

# APPLE Program Review

Board of Education Study Session  
January 10, 2017

# Purposes of a Program Review

- Determine whether the program is meeting its intended goals.
- Ascertain whether the program continues to align with the district's mission and stretch goals.
- Reaffirm priorities, values, and goals.
- Identify modifications that will improve results.
- Align resources with outcomes.

# What is the APPLE Program?

## APPLE: A Place People Learn Excellence

A school within a school at Mamaroneck High School which serves up to 64 students in Grades 9-12 who would benefit from smaller class sizes and individualized attention.

# APPLE Program Review: Essential Questions

- Is the APPLE program meeting its goals and objective—delivering a supportive and intimate learning environment to help at-risk students earn a high school diploma?
- Does the program design--school-within-a-school, limited enrollment, therapeutic support--adequately address the academic and social/emotional needs of the at-risk student population at Mamaroneck High School?

# History of APPLE Program

- 1970's: 2,000+ students at MHS
- Alternative programs formed
  - School-within-a-School (SWAS)
  - Performing Arts Curriculum Experience (PACE)
  - KICK

1977:

- KICK dissolved
- A Place People Learn Excellence (APPLE) launched

# History of APPLE Program

- Original purpose: to improve retention and high school graduation rates
- Staff comprised 5.0 teachers and a secretary
- Students spent entire day in APPLE
- Project-based; experimentation with teaming and curriculum encouraged

# Current Program Structure

- Maximum of 16 students per cohort in Grades 9-12
- English, math, science, Social Studies classes taught within APPLE
- Elective, physical education, world language, health delivered in main school
- Daily AIS period
- Regular group counseling sessions

# Current Program Facilities

Suite on third floor of MHS Post Road building:

- Four classrooms
- Computer lab
- Office
- Conference room
- Kitchenette
- Large group instruction space

# Current Program Faculty

- 4.0 teachers
- 0.2 special educator
- 0.5 social worker
- 0.8 director (+ stipend)
- 0.5 secretary
- 1.0 teaching assistant

# Program Review Methodology

- Stakeholder Interviews
  - Current and former directors and faculty
  - Current and former APPLE students
- Surveys
  - Current APPLE students
  - Current APPLE parents
- Data Analysis
  - High school graduation rates
  - Grade point averages
  - College matriculation and completion rates
- Collection of program artifacts
  - APPLE student handbook
  - APPLE Juice Newsletter
  - Community-building activities
  - Field experiences
- Research on alternative high schools and schools-within-schools

# Stakeholder Interviews

- Current and former directors
- Current faculty
- Guidance counselors
- Social worker
- Former faculty
- Former MHS principal
- Current and former students
- Current parents (survey)

# Stakeholder Interviews

- What is the purpose of the APPLE program?
- What are the criteria and process for entry?
- What is the curriculum? How is it similar to/different from main school?
- To what extent does the APPLE program meet students' needs?
- Additional comments?

# Stakeholder Interview Findings

## Purpose of program:

- To provide a nurturing and structured small-school environment
- To serve as a home for kids; provide a “family feel”
- To provide social and emotional support
- “More attention, more eyes, more structure across the day”
- To foster a sense of belonging
- To equip students with tools and a sense of agency
- Predictable routines and accountability

# Stakeholder Interview Findings

## Criteria and Process for Entry

- Students spend first quarter of ninth grade in main school
- After first progress report, teachers and counselors make recommendations
- APPLE faculty invite students and parents to information session and interview
- Mutual matching process: students and families must actively embrace enrollment
- Consideration of students' Individualized Education Plans (IEP's)
- A cohort of no more than 16 admitted in mid-November

# Stakeholder Interview Findings

## Curriculum

- Historically, Math and Science courses have had slower pace (2 years for Algebra and Biology)
- This year, Algebra shifted to one-year course; Biology shifted to a year-and-a-half
- Program prepares students for Regents exams: Algebra, Biology, Global History, U.S. History, English
- Traditional pedagogy with emphasis on personal relevance

# Stakeholder Interview Findings

## Extent to which Program Meet Students' Needs

- Program meets students' emotional and academic needs.
- “We find a way to get them to graduate.”
- “Students want to come to school. They feel at home.”
- “Students don't feel judged.”
- “There is not a single student who slips through the cracks. We know every single one.”
- “APPLE gives kids a feeling of success.”

# Parent Survey

- What were the original reasons you sought to enroll your child in APPLE?
- What's your understanding of the purpose of the program?
- To what extent has the program met your child's needs?
- Additional comments?

# Parent Survey Findings

## 9 Respondents

- “If it weren’t for APPLE, I don’t know that my child would have made it this far. He actually likes going to school.”
- “I am a ‘97 APPLE graduate, and if it weren’t for the APPLE program, I don’t know where I would be right now in life. I’m so grateful for it, and I can’t wait to see my son graduate from there.”
- “It’s a great program for those who require this type of enriched setting.”
- “Both of my children would have been lost—”another number”—if it hadn’t been for this program.”

# Parent Survey Findings

- One respondent expressed concerns about substance abuse among students and the impact on the program's reputation.
- Another questioned whether the program prepares students to re-enter the mainstream high school.

# Student Interviews

- When did you join APPLE?
- Why did you decide on the APPLE program?
- What is the purpose of the program?
- Describe your experiences in APPLE to this point.
- What do you think APPLE provides you with that main school didn't?
- To what extent does APPLE meet your expectations?
- Have any of your family or friends been in APPLE?

# Student Interview Findings

- “There is a lot more individual help like doing homework during AIS.”
- “APPLE taught me how to care about my work. I don’t know how I would have handled the freedom in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades.”
- “They don’t want to see you fail. The purpose is for kids to be in smaller groups. I got more confidence and did more talking in class.”
- “My grade all got close very quickly—a little family helps not feeling left out.”

# Student Interview Findings

- “The main factor was that my brother was in APPLE. I wasn’t going to work too hard in ninth grade because I assumed I was going to go into APPLE.”
- “AIS helps getting my work done. I’m pretty lazy; when I have my work done I can just chill.”
- “Something would happen in one period and then everyone would know and it became a whole big thing.”

# APPLE High School Graduation Rates

Cohort	Graduated	Diploma	Enrolled	Students
Cohort 2007	36	1		37
Cohort 2008	19			19
Cohort 2009	17			17
Cohort 2010	17			17
Cohort 2011	12		2	14
Cohort 2012	17		1	18
Cohort 2013			18	18
Cohort 2014			15	15
Cohort 2015			15	15
Cohort 2016			9	9
All Cohorts	118	1	60	179



Note: Students in Cohorts 2013-2016 are still in high school and have not yet graduated.

# APPLE: Who Participates (by Ethnicity)?

## MHS Students in APPLE

Cohort	Asian	%	Black	%	Hispanic	%	Other	%	White	%	Students
Cohort 2007	1	2.7%	4	10.8%	13	35.1%		0.0%	19	51.4%	37
Cohort 2008	1	5.3%	1	5.3%	9	47.4%		0.0%	8	42.1%	19
Cohort 2009		0.0%	2	11.8%	7	41.2%		0.0%	8	47.1%	17
Cohort 2010	1	5.9%	1	5.9%	6	35.3%		0.0%	9	52.9%	17
Cohort 2011	1	7.1%	2	14.3%	4	28.6%		0.0%	7	50.0%	14
Cohort 2012		0.0%	1	5.6%	13	72.2%		0.0%	4	22.2%	18
Cohort 2013		0.0%	3	16.7%	9	50.0%		0.0%	6	33.3%	18
Cohort 2014	1	6.7%		0.0%	9	60.0%	1	6.7%	4	26.7%	15
Cohort 2015		0.0%	3	20.0%	7	46.7%		0.0%	5	33.3%	15
Cohort 2016	1	11.1%	1	11.1%	6	66.7%		0.0%	1	11.1%	9
All Cohorts	6	3.4%	18	10.1%	83	46.4%	1	0.6%	71	39.7%	179

# APPLE: Who Participates (General Ed/Special Ed)?

## MHS Students in APPLE

Cohort	Regular Ed	% of Cohort	Special Ed	% of Cohort	Students in Cohort
Cohort 2007	31	84%	6	16%	37
Cohort 2008	16	84%	3	16%	19
Cohort 2009	12	71%	5	29%	17
Cohort 2010	14	82%	3	18%	17
Cohort 2011	9	64%	5	36%	14
Cohort 2012	16	89%	2	11%	18
Cohort 2013	15	83%	3	17%	18
Cohort 2014	14	93%	1	7%	15
Cohort 2015	10	67%	5	33%	15
Cohort 2016	4	44%	5	56%	9
All Cohorts	141	79%	38	21%	179

# APPLE Enrollment Patterns

Cohort	Patterns of Enrollment in Program			
	In	Out	Full	Students
2007 Cohort	11	9	18	38
2008 Cohort	8	5	6	19
2009 Cohort	5	3	9	17
2010 Cohort	6	1	10	17
2011 Cohort	2	3	9	14
2012 Cohort	4	6	8	18
2013 Cohort	3	7	8	18
Cohorts 2007-2013	39	34	68	141
% of Program	28%	24%	48%	

# APPLE Grade Point Averages

Year_Grade	Students not in APPLE		Students in APPLE	
	GPA	Std Dev	GPA	Std Dev
2008 12	85.0	7.8	79.3	4.8
2009 12	85.4	6.7	74.7	6.2
2010 12	85.8	7.0	77.0	4.3
2011 12	86.1	7.0	77.5	5.4
2012 12	86.1	6.8	79.7	5.0
2013 12	85.6	7.7	75.0	4.9
2014 12	86.3	6.6	77.1	3.4
2015 12	88.0	6.1	77.9	4.2
2016 12	87.1	6.8	78.5	4.8
2017 10	87.9	7.9	73.7	5.3
2017 11	87.3	7.5	76.7	7.5
2017 12	86.2	8.4	74.3	6.3
2017 9	88.0	7.7	74.4	6.6
All Students	86.6	7.3	76.7	5.5

# College Completion: APPLE Graduates vs. Control Group

## APPLE Students

Cohort	Students	Associate	Bachelor
2005 Cohort	12	2	2
2006 Cohort	13		2
2007 Cohort	36	5	4
2008 Cohort	18	2	4
2009 Cohort	17	1	1
Students	96	10	13
% of Students		10%	14%

## Control Group

Cohort	Students	Associate	Bachelor	Master
2005 Cohort	27	2	12	
2006 Cohort	34	10	15	1
2007 Cohort	33	7	14	1
2008 Cohort	63	7	12	
2009 Cohort	50	1		
Students	207	27	53	2
% of Students		13%	26%	1%

# Findings

- The APPLE program has successfully fulfilled its original mission to guide students to graduate from Mamaroneck High School.
- APPLE enjoys strong, multigenerational support from the community with many “legacy” families.
- Program faculty perennially demonstrate remarkable dedication to the program and commitment to its students. Two current APPLE teachers have been with the program for 18+ years.
- APPLE faculty build powerful relationships with students and families over time.
- The deliberately small cohort sizes foster a sense of community, a “family atmosphere.”

# Findings

- Families who accept admission into the APPLE program demonstrate strong commitment to their child's success in the program.
- Of APPLE student cohorts from 2007-16, 48% of the students have participated in all four years of the program; 52% have not participated in all four years.
- Children of color are disproportionately represented in APPLE. 60% of students in cohorts 2007-16 have been non-white.
- Applications to the APPLE program have declined in recent years. The current cohort of ninth graders has 10 students out of a possible 16 slots (less than 2/3 filled).

# Challenges

- Many of the same strategies that support students' short-term success and graduation (i.e., close monitoring and other safety nets) do not cultivate skills and dispositions that students will need for long-term independence and success post-graduation in college and/or the workforce.
- APPLE teachers, though dedicated and experienced, have not had specialized training in responding to many of students' acute therapeutic needs.
- In the current program structure, therapeutic support is provided by cohort (e.g., group counseling sessions for sophomore girls) and is sometimes delayed due to urgent needs in main school.
- Student Support Service leaders and providers have expressed concern about our systemic capacity to meet the needs of students who have not been accepted into the APPLE program without sending them out of district.

# APPLE Program Review: Essential Questions

- Is the APPLE program meeting its goals and objective—delivering a supportive and intimate learning environment to help at-risk students earn a high school diploma?
- Does the program design--school-within-a-school, limited enrollment, therapeutic support--adequately address the academic and social/emotional needs of the at-risk student population at Mamaroneck High School?

# Recommendations

- Collaborate with Student Support Services to assess the range of short and long-term needs (emotional, academic, therapeutic) of students with and without disabilities in the entire MHS population.
- Consider early intervention models for pre-adolescent (i.e., middle school) students.
- Consider expanding and/or redesigning APPLE from a four-year cohort model to a more fluid, flexible, needs-based constellation of programs and services.

Comments and Questions?