students that demonstrated a high level of academic or social-emotional risk attended in-person, supported study groups that convened during and after regularly scheduled, remote learning classes. With breakfast served and within a friendly environment, students were provided with a quality study space and as-needed staff support.

Theme 4: Citizenship

Elementary Student Council

All four elementary schools have a student council and this year they have been meeting virtually via Zoom. Each school council sets its own goals and areas of emphasis each year. The students typically focus on fundraising or humanitarian campaigns to help local, national, and/or international organizations as well as school spirit or school culture activities. Student leaders are typically 3rd, 4th, or 5th graders and represent their classes

and act as a liaison with primary classrooms. Our staff advisors work hard to foster student voice through this process, empowering them to make choices for how they want to serve the school and broader community.

Election-related activities IP

Using age-appropriate articles (e.g. Time For Kids), grades talked about the election process and the role of voting in citizenship. Student also participated in discussions about:

- 1) Leadership
- 2) The three branches of government
- 3) The presidency
- 4) First amendment related issues (BLM marches)

Civil Rights/Art Docent Programming - IP

Classes have been engaging in discussion, civics education, and art through our art docent program. Lessons this year have focused on viewing the Civil Rights Movement through the lens of various artists of color. These lessons have been interactive and integrated a variety of grade-level content standards in reading and writing.

WEB Program- IMS

Both the WEB Program (Where Everybody Belongs) and the Sources of Strength group teach the fundamental skills of self-awareness, emotional/social intelligence including empathy and citizenship. WEB, which stands for "Where Everybody Belongs" is a middle school orientation and transition program that welcomes 6th graders and makes them feel comfortable throughout the first year of their middle school experience. Built on the belief that students can help students succeed, the program trains mentors from Islander Middle School's 8th grade class to be WEB Leaders. As positive role models, WEB Leaders are mentors and student leaders who guide the 6th graders to discover what it takes to be successful during the transition to middle school and help facilitate 6th grade success. Additionally, the Sources of Strength group is composed of self-selected and/or teacher recognized peer leaders who want to help inspire the IMS community to recognize their personal sources of strength. Through weekly meetings and school wide campaigns throughout the year, these peer leaders do their part as citizens to inspire positive messages of support and hope to our community. Both programs allow students to learn about themselves in leadership roles at school and to be empathetic to the needs of others all while representing IMS as ambassadors for their particular program.

MIHS

- Student Clubs and Organizations: Through teacher and administrative support, many student clubs and organizations have mobilized to support action toward equity and anti-racism. While not limited to the following, some examples are:
 - Black Student Union - Working with administration and student leadership, BSU outreaches to students to forward the voice for BIPOC students.

- Asian Collective & Education Coalition for Asian Representation: Working with administration and student leadership, BSU outreaches to students to forward the voice for Asian and Asian-American students.
 - DECA: Through the “Dominate Virtually” campaign, DECA reiterates and supports students in their mutual responsibilities to support one another during COVID restrictions and remote learning.
 - ASB: Youtube Islander News provides spirited, supportive and regular updates for student successes and celebrations, as well as school news.
- Empty Bowls Fundraiser Project: Students in Chantel Torrey’s Wheel Throwing class research local non profit organizations and choose one as a class. Students create the bowls that will then be sold as a donation to the non profit organization they selected. Students organize donations and community members receive a bowl of soup (they put it in the student created bowls), bread and desserts for guests to enjoy while listening to presentations from the organization.
 - Defining the Common Good in the Civics Classroom: This year Jamie Robertson’s 12th grade Civics classes participated in a unit titled “Defining the Common Good in our Classroom” where the purpose was to engender student agency and decision-making in the classroom. In addition, students gained basic civics knowledge regarding types of government and the value of constitutional rule. Students thoroughly analyzed how a democratic classroom impacts student learning. Students in Robertson’s classes learned about the rights and responsibilities needed in order to effectively govern their class throughout the term.

K-12 Digital Citizenship

The foundation for excellent digital citizenship begins in the K-5 segment with introductions to computer lab and iOS device use that include accepting the responsibility for sticking to educational purposes set by the teacher, respecting shared folders and passwords, and for accessing safe sites on the internet. In addition, each classroom participates in a simple, direct instruction lesson annually to meet the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requirements including Internet safety, online safety, cyberbullying, and digital etiquette. Foundational and digital citizenship lessons are reinforced as teachers work with students in context of the curriculum throughout the year with digital media tools. A few examples include accessing and collaborating on Cloud (Google Drive or OneDrive) documents, behavior in online social media environments using Seesaw as a safe platform to learn about appropriate sharing online, and research learning how to assess websites’ validity with a critical eye. These lessons are extended in middle schools with overarching themes related to harassment and cyberbullying, online safety, and leaving a positive digital footprint. All students are reminded about these topics in the fall with the review of exceptional use of Schoology and the iPads, and then these topics were covered more extensively in 6th grader core classes in the fall. Students entering high school also receive in-person training at Fee & Photo Day to reinforce the educational use of our District issued 1:1 iPads.

Transportation

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the MISD Transportation Department noticed patterns in everyday life that speak to the importance of developing self-awareness, empathy, emotional/social intelligence, responsible decision-making and citizenship.

We started off the pandemic with the loss of one of our own, Marty Duitch. His passing was a shocking event for us. Our department wrestled with finding ways to grieve while trying to communicate to his loved ones how much we all loved Marty and wanted to grieve with them. Without being able to mourn at a funeral or another collective way, the department explored many creative ways to honor not only his passing but his life.

The early stages of the pandemic were a mix of fear and wonder how real everything was. There was an immediate loss of work which created a loss of security in our value to society. Many at the time could not imagine how long this would continue. The school districts commitment to keep us on salary during this time was a relief. Soon the desire to be of value to our community helped push us to overcome our fears of the unknown to venture out to become of service.

As human beings we like to feel we have a mastery of what we do. However this year we have been reminded that a lot of what we know comes from trying and then waiting to see the results. We have had to get used to learning on the fly and becoming comfortable with the fact that we are all doing normal tasks in a way we never have. This creates extra stress. We have all wrestled with the task but what has made it worthwhile is watching the reaction of the students as we merge the worlds of how life was before and how it is now.

Examples from transportation this last year.

1. Seeing parents and students excitement as we delivered curriculum packets instead of picking up the students to take them to school. The drivers, parents and students were so excited just to see each other. Although I am sure the curriculum was important, the connection is what was missed.
2. As drivers passed out iPads for the students, the students were excited about getting the iPads, it was the connection of seeing the parents and students that was exciting and the general sense that what we were doing was helpful to others.
3. As we began transporting students starting September 8, 2020 there was fear, but the desire to serve the students helped us all overcome the fear of the unknown. Many of our drivers who had not driven a small bus in a long time were now doing something they had not done in years. What was exciting, was to see the students and parents as they started getting some of the services they had received in the past.
4. Watching the Kindergarten students get on the bus for the first time and then get off the bus at school and see their excitement overcome their fear.
5. Taking them home after their first day of school and to see their excitement as they began to tell their parents about school was a reminder of what we love about our jobs. Our lives matter as we help others lives be impacted in a positive way.

6. We realize that what we do matters more than how we do it. We strive every day to do our job in a way that keeps everyone involved safe, all the while there are those out there telling us many things. We do our best with the information that we have.
7. As the numbers of students that rely on transportation to and from school grows, what is important about our job is the professionalism in which we do it with the knowledge that we have but mostly it is the service that we provide to our MISD community. What we do matters in others lives.

Maintenance and Operations

The Maintenance and Operations Department has continued to strive to have a positive impact on our students even as the majority of these students have spent nearly a year away from our district's buildings and facilities. In the broadest sense, the M and O department has taken its role of maintaining safe, healthy, and inviting facilities very earnestly in order to support students' development of self-worth, civic responsibility, and sense of belonging to a community that takes pride in itself.

When remote learning took hold, the department was involved in providing enough bags for each student to receive the classwork that was abruptly left behind in the spring, and for the delivery of learning materials as their remote learning began. As bus drivers delivered special equipment to PLP students, the maintenance staff delivered large therapy trikes and other equipment to their homes. The Grounds Department worked diligently to keep all outside areas, landscaping, playgrounds and fields looking like schools are ready for students, imparting to the students and the community the value that students are still the priority. When appropriate, students who returned to school in the ATP class were often engaged in maintaining the grounds, supporting them in gaining valuable work skills, confidence, and connection to their school. As students returned to buildings in the fall, they found buildings sparkling clean, freshly painted, and arranged in ways that made them feel safe and healthy. Special effort was taken to supply the proper sized facemasks and sanitizing stations for students, and decals and signage that help them participate in the various Covid-mitigating procedures.

The Maintenance Department models its commitment to sustainability and fiscal responsibility as demonstrated last spring when the packing crates for a large order of sound shells for the Performing Arts Department. Each was carefully dismantled to be used for future projects rather than discarded. The maintenance crews were very committed to making Graduation for the Class of 2020 a festive and memorable celebration for students who had already lost so much of their senior spring. Working on a very short timeline and budget, this crew built a stage at MIHS for the ceremony using the salvaged packing crate material. After the ceremony, the stage was dismantled and the material was stored again. As the buildings were being prepared for the return of students in the fall, there was a need to source freestanding hand sanitizer stands. With the budget in mind, the department again was tasked with how to provide fifty of these stands. Staff identified the materials on hand and created a design based on what they had available. The sanitizing stands were produced by the district's maintenance staff using mostly repurposed materials, again demonstrating a commitment to sustainable and cost saving principles.

During remote learning, the ability of the school custodians to participate in the meaningful connections they normally have had with students was challenged. One elementary school custodian in particular found a way to engage students with their school while they were learning at home. He shared a series of videos he recorded himself around the building, showing students what was happening in their absence. The videos highlighted topics such as, “what’s behind this door”, which led to a tour of the boiler room and other areas of mystery. Another video shared a visit to the goldfish pond in the courtyard. The students’ feedback to this was most positive, expressing their joy and excitement for their school. In late fall one of the custodial staff was faced with the decision to take a leave due to health concerns and Covid-19. Although it was clear this was the right choice for him, this employee struggled with the decision, in part due to his commitment to a student in the schools resource program. Pre-Covid, the school’s resource program staff offered a student weekly time with the custodian as a positive reinforcement for the student’s behavior. These weekly interactions had a great impact on the student. When Covid came into play, the employee member quickly shifted these encounters to an online version and continued to find time to meet with the student virtually. Now that the student is back in the building and the employee is on leave, their positive interactions have continued virtually, only with the student and employee’s locations reversed.

The Maintenance and Operations Department is continually adjusting and adapting to changing needs in the buildings, and filling in wherever and whenever help is needed. Currently two employees have adjusted their schedules to accommodate working alongside the food service department for a few hours each day, preparing and delivering over 300 sack lunches daily. The department’s role in supporting the fundamentals outlined for student development is demonstrated mostly in actions that can be modeled and realized in very concrete aspects that students experience every day at school.

Social Emotional Survey

As a part of OSPI’s re-opening requirements, school districts were to implement a screening tool for social-emotional well-being. As a system, Mercer Island School District was engaging stakeholders in groups referred to as Learning Forward groups. As the assistant director of learning services, Nova Williams managed the Assessment Learning Forward group, which had an offshoot of the Social Emotional Screening Tool Learning Forward group. This team discussed what we wanted as a part of the screening tool and reviewed the tool we had at our disposal, the CEE’s SEL Screener, to determine the “when and who” of the screening process.

This group included representatives from the counseling teams, administrators, and MIYFS. As a group we concluded that we’d like to begin the process with third, sixth, and ninth grade students. We also determined that three times over the course of the school year would be best, to have data to build from.

This shifted slightly, when the elementary schools moved forward with assessing students in grades 3-5 in early fall followed shortly thereafter with K-2. We had some hiccups along the way, which meant we didn't get screening info from all kids for a variety of reasons. At this point, we have screened all K-2 students (asynchronously; participation not 100%) once, 8th grade students once (synchronously), some 6th grade students once (synchronously), 9th grade students (synchronously), and 10th grade students (synchronously).

A factor that we had not considered was the flagging system in the screening tool. To be able to properly support students, we had to slow the process. While we had hoped to screen all students three times this year, the system doesn't have the bandwidth to complete the process effectively. We want to ensure that, if a student is flagged, he/she/they can be supported in whatever way they need. So, we adapted our plan. All students this year will have been screened twice (we hope) by the end of the school year. The benefit to this will be that we hope to see growth from the changes that have happened along the way.

Parent Outreach:

Fireside Chats:

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, 'Stay Home Stay Safe' requiring parents to manage school in the home and questions coming our way about behavior and engagement during the school day, a team of school professionals came together to share their passion and expertise in support of families. Using Zoom as a platform, we brought the following Fireside Chats to the homes of many.

- Mindfulness
- Stress: Causes, Effects, Management
- Understanding Meltdowns
- Managing a Meltdown

Knowing not all families were able to attend, recordings remain accessible to families at any time through the website.

The Parent Space

The Parent Space was derived from articles and findings regarding parents and lack of self-care as a result of Pandemic stress. All of us are being stretched into uncharted waters discovering a wealth of feelings and stressors in our present-day lives. We are all feeling the impact of the Pandemic, while also being faced with deeper feelings of loneliness, fear, anger, and resentment. Our response to stress may look like poor sleep, low frustration tolerance, shutdown, blaming, and lashing out. With open minds, we come together to discover why we are feeling stressed and ways to manage the heightened stress in our lives. The Zoom drop-in is intended for parents who want to step away from daily stress and activation of the world and regroup. We hold individual space and guide the group from body awareness (nervous system) and mindfulness perspective. Our intention is to provide a space for parents to practice self-care in support of themselves and their families. As a pilot, the group has been offered to families at West Mercer and Lakeridge, every other week since mid-November.

Culturally Responsive Strategies for Building Relationships with Families

We have made this training available for teachers with the goal of increasing parent engagement through culturally responsive strategies. This webinar focuses on building parent-teacher relationships by increasing cultural awareness.

Objectives:

- 1) Understand how to address the individual needs of students and families by increasing self-awareness and understanding personal biases.
- 2) Recognize the difference between equality and equity.
- 3) Implement inclusionary strategies to build community rapport.