

ASCA National Model Project: Hanson Middle School

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I. Background Information

Hanson Middle School is located in the town of Hanson, Ma. Hanson is located in the Plymouth County, on the south shore, approximated 18 miles south of Boston, Ma. According to the 2000 census there were 9,495 people and 3,123 households in Hanson. The local economy of Hanson began with farming and bogging. Ocean Spray was created with the seven cranberry bogs in Hanson. In the 2000 census the average per capita income was \$23,727.00 compared to the national average of \$21,587.00 and the average income for a household was \$62,687.00 compared the national average of \$41,994.00 (Public School Review, 2010).

Hanson schools are a part of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School district which overseas seven schools. Whitman-Hanson Regional spends approximately \$10,510 per a pupil each year. Their dropout rate is about 3% compared to the state average of 4.4%. Currently in Whitman-Hanson students need to pass the MCAS and have a total of 106 credits in certain subject areas in order to graduate. Graduation rates in 2010 were 97% of graduating seniors went to college, 69% went to a four year college, 22% two year, and 6% other. Some of the top schools students attended in 2010 were Harvard, Northeastern, Quinnipiac, Bryant, New England school of Photography, Providence, Stonehill, Ball State, Coastal Carolina, University of Tampa, and much more. In Whitman and Hanson the percent of people over the age of 25 with a college degree is 31%, and growing. Whitman-Hanson schools provide a college preparatory curriculum in including honors courses, advanced placement, independent studies, and special needs services. Students are able to achieve their goals in a state of the art facility which opened in the fall of 2005 (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

In Hanson there are three schools, Maquan Elementary, Indian Head Elementary, and Hanson Middle. Hanson Middle School was built and opened in 1998. At Hanson Middle school

there are 488 students, a student teacher ratio of 1:15 and serves grades 6-8. Hanson Middle School received a very high performance rating on the English Language Arts MCAS and a high rating on the Math MCAS. This is an improvement from the previous year. Subgroups in both ELA and math received adequate yearly progress for 2010 compared to 2009 (Public School Review, 2010). Hanson middle school offers many after school activities such as basketball, track, cheerleading, builders club, student council, and much more.

Hanson Middle school encourages parent involvement. They have a school counsel board which any parent can be a part of, and also a PTO. They have an online database for parents to look up student's grades, assignments, upcoming events and more.

II. Foundation

The foundation of a school system consist of beliefs, philosophies, goals, mission statements, visions, and much more. As a school, staff members come together creating a foundation for their school and students to be successful. While following the ASCA national model, these foundations must meet student academic, career, and personal/social development (ASCA, 2005). At Hanson middle school there was no guidance foundation, but guidance counselor Jan Sweeney says, "Our goal is to address the educational, social, and emotional needs of each child in order to help him or her to develop good work habits, healthy peer relationships, and an active, positive role in society."

Beliefs and Philosophy

We believe the Middle Schools in the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District: Value the importance of a safe and secure environment for all. Respect the dignity of the individual and promote personal interactions that value differences, diversity, and ethical behavior, affirm similarities and demonstrate openness and flexibility.

Set high standards and expectations of and have respect for each student, teacher, parent, and community member as essential in a teaching and learning environment.

Provide each student equally with challenging instructional opportunities to fully reach his/her potential.

Are student-centered learning environments where initiative, innovation, and individual development are prized and where daily successes and mistakes are seen as part of the learning process.

Encourage and support staff innovation, initiative, and professional development.

Recognize the importance of broad-based communication and encourage the involvement of parents, community members, colleges, businesses and nonprofit organizations are integral to our communities, and our communities are integral to our schools (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

Mission of Hanson Middle School

Hanson Middle School is committed to providing a safe, respectful environment where all students will learn through a challenging, high quality education that fosters positive self-esteem, encourages individual achievement, responsibility, creativity, critical thinking, and effective communication skills that will produce responsible citizens and life-long learners (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

Domains and Goals

Hanson Middle School students are the future of our communities. Middle schools provide environments that address diverse academic, social, cultural, and emotional needs. Students, faculty, and administration continually meet new educational challenges and work to enhance each student's self-esteem.

Students will be actively involved in their academic, personal, and ethical development. In addition, students will be encouraged to become responsible citizens of their community, country, and world.

A climate of safety and security is essential to the teaching process. In order to maintain a safe and nurturing environment, all members of the school community will practice consideration for others, self-discipline, and self-respect (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

ASCA National Standards/Competencies

The mission statement, beliefs, philosophies and goals of Hanson Middle School can be aligned with the ASCA national model. Their school guiding principals reach out to all students.

With the history of the town and the currently population the school is able to implement a

school system that is up to date with today's society and their community. When there is a student at risk for not following under the mission statement guidance is able to help that student so the mission statement, beliefs, philosophies and goals will apply to that student as well. As you will see throughout the paper the Hanson Middle School follows many of the ASCA national standards and competencies.

III. **Delivery System**

The delivery system is how a school implements their programs and curriculums. In this section they also describe each program and how they are related to the ASCA national Standards. The delivery system is considered to be the "how" of the implementation process (ASCA, 2005). At Hanson Middle school the guidance counselor, adjustment counselor and school psychologist are all involved with their students, but among them there are many other staff members and programs for students to learn and grow in positive ways.

Guidance Curriculum

DARE

Dare class is a classroom instruction primary prevention, here students learn about destructive behavior and how it can hurt them negatively in a classroom setting from a counselor, police officer, or teacher. They also learn how to be positive, grow, and ways to succeed in having self respect and responsibility. Dare class is not implemented by the guidance department but it aligns with the guidance curriculum because it is teaching all students in Hanson Middle School knowledge and skills appropriate for a safe and healthy live at their age level. This is also set up through a classroom setting and meets the foundations of Hanson Middle School because

they value a safe and secure environment. In DARE class students learn about and can help create a safe environment for themselves and others (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010). This will meet the ASCA national standards, PS:A1.1, PS:A1.2, PS:A1.4, PS:A1.5, PS:A1.6, PS:A1.8, PS:A1.10, PS:A2.2, PS:A2.3, PS:A2.6, PS:B1.1, PS:B1.2, PS:B1.3, PS:B1.6, PS:B1.8, PS:C1.2, PS:C1.4, PS:C1.7, PS:C1.8, PS:C1.9, and much more.

Health Class

Health Class is a classroom instruction primary prevention. Students learn from a counselor or teacher about topics such as how to stay healthy, about the human body, and how to have self respect for themselves and others. This course is not connect directly with the guidance department but it connects with the guidance curriculum because it takes place in the classroom and all students take the course each year in middle school. Here students are able to learn about age appropriate health issues and ways to stay healthy and happy. This program meets the mission statement of Hanson Middle School because through health class they will foster positive self esteem and save environments for themselves and others (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010). This class meets many of the ASCA national standards such as, PS:C1.3, PS:C1.7, PS:C1.8, PS:C1.10, PS:C1.11, and many more.

With these two courses required for middle school students to take, the student body as a whole is learning the primary steps on how to be healthy and happy. They are also learning basic skills to be a responsible citizen, how to face peer pressure, and respect other students. With these two programs all students will be educated on academic and social/personal wellness which meets the standards of ASCA as well has Hanson Middle Schools mission, beliefs, philosophies, and goals.

Group Activities

Student Council

Student Counsel is a group activity primary prevention; the council can provide information and projects for students to complete on their own. Student counsel discusses upcoming events, community service projects, issues in the school, and ways to improve their school. These students work together in a safe environment, reach out across the entire school, promote change, respect one another, have self discipline, are creative, and can act as a responsible citizen, which meets many of the schools beliefs, philosophies, and mission statement (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010). Student council is a responsive service because the students work to meet the immediate needs of the school, community, and other students. Student council can meet all of the ASCA national model domains depending on the topic of discussion during the meetings. This group is so broad that they can help make changes in the classroom, community, or environment they live in. Piaget's cognitive theory, formal operational stage aligns with this program because students are co facilitating the needs of themselves and others, creating action plans, and taking action (Erford, 2011).

Builders Club

Builders Club is a small group activity that is a primary preventative program, which is a community service organization. They do food pantry drives, recycling and events in the community. Any Student can join. In this group students are learning to become responsible citizens by giving back to others. They are taking responsibility of performing community services and achieving helping others (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010). The builders club meets the standards of an individual student planning group because it consists of a small group of students. During their meetings they have an advisor who helps them in planning

their services and action plans. Also students can discuss issues currently in their school they wish to help reduce or personal concerns, such as littering. I also feel the builders club aligns with Erikson's personal/social theory of Industry versus inferiority. Students in builders club set and work towards their goals, take responsibility into their own hands and delegate different tasks (Erford, 2011).

Cross Country

Cross Country is a group activity that is a primary prevention; it is for any student to join. Here students learn to achieve their personal goals as well as ways to be active and healthy in a safe environment. By joining cross country students are working together to achieve a common goal as well as their own (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

Hot Shots, Volleyball, and the Turkey Trot

Hot Shots, Volleyball, and the Turkey Trot are all group activities a Hanson Middle which are tournaments that can be seen as primary prevention programs. These school wide tournaments can promote positive self esteem, team work, critical thinking, and achievement through a challenge. During these events students get out of the classroom and working together. These also promote self respect and physical health (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

Individual Student Planning

Individual/small group appraisal

Students at risk attend at specific homeroom with other students at risk which is split up by grade level which is run by the school psychologist, guidance counselor, and adjustment counselor. During this time students show the homeroom teacher what they have been working

on in class, grades they have received, and work they have to complete. Students here can work on their homework, or how to do better in a class or specific topic. When students in this homeroom they know their goal is to achieve better grades, do well socially and personally and plan for the future, in order to return to their regular homeroom (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010).

Individual/Small Group Advisement

The guidance department at Hanson Middle School has many effective ways of working with students at risk. The counselor will review the students records when they first start working with the student, and check on them after each quarter is over to see if their grades are improving. This can help determine if the student will join, stay in, or leave the at risk student homeroom. The counselor will meet with the student individually when needed to discuss any current issues or to help the student just feel better on a bad day. Students can meet and discuss any topic which may be bothering them, this way the counselor can help improve the student's education, and personal/social life. During these meetings the counselor does not take notes or keep records of the student being there. Typically for any long term counseling a student will be referred to an outside counseling center (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010).

Responsive Services

Consultation

Team meetings are held weekly. During these meetings the guidance counselor, school adjustment, school psychologist, nurse, principal or assistant principal, and staff members from a specific grade are present. During this time the staff discusses some specific students or

curriculums that are currently in place. During this time they can talk about what is effective and what is not, so they can help make changes to the system if needed to help make students education at Hanson Middle the best they can get (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010). This can also be related to the system support consultation and collaboration ASCA system.

Referrals

At Hanson Middle School there is a guidance counselor, adjustment counselor, and school psychologist, these professionals are there to offer support and services for students to help their education, personal/social, and career wellness. If there is a student who needs long term or intensive care they have many agencies they can refer the student for. Also if a student shows signs of suicide, violence, abuse, or any other crisis, the counselors are to consult the principal and nurse and call DFS, the local police, or follow the next school policy protocol (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010).

System Support

Professional Development

Professional Development at Whitman and Hanson Schools are in-service training throughout the district. Students in the district have a half a day and the teachers stay for a full day. During this time there are department meetings and staff trainings and programs to help enhance and update all employees' knowledge and skills. During these meetings they also can use consultation and collaboration to help achieve goals and solve or reduce any existing problems (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

IV. Management System

The management system is the when, why, and who, will implement programs which follow the ASCA national guidance and guidance curriculum (ASCA, 2005). The management system is not only who implements and creates a programs, but it also consist of data which can help evaluate programs and restructure them to be more successful or continue to use them because they are already successful. The management system is really important for the school because they can help make a different in the education students receive at Hanson Middle School. Many of the other ASCA areas are built off of the management system (ASCA, 2005). At Hanson Middle School parent and staff involvement is huge. They have many groups which meet outside of the school day to help make the best possible learning environment for their students. Currently every staff member ranging from principal to custodian is involvement in a student mentor program. Adult involvement is expected at Hanson Middle School, and also makes a large impact on the students career at Hanson Middle School.

School Counselor/Administrator Agreements

Collaboration Meetings occur once a week, the guidance counselor, adjustment counselor, and school psychologist meet with the nurse, principal, and assistant principal. Also once a week the guidance counselor, adjustment counselor, and school psychologist meet with teachers by grade. During these meeting they discuss students who may be at risk, student progress, or something a teacher may feel they need to inform the counselor of. Also during this time they can discuss program effectiveness, or a parent situation. These meetings main goal is to meet the needs of students and to discuss if they are, or what they need to change in order to meet student's needs. Hanson Middle School uses a lot of consultation and collaboration to help

make their school a better learning environment for all students (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010).

Advisory Council

Hanson Middle School Counsel consists of parents, staff and community members who come together to improve Hanson Middle School. Currently they are working on the school improvement plan. This group works on achieving their mission statement, views, and goals. Currently they want to increase MCAS scores, have more enriching programs, and use more technology in the classroom. The Hanson Middle School Counsel meets the domains and goals of the middle school because this committee is always working to meet new education goals and to enhance the school (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

PTO (parent, teacher, organization) is a primary prevention program where parents volunteer to be a part of the school environment. Here they can volunteer time at the schools, fundraise for the schools, support enrichment programs, and help set up and support parent student activities. Here the parents and community are involved with the school system creating change and support for faculty and students. The PTO helps meets many the schools goals, beliefs and mission statement. By having parent volunteers in the school, they are helping enhance the students education and teach them new skills. They are also able to model a responsible citizen by volunteering their time (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010).

Use of Data and Student Monitoring

Student Monitoring at Hanson Middle is important the guidance department. All students who are at risk are placed in a specific homeroom with other at risk students in their grade. The school guidance counselor, adjustment counselor, and school psychologist each are assigned one of the homerooms for the year. During this time they are able to monitor these students and help give them extra support and a warm greeting each morning. During this time it is easy for counselor to see changes in the student which can result in the counselor addressing the situation early on.

The Hanson Middle School guidance counselor does not keep writing data on the students. No notes are taken, or folders are kept with student information. Any information needed can be found on the school computer system or their main folder in the main office (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010).

Use of Data and Closing the Gap

Hanson Middle School Counsel consists of Parents, staff and community members who come together to improve Hanson Middle School. Currently they are working on the school improvement plan. This group works on achieving their mission statement, views, and goals. Currently they want to increase MCAS scores, have more enriching programs, and use more technology in the classroom. By using the data from MCAS scores the Hanson Middle School Counsel is able to make changes and enrich student's education by focusing on what needs change.

At the middle school level the main student achievement data measure is through MCAS. All MCAS scores are held in the student's personal file in the main office.

Student achievement-related data information can be found in the student's personal folder as well. They keep track of any disciplinary problems, attendance, parent/guardian information, health related information, and any physical/psychological information needed (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010).

Action Plans (Guidance Curriculum and Closing the Gap)

The Hanson Middle School Improvement Plan is created by the school council, staff members, and administration of Hanson Middle. They have come together to create a plan to improve Hanson Middle School where necessary, academic, career, or personal and social domains. These groups collaborate together to find areas of need, and create goals and plans to make changes. The first goal of the 2010-2011 improvement plan is, to increase the proficiency rate of all Hanson Middle Schools population, specifically students with special needs, in all measureable MCAS tests: ELA, Math, and Science and Technology. The second goal is to continue to have more enrichment opportunities for the whole community at Hanson Middle by continuing the instruction of the foreign language of Spanish at the middle school level; and continued use and advancement of the extension period times for enrichment activities. And the final goal is to continue to educate the student body for the 21st century. For the action plan of Hanson Middle School please see Appendix F (Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, 2010). For a mock action plan please see Appendix O.

Use of Time/Calendar

Use of time varies in the guidance department depending on the time of year. During the beginning of the year the guidance has a large focus on at risk students and incoming 6th graders.

The guidance tries to split their time up evenly between collaborating with other staff members, working with students, and taking action on creating a better school. In the early spring a lot of their time is spent on MCAS. During this guidance spends the majority of their time working on student achievement. During the end of the year guidance spends the majority of their time creating schedules and helping 8th graders apply to private high schools, or prepare for the public high school. Throughout the whole school year guidance has to split their time between paperwork, meetings, students, and planning (J. Sweeney, personal communication, November 12, 2010).

V. Accountability

Results Report

A mock results report can be found in appendix O. The results report is a set or data that gives answers to how a program is working. This way a school can tell how effective a program is and the counselors can evaluate it. Having this information is important to a guidance program because it helps analyze the program after it's completed. A results report can help you make a positive impact on students, and create an improving school environment. At Hanson Middle they do not complete a results report for their programs. Instead they look at students at risks transcripts and compare grades from one semester to the next to see if what they are doing is helping them improve their grades (personal communications, November 12, 2010).

Counselor Performance Standards

Counselor performance standards are expectations that need to be met by the school counselor. During the interview at Hanson Middle there was no discussion on whether or not the

school followed ASCA. Many of the programs and policies the school implements do align with the ASCA national standards for school counselors. Having a set of standards can help the school evaluate the performance of the program or counselor.

Standard 1.1 the school counselor has a program which is designed to meet the needs of students at risk. Standard 1.3 the counselor has weekly meetings with all staff members and administration in the school. Standard 2.2 the counselor works with students at risk during homeroom period to get focused, help reduce stress, and more during that time. Standard 2.3 the counselor has set up a program where every student was able to choose their one mentor. Every staff member is involved in this program from the principal to the custodian. Standard 4.1 the counselor meets with student individually and in small groups, such as homeroom, or school groups such as builders club. Standard 5.1 the counselor among other staff members collaborate together during staff meetings and professional development to help improve the school. Standard 6 the counselor has weekly meetings with administration to discuss current and future issues and programs at the school. Standard 7 parent groups which are involved with the school helping make Hanson Middle School the best it can be. Some staff members are apart of this group. Standard 8 the counselor does not use a lot of data to evaluate programs but they do keep track of students grades in order to evaluate programs. Standard 9.1 the counselor monitors all students at risks during homeroom and meets with them individually when needed. Standard 9.2 the counselors implemented the students at risk homeroom to help give those students time to focus and relax before school starts as well as get work done. Standard 10.3 the counselor has a monthly letter go home with every student at Hanson Middle informing parents of events and guidance information for that current time. Standard 13.1 the counselor promotes student success. When student's grades begin to drop they become a student at risk and join the student

at risk homeroom. They also will take part in a working lunch where they can do work while eating lunch to help catch up in class. Standard 13.5 the counselor works with all staff members at Hanson Middle and the parent groups work closely with the school to help improve their MCAS scores and students education at school (ASCA, 2005).

Program Audit

A program audit is a very useful tool which can be used in a school system. The program audit can be used to evaluate current programs in the school to see how effective they are and how much students benefit from them. If student are not benefitting from a program the audit will help teachers reassess and enhance the current program to be better effective. The program audit also will provide information if the program aligns with the ASCA national model (ASCA, 2010).

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