Date: February 19, 2019

To: Navigator Schools Board of Education

From: Heather Parsons, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Re: Priority Update: Continue implementing strong instructional program for all students

Objective(s):
1. Update board on school culture, academic coaching, data driven instruction, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) at GPS and HPS
2. Provide context for ongoing need and potential increased support to codify our middle school model

Overview
Our top priority as Navigator grows is to ensure the sustained success of our existing schools while codifying our model, our systems and our trainings for the seamless opening of future schools. This year created a new paradigm for Navigator as the support office academic team grew and we promoted internal candidates to site leadership positions. Across the two sites, five of the six site leaders are in new roles in 2018-19. The Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) proactively doubled the amount of on-site leadership support and school-site presence to ensure a successful transition of two new principals at Gilroy Prep School and Hollister Prep School. Additionally, the support office academic team has provided significant support to our third new principal of Watsonville Prep.
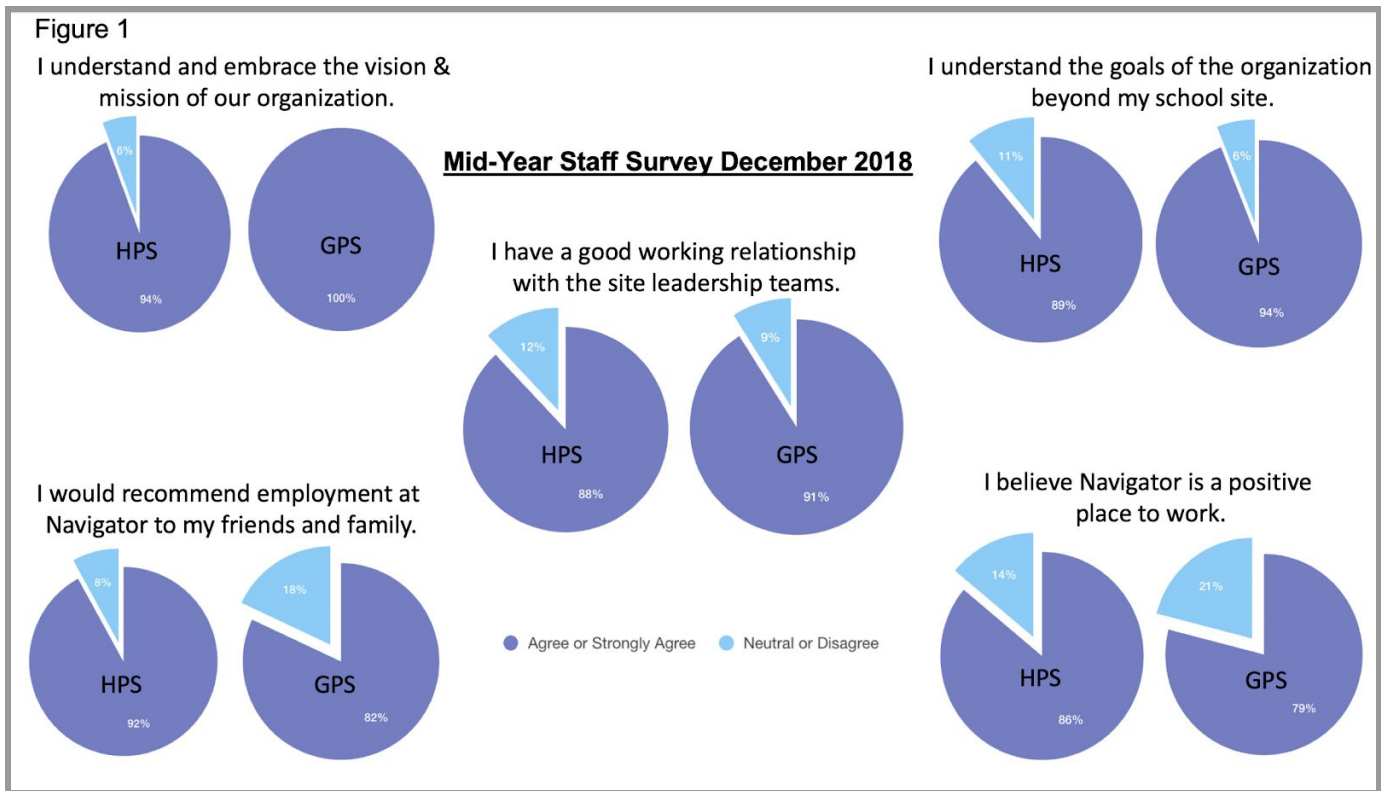
Through the added supports and an deep leadership pipeline, our current schools are well prepared to:
- Sustain a positive school **culture**
- Sustain strong processes and **coaching**
- **Maintain academic excellence** through data driven instruction and intervention
- **Amplify MTSS** supports
- Provide one of the most innovative **Middle School models** in California

Both schools are on-track culturally and academically as evidenced by several qualitative and quantitative measures as evidenced below, and our ongoing successes reinforce our optimism that school three will thrive using the same instructional program. The greatest area of challenge at the schools currently is the codification and support of teachers in our middle school model.

Culture
When walking onto the campuses this year you will find upbeat morning huddles that integrate SEL core competencies during the sometimes endless shoutouts amongst staff. Potlucks and staff events are well attended and there is a genuine feeling of respect and kindness throughout the schools. The mid-year staff survey confirmed there is a positive staff culture through several key points of data in Figure 1.

Figure 1

I understand and embrace the vision & mission of our organization.

HPS — 6%, 94%
GPS — 100%

Mid-Year Staff Survey December 2018

I have a good working relationship with the site leadership teams.

HPS — 12%, 88%
GPS — 9%, 91%

I understand the goals of the organization beyond my school site.

HPS — 11%, 89%
GPS — 6%, 94%

I would recommend employment at Navigator to my friends and family.

HPS — 8%, 92%
GPS — 18%, 82%

● Agree or Strongly Agree   ● Neutral or Disagree

I believe Navigator is a positive place to work.

HPS — 14%, 86%
GPS — 21%, 79%

Next Steps:

We take school culture very seriously, and survey data is an integral part of maintaining a positive school culture. These surveys are a confidential way for staff to give feedback on anything they'd like to see addressed. Leadership holds a problem and solution meeting with all staff after each survey, and the school site team helps to come up with the most viable solutions to issues.

For this mid-year survey one example of an agenda item that will be addressed at the problem and solution meeting is workplace positivity. For each question staff is given the opportunity to provide detailed comments. Individual comments have been analyzed and the principals have detailed plans to facilitate the staff discussion around solutions and formulate next steps.

Academic Coaching
Excellent academic outcomes is the primary focus for Navigator, and we relentlessly train our staff to deliver the best possible instruction to our students. To achieve this end, the Navigator academic team has invested heavily in developing current and future coaches in a variety of ways.
1. Seven of our new leaders are attending RELAY and learning the foundational skills they need to be effective coaches.
2. For the first time, the support office academic team has been able to provide coaching of coaches for each site leadership team. Each week our instructional leaders bring their own observation and feedback videos to the weekly educational leadership team meeting and the DCI leads a video review process using the Feedback Meeting Criteria for Success. This new process has led to a significant increase in our coaching rigor and the ability to track the frequency of feedback meetings as seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Coaching Dashboard
August – January 2018-19

AY		Site		
			GPS	HPS
2019	No. Weeks in Academic Year		40	40
	Current Week		19	19
	Weeks Completed		48%	48%
	LCAP Sessions Goal		30	30
	Avg. No. Sessions		14.3	15.3
	Percent Avg. Progress		48.2%	50.9%
	No. Staff (T, SGI)		27	25
	No. Staff On Track		23	17
	Percent Staff On Track		85.2%	68.0%
	Percent Staff Near Track		92.6%	96.0%
	Lowest Recorded Trajectory		81.5%	84.2%
	Highest Recorded Trajectory		222.2%	119.3%

3. Coaching teams perform two school walkthroughs weekly and log and evaluate all action steps given on the campus with the DCI. These walkthroughs have also provided us with qualitative observation data, as we are able to compare what we saw in our walkthroughs this year to previous years, and we have seen great strides in the rigor of instruction. The observation and feedback process of coaching has never been stronger than it is today.
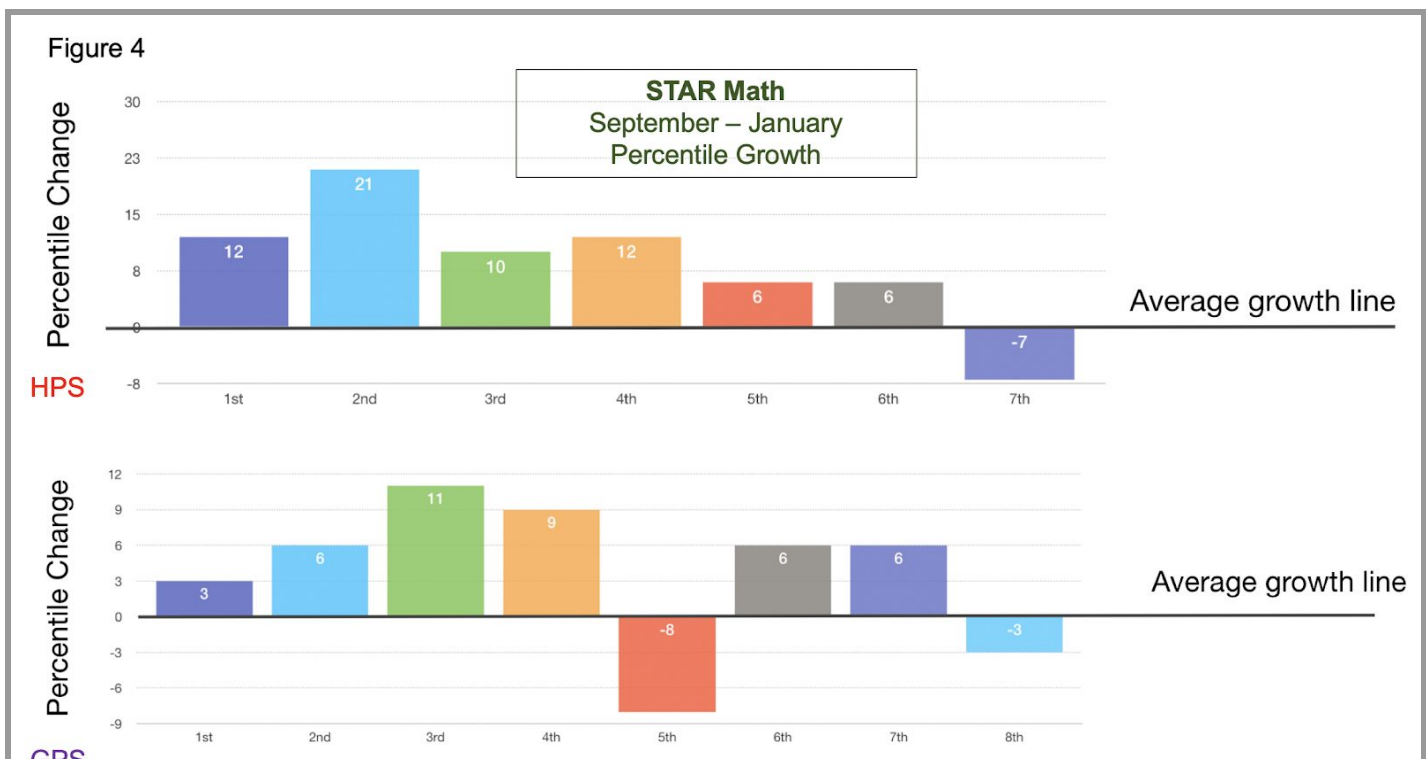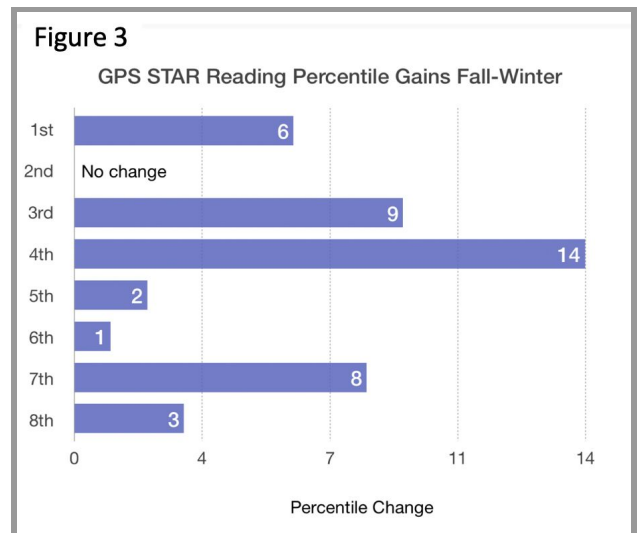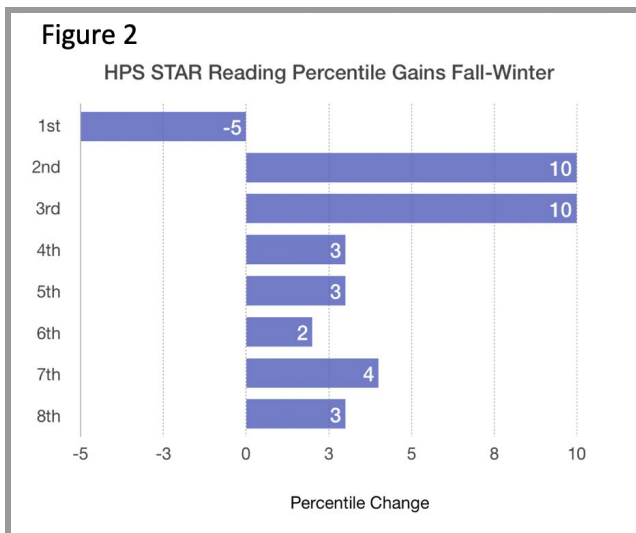
Next steps:

1. Our new coaching dashboard (Table 1) is an huge leap forward for Navigator as we are truly tracking coaching touchpoints for the first time. We have learned much in the first five months of the year and need to make the following adjustments to truly take into account all coaching events provided to our instructors:
   - Mid and end of year evaluation meetings are coaching meetings that are not currently being reflected.
   - Many hours are spent by each leader live coaching in classrooms which has incredible impact on a teacher's development and that time is not always reflected in the coaching dashboard.
   - In a process called three-way coaching, each teacher accompanies their coach to observe another teacher four times a year. These observations include a post-observation debrief that leads to action steps that the observing teacher will implement in their own classroom. These three-way coaching meetings have not been consistently reflected.
   - Not all teachers require the same level of support. New teachers may need to receive more coaching touch points while experienced teacher can be observed every other week. This would be a more equitable solution but in the current framework would lead to lower scores on our metrics.

2. Navigator employs teachers in training (TnT) at each site. These instructors are our substitutes and frequently take a classroom position in their second year. Because of the inconsistent daily schedule of the TnT, providing consistent coaching has been a challenge. The support office academic team supported the principals in the development of TnT coaching pilot for this year and we will need to analyze and refine the implementation. This will allow us to develop a long-term system for future years.

Academic Excellence through Data Driven Instruction and Intervention
Academically our students are showing positive growth overall. We attribute these gains to our refined coaching practice, strong culture and targeted interventions. Intervention is now aligned and occurring at both GPS and HPS during the school day as well as after school. The sites are tracking student data closely and addressing gaps through targeted reteaching of skills and standards. Though we will not have SBAC results to analyze our DF3 goals until summer, we are using short-cycle assessments such as weekly quizzes and STAR to ensure we are on track. As evidenced through our quarterly STAR assessments, the students have demonstrated growth in both disciplines. As you can see in Figures 2 - 4 our STAR Reading and Math both show overall positive trends.

Figure 2 — HPS STAR Reading Percentile Gains Fall-Winter

Figure 3 — GPS STAR Reading Percentile Gains Fall-Winter

Figure 4 — STAR Math September – January Percentile Growth

Analysis:

Navigator has used the STAR assessments since the inception of the schools. The primary functions of this assessment include:
- Initial placement into homogenous groupings for small group instruction
- Initial placement into Accelerated Reader
- Progress monitoring for individual students as we triangulate data from STAR, SBAC and standards-based assessments

This assessment, while important to give us a general idea of how individual students and grade levels are performing, does not give us standards-based, formative data that would allow for adjustments in instruction and intervention.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
Navigator received a Scale-Up MTSS Statewide (SUMS) grant in 2018 that is helping us to deepen our framework that serves to personalize supports for all students and that provides the critical training to staff. Navigator's model has evolved to address the domains of academic, social-emotional and behavioral needs of students in ways that we did not a few years ago. This year we launched an MTSS team that meets regularly to evaluate and improve our Tier I, II and III services in the three domains mentioned above. The work of this team and the increased awareness at sites has led to more strategic and targeted small group instruction and support for our most at-risk students. Behavior referrals in illuminate have decreased 64% this year compared to last year. We believe our new MTSS services have been key factors for this improvement.

Middle School Model
Navigator has created a classroom model that attempts to address the unique challenges the middle school-aged students face including:
- Physiological changes
- Social and emotional challenges
- A growing need for independence
- Difficulty engaging with academic content

The Navigator middle school model attempts to maximize student strengths such as the desire to communicate with peers, the ability to solve increasingly sophisticated problems and an intense desire to fit in socially with their classmates.

Model Highlights:

- Students work in teams of three called squads
- Custom lessons are designed for student facilitation
- Teachers send lessons to squads electronically
- Student facilitators lead their own high level discussions
- Most work is collaborative
- Students track and support each others progress
- High student achievement while developing the following competencies:
  - Critical thinking and problem solving

- - Collaboration and leading by influence
    - Agility and adaptability
    - Initiative and entrepreneurship
    - Effective oral and written communication
    - Accessing and analyzing information
    - Curiosity and imagination

The model has produced incredibly high levels of discourse and energy from the age group of students that is traditionally the least engaged in school. The model has great promise and has attracted dozens of schools and organizations that have visited our campuses interested in learning about our middle school model. It is also a young model and requires a new type of support unlike any that we have provided in the past. A few examples of this new support include creating custom content for student facilitated lessons, coaching teachers on instructional mindset (guide from the side) and a high level of facilitation training for students.

Challenges:
While Navigator is constantly seeking ways to improve in all areas, the middle school is most in need of additional resources.

- Continued refinement of the middle school curriculum, particularly in ELA has been a heavier lift than expected. Developing rigorous and engaging middle school materials requires much time and effort from the support office academic team. More resources and personnel are needed to finish the project.

- More than half of our teachers are either first year teachers or in their first year in middle school. The unique needs of coaching new teachers in an evolving model has been a challenge. We will add additional new teachers next year since two middle school teachers have been identified as site leaders in the 2019-20 and HPS is expanding to 8th grade. The investment in middle school teacher development and support will be critical.

- Navigator is developing age appropriate social emotional and behavior management systems for middle school students.

Mitigation to address current challenges:
In addition to driving ELA curriculum creation, the support office team is currently supporting a new iteration of the ELA station rotations to replicate the successful math rotations.

Next steps:
In order to finish taking this from an evolving implementation to a replicable model, we are considering potential solutions, including

- Adding one middle school development coordinator in 2019-20
- Adding one subject area coach in math and one in ELA

These potential new staff members would support middle school teachers at each site and bring alignment to both the humanities and STEM departments They would also be responsible for coaching,

supporting curriculum development and creating training systems. This may lead to an LCAP and budget recommendation. Once a replicable model is complete with curriculum, a middle school coaching protocol, and codified training systems, these positions could be phased out. Board member feedback and suggestions are welcome.