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Heath School School Improvement Plan Update (SIP)

March 24, 2022

School SIP Information

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Our "North Star"

“When children and teachers feel happy, safe, and supported we have room to grow and learn through collaboration and risk-taking with our peers.”

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Objective

Our primary objective is to ensure access, membership, and participation of all community members.

Over the next three years, we will have a particular emphasis on professional growth for all educators; student mental and social emotional health and wellness; and physical health and safety of students, staff, and families. These foci, along with an emphasis on core content standards, will – we believe – allow for the full access, membership, and participation of the students we serve.

As practitioners, staff and community members **actively engage in cycles of inquiry** and are asking ourselves the following questions:

- *What is the impact of my teaching on students, both daily and over time?*
- *What does high-quality teaching and learning mean in an ever-changing society?*
- *What does fair assessment mean, and who decides?*
- *What systems and practices can we disrupt and/or create so that community members can enjoy full access to school?*

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Objective, cont.

Centering these educational quandaries across academic and social disciplines allows us to **collectively reflect on the learning conditions we are establishing for students, reflect on our personal biases, and move our practice forward** so that the most current educational philosophies and pedagogies are being implemented in our classrooms.

Finally, we believe that children should be able to use all kinds of tools to impact their local community. **Our students should be able to approach unstructured problems, define the problem, assess them, engage in cycles of inquiry and feedback** – including success and failure, and work collaboratively towards innovative solutions.

Our SIP goals in the following slides speak directly to our growing edges as an educational community and seek to convey that **we owe an educational debt to students for whom our collective practices have not had the intended impact**. The success of our methods will be measured by how our school accomplishes the following goals, outlined in the next slides.



Goal #1

Every student can advocate for and access what they need.

Our community is focused on developing and nurturing trusting relationships and fostering a sense of whole-school belonging. In particular, we want to prioritize creating affinity groups in an ever-increasing safe space, with dedicated opportunities and scheduling priorities for these group members. In addition, students should be supported both academically and emotionally. Health should be a school where students can practice and learn good mental health hygiene, such as mindfulness, compassion, empathy, and the ability to show up as their authentic selves. When students experience success and/or failure, they do so in a safe and supportive manner. Staff, parents/guardians, and adults will serve as coaches and advocates to facilitate this process whenever necessary. Every student should be able to name and access a trusted school-based adult.



Goal #2

A positive increase in student data returns, particularly for students with disabilities and BIPOC students.

Staff should aim to continue reducing disparities in student learning by providing diverse materials and resources. In addition, staff should be able to provide an equitable learning experience for all students and families. Lesson planning and development will be approached through an anti-bias/anti-racist/anti-ableist lens. Staff will look at specific student growth in myriad areas over time, and seek to understand where students have gained momentum and skills and where they have not. Staff should also participate in their own cycles of reflection and inquiry: What skills am I specifically teaching and why? How are these lessons helping students help themselves and others? How will my instruction lead to more equitable outcomes that empower my students?



Goal #3

Continue to implement cycles of professional learning during faculty meetings.

Staff should be able to walk away from faculty meetings with resources and tools they can use immediately in their practice. Faculty time is productively used as learning time, professional development, and other opportunities to enrich educators' abilities. Routines around adult learning are stable, consistent, and relevant to their work.



Goal #4

Serve as an educational ambassador to the greater PSB community.

Heath should adopt and integrate district-wide practices, policies, and values into their school environment. Recognizing that Heath has a cadre of talented practitioners serving a diverse community, many of the adopted practices can and will be adapted to meet the needs of our students and our shared core values. Members of the Heath community should continue to serve both as a pioneer for best practices (i.e., pilot new curriculum when able) and actively participate in and support larger district and town-wide educational initiatives.

Actions

This plan targets two specific populations at Heath that has shown significant gaps in their performance: Students who receive Special Education services, and Black/African-American students. We seek to improve their academic outcomes by promoting greater access, membership, and inclusion for both of these groups within the Heath community. This can include, but are not limited to:

- **Intentional ongoing efforts to ensure participation of historically marginalized groups (specifically BIPOC students, students with disabilities, LGBTQ+ students, EL students, economically disadvantaged students) in community events:** An inclusive school culture provides a pathway to membership for parents, students, staff, and the broader community, where everyone is seen, represented, and valued. We also recognize that everyone participates differently, and that the development and nurturing of trusting relationships can only be fostered in a safe and inclusive environment.

To this end, we aim to create these **safe spaces for students to engage in affinity groups** by prioritizing and funding specific student clubs (e.g. GSA, Rainbow Club, Young Scholars, METCO Connections, ModelUN) created specifically for these historically marginalized groups, and also ensuring that the RISE program continues to receive priority funding and focus.

Actions, cont.

- **Bi-monthly faculty meetings designed to look deeply at our collective and individual pedagogies, including Anti-Bias/Anti-Racist Pedagogies, Supporting LGBTQ+ Students, Special Education: Models of True Inclusion, and Supporting Student Mental Health.** Our school culture should be guided by progressive educational theories, including, but not limited to:
 - The work of Dr. Gholdy Mohammad's framework "**12 Questions to Ask When Designing Culturally and Historically Responsive Curriculum;**"
 - The **Cycles of Inquiry** ("analyze evidence, determine a focus, implement and support and analyze impact") framework;
 - The "**Participation ---> Membership ---> Access**" framework, of Special Education instruction;
- Heath Staff should also regularly reflect and consider their own work (**intent v. impact**) to help move collective and individual practice toward much more equitable outcomes.

Monitoring Goals

As we enforce this plan over the next three school years, we will revise and adjust our actions as necessary by reviewing the following measures:

- **Improved statistical outcomes**, such as academic growth represented through attendance, reviews of student work, growth in meeting IEP goals, participation in individual and group projects, reading levels, grades, healthy friendships, engagement with the life of the school, SGP, or other measures for each student.
- Hosting student panels during Faculty Meetings so that staff can **hear directly from students** the impact of their work (at least three times per school year)
- **Implementing and deciphering data from the Universal Screener** to decide how to move forward with these new understandings of what students need (at least twice per school year.)



Thank you!