

**Mercer Island School District #400
Board of Directors Meeting**

June 25, 2015

WORK AND DELIBERATION

Monitoring of Fundamental 6 – *Cultivating Global Awareness*

Fundamental 6: Cultivate Global Awareness and embrace diversity, with a focus on respect acceptance, and understanding real-world problems, issues, concerns, commonalities, differences and interdependence.

BACKGROUND AND FACTS:

The administrative team is committed to implementation of the 2020 Vision including the six fundamentals. The following will explain the work being done in our schools to meet Fundamental 6 – *Cultivating Global Awareness*.

The leadership team considered the superintendent's interpretation of Fundamental 6 and based on the interpretation supported by the board, the monitoring is divided around three themes:

Theme 1: Cultivate an awareness of global society is an important context for learning (includes the ideas of interdependence and fluency in a second language)

Theme 2: Cultivate an understanding of diverse perspectives (including respecting, understanding, accepting and celebrating diversity)

Theme 3: Cultivate an understanding of concepts and ideas that impact the world (includes environmental, social, cultural, religious, political and economic relations; also includes real world problem solving)

The following indicators represent a baseline for representative quantitative and qualitative data that is already being collected to support the monitoring of Fundamental 6.

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

Numerous quantitative factors were considered to highlight implementation of Fundamental 6.

First considered was the changing demographics of the Mercer Island School District. Below is a chart of the student population by race for the last five years.

District Ethnicity Breakdown	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Hispanic/Latino	2.7%	3.4%	3.6%	3.9%	4.2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Asian	19.4%	19.0%	18.6%	18.5%	19.4%
Black/African American	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.4%	1.2%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%
White	73.6%	72.4%	71.5%	69.8%	67.9%
Two or More Races	2.4%	3.3%	4.6%	5.8%	6.9%

Mercer Island School District is becoming more diverse in many ways, including our racial diversity.

Next, the Instructional Leadership team considered a broad range of indicators including enrollment in world languages, annual Educational Effectiveness Survey of staff, parents and students, and enrollment in various courses.

Theme	Indicator	SY 10-11	SY 11-12	SY 12-13	SY 13-14	SY 14-15
Theme 1 – Cultivate an awareness of global society	% 7 th grade students enrolled in World Languages	40.3	46.9	46.7	65.0	64.6
	% 8 th grade students enrolled in World Languages	21.0	29.7	37.1	43.1	50.9
	% 9 th grade students enrolled in World Languages	87.4	90.5	86.6	85.8	82.1
	% 10 th grade students enrolled in World Languages	89.3	87.0	86.9	84.9	82.9
	% 11 th grade students enrolled in World Languages	75.8	80.3	74.3	69.2	74.7
	% 12 th grade students enrolled in World Languages	46.2	43.2	40.6	29.7	28.3
	% 12 th grade students who took 4 years of a World Language	39.0	35.7	34.3	24.4	25.1
	% of students who took at least one fourth year/fifth year/AP course in World Languages	14.8	16.1	16.1	12.8	12.9
Theme 2 – Cultivate an understanding of diverse perspectives	% of staff who agree “The curriculum we teach reflects the diversity of the community we serve.”	49	55	52	49	45
	% of parents who agree “This school has activities to celebrate different cultures, including mine.”	67	71	64	51	46
	% of staff who agree “This school has activities to celebrate the diversity of this community.”	50	58	54	52	55
	% of students who agree “This school has activities to celebrate (culture) student differences.”	47	53	55	50	50
	% of students who agree “The school respects student differences (different cultures) in our community.”	70	71	80	80	79
	% of staff who agree “We have opportunities to learn effective teaching strategies for the diversity represented in our school.”	25	27	45	41	38
	% of staff who agree “We are provided training to meet the needs of a diverse student population in our school.”			40	32	37
	% of staff who agree “The school addresses issues of diversity (cultural responsiveness) in a timely and effective manner.”	29	29	53	46	50
Theme 3 – Cultivate an understanding of concepts and ideas that impact the world	% 7 th and 8 th grade students enrolled in Global Citizenship elective			4.0	2.9	3.2
	% 9 th grade students enrolled in Global History and Global Studies	77.8	69.5	71.0	65.0	62.0
	% 12 th grade students enrolled in International Studies	36.0	21.6	22.5	15.5	22.9
	% 12 th grade students enrolled in AP Comparative Government and Politics	25.0	49.6	38.0	52.8	48.6
	% 12 th grade students enrolled in International Entrepreneur	2.3	3.2	3.7	7.9	3.5
	% 11 th and 12 th grade students enrolled in AP Microeconomics		2.3		3.1	
	% 11 th and 12 th grade students enrolled in AP Macroeconomics	7.8		7.0		8.7

	% 11 th and 12 th grade students enrolled in AP Environmental Science	14.2	11.5	12.8	18.5	14.2
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These data show that students take advantage of opportunities in the area of global awareness including high levels of participation in world languages, and accessing a variety of global centric course offerings including electives at both IMS and MIHS. Additionally, students feel the schools respects student differences.

These data also suggest future work around curriculum that reflects our diversity as well as professional development opportunities for staff to meet the needs of our diverse populations. Based on these Theme 2 data and our own internal reflection on increase diversity of the school district, the superintendent will be presenting a draft Fundamental 7 for consideration at the June 25, 2015 Board retreat.

QUALITATIVE INDICATORS:

The following qualitative data provides snapshots into Fundamental 6 - Cultivating Global Awareness. Several but not all will be highlighted at the May 29, 2014 board meeting.

Theme 1: Awareness of global society is an important context for learning (includes the ideas of interdependence and fluency in a language)

- Elementary Student Council Humanitarian Projects:** The student council at each school has been responsive to local and global needs and disasters and catastrophes. Our student councils have rallied the student body to respond to the tsunami in the Philippines and the more local landslide in Oso, Washington. Students have also participated in food/clothing drives for the Mercer Island Food Bank, Treehouse, and the Humane Society. Students at all levels learned about the events, how the local population was affected, and how they could help solve the problem.
- IMS WE day/Global Citizenship:** The Global Citizenship class, led by Jan Brousseau, took the We Day challenge to bring local and global awareness to students at IMS. The class began the year by learning about a variety of different actions that people around the world are taking to improve the lives of the global community. The students then worked collaboratively to decide on a local and global action. Locally, the students worked with Mercer Island Youth and Family Services to conduct a food drive around the holidays. Globally, they raised money for schools in Kenya (Brick by Brick), and raised money for clean water in India. Their work culminated in an invitation to WE Day.
- IMS UW Engineering Field Trip** – Each April a group of 6th graders go on a field trip to the University of Washington to participate in the Discovery Days activities sponsored by the department of engineering. There are demonstrations, many hands-on activities and lots of opportunity to learn about real-world problems being addressed by students there. At one exhibit where students tried to build a model building that could withstand the forces of an earthquake, the engineering students shared information about what happened to buildings in recent earthquakes around the world. In another exhibit, students learned about sensor attachments for canes that allow the user to detect and avoid obstacles. There were other exhibits including ones for Engineers Without Borders projects in Guatemala, use of drones,

and advancements in cancer research. The students are exposed to machines and technology that many have never seen before. In an exciting way, the students discover that science is important in many ways and it is fun, too.

- **IMS World Languages:** Over the last several years, IMS has significantly expanded the foreign language opportunities for students. Traditionally, IMS only offered Spanish language to middle school students. In order to diversify and expand experiences for students, IMS now offers Spanish, Chinese, and French to 7th and 8th graders.
- **MIHS Music from a Variety of Cultures – MIHS Bands:** In preparing any piece of music, knowledge of the cultural, historical and harmonic framework in which the piece was written is critical in order to present an authentic performance. In band this year, students explored Russian, Czech, American, French, German, South American, Mexican, and Spanish composers spanning time periods covering over four hundred years. Over the course of each performance series, the process of learning, hearing and incorporating each of these diverse harmonic languages supports our students' best product, expands their musical vocabulary, and opens their minds to sounds around them that they may otherwise dismiss.

Theme 2: Understanding of diverse perspectives (including respecting, understanding, accepting and celebrating diversity)

- **IP Diversity Poems and reflections:** Fifth grade students at Island Park have been incorporating activities from Teaching Tolerance, lessons created by the Southern Poverty Law Center. While they were learning about overlooked African American contributions during the Revolutionary War, students wrote "Just Because" poems where they shared a little known or misunderstood aspect of themselves. In the activity, they were asked to think deeply about what makes them unique and misconceptions others might harbor based on that uniqueness (e.g. ethnicity, race, gender, skill sets, etc.). They read their very personal poems to each other and discussed the feelings embodied in the pieces. Discussion was rich in that it revealed similar/diverse feelings, apprehensions, joys, pride and wonderings felt by their peers.
- **Elementary Culture Fairs:** There are school day and community celebrations/family education nights at each school that encourage students to explore their own heritage and the cultural influences in their own community to promote global awareness, cultural competency, and awareness, mutual respect and understanding.
- **7th Grade Culture projects:** Every year, all IMS 7th grade students develop a culture project that highlights the culture of the student and their family. These projects involve students researching a self-selected component of their family's culture and its impact on the local, regional, and/or global communities. Students, through this project, interact with their culture and present their findings to the rest of the class to enhance cultural awareness and understanding for all.
- **IMS Egyptian Ruler Project:** It started with Hatshepsut—a woman who took more power than was offered and used her power to improve her community. A leapfrog of research and questioning led my 6th graders (the "Legion of Awesome") to seek answers to the question, "How do we empower those who may not be offered by the world the power they deserve?" After research and discussion, the LOA chose to support the Make-a-Wish Foundation,

observing that kids are empowered by having ways to relate with their peers, and that chronic or terminal illness dramatically impedes that. They wanted to give kids a way to connect with others. And they did! With minimal prompting and guidance, they organized a bake sale (including contacting businesses as potential locations, advertising in multiple forms and forums, rallying volunteers from our class, and baking and acquiring supplies)... and then they ran it. They earned \$292.76... and invaluable lessons about teamwork, organization, and being part of a wider world community.

- **Political Independence & 21st Century Skills Workers Need:** This recent AP Comparative Government unit researched countries and explored reasons why certain countries should be independent. The students looked at the country's current political state, economic state, social state; examined historical context and conflicts; identified the greatest obstacles in seeking independence; identified the ramifications both locally and globally of independence; and then advocated for independence using social media campaigns (Twitter, blogs, etc.). During the project students had to employ the "10 Skills 21st Century Workers Need" during the process and then had to assess their effectiveness.
- **MIHS Unified Sports Teams:** MIHS Student Mitchell Meade took his love of sports and his interest in supporting people with disabilities and combined them to create the first two MIHS Unified Sports Teams. During the winter sports' season, Mitchell proposed starting a unified basketball team and working collaboratively with special education teacher Sue Job to make it a reality. He found a coach, recruited potential players, and sought approval as a club. Mitchell did all of the leg-work to provide the opportunity for students with disabilities to play basketball competitively with their peers in the Unified League. The interest and success was outstanding as the Islanders' Unified Team won first place in the end of season tournament. With the incredible success of the basketball team and an interest from students and their families to continue with unified sports offerings, Mitchell and Sue expanded the program to offer Unified Soccer this spring.
- **MIHS Student Diversity Task Force:** A student task force charged with providing insight about issues/concerns around diversity was formed this year as part of our SIP Plan goals. This group met with the MIHS administration four times between January and June to share perspectives about diversity and sensitivity training needs for students and staff. The group focused on religious, racial, and cultural differences. The Student Diversity Task Force drafted a list of activities to focus on next year and they will continue to provide input and feedback as we establish our MIHS Diversity Committee.
- **MIHS Every Face Matters:** Inspired by the former principal of Columbine High School, MIHS Principal, Vicki Puckett, collaborated with social studies teacher, Mike Radow, to get every student's face on the wall of MIHS. As you walk down the halls of MIHS and look up, you can now see the face of every MIHS student – because every face and person matter. The purpose of this project was to show that each student belongs to the MIHS school community. These pictures were also a visual way to show how diverse our students are.

Theme 3: Understanding of concepts and ideas that impact the world (includes environmental, social, cultural, religious, political and economic relations; also includes real world problem solving)

- **Elementary Green Team:** Elementary school students engage in work as part of a Green Team throughout their K-5 careers. Students learn about and engage in recycling and composting every day in the lunch room as they sort their refuse from lunch. As students get older, they begin to engage more in the recycling work of the building by learning about and supporting the whole-school efforts of thoughtful using and managing classroom resources and collecting and managing recycling. In addition, students engage in environmental education through classroom learning and a variety of field trips and speakers. This year at West Mercer, for example, 5th graders took a field trip to learn about local salmon and the environmental factors that affect them. In addition, the West Mercer Green Team hosted an Earth Challenge Assembly, an interactive presentation to teach all our learners about reducing, reusing, recycling, composting, and knowing how to make personal choices that support the environment.
- **Elementary Educational Field Trips:** Mercer Island Elementary students are given yearly opportunities to develop awareness and understanding of concepts and ideas that impact the world through a variety of educational field trips into the greater Seattle area. These field trips include visits to area art and cultural facilities, museums, government institutions, environmental education programs, and businesses that directly connect to grade standards.
- **Elementary Educational Speakers:** Elementary students are also exposed to the wider world through various instructional opportunities where educational speakers are brought to the classrooms including artists in residence, scientists, members of local diverse communities, government leaders, and community members who enrich classroom instruction by sharing unique life experiences. The overarching goal is that students are able to make connections that further their understanding of the interconnectedness of our community.
- **Elementary Social Studies Curriculum:** The elementary social studies curriculum is designed to appropriately develop a child's understanding from self to family; family to local community; local to regional community; and from state to country. Three times throughout this sequence, a child also is provided an opportunity to find their place within the global society through study of countries and cultures around the world, starting with learning about their own family's global cultural heritage.
- **Elementary Engaging in Current Events:** Using periodical publications and digital resources, teachers engage students in current events throughout the national and global communities. Students across grades use Time for Kids, National Geographic, Scholastic News, Seattle Times, and web-based news sites to learn about and discuss people and events across the world. Using iPad apps, teachers have the capacity to select articles with varying reading levels, allowing all students first-hand access to text to support their learning of diverse perspectives and experiences of people around the globe.
- **Native Americans Study and Salmon Study:** Our third graders study the native peoples of the local area and the Pacific Northwest. As fifth graders, they link this knowledge to their study of salmon as an important environmental component of our area. Students develop an understanding of how the natural environment effects and supports development of environmental connectedness.
- **Eighth Grade Language Arts:** The eighth grade Language Arts curriculum is a thematic examination of the human condition through the lens of global human rights. Students acquire

a fundamental understanding of the United Nations ' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and apply that knowledge to their analysis of required novels. In *Maus*, *Animal Farm* and *To Kill A Mockingbird*, students gain a global perspective as they learn about historical examples of human rights violations. Students are also asked to think critically about potential global human rights issues in the dystopian *Hunger Games* and science fiction short stories. The eighth grade Language Arts curriculum equips students to leave with a sense of empowerment and the critical thinking skills to become globally aware citizens and students of literature.

- **MIHS Collaborating to Design Curriculum for *Huck Finn* and Beyond:** Kyana Cavaiani, a Race and Social Justice Facilitator for the City of Seattle, collaborated with American Studies teachers Creighton Laughary and Ed Puchalla to add to their existing repertoire of vocabulary and concepts around "access" and "opportunity." She provided teachers with several of the documents she uses in her work, one of which they adapted for use in the classroom (called Queen Allegory). Her ideas went beyond race, as her job is to get city employees thinking about serving people who do not speak English or do not have a car. Ms. Cavaiani came to MIHS on Mondays throughout the study of *Huck Finn*. She helped plan and co-taught some of those lessons and she participated in the classes online discussions. As a result, when the class later studied texts that again addressed race, social class, immigrants, and poverty, the students were reminded of their previous work with Ms. Cavaiani and re-applied the concepts and vocabulary she introduced. In this way, she helped to further integrate the block class. She also modeled appropriate use (or no use) of language--pronouns, as well as the n-word and descriptive terms, like negro, African American, and black American--helping to reinforce proper diction to the students.
- **Mercer Trade Inc. – International Entrepreneurship:** This company was developed by students in the entrepreneurship class. Students study the global market and set up a business to support third-world countries purchasing items such as bags, jewelry, clothing, and food items to sell. Proceeds from this business go back to the countries where the goods were purchased from to support local economies. This year's focus country was Vietnam.
- **MIHS *Honor and Sacrifice* Film Screening for Asian Heritage Month:** In honor of Asian Heritage month, students and community members were invited to attend a screening of *Honor and Sacrifice* with documentary film makers Lucy Ostrander and Karen Matsumoto on May 6. The 28-minute documentary won several prestigious awards and has been featured at local festivals. Students collaborated with social studies teacher Ed Puchalla to bring this event to MIHS and they had the opportunity to extend their learning by asking questions of the filmmakers following the film. A quote from the film's website captures the significance and relevance of its creation: "We often uncover secrets when making films, but the revelations in this documentary astonished us. We intended to tell the story of an unlikely hero, but the production became a discovery of the suppressed struggles of three generations of a Japanese-American family from Hiroshima divided by World War II. Their journey is an embodiment of the immigrant experience, ultimately revealing the extraordinary strength that America gains from its diversity."-Don Sellers & Lucy Ostrander

RECOMMENDATION:

The superintendent recommends the board achieve a strong majority or unanimous decision on the monitoring of Fundamental 6. To that end, he further recommends that should additional data / indicators be requested, that such additional information receive a majority vote of the board with the expectation that the board as a body provides direction to the schools around the work they are doing with Vision 2020 and its accompanying fundamentals.