



Memorandum

To: Mr. Chamberlin and Members of the Board
From: Michael Bessette
Date: 4/1/11
Re: Principal's Report

Mr. Chamberlin and Members of the Board:

In keeping with Mr. Chamberlin's request, this month's Principal's Report is focused upon committees, and their impact on the school and District.

At MSS, committee work influences grade level work, the school grades at large, and the school community inclusive of parents and students. We have several committees that are considered to be "standing" committees that work year round towards the achievement of their goals. These committees include CORE (Celebrating Our Respect For Everyone), ADL (Adult Leadership Team), Wellness, and curriculum committees in the areas of math and science. Additionally, we have building committees such as our SSC (Student Support Committee) and our Child Study Team operating to help ensure that we thoroughly examine data related to student behavior and academic achievement. These committees have been very successful in providing our staff critical information to help monitor and teach the students in our school in the most effective and timely manner.

CORE has been very active in working with staff and students to plan and organize assemblies, community clubs, and the all school field trip on Earth Day. Additionally, they have supported the work of the Team of Tomorrow and the Adult Leadership Team. The ADL has worked hand in hand with the Team of Tomorrow to help design their anti-bullying video and assist them in their work in the school to develop positive school climate.

At the District level, I will take this opportunity to share some of the efforts made by the Professional Development committee this year. The PD committee began the year by working to explore several alternative models by which high quality PD might be provided to staff through efficient and cost effective means. While most our explorations discovered that many of the online services that provide PD through media and internet services failed to meet the staff's expectations for engaging content, we were able to locate other opportunities and resources by which we could expand opportunities and differentiate trainings for staff. We are still exploring other venues and opportunities on

the Internet, as this is a growing area of PD training resources, and will not abandon the idea as having merit.

The PD committee also worked with CSS (Center for School Success) to help develop and implement a graduate level course on Neurodevelopmental Approaches to Teaching. This course was held at MSS this year and enrolled approximately fifteen staff members and administrators. It has been a very engaging class and has helped staff to realize the importance of learning about the brain and it's development to better understand how and why we teach. Participants in the class were given the opportunity to obtain one graduate credit through Plymouth State University.

As the remainder of the year comes to a close, the PD committee will work with the staff to help develop individualized plans for the make-up of the April 8th PD day cancelled to make up for snow days. They will also help the Leadership Team to generate a summer curriculum and training opportunity for staff that is the tradition in the Hopkinton School District.

Finally, I would take a moment to discuss the Science Committee. The Science committee has met on several occasions this year to begin the preliminary preparations for a summer session in which they will examine the current curriculum standards and the proposed Common Core standards in relation to one another. Through this process, the committee will derive the expectations for how we address the science curriculum in the Hopkinton School District and the methods best used to assess our progress in meeting our goals for student performance. Science will be undergoing substantial curriculum shift in the coming two to three years, as the Common Core makes a distinct impact on the standards for learning. Our goal as a committee will be more than to provide clarity around the standards to staff, but also address that which we believes makes the Hopkinton learning experience unique and significant for our communities' children. This committee is in its early stages of work, but will ramp up as the close of the year advances.

All told, committees are alive and well in MSS and in the Hopkinton School District and we are proud of the efforts of our participants in helping to make tomorrow a better day than today through collaboration and teamwork.