

Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School District
Superintendent's Report
Thursday, December 10, 2015

William H. Lupini
Superintendent of Schools

FY2016 Budget Development

We are currently in the initial stages of developing the FY2016 budget proposal. Our goal is to hold an initial detailed discussion with the Finance Subcommittee at their meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2016 and with the full School Committee at our meeting on Thursday, January 21, 2016.

Our discussions to date have focused on the following issues:

- The need for additional CTE staffing in certain newer program areas to address increased enrollment in those areas;
- The possibility of reducing or combining CTE staffing in certain program areas where enrollments are lagging;
- An examination of administrative functions in order to possibly combine positions, create efficiencies, and better address certain program priorities (e.g., adult education, cooperative education, etc.);
- The need for additional academic teaching staff to address a growing student population; and
- An examination of revenues, revolving accounts, and reserves in order to best address budget needs, while dealing with member district assessments.

Adult Education

We are continuing to struggle with the program offering and revolving account for our adult education program. At present, it appears that we can anticipate an end-of-year balance in the revolving account of \$63k, before accounting for the \$40k that the FY2016 budget anticipated would be paid from this source toward the Director's salary.

As noted above, we are looking at other models for this program and administrative function in order to create efficiencies and better address our priorities as part of the FY2017 budget development process.

Open House and Application Process for 2015-2016

Following is a summary of our admission (recruitment and application) process, designed to meet our projected enrollment of 360 grade nine students annually.

Recruitment

- October: Grade 8 visits by ETHS Grade 9 Counselors; Contact Counselor Breakfast;
Grade 8 District Mailing
- November: Open House (November 15, 2015)
- December: Tours (after school on Tuesday and Thursday from 2:45 to 4:00 p.m.)

Application Process

- Applications are available for download at <http://www.essextech.net> and at Middle School guidance offices.
- Complete applications are due by the first Friday in February (February 5, 2016).
- The application consists of:

- Student Demographic Information (including signatures, CTE Program preferences, and voluntary information)
- Academics: Previous school year and term 1-2 of the current school year averages in ELA, mathematics, science and social studies (maximum of 32 points)
- Conduct and Discipline Record: Previous school year and term 1-2 of the current school year (maximum of 20 points)
- Attendance Record: Unexcused absences for the previous school year and term 1-2 of the current school year (maximum of 8 points)
- Counselor Recommendation Rating (maximum of 10 points)
- Interview: Scheduled by the ETHS admissions secretary at the middle school if five or more student applications have been received; all other applicants are interviewed at ETHS after school and/or during February vacation (maximum of 40 points)

Late Applications

Applicants for fall admissions received after the first Friday in February will be accepted. These applications are evaluated using the same criteria as other applications and the composite score is computed. They are placed in rank order on the established waiting list.

Grade 9 Non-Resident Applications

“Ninth grade students who reside in cities and towns that offer an approved exploratory program shall attend the exploratory program provided by the district of residence; provided however, that students may apply for non-resident admission for the purpose of exploring specialized agriculture and natural resources programs designated by the Commissioner and not available in the student’s district of residence.” (effective March 2015 per MDESE)

Notification of Acceptance (April through September)

- Conditional Acceptance (April 2016): These letters are mailed to the students’ parents/guardians. An email is also forwarded to the students’ guidance counselor identifying accepted students.
- Placement Testing (May 2016)
- Confirmation of Acceptance (July 2016): Acceptance is confirmed pending receipt of final report cards and passing grades in ELA and mathematics.

Wait List

The wait list is maintained and referenced as vacancies become available through September 2016.

Early College Program

Since the Parent Information Night on November 10th, attended by over 200 parents across grades 10, 11, and 12, we have given nearly 150 application forms to students and parents, in addition to the 100 distributed on November 10th. Pat Gentile, President of North Shore Community College (NSCC), and Karen Hynick, Early College Director for NSCC, and Nancy Dashcund, ETHS Program Director, presented the program benefits as part of the information night. We added information to the ETHS web site that links to the NSCC Early College site.

Twenty (20) students attended an after-school information session on November 19th. This meeting clarified admission procedures and student responsibilities, including the Accuplacer requirement. Susan Curry (NSCC) and Nancy Dashcund led the meeting. Students are in the process of taking Accuplacer at NSCC. As of December 3rd, approximately 25 students had taken Accuplacer, which is required for three of the four courses offered in the Spring 2016 term (EMS/first responder does not require the test).

Of the students sitting for the tests all but three (3) scored above the required cut score. Another information session is scheduled for December 10th.

As of Friday, December 4th, 18 applications had been turned in. The most popular course selection has been Biology, with Introduction to Computer Science a close second. Several students have asked about the EMS course, as well.

Next Steps:

- Scheduling meetings to align courses and propose alternative assessments to Accuplacer, as part of the Memorandum's requirements. These discussions will be between the academic directors at ETHS and NSCC representatives.
- Articulation agreements currently in place will be reviewed by the Early College Coordinator and NSCC, and additional pathways for Machine Tech, Environmental Science, Natural Resources, and Veterinary Science will be evaluated.
- Assessing applications via a team from NSCC and ETHS.
- Determining whether an existing bus route can be used to drop students at the NSCC campus after school, and if we will expect payment in full or accept it in installments.
- Assessing the students who were interested but did not apply to discover what might be alternatives for the program going forward.

Finally, Manchester-Essex High School is developing an Early College/Dual Enrollment Program and their Principal will be meeting with Nancy Dashcund to discuss program design. Also, Greater Lawrence Technical High School is interested in working on a similar model with Northern Essex Community College.

Adoption of the Alternative Method of Posting Public Meeting Notices

The Open Meeting Law Regulations require that our public meetings be posted as follows:

“The secretary of the regional school district committee shall be considered to be its clerk. The clerk of the regional school district shall file notice with the municipal clerk of each city and town within such district and each such municipal clerk shall post the notice in the manner prescribed for local public bodies in that city or town.”

However, as an alternative method of notice, the regulations allow the meeting notice(s) to be posted on the regional school district's website. We are currently exploring the feasibility of this approach and could have a recommendation for the School Committee to consider in January.

Middlesex County Sheriff's Department

Brad Morgan and I met with representatives of the Middlesex County Sheriff's office on November 24th to continue discussions regarding a potential partnership. We are continuing to look to develop programs and curriculum that would serve the needs of those reintegrating back into society, while equipping them with the bridge skills necessary to be successful.

We are currently discussing the following programmatic avenues:

- Streaming lessons during the school day, including blended learning opportunities;
- ETHS staff teaching courses at the MHOC after school hours; and
- MHOC residents taking supervised coursework at ETHS during after-school designated hours.

Following are areas of programmatic interest that we discussed:

- Landscaping
- Arboriculture

- Horticulture
- Automotive Technology

We hope to be able to provide you with another update on this promising program concept within the next few months.