



HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT School Administrative Unit 66

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Superintendent's Report Hopkinton School District

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A few years ago, *Optima Doctrina* (exemplary instruction) was established as the theme for the school year at the middle and high schools. Instruction is the *raison d'être* for schooling. High quality instruction is incredibly important. The impact of high quality instruction can never be minimized. *Optima Doctrina* has to be and is the accepted standard for our staff. As the opportunity to visit schools and classrooms throughout the district it is clear that the staff is devoted to high quality instruction. It is also clear that everyone must be committed to the continual improvement process.

Observations

- Experienced staff: About 90% of teachers have a continuing contract (achieved tenure) in the Hopkinton School District including every teacher, but one at Harold Martin and Maple Street Schools. About 60% have obtained Masters Degrees. That being said, malaise is not a vice for this teaching staff. The work ethic and devotion of Hopkinton School District teachers is incredibly strong. The peer pressure/expectations from colleagues to perform is palpable and key. This experience and training is leveraged to achieve high quality curriculum work, sharing of instructional practices, and the decreased need for district level teacher support.
- There is a strong emphasis by administrators on relationships, climate, and culture with regard to teacher /student interaction. The expectations for teacher/student interaction are clear and consistent.
- Teachers utilize a variety of instructional techniques: teacher centered instruction (a teacher is the focus of the class, such as the new American Lecture), cooperative learning (students have group learning goals and are assigned definite roles/responsibilities), experiential/authentic learning (students use actual data or real life circumstances to provide the framework for learning), and service learning (students learn while performing a service for others).
- The culture of collaboration is strong across the district.
- There is a strong commitment to personalize instruction to meet the needs of all students. The goal of this philosophy, formally known as differentiated instruction, tailors instruction for individual learning style, interest, and ability.
- The use of technology: The use and availability of technology to enhance instruction within and between buildings is inconsistent (interactive whiteboards, permanently installed projectors, and documents cameras at the middle high schools, limited projector availability in each elementary school). The use of technology has increased: from wikis in learning centers to voice threads at the elementary schools to digital portfolios.

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- Administrators filling the role of instructional coach/facilitator/leader is important but often, by necessity, supplanted.

Areas of focus

- Increasing the availability of technology
- Providing opportunities for teachers to observe each other's teaching
- Increasing one's ability to differentiate instruction
- Increase the expectation that teachers change instruction based on student learning data.
- Continue to establish student learning as the most important part of the Hopkinton Schools
- Prepare for the transition from a veteran to less experienced staff (8 teachers ≥ 60 years of age, 40 ≥ 55 , and 55 ≥ 50).

Thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven M. Chamberlin
Superintendent of Schools