

Northwest Passage High School

Charter School District 4049-07

2013-14 Annual Report



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School Mission:

“Rekindling our hope, exploring our world, seeking our path, while building our community.”

Vision Statement:

Students enrolled at Northwest Passage High School develop self-confidence and academic skills through participation in a small learning community, where instructors are lifelong learners who model integrity, responsibility and respect. Varied projects, field studies and inquiry-based methods give students the opportunity to develop a greater sense of the world by engaging in challenging academics, structured work experience, and service learning. Students take responsibility for their own educational plans, and graduate with the tools to make informed decisions about their future.

Authorizer Information:

Bethel University
3900 Bethel Drive
St. Paul, MN 55112-6999
Liaison: Sandi Horn
Email: sandi-horn@bethel.edu
Phone: 651-638-6343

First Year of Contract: 1999
Years Contract has been renewed: 10

Comments: Bethel University continues to support the school and its mission. Bethel became an authorizer in June of 2011.

Governance:

Board Elections: The school held its annual election on November 19, 2013 at its annual meeting.

Name	Attend %	Email	Telephone	Position	Start of Term	Trainings
Chuck Hoppe	100	choppe@nwphs.org	763-862-9223	Board Member, Teacher	July 2012	Upcoming MACS
Jason Olson	100	jolson@nwphs.org	763-862-9223	Board Member, Treasurer, Teacher	July 2012	Upcoming MACS

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Kathy Trelstad	88	katrelstad@gmail.com	763-568-6912	Board Member, Parent	Nov. 2012	July 2013 MACS
Lisa Heille	88	Lisa.Heille@anoka.k12.mn.us	612-644-2351	Board Member, Community Expert	Nov. 2003	July 2011 MACS
Cate Carlis	100	ccarlis@nwphs.org	763-862-9223	Board Chair, Teacher	Nov. 2013	July 2014 MACS
Mike Luger	66	mikeluger@comcast.net	651-771-1389	Board Member, Community Expert	Nov. 2008	July 2011 MACS
Theresa Boisjolie	100	tboisjolie@nwphs.org	5545763-862-9223	Board Member, Secretary,Teacher	Nov. 2010	July 2011 MACS
Ryan Haasch	88	rhaasch@nwphs.org	763-862-9223	Board Member, Teacher	Nov. 2012	July 2014 MACSj

Management:

The management team at the school consists of a Chief Financial officer, Deb Knutson who has a Bachelors Degree in Business, and a Director, Peter Wieczorek holds a Master's Degree from Goddard College in Education and a B.S. in Recreation, Park and Leisure Studies from the University of Minnesota College of Education and Human Development, and a 7-12 Teaching License in Life Science.

Finances:

The 2013-14 audit conducted by Larson Allen returned a clean audit with no material weaknesses. The audit for this school year is scheduled for September and will be submitted prior to the December 31, 2014 deadline. Student enrollment numbers were at an all time low in 2013-14, resulting in spending down the school's budget reserve in order to maintain the high quality staff and not detract from student technology and expeditions. The school initiated a new marketing plan for the Summer of 2014. This measure was seen as necessary due to the low enrollment and graduation of 26 students. Despite the lower than projected enrollment numbers, the retention rate increased and the number of freshmen increased again.

Teaching Staff Information:

Licensed Teachers

Name	File #	Assignment	Returning
Ryan Haasch	424147	Social Studies	Full-time Yes
Sara Hoadley	420486	Social Studies	Full-time, Yes
Jason Olson	458823	Math	Full-time Yes

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Byron Fretty	168211	Math/Physics, General Academics	Part-time, Yes
Valerie Miller	409413	EBD/SLD/MMI	Full-time, Yes
Peter Wieczorek	425983	Life Science	Full-time, Yes
Diane Elkerton	355746	School Psychologist	Part-time, No
Jody Tschetter	344871	Special Education Director	Part-time, No
Cathryn Carlis	432084	English	Full-time, Yes
Theresa Boisjolie	425581	Special Education	Full-time, Yes
Chuck Hoppe	442179	Life Science	Full-time, Yes
Deb Howard	290512	Social Work, Social Studies	Full-time, Yes
Anna Benz	469924	Special Education	Full-time, No
Brandi Greer	460779	Art	Full-time Yes

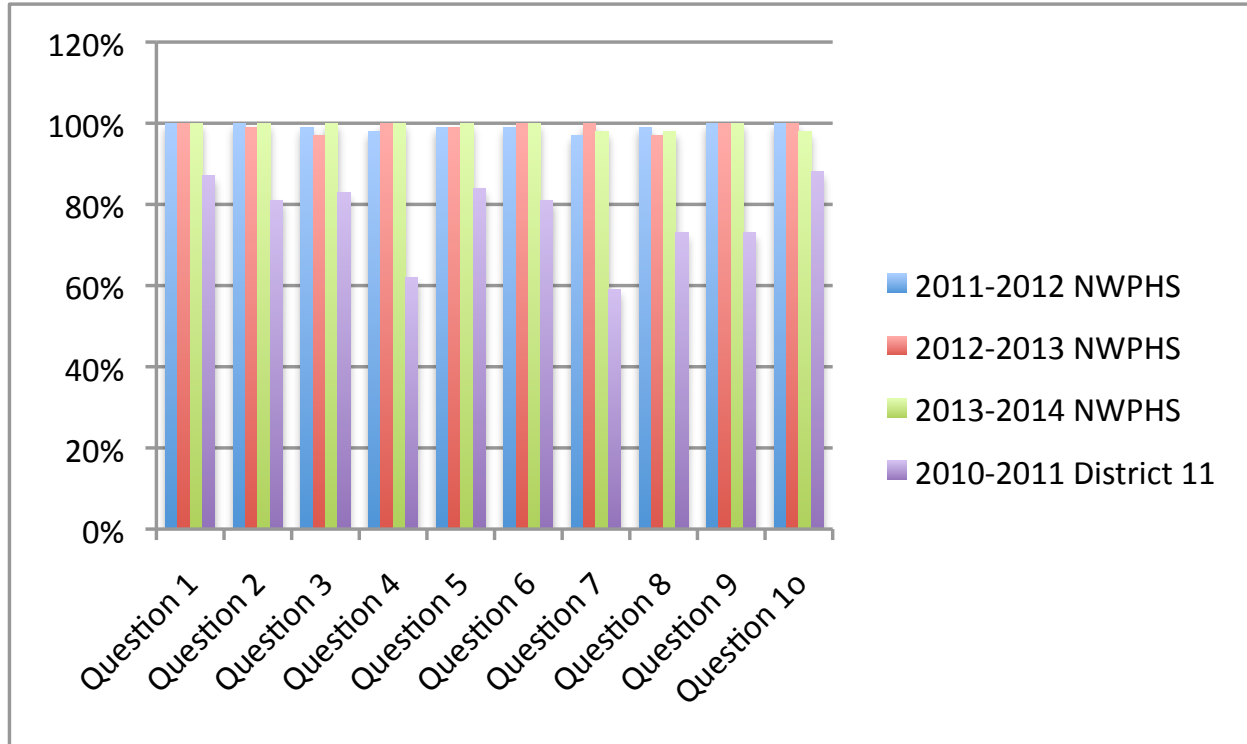
The school continues to enjoy a great retention rate of professional teachers, with an average tenure of 9 years since our start 16 years ago. Staff continues to receive competitive compensation and benefits that is typical of the geographic norms, however discussions continue on how to maintain competitive wages with little increase in state aid.

Operational Performances, Program Successes and Best Practices:

Parent Survey Results:

The annual school parent survey results are reflected in the following graph. The school continues to enjoy and receive high marks from our parents. Below is a list of the questions asked of parents in this anonymous survey administered in the spring of each year.

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Questions Asked in Survey:

- #1. Teachers and staff care about my student
- #2. My student school is safe
- #3. Teachers provide help for my student when needed
- #4. Teachers in this school support my student in learning outside this school
- #5. I feel welcome at my student's school
- #6. The teachers challenge my student to do his or her best in school
- #7. Teachers communicate regularly with me about my student's progress
- #8. All staff show my student respect in this school
- #9 This school provides a variety of opportunities for my students
- #10. Overall, this school provides a quality education for my student

- The school also has incubated a culture of trust where students have a number of ways to give and ask staff questions and deliver feedback. These feedback loops include formal surveys, focus groups and informal conferences and meetings.

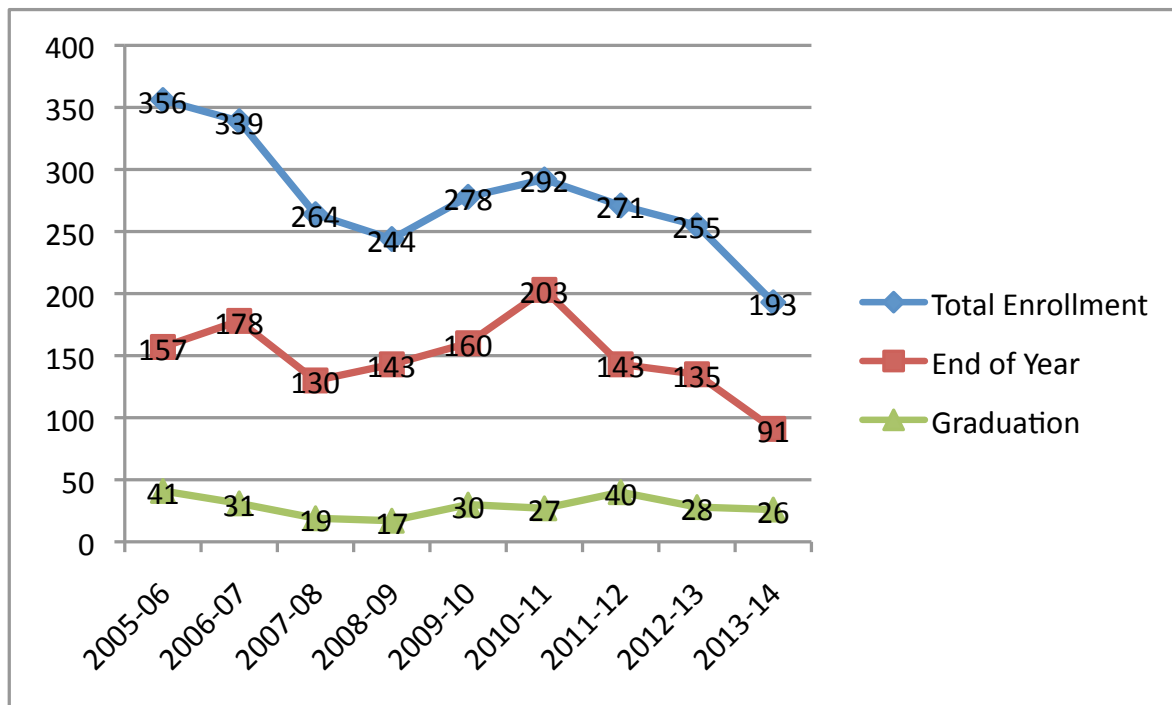
Innovative Practices

- Staff Development – The school does an outstanding job in the area of staff development. This year the school invested time in improving the Project Based Learning delivery and assessment. The school also continued to focus on advisory and the development of assessments based on Tony Wagner's Seven Survival Skills for the 21st Century. Staff are also working on developing Senior Portfolios and advanced multi-media technology such as green screens, pod casts, and digital storytelling.

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- Advisory Programs – NWPHS has an extensive advisory program. Each student is assigned an advisor when they enter our school, which they retain for their entire time at NWPHS. Advisors track performance and perform project management for student’s individual projects. All students now have a Personal Learning Plan, as well as, Digital Portfolios.
- Project Based Learning: Using a web-based project-tracking program, students propose and complete self-directed learning projects that meet the State of Minnesota’s graduation standards.
- Multi-disciplinary team-based teaching. In the afternoon block of instruction, teachers team-teach 90% of courses in a Multidisciplinary approach to learning. Using Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence and Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning, students engage in extensive field studies with authentic assessment. This part of the program is rich in its use of community experts and local resources
- Expeditions – the school requires students to complete four expeditions before graduating. The program is fully funded and in 2013-14 NWPHS allocated over \$55,000 for this component of our program. NWPHS ran more than 21 extended overnight expeditions and multiple daylong field experiences. Over 150 unique individuals participated on expeditions this year.
- Service Learning – This year the school continued to implement advisory service learning with more 900 hours provided to 15 different community organizations. Over 150 students participated in service learning activities.
- PSEO – 20% of seniors that graduated in May participated in PSEO
- D-Term - 2013-14 saw the introduction of a two-week D-term including School of Rock, Mural Painting, Service Learning, Bicycle Repair, and Senior Transition.

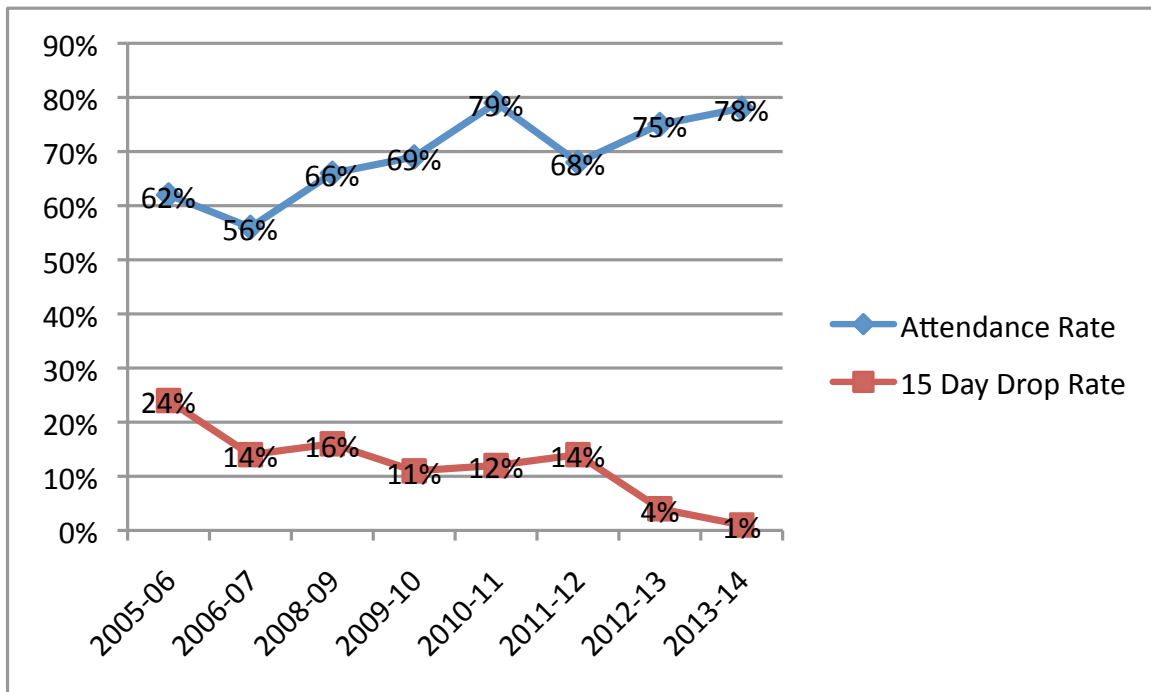
School Enrollment



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Attrition Rates

In addition to outstanding programming, the school continues to see its high retention rates of students who began and continued to stay at the school. This can be seen in the following chart. The school retained 61% of the students who started here in the fall and only 1% dropped out of school and did not enroll in another school during the 2013-14 school year. The school continues to reach out to students who have been left out of education.



Future Plans/Challenges:

In the 2012-13 school year NWPHS increased the school hours from 8:15-2:00 to 8:00-3:00 and extended the number of student days from 142 to 154. As a result of the additional hours and days the school saw a drop in enrollment. This is viewed as a short term problem as both returning and new students grow accustomed to the new schedule. In 2013-14 an aggressive marketing campaign was conducted to help increase enrollment including monthly parent enrollment meetings, a radio campaign, public events, and community connections. The 2013-14 the incoming freshmen class was the largest in school history. Future plans include updating the school's website, increasing the social media presence, and enhancing student outreach.

Academic Goals for 2013-14

The school focused on two value-added academic goals for the year. By using Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), we were able to tell what effect instruction had on students' math and reading skills.

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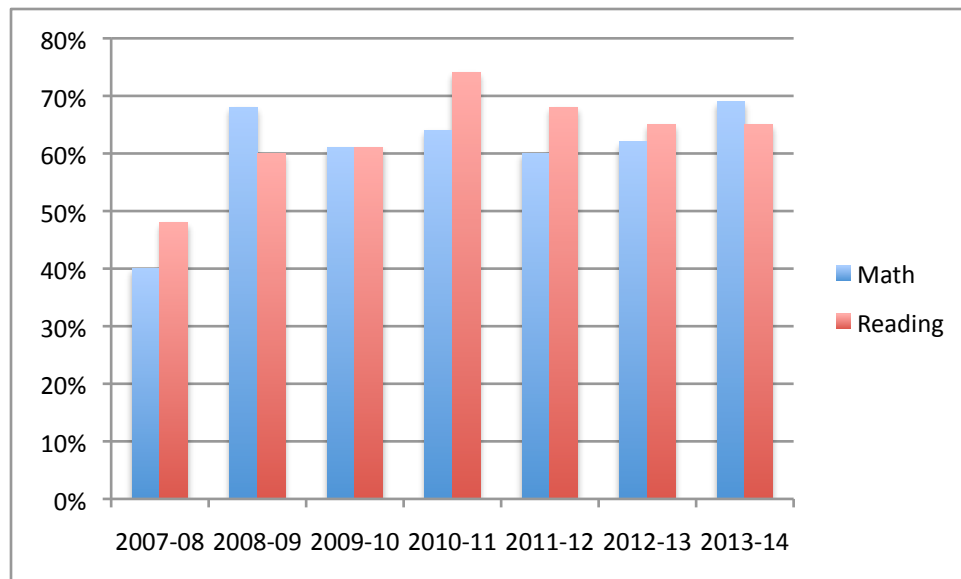
1. **Student Performance Goal:** 60% of students enrolled for the entire year will improve their NWEA MAP assessment in Math.
2. **Student Performance Goal:** 60% of students enrolled for the entire year will improve their NWEA MAP assessment in Reading.

Data Collection:

NWEA MAP testing was conducted in the fall of 2013, winter of 2014 and spring of 2014. Students included in this data set were students who started on September 6, 2013 and were still enrolled on June 1, of 2014. Any student enrolled was given the NWEA test but for the purposes of measuring improvement, only students enrolled the entire year were analyzed.

Data Analysis:

After collecting the data, it was put into a database and sorted based on percent gains. Any student who had a positive number was counted and a percentage was calculated by dividing the number of students with a positive gain by the total number of students enrolled for the entire year. (See Below Chart)



In non-adjusted gains the school made improvements in reading and math scores compared to the previous year, and met both of its academic goals. The school continues to implement a school-wide reading program and cooperative math-solving program. Advisors use Lexile scores to help students find reading materials to increase their reading skills.

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Non-Academic Goals for 2013-14

The school will focus on attendance and use the HOPE study to measure students' affect emotions toward school.

1. **Student Performance Goal:** Average daily attendance will continue to increase. Average Daily Attendance increased from 56% in 2007-08 to 66% in 2008-2009, to 69% in 2009-10, to 79% in 2010-2011, and 68% in 2011-12, 75% in 2012-13, and 78% in 2013-14
2. **Student Performance Goal:** Students will increase their HOPE study scores. Overall the results from Northwest Passage are very good. Overall, NW Passage is generally at the EdVisions average. Student perceptions of autonomy are good, they feel a good sense of support from teachers, perceive a high mastery goal orientation at the school, and believe that teachers are holding them to high expectations. As a result, behavioral engagement is good and emotional engagement is particularly high. Overall numbers from fall 2012 to 2013 decreased slightly from 50 to 49, but maintained an average above 46.

Academic Goals for 2013-14: After consultation with Bethel University, the school has modified it's goals and has incorporated the SMART format.

1. **Student Performance Goal:** 70% of continuously enrolled students who begin at NWPHS as true freshmen will gain one year of growth for one year of academic opportunity in Math and Reading on their NWEA MAP baseline assessment.
2. **Student Performance Goal** For students that begin their schooling at NWPHS after 9th Grade and who are continuously enrolled, 65% will gain an average of one year growth based on a 3-5 year average, by capturing their highest and lowest recorded score on the NWEA MAP assessment.

Non-academic Goals for 2013-14

1. **Student Performance Goal:** Longitudinal Hope Study Scores will remain greater than 46.
2. **Student Performance Goal:** 60% of seniors will graduate with a showcase portfolio in the 2011-12 school year, 70% in year 2012-13 school year, and 80% there after.

In 2013-14 85% of the graduating seniors completed showcase portfolios.

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Staff Development Plan for NWPHS Director:

Peter Wieczorek is the current Director for NWPHS. Mr. Wieczorek took over as Director in 2012 and has taught at the school since 2004. He holds a Master's Degree from Goddard College in Education and has graduated from the St. Thomas University Leadership Development program. Mr. Wieczorek continues to participate in leadership training programs through MN Department of Education and MN Association of Charter Schools.

School Admissions:

DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the School Board of Charter District No. 4049 to comply with applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination to the end that no person protected by such law shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any educational program; or in employment or recruitment, consideration, or selection, thereof, whether full time or part-time, under any education program or activity operated by the district for which it received federal financial assistance.

Nonprofit Status: Active.