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Scott Barksdale, Head of School  
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July 31, 2020

### **Parent Notification Regarding Title I Programs**

Harpowell Coastal Academy (HCA) currently receives Title I Federal Funds. The amount of this funding fluctuates between \$65,000-\$85,000 depending on our student enrollment and our percentage of students who qualify and the funding rate any given year. The primary purpose of this funding is to help ensure that all children have access to the supports they need to meet academic state standards. The purpose of this notification is to inform all parents of the use of these funds and ways for parents to be involved.

During the 2018-2019 school year, 46% of HCA's students met the criteria to qualify, and as such we qualify to utilize this funding in support of school programs and services designed to upgrade our educational program to support the academic achievement of Title I-eligible students.

#### **Origins of Funding Use**

Each year, Harpswell Coastal Academy conducts a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) to identify areas of improvement. Our CNA Team is comprised of our Leadership Team, select members of our Board of Directors, and key community members and parents with extensive knowledge of our school and/or education. There were multiple opportunities for faculty, families, and community members to participate. These were communicated through our weekly newsletter, and in person at school events. Our CNA team emerged from our Charter Renewal team, as much of the work on the renewal overlapped with the work required for the CNA. The original process kicked off at the end of the 2016-17 school year, with a closing faculty meeting that included reflection on the strengths and challenges of the school. This was followed by a Board retreat during the summer of 2017 during which the Board and Leadership Team reviewed the faculty reflections, and engaged in a reflective activity of their own.

During the 2017-18 school year, members of the CNA team led sessions with faculty, some of which were also attended by Board members, to explore historical assessment and attendance data, with the goal of identifying trends in student performance, and gaps in knowledge. The management of the CNA efforts was taken on by the Leadership Team, which met weekly throughout the year. This team, comprised of our Executive Director, our Director of Teaching & Learning, our Director of Technology and our principals, spent time reviewing HCAs data, and exploring best practice options to improve areas of weakness. These meetings were an integral aspect of our work on this plan. Meetings that involved more faculty, Board, family and community members took place weekly throughout the academic year.

Beginning in the Spring of 2017, and lasting through June 2018, stakeholders were brought together to review data, and discuss aspects of our program. In conjunction with our Charter renewal process, we had a series of meetings with faculty, families, community stakeholders, students, and our Board. These meetings included open feedback sessions as well as topical meetings about things including Assessment, Standards Based instruction, and Restorative Practices.

Additionally, our Academic Affairs Committee worked with our Director of Teaching & Learning and a group of faculty to dive into our NWEA and MEA data. These data were explored within the context of special student populations including our Special Ed students and our economically disadvantaged students. Analysis from these meetings were then brought to our full faculty and staff, and insights were used in the development of faculty PEPG goals for the current year. Insight gleaned was also used by our

Leadership Team and student support faculty in the implementation of our RTI program this year.

In the spring of 2018, faculty, students, and families were surveyed using a Panorama Survey from the Charter Commission. Results from this survey were reviewed and analyzed and included in our final CNA.

Every year since, we have repeated this exact process and timeframe in order to make adjustments to the CNA and re-ratify the plan.

### **2020-2021 Title I Use of Funds**

Stemming from this process are a series of schoolwide goals that are incorporated into everyday curriculum and operational policy and procedure. HCA has chosen to utilize our Title I funds to enhance the goals from our needs assessment. The intent of this approach is to support existing programming, not supplant it, so that all Title I-eligible students can receive academic instruction and support to meet their needs, as well as to provide for a variety of enrichment activities.

During the 2020-2021 school year, Title I funds will be used to support eligible students in HCA's main goals:

1. 10% Percent increase of tested students scoring proficient on the ELA portion of the MEA over the year
2. 10% Percent increase of tested students scoring proficient on the Math portion of the MEA over the year
3. 10% decrease in the number of 'chronically absent' students

An all-encompassing Title IA project has been designed as a multi-faceted approach to supporting Title IA students as we endeavor to exceed Goals outlined in our Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The districts leadership will dedicate time to these Title IA projects above and beyond the normal scope of work, and collaborate with staff to monitor, manage, document and implement specific project efforts to improve metrics in these three core areas that have disproportionately impacted low income and disadvantaged students. Time will be spent in group work with the entire HCA faculty and staff on tools & learning techniques to overcome barriers to learning.

Regarding attendance, Title IA students are experiencing chronic absenteeism, and a dedicated team of staff will convene an average of 8 hours / week (0.20 time) above their normal duties to identify and correct a wide number of factors in order to improve attendance.

In order to properly address academic achievement in ELA and Math on the MEA, additional time will need to be spent coaching and training teachers on new and innovating techniques to shape project-based learning in such a way that better prepares students for the environment of test taking. Additional time will be spent on coaching teachers on communication techniques as it relates to better understanding students' environment outside of school, thus allowing teaching CREW leaders an advantage in identifying barriers to attendance. These have proven to be difficult areas of achievement, as uncovered and outlined in the CNA and therefore require additional resource.

Additionally, funds are used to fulfill the requirements set forth in McKinney-Vento by tasking the Homeless Liaison to create a comprehensive outreach program that coordinates the identification and school enrollment of homeless children.

Finally, HCA will appoint a Title IA Coordinator to lead program implementation, monitoring and reporting.

Title I Funding, State Level Supplemental Funding, as well as general funds are allocated to these expenses. HCA believes that educating children is a joint effort between the school and the support system of the child, particularly the parent/guardian of the child. HCA encourages parents/guardians to be involved in their child's education and we consider parents to be an integral component to the academic

success of their child. When schools collaborate with parents to help their children learn and when parents participate in school activities and decision-making about their children's education, children achieve at higher levels.

### **Department of Education Perspective**

The U.S. Department of Education defines the purpose of the Title I funding as the following: SEC. 1001. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE. The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments. This purpose can be accomplished by —

- (1) ensuring that high-quality academic assessments, accountability systems, teacher preparation and training, curriculum, and instructional materials are aligned with challenging State academic standards so that students, teachers, parents, and administrators can measure progress against common expectations for student academic achievement;
- (2) meeting the educational needs of low-achieving children in our Nation's highest-poverty schools, limited English proficient children, migratory children, children with disabilities, Native American children, neglected or delinquent children, and young children in need of reading assistance;
- (3) closing the achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and nonminority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers;
- (4) holding schools, local educational agencies, and States accountable for improving the academic achievement of all students, and identifying and turning around low-performing schools that have failed to provide a high-quality education to their students, while providing alternatives to students in such schools to enable the students to receive a high-quality education;
- (5) distributing and targeting resources sufficiently to make a difference to local educational agencies and schools where needs are greatest;
- (6) improving and strengthening accountability, teaching, and learning by using State assessment systems designed to ensure that students are meeting challenging State academic achievement and content standards and increasing achievement overall, but especially for the disadvantaged;
- (7) providing greater decision making authority and flexibility to schools and teachers in exchange for greater responsibility for student performance;
- (8) providing children an enriched and accelerated educational program, including the use of schoolwide programs or additional services that increase the amount and quality of instructional time;
- (9) promoting schoolwide reform and ensuring the access of children to effective, scientifically based instructional strategies and challenging academic content;
- (10) significantly elevating the quality of instruction by providing staff in participating schools with substantial opportunities for professional development;
- (11) coordinating services under all parts of this title with each other, with other educational services, and, to the extent feasible, with other agencies providing services to youth, children, and families; and
- (12) affording parents substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.

## **Parent Rights Under Title I**

Under the Title I Program Guidelines, parents have the following rights:

1. To be provided with ready access to information on Title I Programs and Services
2. To be provided with opportunities to participate in the decision making and programs around the use of Title I Funding
  - a. HCA offers regularly scheduled parent meetings with provisions for dinner and childcare
  - b. HCA holds regular monthly Board of Directors meetings, for which all parents can attend
  - c. HCA has an open door policy for administrators-parents can access administrators at most any time
3. To request the professional qualification both teachers and paraprofessionals
4. To request that any and all school information be provided in a language other than English
5. To be provided with volunteer opportunities with the school
6. To be provided with information on our complaint procedures (see website)

Parent Orientation:

Date: Thursday, August 29th

Time: 5:30pm @ Division 1

Location: HCA, 9 Ash Point Rd., Harpswell, ME 04079

Parent Orientation:

Date: Thursday, August 29th

Time: 7:30pm @ Division 2

Location: HCA, 8 Leavitt Drive, Brunswick, ME 04011

If you are unable to attend, please alert Angie Arndt at [aarndt@harpswellcoastalacademy.org](mailto:aarndt@harpswellcoastalacademy.org), 207-833-3229 and she will be able to provide all materials presented at the meeting.

Additional one-on-one Parent Meetings will be offered by 10/01/20, and the schedule will be emailed to parents not in attendance at the main orientation meeting.

## **SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT**

Harpswell Coastal Academy, and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (participating children), agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

This school-parent compact is in effect during school year 2019-2020

## **School Responsibilities**

Harpswell Coastal Academy will:

1. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:
  - a. Utilize aligned instructional materials in classes and for home based activities
  - b. Utilize creative teaching strategies that are engaging and hands on
  - c. Maintain a low teacher to student ratio to maximize student support
  - d. Provide regular access to technology at all opportunities
  - e. Provide access to a variety of instructional support materials

- f. Provide regular enrichment activities at all classes
  - g. Each student will have a personalized learning plan that takes into consideration individual strengths, interests and areas for growth.
2. Hold student-led conferences at minimum twice per academic year, during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement. Teachers will promote and schedule these meetings individually with their families.
3. Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress. Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:
  - a. Each student will receive a direct communication from teachers once a month noting student's performance.
  - b. Each family will also have access to the results of any assessments.
  - c. If a student is experiencing difficulty in their coursework, a meeting will be called to discuss the student's program and any changes that need to be made in order to better support the student.
4. Provide parents reasonable access to staff. Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:
  - a. Administration is available to consult with parents daily during the course of regular school hours
  - b. Teaching staff is available upon request outside of normal school hours
5. Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities, as follows:
  - a. Parent may volunteer at HCA, or observe school based activities upon request. Volunteer time should be scheduled with the child's teacher.
  - b. Parents may volunteer for field trips and other school activities. Notifications of opportunities will be sent out in advance.
  - c. Parents may attend monthly HCA Board of Directors meetings. Schedules are available upon request and are also posted on the school's web site

### **Parent Responsibilities**

We, as parents, will support our children's learning in the following ways:

1. Monitoring and supporting active student attendance.
2. Monitoring student's work completion.
3. Maintaining open and regular communication with teaching staff.
4. Monitoring amount of television their children watch.
5. Volunteering in school activities and classes.
6. Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my children's education.
7. Promoting positive use of my child's extracurricular time.
8. Staying informed about my child's education and communicating with the school by promptly; reading all notices from the school or the school district either received by my child or by mail and responding, as appropriate.
9. Serving, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups.

We look forward to ongoing communication with all parents around our evolving programs and use of resources. We thank you for choosing Harpswell Coastal Academy.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, feedback or concerns.

Sincerely,

Andrew T. Smaha  
 Director, Business & Finance and Title I Coordinator