1. Update on administration and Classroom Visits

Principal Puckett and administrative staff (Associate Principals) have been making unannounced visits to the classrooms called learning walks. This was based on “Breakthrough coaching” training that the administration team attended in Vancouver, WA. last summer. The idea is to spend more time in classes, instead of being holed up in administrative offices. Also included Administrative Assistant training so they can take over the clerical part of the operations to free up the Principals’ time. For Principal Puckett, her Administrative Assistant Della Dolby got the training as well on how to help free up the administration to do this.

All administrative staff have been devoting 2 days per week for classroom visits.

When reviewing the past year’s teacher evaluation data, a big area of growth for the entire teaching staff was how to engage students and communicate back and forth (asking questions and leading discussions to deeper learning). So lots of communication with teachers devoted to “what it means to be proficient in this area”. Giving quick feedback after student discussions have been helpful: intake data as class discussions happen and immediately give feedback through Google docs.

Administration meets as group to go over classroom visits looking for consistency - identifying who needs support and possibly some additional training.

So far, 160 visits to classrooms and about 50% of them have been Principal Puckett as Associate Principals will get called to handle individual student matters/crisis management more often. Earlier efforts showed 1st and 7th periods being visited the least, so administration is trying to make sure they get to all periods. Students are noticing the visits and are requesting visits to individual classrooms –not always necessarily bad – sometimes it’s to show off something they did that they are proud of! They want their principals to see a neat project or presentation they are about to give in class to their classmates. Some teachers get more visits than others depending on the needs. Some teachers want help with classroom management ideas with certain classes – such as chemistry in class might be out-of-whack.
Parent Question: Last year, there was a flow chart (MIHS Communication Flowchart) of who to go with concerns.

- Go to teacher first and if teacher is unresponsive, go to Academic Counselor (assigned by last name) and they will intervene. Counselors will then take it to the Associate Principal assigned to your family (by last name) if necessary.

Instructional coaches are key to improvement. Sometimes they are present at the feedback meetings with Principal Puckett and a teacher who is wishes to have them present. Instructional coaches are peers that have been selected for certain skills that they possess. They agree to confidentiality with the teachers they help. An administrator cannot use any information from an instructional coach for evaluation. Instructional coaches cannot share any details of work they are doing with an individual teacher unless that teacher says it is okay. They coach teachers inside and outside of their own department. Some teachers are not comfortable talking to an administrator about their teaching challenges for fear of evaluation being negative so they go directly to instructional coaches for feedback. This has made a huge improvement in the “growth mindset” approach. Teachers feel the instructional coaches are one of the most valuable resources for them. Three coaches are released for .2 (one class period) a day dedicated to instructional coaching. It is certainly not enough time but greatly appreciated.

Instructional coaches are:
- Peggy Aguilar who teaches World Language (Spanish)
- Jeff Randolf who teaches English
- Lynn Adsit who teaches Math

Clarifications on expectations of what good instruction looks like for teachers. Already seeing positive results with the instructional learning walks. Students – important for them to know that the Principals in our school care.

Example shared: Request by student to visit her class – not going well – but Principal Puckett noticed student herself was not prepared to learn - had no materials or iPad – in her group of 4, only one student had all the stuff prepared (so 3 non-task students and 1 on-task student in the group) – gave student feedback that she also needs to be prepared to learn – then gave teacher feedback to rearrange groups so you do not have all the non-task students in one group as other groups seemed to have students on-task.

For Principal Puckett, she got a greater understanding of what is going on in the classrooms. Preconceptions have been changed – what she thought was working was not working, and/or what she thought was not working is.

Next: Principal Puckett is thinking about inviting teachers to be a student for the day to experience 7 courses in one day. Principal Puckett experienced how exhausting this can be just from her visits.

Current SIP goal: curriculum alignment in all content areas.
For example, 9th grade class – try to go through the same experience with different teachers.
Other topics being explored in the future (next three years): How to get better training and support for:
Grading practices and homework
- What is our grading practice?
- What is the point of homework?
- Grading practice is a very sensitive topic with some teachers. Associate Principal Jamie Prescott is going to training on grading practices and homework practices this month to bring back more information to share.

Would eventually like to have all subjects reach agreement on common assessments – making steady progress on this.
This is not to make all teachers to lose their freedom and different styles of teaching, but we want some consistency across the board.

Four departments with Honors program: English, Social Studies, Math, and Science
Some Gen Ed course are mostly boys, with high numbers of 504 and IEP students.
Honors courses mixed gender with 24-25 students.
Disparity between Gen Ed courses and Honors courses
Numbers, etc. Vicki read some data she had been collecting.
Examples are:
non-Honors English 11 Block: 166 students (126 male)
non-Honors English 12: 48 students (30 males)
non-Honors Geometry: 228 students (121 male, 171 female)
Honor geometry: 78 students (52 male, 26 female)
Honors Algebra 2: 119 students (81 male)
Precalculus Honors: 89 students (59 male)
World History Honors: 121 students (67 male, 55 female)
Chemistry 1 Honors: 185 students (82 female)
General student populations: half and half
Senior English 7th period - one girl

So general trend is more boys in Honors Math and more girls in Honors English.

Principal Puckett would like to take a look at the Honors program.
Review with College Board and what they say about students taking Honors courses for admissions.
Class ranking – looking at the value of it? Do we need it?
College admittance requirements – what are they really?
Call colleges and talk to admissions.
Concerned about stress on kids.

Dr. Myerson (MISD School Board member): 10 years ago, district did a study on this issue.
There is a book that he can share with Principal Puckett.
How many AP courses necessary to get in certain colleges.
He believes more AP courses are the key to success.

Think about the load of honors courses.
Fall is the season for increase in suicide among students overall.
Just had some student issues yesterday over the heavy load.
To protect students, MIHS may insert some “speed bumps” into getting into honors courses.

Why do you have to be an expert in everything?
We are killing our students.
Speed bump ideas:
  placement assessment
  commitment: realizing homework load and hours

Parent Comments:
  • Kids do it to themselves
  • “Busy is cool”
  • Want to be with friends so enroll in honors courses.
  • Style of teaching is a factor in choice.
  • Gen Ed instruction may be too slow

Teachers are seeing a mixture of Honors-level students in Gen Ed courses and Gen Ed-level students in Honors courses.
Gen Ed course is becoming a bad word among students.

Parent Comment: Can “Angst” movie be shown to the students?

Parent Comment: Honors vs AP courses
  AP courses are geared towards the tests
  Honors courses might be more interesting – passion subjects for the teachers – and might be more richer and more interesting

**Vicki is NOT taking Honors courses away.**
Not trying to make Honors go away. Just want to know what it means and help students and parents make better informed choices in course selections.

Some of the Honors courses are feeder courses for AP.
One issue for World History Honors – no 9th grade honors social studies to prepare them.
Get college admission people to talk to our staff.
Our students are pretty well prepared when they get to college.
But need to know what else we need to do, what we are not doing.

Talking to Superintendent Donna Colosky and Assistant Superintendent Fred Rundle – about this issue –College Board article mentions GPA is the number one thing that colleges look at.
More preferred and selective colleges – look at essay and experiences.
But would like to hear from actual College admission counselors.

Main worry about 9th graders – killing GPA early as they overload their schedule.
There is an algorithm the college uses – GPA and courses.

Dave Myerson (School Board member):
There are about 50 colleges you can get in 50% of the time. But Highly selective colleges – you need AP courses.

Parent Comment: Could we get a chart or table of time commitments for each course so the students can make the decision for themselves?
For IEP – they meet with parents and students – go through each class and see if they can handle all the courses- so maybe something similar.

**Parent Suggested Topic 1:** Perhaps 9th grade social studies should not be an option if it’s required for Honors World History.
Student asked for it, but could not get in the class.
This is a frustration for the teachers as well.

**Parent Suggested Topic 2:** Harassment in the workplace and educational institution. How is this being covered? Is this covered in Bridges?

...and this leads to the next topic

### 2. Educating students with Social Norms

Especially in light of the Scavenger Hunt
Snail Pound, Islander Girls, Flag Dudes are exclusive groups active at MIHS.
But Snail Pound and Islander Girls are not MIHS clubs.
Every school has a secret group, not just MIHS.
But understanding that not everyone in the 3 groups joined in the activities of the Scavenger Hunt. So please be careful not to stereotype the students in these groups.

We are trying to promote inclusiveness as a school.
And here are students promoting exclusivity.
Faculty is fed up with this issue.
3 cabinet meetings and 2 faculty meetings have been about this topic.

The students using subtle ways of exclusivity in some of these groups.
Example: “oh you are welcome, but we don’t have enough room in our car”.

Student wrote a letter to Principal Puckett in MI Reporter about the Homecoming Assembly Dance.
Met with student directly before letter was published.
Issue is keeping tradition vs inclusivity of all student groups.

What do we do best? What can we control?
We teach, we educate.
Educate about the dangers of what happens.

Movie: “The Hunting Ground”
Movie about the what happens to girls in the college scene
Short version and long version
Getting ready to move into adulthood and fraternity/sorority culture

Movie: “The Mask You Live In”
Geared towards boys
What we as a society expect boys to be like
Actions taken by boys because of societal pressure

Misogyny
Studies from National Misogyny Center
Teachers are beginning to see signs of misogyny among students.
Girls also thinking they have to be a certain way to get attention from boys.

One idea: there was a case about Korean women that were brought to Bellevue to pay debts by prostitution last year and the lead attorney (MI parent) would like to come and give a talk at MIHS.
Try the talk with parents first– so try PAC before the kids.
Some of the things he is concerned - about kids doing illegal acts without knowing.

Teachers feedback: need to slow down to be able to do the follow up conversations.
They are uncomfortable with topic and want training to follow up.
Also they feel this is a lot to tackle and outside of their teaching requirement.
So perhaps do a few of the ideas first. And gradually insert strategically.

Principal Puckett would like to do a workshop for these topics.
But instead of Bridges, teachers would like to work with their regular students.
Teachers are more comfortable with regular students than Bridges students.
Also uncomfortable teachers can join forces with teachers that are comfortable with topic.

Parent Suggestion: Can students vote and remove certain things in MIHS culture that are exclusive and promote popular vote?
For example, Homecoming royalty
Have the students decide what they don’t want at MIHS.

Snail Pound and Islander Girls
Teachers are asking: can we ask them not to wear their clothing in class?
Makes them uncomfortable.
Attorney said no.
In order to ban something, need substantial disruption = riots.

Flag Dudes are part of the school club. They are part of a club called Maroon Platoon. They used to not be a school club before Vicki’s time, with previous Principal and previous Superintendent Dr. Plano. Dr. Plano and the Principal decided to bring them in to become a school club. The purpose of this action was to control more what Flag Dues could do and what they could not do since they are part of a school club. Only having four members in Flag Dudes have helped. Recent parent feedback: Flag Dudes were doing well at waterpolo games and raising school spirit with their cheers.

Homecoming Assembly
Principal Puckett and Admin. stopped Junior class dance when the boys dressed in female clothing started stripping during the assembly. We were not sure what was going to happen next because it was not rehearsed in the assembly practice that morning.
Got a lot of complaints from students and parents about the interference.
But Vicki got a parent letter thanking her for stopping the Junior boys dance routine.
Many parents at PAC also thanked Principal Puckett for stopping the Junior boys dance routine.

Parent Question: Who decides on the content of the assembly?
ASB leadership decides on what is put on at Homecoming Assembly with some guidance from their advisor. It is a give & take with students’ decisions about content.
Perhaps they need adults overseeing the content, or require guidelines.
We now have PASS Parent Representatives to help the ASB leadership.
Could PASS (formerly ASB Parent Reps) provide guidelines to the assembly?

Parent Suggested Topic 3: Vocational classes and Running Start classes in High School
Vocational classes will be the CTE/CCR courses at MIHS.
CCR Department Chair Jennifer McLellan can come in and talk about her Department (which she did last year for PAC). We can also have a counselor who oversees Running Start come and talk about Running Start in future PAC meeting.

Parent Suggested Topic 4: Facebook and Social Media
Opportunity for the school to educate them on the media.
Need to look at sources - know how to identify fake news - to develop a critical eye.
UW has a group that teaches students how to identify fake news. Perhaps the students could benefit from this.

Parent Suggested Topic 5: Jan Sayers retirement
Jan Sayers did not retire.
Jan is on a medical leave of absence.
The course is still the same content.
Parent Suggested Topic 6: Expectation of clubs and mentorship
Advisors for the clubs
We are trying to clean this area up putting in place clear expectations of role of advisors. Principal Puckett was not happy with that area.
It is a liability issue.
Students doing activities without advisors and without their knowing.
But to put it in context, not all the club advisors get paid.
¾ of the teachers do not get paid.
So they feel they are volunteers and act accordingly.
Jamie Prescott, Associate Principal had a mandatory meeting with advisors this fall to set up guidelines.
Students not knowing the expectations – advisor job to sign off and teach them the expectations of their roles in clubs.

Parent Suggested Topic 7: ASB budget and how to collect salaries from ASB budget

Stipends require MIEA (teacher’s union) contract negotiations.
Vicki cannot give stipend to a club advisor unless it is agreed upon by the union.
But she can give extra money (hourly per diem).
$35 hour per diem for extra time spent. However this money must come from the building budget which is tight.

ASB budget pays for book keeper, supervision, etc. then divide the money amongst the clubs.
Trying to be equitable.
These are ASB decisions – so they are students’ decisions, not adults.
But adults can influence these decisions and they do.
There is never enough money.
Currently a hole in athletic budget. Costing more to run athletics then we get for revenue.
School buses are shared with elementary and middle school.
So we have to hire charter buses to transport students – very expensive and asking Booster Clubs to help.
It’s great that many of the MIHS sports teams are doing well – but also killing the budget.
Although this is a good problem to have. Means the students are successful.

ASB fees may go up a tiny bit.
Athletic fees already went up – concerned about raising the fees too high.

Athletic Coaches cannot be paid by ASB alone – not enough

Also our district budget pays 60% for running athletics (coaches’ salaries) but ASB pays the rest.

PTSA has helped school a lot when needed. Thank you so much.

More homeless kids at MIHS this year.
4 legitimately homeless
but probably double that number (not reported)
Most don’t want others to know and will try to hide it.
Not including the couch surfing students who got kicked out of house
Connected with MIYFS and have funds that we can access
New Truancy Law – for schools to find out what is happening, why the student is not coming to school – no funding for that law
Counselors give resources to help students with housing.

**Parent Suggested Topic 7:** Assemblies are all about sports. How about advertising Drama Program and students?
The play is probably the most advertised event right now at this school.
Please go as family night out. Wish more people would attend.
Principal Puckett recommends the play highly!
Next drama production will tackle a serious topic about date rape.