

# ASTORIA SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

**DATE:** February 4, 2015

**SCHOOL:** Astoria High School

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

- **Smarter Balance (SBAC) Training:** On January 15, 2015, during Early Release, staff throughout the District participated in training regarding the Smarter Balance Assessment. For Astoria High School, this exam will be the standard assessment by which school and student Essential Skills will be evaluated. The testing will begin on April 27<sup>th</sup> with the English Language Arts exam followed by the Mathematics exam beginning on May 11<sup>th</sup>. While there is still a certain level of concern and anxiety about the exam, many of the questions and logistics of the assessment and how we can prepare our students are being more fully understood.
- **Office Staff Cross Training:** During early release, Astoria High School Office Staff have been cross training in the event one of the staff members is gone for an extended period of time due to illness or family matters. This will allow business to continue with a minimal impact on school operations. Their first meeting addressed attendance issues, daily absences, sports travel, class field trips, and various reports. Over the next few weeks, Office Staff will cross train on sub-calling, reports, online calendaring, check cutting, and purchase orders. They plan to continue to receive this training until each member feels comfortable covering the demands of each respective position.
- **Environment and Society:** For the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester 2014-2015, Mr. Delaney Sharp will present a new course entitled, Environment and Society. This will offer yet one more academic enrichment opportunity for upper classmen seeking college preparation.

Environment and Society (04303) Open to Grades: 11-12 Length of Course: Semester.  
Grad. Requirement: SS or EL. Prerequisite: None

*This course will examine the relationships between humans and their environment. We will explore ways human societies have shaped their environment across the globe as well as how our environment has shaped our society. Topics include natural resource management, food systems, parks and protection, and recreation.*

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

- **Math:** During the months of December and January, the AHS Math PLC discussed best practices to support student learning. They decided to focus on summarization and then analyze the effects this had on student learning. Algebra 1 used summary tables from the text book and saw gains from 6% proficient to 31% proficient. Geometry used

summarization at the end of daily notes and saw gains from 66% proficient to 69% proficient. Algebra 2 and Pre-Calculus used Chapter Summary Graphic Organizers. Students used a Likert Scale to evaluate the effectiveness. Sixty three percent rated them as helpful whereas 11% of students rated them as not helpful. As the Math PLC heads into the rest of the year, they will continue to explore effective teaching strategies as well as calibrate grading to be more uniform across the department.

- **Engagement:** The focus of the engagement team this year has been both to intervene with individual students as well as create activities and interventions to impact all students, with the intent of fostering a caring school culture (#5 of the 40 Assets). January's discussion pertained mostly to goal setting for second semester to further efforts in both these areas. Students were discussed in an effort to identify individuals that they could encourage to finish the semester strong and obtain as much credit as possible. Members of the Engagement Team spoke with these specific students over the course of the month. Once first semester grades are posted, the team will identify students that no longer need the focus of the engagement team, as well as identify students that would benefit from interventions during second semester. The group also brainstormed a number of school-wide activities that could be implemented during second semester to increase school morale and student engagement. In addition, several members of the team are going to a PBIS conference soon and we look forward to more ideas that come as a result of these events.
- **Science:** The Science PLC finalized the Essential Learning Objectives as outlined below:
  - Based on observations and science principles, formulate a question or hypothesis that can be investigated through the collection and analysis of relevant information.
  - Design and conduct a controlled experiment, field study, or other investigation to make systematic observations about the natural world.
  - Collect sufficient and appropriate data.
  - Analyze data and identify uncertainties.
  - Draw a valid conclusion, explain how it is supported by the evidence, and communicate the findings of a scientific investigation.

Currently they are evaluating the development of a plan for assessing the gaps, redundancies, and effectiveness of what they currently teach in order to meet the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) while also successfully teaching the ELO's as outlined above.

- **English:** On December 18, 2014, the Astoria High School ELA PLC unveiled the [ahswrite.org](https://sites.google.com/a/astoriak12.org/ahs-writing-resources/) website. <https://sites.google.com/a/astoriak12.org/ahs-writing-resources/> Throughout the month of January, staff have promoted the website with their respective classes and are currently evaluating the effectiveness of the website through student surveys and responses. They are now making the corresponding changes to the website based upon this information.
- **Greater Good:** Members of the Greater Good PLC created a survey to be distributed to AHS staff regarding methods used for stress reduction. They will administer this survey

at the next “engagement” meeting of our staff. We know from research that stress management is key to one’s well-being and, thus, better work. Many of these strategies are being taught to students who need Specially Designed Instruction in areas of anxiety and personal management.

- **Social Science:** In an effort to systemically address the rigor of Honors Courses throughout the Social Science PLC, staff have been collaboratively creating formative assessments to be used for student placement and matriculation in specific courses. These assessments focus primarily on writing prompts that assess a student’s interest, content knowledge, and level of writing. This is a change from the specific skill standards from their previous PLC cycle in which they were targeting a specific writing trait.

### **STUDENT AND STAFF SUCCESS**

- **Free School** – As noted in the December board report, Astoria High School continues to develop enrichment opportunities for students to engage in beyond their core academic courses. Beginning on January 29<sup>th</sup>, students have had or will have the opportunity to participate in presentation from staff, community members, and alumni on a wide range of topics. Jordan Poyer ('09) presented thoughts and strategies to focus on perseverance and dedication in the classroom and on the playing field while Mr. Fromwiller and Mr. Robinson discussed firefighting and environmental topics. On February 17, 2015, Jerel Lilywhite will offer students the opportunity to practice climbing the rockwall in the auxiliary gym.
- **State of Leadership Review** – On January 27, 2015, as part of their Semester 1 Final, students from the Honors Leadership class presented their review of Leadership up to this time in the school year. They discussed aspects of communication, unity, and spirit as well as how they have responded to set-backs. Superintendent Hoppes and Board Chair Marty Dursse were present, as well as Principal Ploghoft and other District Staff. It was a nice opportunity to witness the talents of our up and coming leaders.
- **Gema Garcia** – During the annual Oregon Association for Comprehensive Education state conference, Gema Garcia was honored as the Oregon Migrant Student of the Year. This is a great honor for Gema and highlights the service and character of this wonderful student. Many District Staff and Community partners have had a part in her education and development. She is an example to many of our students of the value of dedication, work ethic, perseverance, and compassion. Congratulations to Ms. Garcia for this accomplishment.
- **Senior Mentor Program** – Astoria High School has currently partnered with 11 community members to support a corresponding number of Seniors with their goals and academic pursuits. The partnerships are as unique as the skills and needs of each mentor and student, but the relationships that are being formed are created clear benefits for the student, and hopefully the mentor as well. We are hopeful that this program will continue to expand to benefit more of our students as the community connection becomes even stronger.

**SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (Upcoming)**

- **February 13th – Wrestling Regional Playoff**
- **February 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> – District Swimming**
- **February 20<sup>th</sup> – Basketball Regular Season ends.**
- **February 20<sup>th</sup> – Latino Club – CCC Visit**
- **February 28<sup>th</sup> – Winter Ball**