



HARWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNCIL  
Professional Library  
2:45 pm

Minutes: Monday, January 27, 2020

[LINK](#)

Co- Chair: Mary Oldach, Principal

Co- Chair: Kathie Smith, Community Member

- Introductions/Attendees
  - Mary Oldach, Lisa McMananmin, Julia Blois, Karen Booth, Kathie Smith, Mary Levy, Meg Shaffer, Adam Caen, Angela Porter, Joy Jordan, Sharon Hughes
- Tour: Science Classroom, Mr. Weimer
  - Mr. Billy Weimer demonstrated the instructional focus areas by grade level, the inquiry approach to learning and science journaling. Billy sees students making connections to higher grade projects as topics “spiral” (K clouds and Grade 3 weather). Science is very messy but exciting! Students are engineering solutions, for example second graders designed bird feeders to attract different bird species based upon their perching abilities. Student choice encourages freedom to explore and heightens engagement. As a result, Billy encounters few behavior

issues in class. School Council members encouraged Billy to solicit donations for everyday supplies (yeast, dish soap, etc) from school families.

- HES Community Playground Update - The Harwich Community Preservation Commission voted to put forward \$500,000 in CPC funding for the Harwich Community Playground. The next step is for the project to be placed on the warrant by the Board of Selectmen, and then voted on at the Town Meeting
- 2019-2020 (FY21) Budget Update - Mary Oldach provided an update on the FY 21 proposed level service budget. The impact on HES is that one second grade classroom will be reduced, and the full time equivalent will be reallocated to the high school to address an enrollment “bubble” . Class size at the two elementary schools is targeted to be 18+/- . In third and fourth grade, there is a differential of about 4 students per class, with CES having smaller class sizes of 15-16 students. School Choice will be offered at CES in these grades to fill “empty seats” and to balance class size inequities.
- 2019 - 2020 School Improvement Plan
  - Strategic Focus #3: Closing the Achievement Gap
    - Mary Oldach showed the Council a video which highlighted the diversity of our student body. Of the current 552 students, 135 are non-white, 31 are English Learners, and 14 countries are represented in our school. The video captured the “environmental mirrors” in our school which are the printed images in which are students can see cultural graphic representation, role models, diverse

literature, etc which reflect their own backgrounds.

This safe and supportive environment creates a sense of belonging and accessibility for all.

- Spring Extracurricular Clubs are now free of charge, and After School Classes are free to students who receive free and reduced lunch. Twenty-seven students received scholarships for classes, and 39 students who receive free or reduced lunch are participating in a free club or class. Enrollment is up in our clubs and classes, and the free cost promotes equitable access to these after school offerings.
- Strategic Focus #4 : Improve Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for All Learners
  - The MRSD ELA Task Force is vetting two ELA curriculums for adoption and meeting with publisher representatives. Field tests may be this spring and adoption may be as early as next fall.
  - Mary talked about the focus on building collective efficacy within the staff and the importance of positive adult culture as the foundation of school improvement. An indicator of staff efficacy is that 72% of the certified teaching staff have been active in a taskforce, committee or leadership position. Building adult professional culture and promoting self care is a focus of Mary's leadership approach.
- Strategic Area #2: Strengthen Social and Emotional Well-Being

- The “Positive Relationship” survey is being taken this week by all Grade 3-12 students. This survey asks student to identify staff members “staff members show you warmth, understanding, respect, and interest, so that you are comfortable sharing your personal problems or concerns with them?” Results will be shared with staff to reinforce relationships and to identify students who need support and connection.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45pm.

Next Meetings for this School Year:

Monday, February 10, 2020

Monday, March 9, 2020

Monday, April 13, 2020

Monday, May 4, 2020