



MEMORANDUM

To: State Board of Education & Early Development
Date: February 3, 2022

Thru: Commissioner Michael Johnson
Telephone: (907) 269-4583

From: Janelle Vanasse,
Superintendent/Director
Mt. Edgecumbe High School
Subject: Agenda 14D. Mt. Edgecumbe High School Standing Report

Note from the Superintendent

These are interesting times when the most exciting thing I can report is how normal MEHS is starting to feel. With our high vaccination rate and the reduced quarantine/isolation guidelines, our in-class experience is less disrupted. We are also re-introducing some of our social interaction activities in the residential setting and allowing kids to go to town. As we begin to pivot to a more sustainable approach to a virus that is likely here to stay, I could not be prouder of the students and staff. Everyone—classroom teachers, recreation staff, overnight Residential Assistants, cafeteria folks--have worked through these difficult times and have maintained a focus on our three non-negotiables: 1. Learning, 2, Relationships, and 3. Safety. And, I could not be more grateful to our MEHS clinic staff whose guidance and hard work has made all the difference.

As I prepare to move on from Mt. Edgecumbe, I am overwhelmed by the experience. The opportunity to learn and serve alongside the staff at MEHS has been very rewarding. The students and families of MEHS are incredibly special; to be able to serve them has been the greatest honor. Mt. Edgecumbe High School is such an important part in our statewide education system. As I look back at the past six years, I not only reflect on not only a commitment to rigor, but an energized focus on inviting and valuing Native cultures and ways of knowing into the rich academic environment. Mt. Edgecumbe celebrates 75 years this year. It's evolution from a traditional BIA boarding school to what it is today is remarkable, and the evolution continues. The future of MEHS is bright. I look forward to cheerleading the new leadership and will forever cherish my claim in the ever-expanding Mt. Edgecumbe family.

Current Enrollment

Well before COVID, MEHS set a goal of 90% or higher retention during the school year. With concerted efforts, this was achieved over the past 4-5 years. This year the number of students choosing to go home during the year has been high and more consistent with the numbers prior to the set goal. Prior to the concerted efforts, retention ran between 80-85%. MEHS staff does exit interviews with each student and reasons are quite varied. Overall, staff feel the situation of the pandemic—both the stress it

causes for families and the limitations necessary on campus—have contributed to the increased attrition. Staff will be continuing to monitor this trend and set goals to improve next year.

Capacity- 394 Beds (29 day students- Sitka)

| Grade | Returning | Accepted/ new | Class size year start | October | February | To-Date Retention |
|--------|-----------|------------------|-----------------------------|---------|----------|----------------------|
| 9 | 0 | 110 | 110 | 104 | 88 | 80% |
| 10 | 86 | 32 | 118 | 112 | 99 | 84% |
| 11 | 103 | 4 | 107 | 106 | 94 | 87% |
| 12 | 81 | 5 | 86 | 81 | 73 | 85% |
| totals | 270 | 151 | 421 | 403 | 354 | 84% |

Returning numbers include students who were accepted last year and deferred because of COVID.

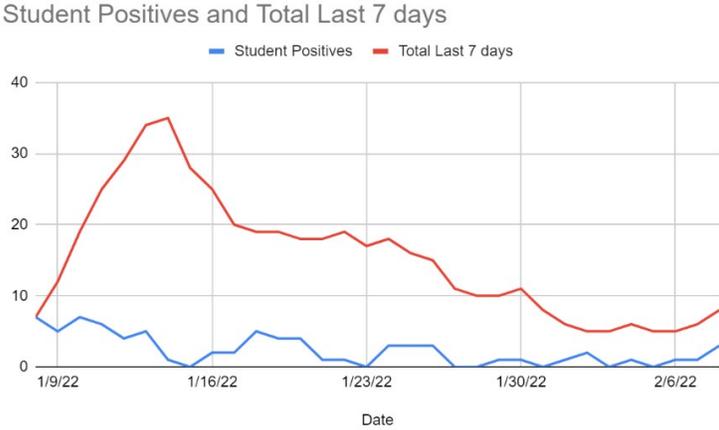
Upcoming Positions Highlight

MEHS is just beginning to plan for staffing in the 2022-23 school year. There are some open positions that are being recruited already. This will be a big year for recruitment for MEHS. The positions being advertised by February 8 include:

- Superintendent
- Academic Principal
- School Counselor
- Math Teacher
- Combination Spanish/English as a Second Language Teacher
- Federal Programs coordinator (new position- currently all managed by Superintendent)

COVID Update

The omicron variant created a lot of concern when students returned to campus after break, however the staff have gotten to be quite skilled at managing large scale quarantines and addressing illness on campus. The number of positive cases since the return to campus has been significantly higher than any other time in the pandemic. However, with the skills and mitigation factors, we avoided a mass covid spread. The largest numbers were right after return with a steady decrease.



MEHS was also able to provide booster clinics in January. By February 1, 72% of all students were fully boosted and over 90% of students had increased immunity either through a booster or recent positive.

MEHS also went through the necessary paperwork to be able to provide our own antigen testing. Initially MEHS relied on the partnership with SEARHC and the MEHS clinic. We continue to do most of our testing through the clinic, however the quick antigen testing adds an opportunity to use quick testing before special events and may help us re-introduce activities that include students socializing.

MEHS has gathered input from parents throughout the pandemic as mitigation strategies have been employed, however a specific survey was distributed in late January regarding next phases of mitigation. Overall parents, staff, and students expressed a readiness for easing up on mitigation strategies.

MEHS has begun a phased plan to ease up on mitigation strategies with careful testing and monitoring throughout. The initial lifted mitigation requirements will be in the residential setting and move slowly to the classroom if numbers suggest this can be done safely.

COVID Funding

MEHS has used COVID funds for maintaining open and mitigation needs. The bulk of the initial funding was spent on managing quarantines and isolations. It is a heavy residential cost to be able to isolate a student, deliver meals to them, monitor their health, and attempt to provide some exercise activity for 14 days. During full campus quarantines (after entry to campus) we had to use off campus locations in order to manage all students. We will need to continue to plan for quarantine and isolation expenses, however we hope that these will decrease as we have moved to shorter isolation times. As we move forward, we plan to continue to boost ways to address the increased mental health needs of students and address learning needs. Our strategies to provide services for additional mental health services and tutoring is dependent on staffing availability. We also hope to capitalize on the positive shifts forced by covid and spend funds to continue to build our academic ability to use blended learning strategies and for our residential to create more outdoor learning and exercise activities that are healthy and least risky for sharing respiratory illnesses.

Some major expenses to date include:

- Additional food contract costs to deliver quarantine meals and modify meal delivery to accommodate COVID.
- Additional residential costs to accommodate quarantine needs
- Air filters and barriers for all classrooms and public offices
- Masks and other PPE equipment for staff and students
- Additional cleaning supplies and contracts
- Digital class material
- Additional temporary mental health position
- Professional development and tutoring time by teachers
- Additional Fellow position to provide behavior support

Some of the past costs will continue and additional MEHS hopes to add:

- Covid testing coordination
- Summer online credit recovery

- Outdoor recreation spaces that are out of the rain and lighted for winter use
- Modifications of spaces to allow for group activities in larger spaces with more airflow
- Continued strategies to increase access to mental health and tutoring services

Data Highlight

A key measure we track for our school improvement/strategic plan is academic growth. Given the difficulties of the COVID times, this has been a key measure to gauge our ability to keep learning at the forefront of our mission. The NWEA MAP assessment provides us with a good summary of growth between the three administrations. It uses a normed comparison group to compare the average amount of growth of individual students as well as the overall amount of growth the school demonstrated compared to other schools. The norm group was created pre-covid, so it can be a good check to see if we are combating the potential learning loss associated with the pandemic. This indicators suggests that MEHS is indeed creating growth that is not only comparable to non-covid times, but better than the national average for growth prior to covid.

Percent of students meeting “expected growth” (statistically the average amount of growth expected)

| | Math | Reading | Language Arts |
|------------------|------|---------|---------------|
| 9 th | 72% | 63% | 57% |
| 10 th | 65% | 61% | 63% |
| 11 th | 61% | 54% | 51% |
| 12 th | 64% | 56% | Not normed |

School Conditional Growth Percentile

(how the school compares to the growth of other schools in the norm group- norm group was statistically created prior to covid)

| | Math | Reading | Language Arts |
|------------------|------|---------|---------------|
| 9 th | 99% | 91% | 80% |
| 10 th | 65% | 94% | 97% |
| 11 th | 86% | 43% | 52% |
| 12 th | 99% | 86% | Not normed |

Pool Update

Pool continues to operate under a COVID mitigation plan. Summer is being planned for full activities and lessons. Summer is a high use time for public. Current appropriated funds cover basic operation and revenues collected have been used to cover cleaning costs and occasional temporary lifeguards needed for special and public events.