

Puget Sound Consortium for Manufacturing Excellence

Summary Report

Site Visit and Interviews at Anacortes High School, Anacortes, Washington

April 19, 2005

Interviews with Marge Thomas, Career and Technology Director, and Val Boyce and Mike Beemer, teachers.

Background

- Marge Thomas, the Director of the Career and Technology Program at Anacortes High, is a dynamic, organized, and competent leader.
- Community business owners are on Advisory Committees/Boards for each program and come to the school to provide support for classes.
- Anacortes, Washington, is located on the edge of Puget Sound, so many marine technology businesses are located in the area. Anacortes also has a nearby refinery that is a major employer in the region.
- Two teachers are using the Modules: Val Boyce (owned a manufacturing business for 28 years, has been teaching welding and metals for 3 years); Mike Beemer (owns a marine technology business and has been teaching for 5 years)
- There are approximately 1000 students in the Technology Program at the high school, which also includes business technology. Most students are white. The Director feels that gender representation is evenly split between males and female in the program.
- Most students go on to community college – usually at Bellingham Technical College or the Skagit Valley Community College.
- In a recent school review, students in the Technology program scored at higher levels on Bloom's Taxonomy than students in other programs. The Director feels the reason for this accomplishment is the time devoted to problem solving in classroom activities.
- There are formal articulation agreements with area community and technical colleges. This past year, 217 Anacortes High students earned 956 college credits. Many students also receive scholarships.
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Curriculum

- Teachers and the Director keep pace with curriculum advancements by attending conferences and meetings. When Marge finds something interesting, she brings the information to the group and to the Advisory Boards.
- Moe Broom, from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, recently audited the Anacortes Technology Program and felt that the school was ahead of larger districts.
- In a recent tally of students who wanted to enroll in metals class with Val Boyce, 191 students in the school noted that this class was their first choice.
- Many times, more students want to take technology classes than the school offers.

MTAG Modules

- MTAG Modules are taught in welding, metals, applied math, and marine technology classes.
- Teachers adapt curriculum as needed in their classrooms and feel that the modules fit their course goals.
- Teachers seem to appreciate module instructional strategies that encourage hands-on, real world processes.
- The Precision Measurement module was viewed favorably. The teacher noted that the calipers used in the module are outdated.
- The Shop Skills module was also viewed positively. The teacher mentioned that he uses the same tools in his classroom and conducts the proficiency testing.
- The Safety module seemed to be very valuable to the teacher. He uses most of the module “as is” without having to adapt anything for the classroom.
- The Applied Math module is used in all four sections of the Applied Math course offered at the school.
- The Marine Technology class uses parts of Shop Skills, Precision Measurement, Interpersonal Skills, and Career Exploration modules.
- Teachers liked the fact that the curriculum was developed for students in their classrooms and convey that information to them.
- Teachers use a few of the assessments, but not all, and usually adapt/integrate the assessments to fit their needs.

MTAG Program and Certification

- Teachers did not seem to be concerned about MTAG Certificate requirements.

Careers

- Anacortes High School has a yearly career fair that emphasizes career pathways.
- All sophomores are required to take a career course (a requirement for graduation) in which they explore the skill requirements and economics of the career, and also participate in job shadowing.
- Seniors are required to form a committee to review their Senior Project. Many times, committee members are local business owners.
- Speakers are invited into classrooms to provide information about careers – one teacher arranged for 30 speakers this past year.
- Anacortes has networks of businesses that are involved with the schools.
- High school counselors also go into the field to learn more about careers in growing fields.

Suggestions

- One teacher wondered why MTAG does not have a module for automotive tech.
- One teacher suggested that K-20 modules for Marine Technology should be developed.
- It was suggested that NSF support a consortium around Marine Technology.
- One teacher is hoping to get a Marine Technology Center in Anacortes, which would use composites to build boats.