

Mercer Island School District #400 Board of Directors Meeting

December 10, 2015

Full Governance Process Monitoring—Board Policy 2020 | Fundamental 3

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

This is the second full governance process monitoring of Fundamental 3. The board approved the Superintendent’s Interpretation of Fundamental 3 on January 10, 2013. The first monitoring of Fundamental 3 occurred on December 11, 2014. The report is separated into quantitative and qualitative indicators or measurement.

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

Numerous quantitative factors from the *Asset Survey* and the *Educational Effectiveness Survey* were considered and the following were selected to highlight implementation of Fundamental 3. To the extent available, prior year’s data are included. All of the *Educational Effectiveness Survey* 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* is given to high school students in alternate years.

Indicator		SY 10-11	SY 11-12	SY 12-13	SY 13-14	SY 14-15
Developmental Asset Survey Results – given to MIHS students	Total number of Developmental Assets (40 possible) report by MIHS students		20.7		21.1	
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Self esteem”		51		48	
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Positive view of personal future”		74		70	
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Sense of purpose”		66		61	
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Personal power”		50		50	
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Restraint”		37		28	
	% of students reporting the Asset of “Peaceful conflict resolution”		60		64	
Educational Effectiveness Survey Results – given to student in grades 4 through 12	% of students who agree “I am hopeful about my future”			87	87	88
	% of students who agree “I am a responsible student”			83	84	84
	% of students who agree “I take responsibility for working on my goals”			84	83	85
	% of students who agree “I pay attention to how I feel”				81	80
	% of students who agree “I can resist doing something when I know I shouldn’t do it”				79	78
	% of students who agree “I can calm myself down when I am excited or upset”				72	71
	% of students who agree “I am a hard worker”				83	82

	% of students who agree "Setbacks don't discourage me"				68	68
	% students who agree "I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt"				84	84
	% student who agree "I am comfortable interacting with people from a different racial or ethnic background"				91	90
	% students who agree "When my solution to a problem is not working, I try to figure out what went wrong"				80	79

As reported before, of the Assets selected to monitor Fundamental 3, only the asset of "restraint" has been studied nationally by the Search Institute (authors of the *Asset Survey*). Nationally, 48% of students exhibit the asset of "restraint", which is a considerably higher percentage than our student population. This asset information, as well as other asset indicators, is being used by the high school to improve students' self-awareness and social/emotional intelligence through SIP planning, BRIDGES and WEB lessons, and individual teacher classroom work.

The other indicators, selected from the *Educational Effectiveness Survey*, are also being used to influence the contents of school SIP plans and social/emotional activities within buildings and classrooms. These data were amazingly consistent over the two years. Of particular interest were the high number of students who agree that "I am hopeful about my future," "I am comfortable interacting with people from a different racial or ethnic background," and "I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt."

All these data show that students are working on experiences that involve developing self awareness, empathy, emotional/social intelligence, responsible decision making and citizenship. Additionally, teachers are supporting their students with engaging learning environments, clear communication, flexibility, and responsiveness.

QUALITATIVE INDICATORS:

The following qualitative data provides *evidence in the form of learning vignettes* into Fundamental 3 – Develop self-awareness, 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
- Theme 3: Responsible decision-making
- Theme 4: Citizenship

The six school teams (Northwood Elementary as the sixth) will be at the December 10 Board meeting to engage in a conversation with the Board.

Theme 1: Developing self awareness

- **Elementary Second Step:** This year the staff at all the elementary schools are implementing *Second Step Social Emotional Learning (SEL)* and *Second Step Bullying Prevention Unit* in all K-5 classrooms. *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. The Second Step Bullying Prevention Unit includes age-appropriate information and scenarios to help students identify bullying behaviors and learn effective strategies to combat those behaviors.

- **IMS Second Step Curriculum:** The *Second Step* program is being presented this year in all 7th grade Language Arts classes as well as in 6th and 8th grade Health classes. All students are receiving instruction and learning opportunities that focus on the development of self-awareness and appropriate and positive interactions with others. By teaching students the of concepts of active listening, empathy, emotional management and self regulation, students are learning not only about how to take care of themselves but also how to engage with their peers in a positive way. With a focus on becoming more self aware, students are taught to set goals in order to grow and develop into productive and actively engaged Islander Middle School citizens.
- **Crest Student-led Parent Teacher Conferences:** The purpose of student-led parent teacher conferences (SLPTC's) is to facilitate meaningful conversations between stakeholders related to individual student progress. By having students lead the conference with teacher support, students take more ownership in their learning and are not passive participants in the conversation, which is the case in traditional parent-teacher conferences. Crest staff find SLPTC's invaluable as a resource in building lasting relationships and partnerships. The Crest Student Agreement states: "Achieving that goal (to graduate) means being successful at Crest and taking responsibility for myself. I understand that my success depends on my attendance and my performance in classes. I understand that my behavior is my responsibility." Fostering students taking an active role in monitoring and reporting their progress emphasizes the value that Crest places on students taking ownership of their learning.
- **MIHS Zones of Regulation:** The Zones of Regulation (Zones) is a systematic, cognitive behavior approach used to teach self-regulation by categorizing all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete zones. The Zones curriculum provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of, and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, managing their sensory needs, and improving their ability to problem solve conflicts. By addressing underlying deficits in emotional and sensory regulation, executive functions, and social cognition, the curriculum is designed to help move students toward independent regulation. The Zones of Regulation incorporates Social Thinking® (www.socialthinking.com) concepts and numerous visuals to teach students to identify their feelings/level of alertness, understand how their behavior impacts those around them, and learn what tools they can use to manage their feelings and states. All students and teachers in the MIHS special education program are using Zones language to observe and describe their current state. Additionally, the MIHS Personalized Learning Program teachers are designing group lessons with Zones curriculum and several students have Zones regulation activities built into their daily programs.
- **Multiple Intelligences Project at MIHS:** In Erica Hill's 10th grade Honors English classes, students employ Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences to explore group dynamics and assess their own highly developed intelligences and identify group roles that align with their strengths. After examining the seven intelligences and discussing how every person employs all of the intelligences with varied levels of development and that the intelligences work together in complex ways, students are given a group task. The students work in groups of five to construct a replica of a poster that hangs in the hallway (designed by the teacher). Each group member takes on a role (talker, athlete, organizer, two artists) after discussing with each other which role is best suited for each member. Each role is equally important for the success of the group and no single member can be effective without the others. After

completing the task, students spend time debriefing their roles and interactions to reflect on the experience and value that each role brings to group dynamics.

- **Partnership Between Mercer Island School District and Mercer Island Youth and Family Services (YFS):** Each school in the Mercer Island School District has a Mercer Island Youth and Family Services (YFS) mental health counselor that provides social-emotional support, education, and enhancement to students as well as consultation to staff, parents and administrators. The high school and middle school have drug and alcohol counselors, affording immediate access to substance abuse intervention for students as well as prevention education, staff and parent consultation and assessment/referral to additional services as needed.

To further the District's fundamental effort to develop and enhance student self-awareness, social/emotional intelligence, responsible decision-making and citizenship, the YFS school-based staff assist students in developing one or more of the following: awareness and skills to cope with interpersonal issues causing distress; skills to manage thoughts and feelings that can affect academic and social success; positive peer, teacher and familial relationships to ameliorate stressors; intervention for critical mental health and social-emotional crises; professional consultation on behalf of the child to family caregivers and school staff; and linkage to community resources beyond the school district.

Theme 2: Emotional/Social intelligence

- **Mindfulness at IP:** Mindfulness is paying attention to one's present moment experience, on purpose, with kindness and curiosity. It is a secular, social/emotional learning curriculum and practice that helps reduce stress, increase emotional coping skills, improve sustained attention and executive functioning, increase impulse control, and cultivate a deeper sense of empathy. Through instruction and techniques such as meditation, awareness-based activities and learning about the functioning of the brain, students and staff acquire the fundamental tools to continue mindfulness practice once the course is completed. We are often asking children to "pay attention," yet we never teach them *how* to pay attention. Mindfulness addresses this through short, 15 minute sessions.
- **IMS Natural Helpers:** Natural Helpers is a peer-helping program focused on strengthening communication and helping skills. The program has three basic goals: to teach helpers effective ways to support friends, to teach helpers positive ways to take good care of themselves, and to teach helpers ways to contribute to a safe and supportive school environment.

Natural Helpers recognizes that within schools an informal "helping network" exists. In middle school students begin to seek out peers for support and occasionally teachers or other school staff that they trust. Our program prepares the "natural helpers" to respond effectively when friends ask for support which includes seeking out trusted adults when needed.

Our contribution to the school community involves planning school wide events such as Mix It Up day, presenting the Youth Suicide Prevention Peer to Peer training program and planning activities in recognition of Mental Health Awareness month to reduce the stigma of seeking support for mental health concerns.

Natural Helpers meet weekly for ongoing training, helper check-in, and activity planning.

- **MIHS BRIDGES - Lesson Topic: Challenging Perceptions of Disability:** Instead of bringing awareness to Disability Month by posting pictures of accomplished people with disabilities in the halls with inspirational sayings, Andrea Cusack and Jamie Prescott designed a BRIDGES lesson to challenge people's perceptions of what disability is and means. Students reflected on what constitutes being an inspirational person and then they were presented with the idea that preparing photos of accomplished disabled individuals further perpetuates the stereotype of "wow, look what (name) did, in spite of (name of disability here)." Next students watched a TedTalk by Stella Young, a disability advocate, teacher, and comedian. Following the short video, students read a post from the Humans of New York Facebook page about a young disabled woman. In both examples, the women explained that by viewing disabled people as inspirational, non-disabled people were pitying them. Students then discussed several questions: *Why do you feel people with disabilities don't want to be seen as inspirational?; How might being seen as an inspiration be damaging to people with disabilities?; What does it mean to pity someone?; Why do you think that both Stella and the girl from the Humans of New York photo reject pity from others?; and Negative attitudes or assumptions about persons with disabilities often stem from insufficient knowledge. What do you wish you knew about this topic so that you were more aware of others?*
- **MIHS Forefront Team:** Suicide is the second leading cause of death in youth ages 15-24 in both the U.S. and in Washington State. With an increased number of suicide attempts and students with suicidal ideations, MIHS established a Forefront Team to be better prepared to prevent suicide. In collaboration with Forefront, the MIHS team (including administrators, counselors, faculty, and parents) is developing a crisis plan that includes a focus on suicide prevention, intervention, re-entry, and postvention; providing training to faculty and staff to recognize the signs/symptoms of suicidal behavior and how to respond; offering education to parents on how to respond to the signs/symptoms of stress, depression and/or suicidal ideation in teens; and assessing how/where students are being - or could be - taught to identify when a peer is troubled and what to say and do in response.

Theme 3: Responsible decision-making

- **Elementary PE Curriculum Pilot** - P.E. students in our elementary schools are piloting a new program, *Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum* (EPEC). Included in the curriculum is a module on personal and social skills where children are taught and practice social behaviors that show respect for self and others during physical activity settings. During the *Compassion for Others* lessons, students practice encouraging students who might be challenged in a physical activity. They also practice praising others for contributions and achievements regardless of levels of ability. In the *Cooperation* portion of the module, students practice taking turns, sharing materials and working through disagreements with peers (e.g. interpreting rules of a game). Students learn how to hold themselves accountable for personal actions and how to prepare to participate in activities during the *Responsibility* lessons. Other learning objectives fall under *Self-Control and Respect for Others* skill sets. Most skills are taught in grades K-2 and reviewed in grades 3 -5. They are often incorporated during other P.E activities (e.g. encouraging others while they dribble a soccer or basketball.)
- **WM PAWS:** PAWS is the description of the basic expectations our West Mercer community holds for the behavior of every member of our community from students to staff to parents to volunteers. PAWS stands for: **P**actice Kindness, **A**ct Responsibly, **W**elcome Challenges, and **S**how Respect. PAWS describes how we work together as a school community to make West Mercer a great place to learn and grow. We have specific PAWS descriptions for the classroom and common areas. To reinforce

this important learning students are often given PAWS certificates for demonstrating one of the four (4) PAWS behaviors. We also have PAWS descriptions for the community members and parents who interact with students and staff at school. Teachers define and model PAWS for classrooms and common areas for their students, and our MIYFS counselor and PALS program further support the efforts of teachers with lessons and support plans for students.

- **Lakeridge Character Trait of the Month:** Lakeridge students and staff focus on demonstrating positive character traits each month. October - Kindness, November - Gratitude, December - Empathy, January - Perseverance, February - Respect, March - Optimism/Positive Attitude, April - Risk Taking, May - Problem Solving, June - Self-Control/Self-Management. Students that practice the trait of the month are granted a Lion's Character certificate and every month, two students from each classroom are invited to join the principal for lunch in the "Lion's Den." Teachers and students create activities within the classroom and school to promote the character trait of the month, daily reminders and motivations are announced school wide in the morning, and school-wide activities and assemblies take place.
- **Islander Middle School Raising Awareness:** Throughout the month of October, Islander Middle School students had a variety of opportunities to raise awareness of bullying, harassment and intimidation as well as successful strategies to end such behaviors. The month began with a "Walk, Rock and Roll Against Bullying," where students dressed in blue and walked to raise awareness of issues of bullying. Students then had an opportunity to learn and reflect on what it means to be an upstander instead of a bystander, watching films sponsored by the organization "Bystander Revolution," and engaging in follow-up discussions. Additionally, all Islander students participated in a reflective art project, creating their own images of boots to "stomp out bullying." On their boots, students wrote about times when they have witnessed or experienced bullying, and reflected on successful strategies to try when bullying occurs. The boots now hang on the walls of IMS for all students and staff to view. The month culminated in "Mix-It-Up Day," a national event that encourages students to meet new people and celebrate the diversity of the school community.
- **AP Stats Community Service Learning Project at MIHS:** AP Statistics students will develop a service-learning based statistics project in which they partner with a non-profit organization in our local MI community. The goal of the project is to synthesize the major concepts of experimental design, data analysis, and statistical inference in the real-world context of community service. Through this project, students integrate their conceptual understanding of statistics within the practical functioning of their local community, ultimately gaining a deeper appreciation for the role statistics plays in the organization and evaluation of service societies. In particular, students will participate in a group which will provide the following four services: meeting with the agency and developing a survey instrument, conducting a survey, compiling data and performing statistical inference procedures, and presenting the results. As part of the final product, students will create an infographic that summarizes their findings and can be used by the non-profit. A large component of the overall process is student self-reflection on their progress and product.

Theme 4: Citizenship

- **Elementary Student Council:** All three elementary schools have a student council. 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.

Student leaders are typically 3rd, 4th, or 5th graders and represent their classes and act as a liaison with primary classrooms.

- **Elementary Gardening Club/Green Team:** The elementary schools demonstrate citizenship by taking care of their schools through gardening and/or the green team. Kindergarten through fifth grade students give back to their school by gardening and promoting green initiatives. Students empty recycling bins in the classrooms, help monitor the compost routine in the cafeterias, tend to the gardens, and work with the green team teacher to raise awareness about reducing, reusing, and recycling.
- **Islander Middle School WEB Program:** WEB, which stands for “Where Everybody Belongs”, is a middle school orientation and transition program that welcomes the 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 mentor from the 8th grade class to be WEB Leaders. As positive role models, WEB Leaders are mentor 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.

In addition WEB Leaders take one trimester of the WEB class in which they are taught the “Servant Leadership” model in relation to their experience as a student, as a WEB Leader and as a member of our community. Through this model, WEB Leaders are increasing their understanding of empathy, self-awareness and self-reflection. WEB provides a structure in which students make real connections with each other thus increasing school safety and reducing incidence in bullying.

- **Mercer Island High School Civics Course:** The new Civics class is taught as a semester-long course, which covers local, state, and national government systems and includes an emphasis on the role of the citizen in each level of government. There are three main units of study. First, students study the moral foundations of different political attitudes and ideologies. Second, they explore how campaigns, elections and voters influence politics and policy. Third, they study case studies about social, economic, and foreign policy. Throughout the course, students have the opportunity to explore their personal values, discuss current events, and follow local, state and national elections, campaigns and policies. For example, students were asked to create election information before the last general election to be displayed in the school informing their peers about how to register to vote, when the election was, and which positions and issues were on the ballot. MIHS participated in the WA State Student Mock Election online and compared our results with the county and state results. Students know who all their representatives are and have written a letter voicing their opinion on the Growth Management Act to a City Council board member. Students were required to participate in a Civic Engagement event and reflect upon how that activity demonstrated a feature of our substantive democracy. Most recently, students formed interest groups and became "experts" on an issue, argued a position on this issue, and created a website to inform their peers how they can get involved in issues ranging from homelessness, food scarcity, tax reform, education reform, human trafficking, parks, and drug/alcohol education. Next, students will be completing an Action Project which is a multi-step project that asks students to apply their understanding of civic responsibilities in order to interact with others in the political system to improve society.
- **Mercer Island High School Band Annual Food Drive:** Six years ago in an effort to build community within the band program, model gratitude, strengthen leadership within the ensemble and fill a need in the Mercer Island community, the MIHS Band Program organized its first MIHS Band Food Drive.

Organized by enterprising student leaders as well as the members of the Band Student Advisory (an elected representative group of band students) the MIHS Band Food Drive has since collected over twenty tons of food for Mercer Island Youth and Family Services and Northwest Harvest. The Band food drive incorporates section pride by rewarding the section with the most pounds of food collected per member with a pizza party. This year senior trumpet player Adrian Ashley and senior horn player Alison Rorem are heading up the drive. We look forward again to utilizing the numbers of students, existing communications structure, effective student leadership, and great attitudes to help do some good and give back to our community.

- **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 purpose set by 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. These lessons are extended in middle schools with overarching themes related to harassment and cyberbullying, online safety, and leaving a positive digital footprint, with a lesson taught in 7th grade language arts, and 8th grade health. In addition, 6th students are exposed to an extensive unit on digital citizenship in 6th grade tech block, and every other year 7th and 8th graders hear a presentation from Officer Stefanie Thomas from the Seattle Police Department and Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force regarding internet crimes and online safety. Annually in October, all high school students partake in an interactive lesson in Bridges exploring the causes and effects of bullying and harassment. Additionally, all incoming 9th graders were provided training on acceptable digital uses of their 1 to 1 iPad.