

High Point High School

School Improvement Plan

2006-2007

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Mission

The mission of Prince George's County Public Schools is to ensure that all students acquire information and skills and the ability to apply their knowledge to become lifelong learners and productive citizens in a diverse/global society.

This mission is best accomplished through a structure of child-centered learning communities characterized by: equity and access to a quality education that includes strong instructional leadership; high expectations for the achievement of all students; a rigorous curriculum; frequent monitoring of student performance; extending learning opportunities for students failing to meet academic standards; well trained, certified teachers in all classrooms; enhanced resources; families who are empowered to assist in providing a quality education for every child; a school climate conducive to building positive relationships; a safe and orderly school environment fostering enhanced school pride.

Prince George's County Public Schools

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Introduction

High Point High School is committed to instilling in its students the necessary habits of hearts and minds to become lifelong learners, productive workers, responsible citizens, and caring members of a global society. To this end, the school offers a range of academic programs including a comprehensive program, an award-winning Advanced Placement program, a large ESOL program, and multiple Special Education programs. Nine Advanced Placement courses are offered as are five foreign languages. Located in Beltsville, Maryland, the school celebrated the 50th anniversary of its opening two years ago. Approximately 2357 students are enrolled at High Point in grades 9 through 12, and the school utilizes a four-period, A day/B day schedule with classes averaging 85 minutes each. An extensive program of activities and athletics is also available for student participation.

The previous two school years documented increases in student reading levels and decreases in suspension rates. The school is especially proud of significant increases in SAT scores last school year. Additionally, High Point's highly successful Advanced Placement program was featured in major articles in the *Washington Post*, and four of the school's former AP teachers were invited to speak at the national Advanced Placement conference in Los Angeles three summers ago. High Point's former science Teacher Coordinator, Martha Alexander, earned national certification status in 2003 as did former foreign language teacher Cathy Boehme in 2004. Mrs. Barbara Hughes, High Point's Food and Consumer Science Chairperson, earned national teacher certification status in 2005, was recognized as the Maryland Pro Start Teacher of the Year, and received the 2005-2006 Pro Start National Teacher of Excellence Award. High Point is currently the only high school in Prince George's County recognized as a Green School.

High Point continues with "school in improvement" status as a result of not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in reading with our Special Education students, and in not making AYP in reading and mathematics with our Limited English Proficient students in 2005. Additionally, the school did not meet AYP goals for graduation in 2005. Our principal, Scott Smith, notified parents and the Board of Education of our AYP status via letter. High Point is currently involved in intensive strategic planning to develop activities in support of the subgroups that did not make AYP standards.

School Demographics

High Point is perhaps the most diverse school in the state of Maryland. The student body reflects the multicultural nature of American society as a whole with 46.29% who are African-American, 42.09% Hispanic, 5.39% Caucasian, and 5.85% Asian. A total of 66 different countries are represented within our large international student population and more than 42 languages are spoken. Forty-seven percent of our students are eligible for free and reduced meals, 19.2% are enrolled in our ESOL program, and 9.9% receive Special Education services. The professional staff is likewise diverse with 45% Caucasian, 47% African-American, 2% Hispanic, and 6% Asian. According to the MSDE website, 46.8% of High Point's teachers hold an Advanced Professional Certificate, 28.8% a Standard Professional Certificate, 1.8% a Resident Certificate, and 17.1% a Conditional Certificate. Twenty-nine percent of High Point's classes are not taught by Highly Qualified Teachers. High Point's teaching staff consists of 65 teachers with 0-3 years of teaching experience, 31 teachers with 4-10 years of classroom experience, 5 teachers with 11-15 years of teaching experience and 46 teachers with 16 or more years of experience in teaching.

Major initiatives and how these efforts will improve student performance.

High Point has identified increased student achievement on the High School Assessments (HSA) and the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) as two priority needs that will be addressed during the 2006-2007 school term. A specific focus is the support of those subgroups that did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress standards. By attacking these priority needs, High Point's primary benefit will be increased reading and mathematics proficiency for our students. Concerning the HSA's, the School Planning and Management Team (SPMT) will continue to fund the Instructional Coordinator (Staff Development Specialist) position to lead the faculty through staff development, curriculum revisions, adjustment of teaching methods, and finding new strategies for motivating students. During the previous six years, more than 6000 teacher hours of staff development have been provided by the Instructional Coordinator in support of the staff. The SAT Committee will continue to work with the SPMT in developing activities to increase

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student performance on the SAT. SAT Prep classes continue to be offered and the guidance staff continues to develop an individual SAT plan for each student to assist in determining their readiness for taking the test. PSAT and SAT information was presented at Back to School Night to orient parents to the tests, and the PSAT was administered to all 10th and 11th grade students on October 18th.

A number of initiatives have been implemented to support students in the area of mathematics. In addition to monthly department meetings, Algebra I and Algebra I AL teachers are meeting after school twice monthly to collaborate and plan upcoming lessons in the curriculum. Teachers discuss the content of the lessons, share ideas and offer strategies for meeting the needs of the students. The Teacher Coordinator observes all teachers and provides assistance to new teachers in the areas of instructional strategies, classroom management, organizational skills, and others as needed. Information, assistance and recommendations are also given to other teachers based on the above mentioned observations. Teachers are encouraged to offer tutoring after school to help students who are struggling with the content to be successful. After school tutoring is also offered to students who need to make up missed assignments due to absences. With the exception of special education students, who need routine to be successful, students have different teachers for Algebra and Algebra I AL. This ensures that the Algebra AL curriculum, which is preparation for the High School Assessment, is being taught to all students.

Science and social studies are implementing new and continuing strategies during the 2006-2007 school year to address the identified needs to improve, sustain and accelerate student performance on assessments in these areas. Biology teachers are receiving and will continue to receive training on the new curriculum framework, new technology and use of new textbook extracurricular activities. Workbooks are being used which will focus on vocabulary development, BCR writing, and lab and concept connections. There is also a new HSA Biology Lab Manual. Social studies classes are using new textbooks that infuse technology and offer enhanced ancillaries. County level training and workshops have been offered to LSN teachers. Department unit tests have been developed for the HSA course in LSN Government. These tests are being updated / rewritten to coincide with the new textbooks' technology and ancillaries. Biology and Social Studies classes have plans to begin an extensive tutorial program after school beginning in January.

Specific activities have been included in this School Improvement Plan to provide support for those sub-groups at High Point that have not met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards. Concerning those subgroups, High Point will implement the following strategies:

Limited English Proficient:

Separate ESOL classes for Algebra I, English 10, LSN Government and Biology will be included in the master schedule to enable teachers of these classes to more efficiently assist ESOL students in the development of reading and writing skills as they present their course's content. These teachers will also use graphic organizers and pre and post-reading and writing strategies to further assist students in the development of reading proficiency. To support development of math skills, LEP students are enrolled in ESOL sections of Language of Math, Algebraic Concepts, and Algebra 1 all featuring extended learning time and offering sheltered instruction. All ESOL I students are enrolled in Pre-World History and Pre-Conceptual Physics classes in preparation for HSA classes in science and social studies. Finally, ESOL teachers have a computer lab available for their classes, and students may use the lab during their lunch period. The lab utilizes software programs to support the development of reading, writing and grammar skills.

Special Education:

Designated Special Education 9th and 10th grade students will also be enrolled in an Academic Resource Course which emphasizes development of basic reading skills. Special Education teachers of 9th and 10th grade students will utilize a series of reading strategies with the goal of increasing reading proficiency. Strategies include, but are not limited to, Activating Prior Knowledge (KWL), making real-life connections, and previewing text for difficult words. In addition, a uniform Five-Step Approach to the reading process will be followed. The use of "Interactive Readers" is

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an additional support for use with Special Education students. In order to address math needs, Special Education students will receive instruction daily in Algebraic Concepts and Algebra I.

Graduation:

The Guidance Department will implement a uniform "exit conference" protocol where students withdrawing from High Point are given specific information concerning re-enrollment in Evening High School, GED programs, and other options intended to target student dropouts. Additionally, the school will continue its Career Exploration Program for the 2006-2007 school year. This program will identify approximately seventy 9th and 10th grade students on the basis of grades and career interest surveys. Enrollment in Career Exploration classes in 9th and 10th grade will lead to possible enrollment in county technical academy programs, or to apprenticeship placements in High Point's Work Study program with the goal of reducing dropouts.

Safe and Orderly Environment

The Administration, the SPMT, and the Safe and Orderly Committee continue to focus on the maintenance of a safe and orderly environment at High Point. The funding for staffing of the Student Services Center (SSC) that serves as an in-house suspension center continues this school year. County suspension data demonstrates that this program has been successful in reducing suspensions. Four additional security cameras have been installed in hallways that were previously not covered, and increased "hall sweeps" and "tardy parties" have cut down on hall traffic during class time. Attendance initiatives that will be continued include use of the "Easy-Caller" telephone system which automatically calls each home of tardy or absent students, and attendance letters sent to parents in five-day increments to make students and parents aware of the serious necessity of attending school. The use of a tracking system of all student discipline referrals will make for more efficient analysis of data over the course of the current school year and will lead to more effective strategies for reducing the total number of referrals. All High Point students are expected to comply with all of the rules and regulations as presented in the *Prince George's County Student Code of Conduct*. Each student is given a copy and all students are informed of its content at grade level assemblies at the beginning of each school year. Those students who do not adhere to all rules and regulations as stated are addressed in a manner indicated in the document.

Parent/Family Involvement

High Point has a long tradition of involving parents and community members in the school's decision-making process. Four positions are available for parents as members of the School Planning and Management Team (SPMT) including a representative of the business community. They enjoy the same voting power as members of the faculty, administration, and staff. During the previous five school years, High Point has held highly successful Parent Conference Nights. Three times per year, High Point teachers remain in their classrooms from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to meet with parents. An average of 3000 conferences per year has been held. The school holds evening parent meetings on a wide variety of topics. Hispanic parents have been invited to review school forms and procedures and have been provided with information concerning gang activity in the surrounding communities. Additionally, the Guidance Department has offered a number of popular "Road to College" evening sessions for parents.

As High Point increases its focus on assisting those subgroups that have not met AYP standards, strategies to increase parental involvement are being developed. The staff is expanding programs designed to involve the parents of our large and growing international student population. Hispanic parent information nights will be held for parents in order to provide information about High Point, academic requirements, the school's programs, and the HSA tests. When available, bilingual student aides will be assigned and trained to assist parents entering the main office. This year High Point has added to its staff a Crisis Intervention Specialist whose position is being funded through the ESOL office. The Crisis Intervention Specialist will communicate with parents regarding attendance and other issues of concern. The International Student Guidance Office will also continue to sponsor activities such as College Night and Financial Aid Night.

High Point enters the second year of self-study in preparation for a Middle States visit in March, 2007. One of the primary components of the *Accreditation for Growth* protocol being used is increased parental involvement. The

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school is committed to putting in place policies that will satisfy this Middle States requirement and, as a result, parental representation on the SPMT/Middle States Planning Team will increase to three members. High Point is continuing its efforts to reach out to the school's community. Mr. Smith and Mrs. Hughes now attend meetings with the Rotary Club of Beltsville, the Beltsville Citizenship Association and the Calverton Citizenship Association.