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Response from High Tech Middle North County

High Tech High**Report Prepared for California State Board of Education****In reference to: High Tech Middle North County****Submission Date: April 13, 2018****Overview**

As requested by the California Department of Education, High Tech High submits the following Summary Report for High Tech Middle North County (HTMNC) regarding the three requested inquiries in support of the State Board of Education's (SBE) Annual Academic Memo (Academic Memo). Specifically, this report addresses:

1. A summary of school's reflections on its Fall 2017 Dashboard Results, identifying areas of greatest progress and greatest opportunity for growth.
2. A summary of the school's reflections on Element Two: Measurable Pupil Outcomes.
3. A summary of the school's reflections on Element Three: Method for Measuring Pupil Outcomes.

Section 1**School Reflections on Fall 2017 Dashboard Results****Identification of areas of greatest progress and greatest opportunity for growth**

HTMNC is focused on continuously improving outcomes for students across all areas on the dashboard. Areas of greatest progress during the 16-17 school year were **growth in student outcomes on the English Language Arts CAASPP** and low **chronic absenteeism**. Overall HTMNC ELA CAASP results increased by 3.4 points from the 15-16 school year. Areas of greatest opportunities for growth during the 16-17 school year were **math achievement** and **reducing suspension rates**.

Greatest Opportunities for Growth*Math Achievement*

HTMNC's greatest opportunities for growth include supporting our students in becoming stronger mathematicians with a special focus on English Learners (ELs) and students with disabilities. HTMNC is also prioritizing reducing suspension rates with a special focus on socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

In order to support students in growing as mathematicians, HTMNC has increased the coaching support and professional development for math teachers and also implemented intervention programs to support struggling students. Efforts to improve math instruction across this year began in August with teachers engaging in both data analysis from CAASPP and NWEA's MAP data to understand student progress and needs. Though HTMNC had also used CAASPP data in previous years to analyze progress, having MAP data available this year also gave HTMNC faculty a clearer picture of student growth over the course of an academic year and helped teachers identify areas for improvement.

HTMNC teachers also participated in a workshop led by an external math consultant in collaboration with the facilitator of the Mathematical Agency Improvement Community HTMNC have participated in for the past several years. This PD was specifically tailored to support HTMNC teachers in developing a clear and shared vision of high quality math instruction that was research-based. In particular, teachers focused on designing effective launch, explore, summarize lessons that were centered on rich and rigorous tasks. Throughout the year, the HTMNC math consultant has worked with the math team to strengthen instructional skills aligned with this vision. That work has taken the form of workshops, lesson studios, learning walks, and video consultancies.

While HTMNC has seen progress with these initiatives based on formative data as well as feedback from teachers, HTMNC continues to work to make these structures more routine in school structures next year. In addition, this spring HTMNC is working with Debra Fuentes, a leader in the Cognitively Guided Instruction for middle school math, to provide additional professional development for teachers. HTMNC leadership is also working to provide more coaching and collaboration opportunities for teachers by creating opportunities for release periods to observe one another and provide feedback. Furthermore, HTMNC is exploring the possibility of creating a summer opportunity for teachers to dig into designing rich and rigorous mathematical tasks with the support and guidance of a math coach. Moreover, we are planning to make our intervention structure for supporting student struggling in math more robust and effective, with a particular focus on supporting EL students and students with disabilities.

HTMNC is also working to reduce suspension rates through several initiatives. First HTMNC is focused on building strong relationships among students and between students and teachers. The goal is to prevent the type of student issues that would rise to the level of warranting a suspension. To that end, HTMNC leadership has supported teachers in incorporating regular community building circles or team meetings into their classroom schedule. These circles provide an opportunities for teachers to share what they might be seeing and for students to

proactively work through challenges and emotions in a productive and safe setting. In addition, the director and socioemotional coordinator visit classrooms to remind students of school norms and encourage students to support one another and seek adult help when necessary. HTMNC has also hired a counselor to be available to support students through both regular meetings and the ability to connect when students have a challenging situation arise. HTMNC plans to continue providing this support for students and expand the number of students who have access.

When issues do occur, however, HTMNC is working to create alternatives to traditional suspensions. HTMNC regularly uses restorative conferences to support students when harm has occurred and are working with families to pilot family conferences both for individual students and for incidents involving several students. HTMNC is also working with an external group to explore the possibility of using counselor and group sessions as an alternative to traditional suspensions when a serious student issue occurs.

HTMNC has seen this work translate into positive feedback from students. In January 2017 students took the YouthTruth survey which gathers student perspective on a variety of elements of their school experience. HTMNC students rank HTMNC school in the 97th percentile in response to the question "School discipline is fair." This was an increase from the previous year where students ranked our school in the 93rd percentile in this area.

Areas of Greatest Progress

ELA Growth and Chronic Absenteeism

HTMNC is focused on continuously improving our outcomes for students across all areas on the dashboard. Areas of greatest progress during the 16-17 school year were **growth in student outcomes on the English Language Arts CAASPP** and low **chronic absenteeism**. Overall HTMNC ELA CAASP results increased by 3.4 points from the 15-16 school year.

This growth was driven by a variety of initiatives at our school including both internal and external professional development in literacy. HTMNC staff worked with the HTH Center for Research on Equity and Innovation to launch a Literacy Collaborative which two teachers from HTMNC continue to attend. This collaborative focuses on building capacity to design and implement high quality literacy instruction. In addition to partnering with schools across HTH and the HTH graduate school for professional development, HTMNC have also worked with external organizations including Columbia Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. Three of HTMNC staff members attended a summer institute on reading at Teachers College and two

additional teachers were trained by Teacher's College staff during a workshop hosted by High Tech High.

HTMNC has also increased use of and reflection on data from formative assessment. In the 16-17 school year, HTMNC began using MAP to assess literacy and math three times throughout the year. HTMNC also trained teachers and provided time for collaborative data analysis focused on student growth. This data has helped identify high leverage literacy teaching practices and develop teachers skills using formative data to hone literacy instruction.

To ensure continued growth in students literacy growth, especially across subgroups, HTMNC has been working to support English Learner (EL) growth in several ways. This year, HTMNC piloted an intervention block to both help students see their status as emerging bilingual students as an asset and help them leverage their understanding of two languages to tackle literacy challenges. In addition, this intervention focused on building students' English language skills in the context of both literacy and math. HTMNC has also worked with school faculty to develop tools for supporting ELs by providing both content-drive professional development on research-based strategies and meeting regularly in action groups during the 16-17 school year to use the structures of improvement science to implement those strategies effectively.

HTMNC is also focused on improving outcomes in literacy for socioeconomically disadvantaged students. Work with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project has greatly influenced the HTMNC approach in this area. HTMNC has focused on developing a culture of reading by increasing students access to text they love and increasing the time they spend in "just-right" texts personalized to their interests and reading level. For example, this school year HTMNC began the schoolwide practice of KBAR (Kick Back and Read) where students spend the first 20 minutes of the school day engaged in reading a book of their choice that their humanities teacher helped them select, with an eye for appropriate challenge. The KBAR initiative has not only led to students reading more at school, but also supported HTMNC families in helping students read regularly outside of school.

In addition, HTMNC has shown progress as a school in chronic absentee data. The HTMNC overall chronic absentee rate was 1.8% compared to the statewide average of 10.8%. This represented a total of 5 students who were chronically absent during the 16-17 school year. This low percentage was driven by an initiative rooted in connecting with families about student absences. Our socioemotional coordinator sends letters and meets with families whose children have high absentee rates. The goal of these letters and meetings is share the impact of missing school on the student's academic growth and to underline the importance of

being present at school. We also use these meetings to problem solve with families and support students in consistently being present at school.

Section 2

School Reflections on Element Two: Measurable Pupil Outcomes

Areas of Greatest Progress and Greatest Opportunities for Growth

Engagement and Sense of Belonging

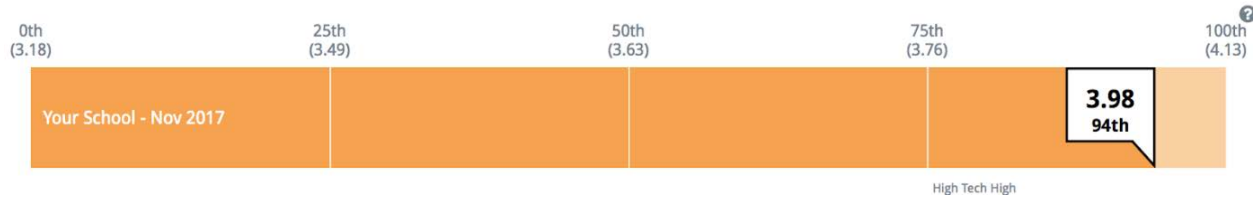
HTMNC has been focused on the goal of increasing **student belonging and engagement with academics**. Research from Camille Farrington suggests that one of the strongest levers to support students overall academic growth is developing their academic mindsets. In order to gain insight on how we are supporting students in this area, each year HTMNC gives the YouthTruth survey. As mentioned above this survey provides students with an opportunity to share their perspectives on a variety of elements of our school including their sense of belonging and engagement with academics.

HTMNC YouthTruth data shows encouraging results in these areas. In the area of **student engagement**, HTMNC is in the 94th percentile within YouthTruth's national percentile. This is an increase from the 88th percentile in 2016-17. Results for English Language Learners placed HTMNC in the 98th percentile nationwide. This is an increase from the 95th percentile in 2016-17. HTMNC ranked in the 93rd percentile in terms of students responding positively that they feel like a part of their school community. Our hope is that these academic mindsets will create a strong foundation for all our students to continue develop other important non-cognitive skills as well as become strong readers, writers, mathematicians and scientists.

Several factors likely influence students connection with their work and our school community including opportunities for student voice and co-design in projects. Students have had the opportunity to both formally tune projects along with their teachers as well as provide feedback that influences teachers' curriculum design. Students also have had the opportunity to see how their feedback influences adult reflection. In the spring of 2017, HTMNC shared back both school-wide and teacher specific reflections and next steps based on YouthTruth with students. This is a practice HTMNC plans to continue this spring with the latest set of YouthTruth data. In addition, we have worked this year to improve schoolwide community meetings and leverage those times as a chance for students to feel connected to the larger school community.

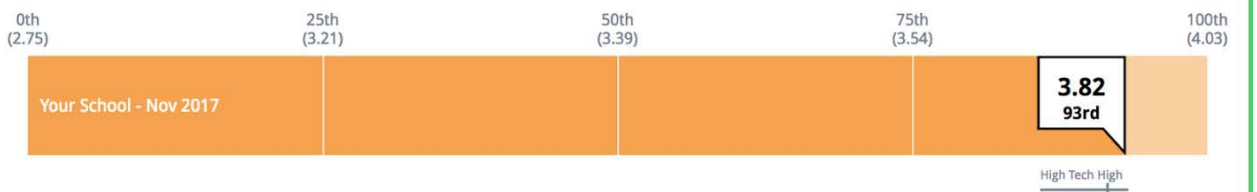
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY MEASURE

This summary measure describes the degree to which students perceive themselves as engaged with their school and their education.



I really feel like a part of my school's community.

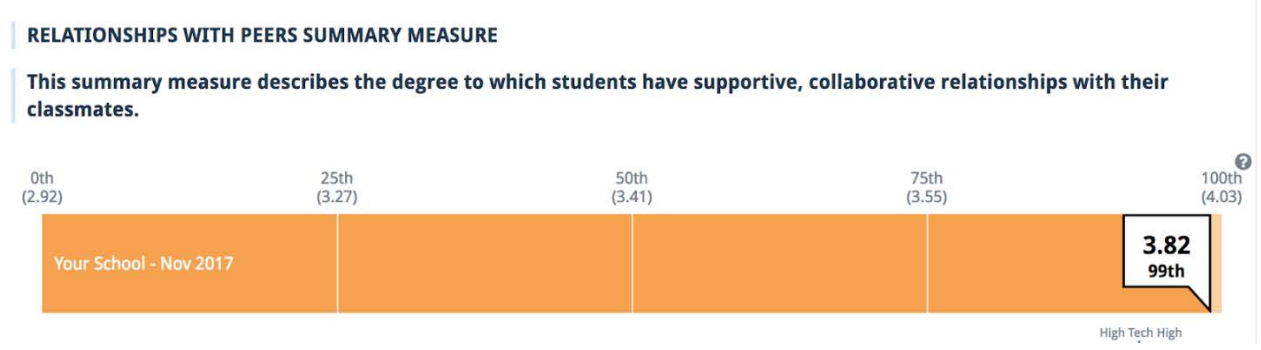
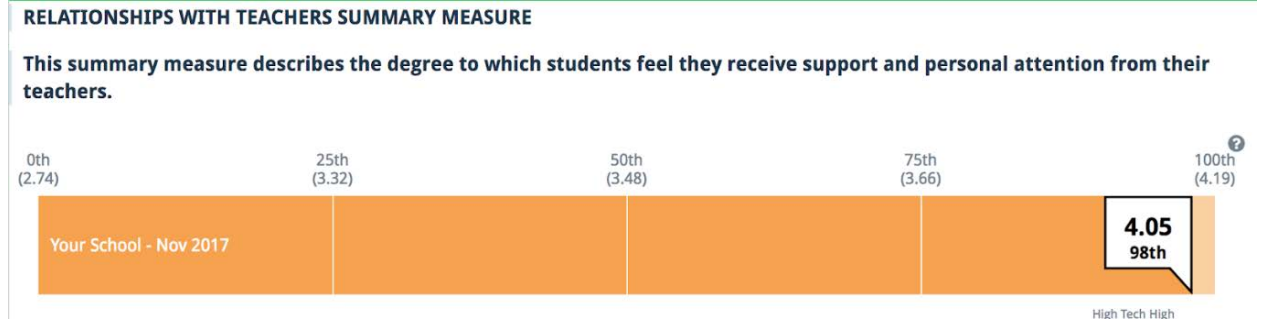
1 = Strongly disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Strongly agree



In addition, knowing that relationships between students and teachers and among students are key for developing a sense of belonging and commitment to doing their best work, HTMNC also reviews student responses regarding their relationships with one another and with their teachers. HTMNC ranked in the 98th percentile for student relationships with their teachers and in the 99th percentile for student relationships with their peers.

Especially important to our staff was that several subgroups including EL students and socioeconomically disadvantaged students ranked their feeling of support and attention from teachers higher than our overall school rating. This was a shift from previous year and likely connected to the professional development our staff underwent regarding how to support EL students as well as the targeted support in intervention blocks. In addition to being an important goal in itself, building these strong relationships will also help to reduce suspension rate as students will feel comfortable working through conflicts with one another productively and also seeking support from teachers when necessary.

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HTMNC hopes to continue to grow and improve in each of these areas in the subsequent year. The data does show discrepancies among sub-groups. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students ranked their engagement lower by .07, and Asian students often had lower results than other subgroups. However, HTMNC is working to identify the cause and next steps for that discrepancy and recently engaged several of our Asian students in a focus group to better understand their experiences at school.

Section 3

School Reflections on Element Three: Method for Measuring Pupil Outcomes

Area of Greatest Progress and Greatest Opportunities for Growth *Family Engagement*

One area of growth that HTMNC has been focused on this year is communicating the HTMNC approach to literacy and math instruction with families, and showcasing student literacy and math work for families. HTMNC teachers collaborated with colleagues at HTeNC to host a family literacy and math night that provided families with a deep dive into the HTMNC and HTeNC approach for supporting students growth in math and literacy.

In addition, HTMNC has a goal to support students in creating high quality work characterized by complexity, authenticity and craftsmanship and to have students share that work with their families and communities. To that end, HTMNC students exhibit their work publicly at least twice during the school year and also reflect on their growth through student-led conferences and presentations of learning. Families connecting to student learning through these experiences has consistently been a strength for HTMNC with nearly 100% of families participating.

In order to strengthen the literacy elements of projects, HTMNC included a literacy focus section in collaborative project tunings. The literacy focus, along with the professional development teachers received both internally and through Teachers College, had a noticeable impact on HTMNC project plans. In addition to strengthening the literacy elements of projects, two projects specifically targeted building a culture of reading. In the most recent example, the 8th grade collaborated on a project titled "Designing to Read" where they designed a reading intervention to support elementary students, planned and held a multicultural book fair, and designed and built structures and furniture to encourage students in our school to read.

Another important goal for HTMNC is continuously improving and refining our literacy and math instruction. One tool that has been particularly helpful is the mid-year data we gain from the MAP assessment. Students take this literacy and math assessment once at the beginning of the year, once in the middle of year, and once at the end of the year. The mid-year growth data is especially helpful since teachers are able to use data about their current students to revise and refine their instruction for those students. In addition, teachers use that data to share best practices across the school. In particular, this data has been helpful in increasing collaboration

between grade level content partners. It has also helped teachers to hone in on the resources that are most helpful for instruction and spread those throughout discipline teams.

In the future, HTMNC plans to use this data more effectively to support students through intervention blocks tailored to their needs. HTMNC piloted this work this year with an intervention block for our EL students as well as reading and math interventions. In doing this pilot, HTMNC found that having formative data on the impact of the intervention on student growth will be important to the success of this work. To that end, HTMNC recently engaged three teachers in a professional development that targeted that skill set and plan to hold at least two more sessions with a similar focus this year.

Conclusion

Please feel free to contact us if there are any questions regarding the HTMNC Summary Report.