Mariner High School and Community Profile

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**Mariner High School and Community Profile**

 **Demographic Information**

**Graph 1**

*Student Race.*

**Table 1**

*Additional Student Demographics.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Student Demographics** | **Students** | **Percent**  |
| Free or Reduced-Price Meals | 1,321 | 65.3% |
| Special Education  | 273 | 13.5% |
| Transitional Bilingual  | 204 | 10.1% |
| Migrant  | 0 | 0.0% |
| Section 504 | 27 | 1.3% |
| Foster Care  | 0 | 0.0% |
| Male | 1,070 | 51.1% |
| Females | 1,024 | 48.9% |

Graph 1 shows student demographic information regarding race (OSPI, 2013). Table 1 shows additional student demographic information including special programs and gender (OSPI, 2012).

**Graph 2**

*Staff Race/Ethnicity 2012-2013.*

**Table 2**

*Dropout Rates by Ethnicity 2012-2013.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Hispanic** | **American Indian/Alaskan Native** | **Asian**  | **White** | **Black/African American**  | **Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander** | **Two or More Races** |
| 2011-12 | 3.8% | 6.3% | 1.4% | 2.8% | 3.1% | 0 | 2.0% |
| 2010-11 | 3.2% | 4.8% | 1.4% | 2.3% | 0 | 0 | 2.0% |

**Graph 3**

*Graduation Rates by Ethnicity.*

**Graph 4**

*Graduation Rates by Gender.*

**Graph 5**

*Graduation Rates for Specific Student Groups.*

Graph 2 describes the ethnicity of the teachers at Mariner High School. Table 2 describes the dropout rates of the school for 2012-2013 by ethnicity. Graphs 3, 4, and 5 describe graduation rates by ethnicity, gender, and for specific student groups respectively for 2012 (OSPI, 2013).

**Graph 6**

*Block 9 MSP Scores from 8th Grade.*

**Graph 7**

*Block 9 MSP Scores from 8th grade.*

Mariner High school serves a specific population of freshmen that scored low in their MSP tests in 8th grade. This group is call Block 9. Graph 6 and 7 describe the MSP results, broken down by ethnicity and gender.

**Graph 8**

*Block 9 F’s Scores for September, October, and November, 2013.*

**Graph 9**

*Block 9 Number of Detention September, October, and November, 2013.*

**Graph 10**

*Block 9 Number of Suspensions September, October and November, 2013.*

**Graph 11**

*Block 9 number of Absences September, October, and November, 2013.*

**Graph 12**

*Block 9 number of Tardies September, October, and November, 2013.*

Graph 8 describes the number of Fs Block 9 students have received for the first quarter of 2013-2014. Graph 9 and 10 describe conduct data for the first quarter of 2013-2014 broken down by ethnicity. Finally, table 11 and 12 describe the attendance patterns that have been shown so far in the current school year also broken down by ethnicity (ASPEN, 2013).

**Data Interpretation**

The demographic data I have collected suggest that White Students seems to dominate the school with a 37.7% of the population. Coming in second place and very close to Whites are the Hispanic students constituting 30.8% of the school’s population. American Indians and Native Hawaiians serve as the smallest populations within this school. Mariner High School continues to serve a population in need of assistance. A vast majority of students either receive a free or reduced lunch, and a good portion of the students are in special education programs.

 When comparing the graduation rates of students for three consecutive years, I found that Hispanics are only graduating roughly 7 out of every 10 students, while consistently averaging lower than the average for the entire school. Native Hawaiians and Asians have the best graduation rates for the 2011-12 school year, graduating close to 9 out of every 10 students. White students have been improving, while American Indians and multi-racial student graduation rates have been declining. African-American students have been consistently about the school average with their graduation rates. When it comes to graduation rates by gender, females have been leading the males. The outlook looks bright for both, however, as both genders have seen year over year growth the past three school years. Similar to the gender rates, both the special education and free or reduced lunch students have been improving their graduation rates year over year. There is definitely plenty of room for improvement with the special education children, as they are only graduating at roughly 6 per 10 kids, well below the average for the school.

 As mentioned above, the Block 9 group consists of kids that scored below 400 hundred in the MSP testing done in the 8th grade. I thought it would be interesting to compare these results by ethnicity and gender to find out which group of student need the most help when getting prepared for the testing that will happen during their high school journey. When it comes to gender, males averaged a higher score on the MSP exam. When it comes to ethnicity, the Pacific Islander students scored the highest, followed by the African American students. Surprisingly, the White students scored the lowest.

 According to the data on staff and whether or not it reflects the student body, the data suggests that it does not. As mentioned before, Hispanics constitute 30.8% of the school’s population yet there are only 4 school staff members that are Hispanic. This means that there is only one Hispanic teacher for every 161 Hispanic students. For the past four months that I have been at Mariner, I have mostly seen Hispanic students in the administration office as well as in the counseling office. Yet, neither office has a Hispanic person or someone that speaks Spanish. All Spanish-Speaking parents have to go through the head of the attendance office employee to make appointments or raise concerns. When it comes to other races, there is only 1 African-American person working at the school and 1 Asian staff member. For such as diverse school, it is very surprising that the majority of the staff, 93 people, is White. It would be extremely important that students from different races have adults or authority figures that they can relate to and come to for help if they feel unsafe going to a White person.

 After looking at these data, it is clear that the implication for school counselors is to create awareness of the group of students that attend Mariner High School. This can be accomplished by creating more educational opportunities for staff regarding the different cultures we see around us. They need to understand the values and norms that each culture carries with them, acknowledging that not everyone from one culture will be the same. School staff members need to be very sensitive to each student’s culture.

**Disaggregated Data, Interventions, and Discussion with Site Supervisor**

Table 3

*Number of students in Block 9.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Females** | **Males** |
| 39 | 31 |

Table 4

*Number of Students in Block 9 by Ethnicity*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ethnicity** | **Number of Students**  |
| Hispanic | 35 |
| White | 22 |
| Asian  | 4 |
| Pacific Islander | 3 |
| African – American  | 6 |

Table 5

*Number of Students per Grade.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Headcount**  |
| 9th Grade | 549 |
| 10th Grade | 544 |
| 11th Grade | 458 |
| 12th Grade | 454 |

As shown in the demographics part of this paper, the data I was able to obtain is already disaggregated by race and gender. Half of the data I decided to focus on was mostly regarding the Block 9 group I have under my case load. A couple more pieces of data I wanted to include in this section was the number of males and females within this Block 9 group as well as the ethnicity breakdown within this group as shown in table 3 and 4. When looking at graph 9, Hispanics and Whites have the most disciplinary action as it pertains to the number of detentions. Many Hispanic children receive multiple detentions, whereas Whites seem to average less, although receiving more than the Asians, Pacific Islanders, and African-Americans. When looking also at graph 12, Hispanics lead with disciplinary action in the form of suspensions. Three students have been suspended, whereas the other ethnicities have one suspension combined. When it comes to absences and tardies, the data shows that Hispanics also lead the number of attendance issues in this group. Lastly, when it comes to the number of F grades during the first quarter Pacific Islanders and African-Americans are performing well in the number of failing grades, as no students of these backgrounds received an "F" in the school year. Unfortunately, the Hispanics have the highest number of failing grades, which is a direct correlation to the Hispanics having the lowest graduation rate.

Based on the data collected, it seems obvious that the students that need the most help are the Hispanics. They make up the largest population in the Block 9 group, therefore, it is imperative that an intervention takes place for them. When I carry out my needs assessment, I will be focusing on career, academic, and personal/social aspects of the students. Due to Mariner’s focus on graduation rates, it is crucial that an intervention with the Hispanic population of the Block 9 focuses on helping them meet the goal of graduation. Table 2 shows that the Hispanic population’s dropout rates increased in the 2011-12 to 3.8% in comparison to 3.2% the year before. This is a trend that needs to stop. Through the needs assessment I want to find out why they have so many disciplinary and attendance issues, as well as why they are failing classes so early in the year. If they continue getting Fs in their classes, and continue having disciplinary and attendance issues, odds will increase of them dropping out of school. Many of those issues can also be caused due to personal/social problems at home or at school. Given that there are only a few Hispanic or Spanish–speaking staff members at the school, it is important that advocacy occurs towards this group.

 Even though my site supervisor had an idea of the struggles some of the groups at Mariner go through, it was still surprising to see all the data collected and some of the results of it. She definitely agreed that we need more people that speak Spanish at the school not only to help the students but also to help their parents. The fact that Mariner does not have a counselor or an administrator that speaks Spanish is somewhat of a concern since many of them are in these offices so often. She seemed very supportive with whatever intervention I decide to carry on next year.

**School Counseling Program**

**Conclusions from SCPIS**

After reviewing The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey, it can be seen that Mariner High School overall has a very strong school counseling program. Many areas in the survey are fully implemented or are in process of implementation. The school as a whole, as well as the counseling program, advocate to meet students’ needs both academically and socially. This in turn helps close the achievement gap and increases graduation rates among all students. The counselors at Mariner genuinely care about the welfare of every student and work hard to achieve it. Each counselor brings to the table different strengths and skills that benefit the program as a whole. Every program or strategic plan that has been implemented is well received by the school counselors, and the school makes sure the program has the tools it needs to carry out the plan in the best possible way.

**Gaps**

The results from the survey show that the program does not have a set of clear and measurable student learning objectives in the areas of academics, personal/social issues, and career development. Three out of the five counselors agreed that this year, one of the goals was to increase the number of students taking the PSAT and SAT. Fortunately, this was accomplished. In September this year only 22 students from Mariner took the SATs, whereas in October the number increased to 52. For the PSAT, last year 107 students from Mariner took it, and 200 students took it this year. This is definitely a great goal that was accomplished by the counseling team. However, they agree that more clear objectives and goals need to be established for the future.

Regarding the question about needs assessments being completed regularly, the counselors say that it is a development in progress. They mentioned they are not as consistent with needs assessments as much as they should. They have created needs assessments that are answered by the teachers in order to create a guidance curriculum, but admit that they need to focus on this aspect more, especially creating needs assessments that the kids can answer to.

When it comes to analyzing student data by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level to identify interventions to close achievement gaps, they responded that it too is a development in progress. They mentioned that the Leadership Team is looking into it since Latino boys are doing so poorly in their classes. The counselors do look at data in the form of progress reports to identify students that are getting Fs and Ds and create an intervention with those that are failing.

**Strengths**

A very important strength from the program is that it operates from a plan for closing the achievement gap for minority and lower income students. Mariner High School as a whole mainly serves these two populations, therefore, both the school and the school counseling program’s main focus is on helping these kids be successful, not only in school, but in life. The school counseling program is very involved in making decisions as to who enters the LAP programs, which helps giving learning assistance to students that have not scored high on the state exams. A couple of the counselors run programs where clothing and food are given to kids and families that need it. By doing this, kids are able to better concentrate on their classes and ultimately, graduate. Lastly, the school counseling program always reaches out to minority students to be part of clubs or organizations that will help them find a path in their high school journey. One of the counselors helps run the MAP program which stands for Minority Achieving Program. During this time, students are able to talk and ask questions about anything regarding college or high school life. More about this program will be discussed in the Community Mapping section of this paper.

Another very strong asset of this program involves delivering classroom guidance to all students designed to promote academics, social/personal issues, and career development. Last year, the counselor program visited the Social Studies and English Classes, including ELL and IEP classes. The visits from September to April totaled 438 classes, reaching each student 4-6 times. They documented these visits on the Mariner’s database system named Aspen in order to let staff and parents know what was talked about during these visits. The counseling team used and still uses Prezi to do their presentations and rehearse them several times so that the message is the same for every student. Lastly, they surveyed teachers in June for feedback regarding the material covered. So far this year, all counselors have visited the classrooms every month for all grades regarding topics such as graduation requirements, transcripts, college information for juniors and seniors, and diversity for sophomores and freshmen. From this point on, the counselors will continue to visit the classrooms every month until the end of the year.

**Recommendations**

Based on the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey results, it is extremely important that efforts to create more needs assessments increase in the school counseling program. By doing this, the counselors are truly providing what students express they need, instead of what counselors think students need. It seems that students would benefit from group counseling in various topics, but in order to find out what topics to cover in a group, a needs assessment should take place. When I asked the counselors about running groups, none of them mentioned they wanted to run one at the moment.

It is also important that the program comes up with measurable objectives and goals that can be accomplished throughout the school year. All counselors should meet with an administrator to come up with valid and important goals that will help and benefit not only the counseling program but also the schools’ improvement plan. The school’s improvement plan is to increase graduation rates among all students. Therefore, it makes sense that collaboration takes place to monitor if the established goals have been met.

Another recommendation I would make to the counseling program is to be more involved with the Spanish speaking Parents at the school. Every month there are meetings that I am co-facilitating where Latino parents receive information about how to help their children succeed, as well as for them to ask questions or concerns about their children’s education. If the school wants to reach every minority in the school, it is important that counselors are involved in getting to know these parents and show them that they want to work with them in helping their children succeed.

**Discussion of the Results**

When I discussed the survey results with the counselors, I was impressed of how they responded to the recommendations I made to improve the program. They were really receptive to the feedback and admitted that they needed to improve some parts of the program to make it a stronger one. For the Spanish speaking parent meetings, they agreed that at least one counselor will be present every month to make themselves more visible to this community. Even though they were very receptive of the feedback, they also mentioned that the amount of work they have does not always allow them to improve the program the way they would want to but that they certainly try their best to do it. For them classroom presentations are a big focus because it allows all students, without exception, to be reached regarding topics that are fundamental for their academic, career and personal/social success.

**Strategic Elements**

**School’s Mission Statements**

Mariner High School will provide an excellent education for every student.

**Core Outcomes**

According to the Mariner High School Performance Report (2011-2012), there are three questions used to set goals towards student success:

What do we teach and how? They do this by identifying the content areas that are crucial and by setting grade level expectations, that in turn will help the district evaluate the curriculum based on identified priorities.

How do we know if students have learned what we have taught them? All teachers meet regularly to analyze student progress based on quarter grades, assessments, and benchmarks. The school uses this data to help develop interventions strategies for struggling learners.

How do we intervene if students have not learned something? As stated above, the data will help the school identify resources and programs to help students who are not meeting grade-level expectations. Examples of student intervention is the implementation of the Algebra and Homework Club and SSR, where every day students and staff read for twenty minutes a book or magazine of their choice. These programs have influence a significant increase in the students meeting standards in math and reading.

**School Improvement Plan**

The focus of Mariner High School has always been increasing graduation rates among all students. One of the ways this takes place is by providing students the necessary help they need to succeed. The way they accomplish this every year is by The Learning Assistance Program (LAP). LAP is a Washington's state-funded program that provides additional academic support to eligible students (OSPI, 2013). LAP funds are available to support programs in grades K-12 in reading, writing, and mathematics, as well as in readiness for those subjects. The way LAP funds have been implemented at Mariner is through providing extra math, English, and science for students that have failed these classes or for students that have obtained a low score in the MSP exam in middle school. The school is constantly looking at student data to determine what other extra classes need to be opened. Right now they are working on opening up more recovery biology classes so students that have not passed the biology EOC can get ready to retake it in January.

Reading is another strategy under the improvement plan that remains a priority at Mariner. The idea with focusing in this area is to show students the relevancy that reading has for their academic success as well as for their future careers. These classes will offer the support they need to pass other assessments, such as HESPE and the End of Course Exams (EOC) required for graduation.

Besides academics, another crucial part under the school improvement plan is to take care of the students’ mental well-being. It is imperative that the school sees each student as a whole and not just in regards to academics. A healthy student will perform and exceed in school. Therefore, making sure that every student is getting the support they need from the school and outside resources is a priority. An increase of graduation rates will occur when this occurs on a more consistent basis. Later in the year, Mariner will hire a Drug and Alcohol Counselor and a Mental Health counselor for a couple of days a week.

**Professional Development Days**

The School District development days will focus on the new evaluation system for teacher improvement as well as to improve the implementation of the common core standards. The common core standards according to the Mukilteo School District Site describe the knowledge and skills in English language arts, as well as the mathematics that students will need when they graduate, whatever their choice of college or career is. Students in Washington will be tested on the common core state standards in the spring of 2015. Therefore, it is a priority that the school district as a whole focuses on this area.

The Professional Development Days at Mariner focus not only on the new teacher evaluation system, but also in areas such as student growth, the success criteria for every student, and conversations in the classroom. All this serves the underlying purpose of increasing graduation rates among all students. This is done through staff meetings, classroom observations, and teacher workshops throughout the year. Teachers are also provided professional development time to create formative and common assessments in order to check for student understanding and to help create future lessons.

**School Counselors Involvement in the Strategic Elements of the School**

Mariner High School does not currently have a comprehensive career planning program but is working on creating one. The idea is that school counselors and the career center work in collaboration to develop a program that can be beneficial to our students and help them plan for a successful life after high school. The school’s administration has already moved positions around such as the culminating project coordinator and the transition coordinators into the career center. The culminating project is a graduation requirement for every senior where they present their best work throughout high school in an online portfolio and their pathway to the future. This was separated from the career center previously.

Another way in which counselors will be involved in strategic elements of the school will be by creating a new curriculum in conjunction with the career center regarding college readiness. This curriculum will have a focus on freshmen and juniors. This means that more classroom guidance will be delivered to all students on top of what the counselors already present every month.

**Key Relationships**

**School and the Parents**

The relationship between the school and the parents seems to be a very positive one. Parents have the opportunity to always check their kids’ grades constantly on the computer and come with concerns about it to teachers or counselors. When it comes to the Spanish speaking parents, the school carries out monthly meetings that are organized by the head of the attendance office. This person is bilingual and now that I came along, I am organizing the agenda with her and co-facilitating the meetings. Also, the school counselors send letters twice a year to parents about their kid’s graduation status and to keep in constant touch with them. As with everything, there are parents that come yelling to the counselors and teachers, but for the most part, parents are really appreciative of our actions towards helping their kids succeed at Mariner. In my experience here, the relationship between school and parents is collaborative in nature. Parents whose first language is Spanish really seem pleased to know that I speak their language and that I can answer any questions or concerns they may have.

**School and the Community**

Mariner is definitely a school that values the community very much. The principal understands the importance of having community members and programs involved in our student’s lives. One example of this was a meeting the principal recently organized with members of the community that have assisted Mariner in the past and that wish to keep assisting it. We had individuals from various organizations come to the meeting and explain to the rest of us what their organizations do and how they can support students from Mariner. More information about the way Mariner collaborates with the community is in the Community Mapping section of this paper.

**The staff and Administrators**

This school has 3 assistant principals each assigned to oversee one of the 3 professional learning communities, which include roughly 300 students and 30 staff members. The assistant principals are also in charge of one of the following areas: athletics, assemblies, and the ELL population. One of the assistant principals this year is new to the building. I can see how well staff is responding to him and the ideas he is bringing to the school. We have staff meetings once a month before school starts to gain more information about what is happening within the school. Also, this meeting includes a “Celebration of Success” where staff members are recognized in order to showcase their successful contributions to student academic and activity success. Overall, school staff members seem to have a really good relationship with the administrators. When they are in the halls, I see them joke around and feeling comfortable with each other.

**School Counselors and Teacher**

According to the counselors and to may experience, the relationship with the teachers is a very good one. Sometimes it also depends on people’s personalities and how they receive and implement feedback given by a counselor or a teacher. They reported that communication has been the most important tool for a good relationship with teachers. This means that any changes we implement in a student’s schedule need to be explained clearly to teachers, and if possible, we should get their opinion on the matter. It would not work if counselors made changes to student’s academic plans or schedules without even letting teachers know. Whenever I have removed students or even add them to a class, I always ask for teacher input and they seemed appreciative of it. Another thing that works regarding teacher-counselor relationships are the clear expectations they have about each other. They know when not to send kids to the counseling office and the counselors make sure to not pull kids out of the same class every time. Also, when counselors are out in the classrooms delivering guidance curriculums, they honor the time teachers give them to do it.

**The School Counselors and the Principal**

Every two weeks the counseling and the administration team meet to talk about new ideas being implemented, classes and requirements, strategies, and to voice concerns from either side. The school principal is always in these meetings and is very receptive of what the counselors have to say. He is also very willing to meet individually with counselors if needed. Counselors overall report a very positive relationship with the principal and feel supported by him.

 **Most Frequently used Agencies for Supporting Youth in this School**

Mariner has used Clothes for Kids for a very long time. This is a resource that serves kids enrolled in any Snohomish County school. In addition, the school uses Operation School Bell which helps low income children and teens feel good about themselves, by providing them new clothing, hygiene kits, and vouchers to buy new shoes. At Mariner, these organizations partner with the Fred Meyer near the school so that the kids go and buy their new clothes there. Lastly, Casino Road Clothing and Book exchange is another resource that is frequently used by our school. People are able to bring clean and reusable clothes and exchange them for other clothes.

**Being Visible**

**District- Wide Counselor Meeting**

I have so far attended two of these meetings at the district office. The first meeting welcomed all school counselors back for a new school year. The primarily purpose of this meeting was to answer any questions or concerns about the web-based system used by Mukilteo called Aspen. All counselors shared their experiences with aspen and raised concerns about it. Also, all counselors had an opportunity to voiced what they thought was important to discuss during these meetings every month. The purpose of the second meeting was to talk about 504 plans and homelessness. It was mostly a PowerPoint presentation where counselors also had the opportunity to ask questions and review the district policies regarding these two topics. I was able to familiarize myself with the McKinney Vento process and what we can do for students once they have been identified as being homeless. I am planning to attend all the meetings every month in order to be visible. It has also been a great opportunity because I have gotten to know the other counselors in the district. I also have the possibility to observe other counselors at their schools and see how they advocate for their students depending on the grade level they are in.

**Parent-Conferences**

I have been luckily to attend and be part of many different parent-conferences at Mariner. I have participated in two that have been very serious regarding gang affiliation, where the student, the parents, the principal were present. Not only did I have the opportunity to learn about this issue at school, but I also was able to offer support to the parents and the students during and after the meeting. I also sat up and run a meeting with four teachers, the student, and the student’s parents. We discussed the different issues the student was having in his classes and ways for him to improve. Besides running the meeting, I was able to give my professional opinion about the issue and how to resolve it. Other meetings I have been in are with the Spanish-Speaking parents to discuss graduation status and a plan for their children to get there, college and financial aid support, and behavioral performance.

**Mariner Provider Team Meeting**

Mariner High School is a place that advocates very strongly for each student. For this to happen, a meeting is held three times a year with members from the community that are willing to work with Mariner to support students’ wellbeing. I was able to attend the one held on October 30th. Eleven members from outside resources were present at this meeting. Some of those included: The Everett Community College Outreach Center, Sea Mar CHC for mental health services, the Cocoon House, Mukilteo YMCA, Volunteers of America, Clothes for Kids, among other community resources in the area of Everett. The representatives from Mariner that were present at the meeting included, the principal, the school nurse, the student advocate coordinator, the school and career center coordinator, and I was representing the counseling team. This was a meeting were the different representatives talked about ways in which we can unite forces to reach our objective, which is to meet every student needs, in order to help them become productive members of our society. I was able to introduce myself to everyone and explain my purpose at the school and how I could be helpful to them to meet our objective. I am organizing a Spanish-Speaking resource fair next year to connect Latino parents to resources out in the community that they might be unfamiliar with. This meeting was the perfect opportunity for me to talk about it and get some of these community resources involved in the fair. I feel this was a great meeting to attend not only for networking, but also to connect myself to these resources for this year and for when I find a job in the near future.

**Spanish-** **Speaking Parent Meeting**

Mariner has a very large Latino population, therefore it is crucial that Spanish-Speaking Parents have the opportunity to express concerns and ask questions about their children education. Every month, a meeting for these parents is held during the day, where they get all the information they need in Spanish. I was fortunate enough to be asked to co-lead all meeting for the entire year. So far I have done two. These meetings have given me an amazing opportunity to be seen by these parents so they know there is a counselor at the school that is willing to advocate for them and their children. The first meeting was about how students can be successful through attending school regularly and doing their homework. This was a meeting mostly focused on parent’s questions and to introduce them key people at the school. Also, the principal and the rest of the administration team answered questions from the parents while I translated. The second meeting was about financial aid for colleges and universities. A list of scholarships was distributed to the parents and they were able to ask questions about what it takes to go to college.

**School Board Meeting**

I was able to attend the Mukilteo School Board Meeting November 12th, 2013 at the school district office. I was able to meet the superintendent of the district during the meeting, as well as other board members. They were all extremely welcoming and seemed interested in knowing how I was doing at Mariner. The meeting started out by giving recognitions to students for their high accomplishments in their respective schools. It then continued by having the students representatives at the meeting report about their schools. The representative from Mariner reported the success of the canned food drive we had last week and all the food that was collected for students and families in need. The meeting then proceeded to discuss how principals were carrying out their school improvement plans and what the focus is for this year was. The focus is on the process that will be used to determine whether the objectives are met, how the assessment plan will guide instructional decisions, the professional development plan, and the school's plan to involve parents.

**Classroom Visit**

I visit the Block 9 classrooms regularly for both math and English. There are times that I am observing the teacher lecture for a couple hours, and other times I help them making sure students are working when they are in groups or working individually. The reason why I visit this classroom often if because I want these kids to know me at a deeper level so they know who to come to if they need something.

**Community Mapping**

**Familias Unidas**

This organization is a family support center focus on the Latino community of the Snohomish County. They partner with individuals, families and communities for health, justice, and hope. On their website, their philosophy is to fill gaps in programs, services and support and, ensure underserved communities and populations have access to those services. They offer services such as: Citizenship Preparation Classes, ongoing ELL classes, Raices Latinas, which is a two-week summer camp for Latino kids ages 10-14 in which they learn about their cultural heritage through education, fun activities, and fieldtrips. They also offer advocacy training in Spanish- where parents learn to navigate the U.S. school-system, to build on their children’s strengths, and learn about their and their children’s rights. The Financial Literacy Program for Youths and Adults, teaches to manage money, create savings accounts, deal with debt, and much more. There are many other services that Familias Unidas offer the Latino population in the area. To contact Familias Unidas call Winnie Carell at 425-513-2880.

**Mukilteo YMCA**

The YMCA is an organization currently assisting Mariner High School with a program called Minority Achievement Program (MAP). MAP is a mentoring program offer after school ends at Mariner. Students and families can also benefit from other programs at the YMCA such as: Adult ELL programs, GED tutoring program, summer program, and youth center among other programs. To contact the YMCA call Alex Costumbato at 425-512-8050.

**Sea Mar CHC**

This organization provides mental health and substance abuse services to children, youth, and adults. To contact Sea Mar call Jonathan Goodman at 206-763-5277.

**Clothes For Kids**

This is an organization that is already serving Mariner High School. It meets the clothing needs of low-income student in the Snohomish area. They provide a full school wardrobe--including underwear, socks, and shoes. To contact Clothes for Kids call Tilda Doughty at 425-741-6500.

**Housing Authority of Snohomish County**

This organization has several programs that provide both housing and supportive services to assist homeless households. To contact this program call Dave Aldrich at 425-290-8499.

**Cocoon House**

Cocoon House has been Snohomish County's only resource exclusively serving homeless and at-risk youth ages 13-17. Cocoon House provides youth housing and other critical community -based services to caregivers, families and the community. To contact Cacoon house call at 800-259-6042

**GLOBE.**

Their vision is that Snohomish County GLBTQ youth and their allies are able to live and thrive in a safe, educated, and integrated community that supports healthy development of their emotional, spiritual, physical, sexual, and gender identities. This organization meets every Wednesday from 6-8pm in a safe, confidential youth-friendly location in urban central Snohomish County. Due to the fact that this is a confidential meeting, they ask youth to email [globeleaders@globeyouth.com](http://www.globeyouth.com/contact.php) .

**SnoGLOBE**

 This organization is a Snohomish County group creating an affirming, equal, just and unified community for GLBTQ youth, adults and allies.To contact this organization, call 425-280-6508.

**PFLAG in the Snohomish County**

This organization promotes the health and well-being of LGBT persons, their families and friends through: support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. To call this organization call: 360-863-8222.

**Child Supportive Services (CPS):** 1-866-280-6714

**Conclusion**

**School Strengths**

One of the strengths of Mariner High School is its diversity. It is a school that welcomes everyone with open arms. They put a lot of emphasis in teaching students to respects each other’s differences and similarities. Due to the diversity there is, the administrators understand the importance of helping every kid, without an exception, succeed in school and they put in place a lot of interventions to help students that are slipping to the cracks to do better at school and graduate. The fact that this school thinks of the student as a whole is amazing. The principal does a lot to help every student have a better life outside of the school and provide all the services necessary for this to happen. He has a great sense of advocacy and believes that academics and college readiness can only happen if students are being taken care outside of Mariner. They apply to every grant they can in order to get more help. The school recently hired a Student Advocate person that helps students and their families reach out to services that are beneficial for them. They also just got a grant that will allow them to hire a mental health professional and a drug and alcohol counselor. They are always looking for programs and services that will benefit the students. The Block 9 serves as an intervention where students get extra support in math and English. This extra help allows student to prepare for all the testing required to graduate and to do well in their other math and English classes also required to graduate. Even though this is a very high needs school, Mariner is doing all it can to close the achievement gap.

**Gaps**

As mentioned above, one of the gaps of the school is the diversity among staff. The school needs more people from other ethnicities that can help students similar to them. As I had mentioned already, some students and even parents do not feel comfortable communication with White teachers or counselors. Many of them want people that understand where they come from and that understand how to help their kids. Once the Spanish- Speaking parents knew there was a counselor that spoke Spanish this year, many of them made appointments with me even though their kids were not under my case load. They expressed very clear that they wanted to be more involve in their kids’ education but many times they do not feel comfortable asking questions to White staff. I keep getting busier and busier every day with Spanish-Speaking parents.

**Issues Needing Further Advocacy and Exploration**

One issue in need for further advocacy is to explore more ways in which Spanish- Speaking parents can be more involved in their kids’ education when there is not a Spanish –Speaking counselor anymore. In order for students to succeed, parent involvement is extremely important. It is also very important that students from different ethnicities identify a person that they feel they can come to when they need it, especially those from the Block 9 group. Lastly, helping the Hispanic students do well during their 9th grade experience is extremely important. This is why I chose to focus my attention in the Block 9 group.

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