

**New England Association of
School and Colleges, Inc.**

Commission on Public Schools



Committee on Public Secondary Schools

**Report of the Visiting Team for
Hingham High School**

Hingham, MA

September 24, 2017 - September 27, 2017

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

THE DISTRIBUTION, USE, AND SCOPE OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee on Public Secondary Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges considers this visiting committee report to be a privileged document submitted by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges to the principal of the school and by the principal to the state department of education. Distribution of the report within the school community is the responsibility of the school principal. The final visiting committee report must be released in its entirety within sixty days (60) of its completion to the superintendent, school board, public library or town office, and the appropriate news media.

The prime concern of the visiting committee has been to assess the quality of the educational program at this school in terms of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Neither the total report nor any of its subsections is to be considered an evaluation of any individual staff member but rather a professional appraisal of the school as it appeared to the visiting committee.

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

The Committee on Public Secondary School's Standards for Accreditation serve as the foundation for the accreditation process and by which accreditation decisions are made. The seven Standards are qualitative, challenging, and reflect current research and best practice. The Standards, written and approved by the membership, establish the components of schools to ensure an effective and appropriate focus on teaching and learning and the support of teaching and learning.

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values and Beliefs About Learning

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Teaching and Learning Standard

Effective schools identify core values and beliefs about learning that function as explicit foundational commitments to students and the community. Decision-making remains focused on and aligned with these critical commitments. Core values and beliefs manifest themselves in research-based, school-wide 21st century learning expectations. Every component of the school is driven by the core values and beliefs and supports all students' achievement of the school's learning expectations.

1. The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.
2. The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social and civic competencies. Each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.
3. The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions and resource allocations.
4. The school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.

CURRICULUM

Teaching and Learning Standard

The written and taught curriculum is designed to result in all students achieving the school's 21st century expectations for student learning. The written curriculum is the framework within which a school aligns and personalizes the school's 21st century learning expectations. The curriculum includes a purposefully designed set of course offerings, co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities. The curriculum reflects the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The curriculum is collaboratively developed, implemented, reviewed, and revised based on analysis of student performance and current research.

1. The curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.
2. The curriculum is written in a common format that includes:
 - units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills
 - the school's 21st century learning expectations
 - instructional strategies
 - assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics.
3. The curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through:
 - inquiry and problem-solving
 - higher order thinking
 - cross-disciplinary learning
 - authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school
 - informed and ethical use of technology.
4. There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum.
5. Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district.
6. Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.
7. The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research.

INSTRUCTION

Teaching and Learning Standard

The quality of instruction is the single most important factor in students' achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Instruction is responsive to student needs, deliberate in its design and delivery, and grounded in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. Instruction is supported by research in best practices. Teachers are reflective and collaborative about their instructional strategies and collaborative with their colleagues to improve student learning.

1. Teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.
2. Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by:
 - personalizing instruction
 - engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning
 - engaging students as active and self-directed learners
 - emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking
 - applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks
 - engaging students in self-assessment and reflection
 - integrating technology.
3. Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by:
 - using formative assessment, especially during instructional time
 - strategically differentiating
 - purposefully organizing group learning activities
 - providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.
4. Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by:
 - using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments
 - examining student work
 - using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents
 - examining current research
 - engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.
5. Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Teaching and Learning Standard

Assessment informs students and stakeholders of progress and growth toward meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations. Assessment results are shared and discussed on a regular basis to improve student learning. Assessment results inform teachers about student achievement in order to adjust curriculum and instruction.

1. The professional staff continuously employs a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics
2. The school's professional staff communicates:
 - individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families
 - the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community.
3. Professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.
4. Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed.
5. Prior to summative assessments, teachers provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.
6. In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments.
7. Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments.
8. Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work.
9. Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.
10. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following:
 - student work
 - common course and common grade-level assessments
 - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
 - standardized assessments
 - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
 - survey data from current students and alumni.
11. Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's

core values and beliefs about learning.

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Support Standard

The school culture is equitable and inclusive, and it embodies the school's foundational core values and beliefs about student learning. It is characterized by reflective, collaborative, and constructive dialogue about research-based practices that support high expectations for the learning of all students. The leadership of the school fosters a safe, positive culture by promoting learning, cultivating shared leadership, and engaging all members of the school community in efforts to improve teaching and learning.

1. The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.
2. The school is equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.
3. There is a formal, on-going program(s) or process(es) through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
4. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff:
 - engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning
 - use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices
 - dedicate formal time to implement professional development
 - apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
5. School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning.
6. The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.
7. Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students.
8. The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.
9. Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.
10. Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.
11. The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

12. The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Support Standard

Student learning and well-being are dependent upon adequate and appropriate support. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of coordinated programs and services. These resources enhance and improve student learning and well-being and support the school's core values and beliefs. Student support services enable each student to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

1. The school has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.
2. The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.
3. Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.
4. School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
 - deliver a written, developmental program
 - meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling
 - engage in individual and group meetings with all students
 - deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers
 - use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.
5. The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
 - provide preventative health services and direct intervention services
 - use an appropriate referral process
 - conduct ongoing student health assessments
 - use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.
6. Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
 - are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum
 - provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum
 - ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school
 - are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
 - conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.
7. Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
 - collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
 - provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students

- perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Support Standard

The achievement of the school's mission, core values, beliefs about 21st century learning expectations requires active community, governing board, and parent/guardian advocacy. Through dependable and adequate funding, the community provides the personnel, resources, and facilities to support the delivery of curriculum, instruction, programs, and services.

1. The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for:
 - a wide range of school programs and services
 - sufficient professional and support staff
 - ongoing professional development and curriculum revision
 - a full range of technology support
 - sufficient equipment
 - sufficient instructional materials and supplies.
2. The community, through the district school board, sets and implements district and school policy to ensure a learning environment that supports high levels of learning for all.
3. The school community develops, plans, and funds programs to:
 - ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant
 - properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment
 - keep the school clean on a daily basis.
4. The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses:
 - programs and services
 - enrollment changes and staffing needs
 - facility needs
 - technology
 - capital improvements.
5. Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.
6. The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services.
7. The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal, state, and local laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.
8. The area, menus, and equipment for food services ensure that the well-being of the students is a priority and is in compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
9. Appropriate school transportation procedures are in place to ensure the safety of the students and in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

10. The professional staff actively engage parents/guardians and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.
11. The school develops productive parent/guardian, community, business, and higher education partnerships that encourage mutual cooperation and good citizenship and support student learning.

School and Community Summary

School and Community Summary

Hingham High School (HHS) serves the community of Hingham, Massachusetts. Located on the South Shore of Massachusetts approximately 20 miles south of downtown Boston, the town is part of Plymouth County. This seaside community sits on Hingham Bay, which is at the southwest corner of Boston Harbor. Founded in 1635, this seacoast community is the 12th oldest settlement in Massachusetts.

Hingham, with a population of 22,051 people, is predominantly residential. The town has a variety of natural features which makes the town a desirable place to live, including a hundred-acre town forest, Bare Cove Park, Wompatuck State Park, and World's End. In addition, close proximity to Boston gives Hingham residents easy access to urban cultural offerings. Access to events and opportunities in Boston is enhanced by commuter ferries and the re-establishment of rail service into the city.

Hingham is a predominantly white middle-to-upper-class town. The largest single minority demographic is Asian, making up 1.01 percent of the population, with 1.38 percent of the population reporting heritage of more than one race, and .97 percent reporting Hispanic or Latino origin. No other minority group makes up more than .3 percent of the population. English is the primary language spoken in 97.3 percent of households.

The median family income in Hingham is \$113,412, and the unemployment rate is 3.8 percent. The majority of the labor force works outside of Hingham, with many commuting to the Boston area for work. The town itself also provides employment to a significant number of town residents, as does Linden Ponds, an assisted living complex which also houses a long-term rehabilitation facility. Retail companies such as Talbots, Whole Foods, and Stop and Shop also provide a significant percentage of employment opportunities in Hingham. The principal employer for Hingham residents is Blue Cross/Blue Shield, which provides 11.3 percent of the total employment in the town. Four and nine-tenths percent of the school population is categorized as economically disadvantaged.

In addition to Hingham High School, the town is also served by Hingham Middle School, with 1,068 students, and four elementary schools with enrollment as follows: 579 at East Elementary, 485 at Plymouth River, 530 at South Elementary, and 530 at Foster School, for a total of 2,124 students at the elementary level. There are a total of 4,327 students in the district. The town is also home to several private schools including Derby Academy, Notre Dame Academy, St. Paul School, Old Colony Montessori, and Su Escuela Language Academy. In the 2015-2016 school year, in a typical annual pattern, Boston College High (Dorchester), Notre Dame Academy (Hingham), Thayer Academy (Braintree), and Milton Academy (Milton) drew the greatest number of Hingham students. While varying from year to year, the percentage of students opting out of Hingham High School to attend private schools is generally between 13 and 14 percent.

Hingham High School serves grades 9-12, with a student population during the 2015-2016 school year of 1,195 divided between 605 males and 590 females. The ethnic and racial makeup of the high school mirrors that of the town. The students of Hingham High School are 1.2 percent African American, 1.8 percent Asian, 2.2 percent Hispanic, and 2.7 percent multi-race. In addition to Hingham residents, Hingham High School participates in the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) program. Twelve students from Boston attend Hingham High School through this program. The school population has increased steadily in the past 10 years, from 1,061 in 2006 to 1,195 in 2016, an 11 percent increase over a 10-year period.

Hingham's per pupil expenditure is below the state average, with \$11,767 per student compared to a state average of \$14,518. In the 2014 school year, spending on education accounted for 48 percent of the town's total budget. In that year, the school budget was equal to approximately 56 percent of the local taxes collected. In the past three school years, 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, the percent of the town-appropriated school operating budget at the annual Town Meeting has been 44.8 percent, 45.04 percent, and 45.15 percent respectively. However, all employee benefits and the town's fixed costs, such as debt service are included on the town side of the ledger. Hence, the total spending for education is typically in the 48 percent range.

Over the past two years, Hingham High has had an average dropout rate of .85 percent and a graduation rate of 96.35 percent. The average daily attendance in 2016 was 91.56 percent. Over the past five years, the majority of Hingham High School graduates have gone on to receive post-secondary education, with 87 percent attending four year colleges and 3.2 percent attending two year colleges. In the past five years, 3.2 percent of graduates have gone directly into the workforce, and .6 percent have entered the military.

Attendance for teachers is also high, with a 96.7 percent attendance rate for teachers in the 2015-2016 school year. Hingham High has 85.5 teachers, creating a student-to-teacher ratio of approximately 14:1. All teachers at Hingham High are licensed in their teaching assignments. In the core subject areas, the average teacher load is 96.8 students, and the average class size is 19.1 students. Common planning time is scheduled daily for all major subjects.

The high school follows a seven-day cycle, with six periods each day. Students at Hingham High School can choose from courses at the standard, college preparatory, honors, or advanced placement levels. All students must take four years of English and three years of science, math, and social studies, which must include one year of U.S. History. In addition, students are required to take two years of the same world language, and may choose French, Spanish, Latin, or Chinese. In the 9th and 10th grades, students must take one semester of health and physical education. Beginning in 2017-2018, 9th and 10th grade students will participate in two semesters of physical education and one semester of health over two years. Students may be exempted from the course requirement in 11th and 12th grades if they play a school sport or participate in another approved athletic activity. Students must also take one fine or applied arts course and either take a computer applications course or pass a computer applications exam. However, beginning with the Class of 2020 and the introduction of the new health course, students are no longer required to take a computer application course or pass an exam as a requirement for graduation. Students can choose from electives in art, music, family and consumer sciences, industrial technology, or may choose elective courses offered within the core academic departments. Because of the consistent academic performance of Hingham High School students, Hingham High School was named a 2009 Blue Ribbon School by the Secretary of Education in Washington, D. C.

Hingham High also offers a variety of sports and co-curricular activities for its students. These include award-winning music and drama programs, an active student council with 20 percent participation, and a variety of other clubs and activities. Participation in student council promotes independent leadership and improves the school and community. The athletic department offers 25 different sports comprised of 34 varsity teams, 16 junior varsity teams, and 10 freshman teams. Seventy percent of HHS students participate in one or more of these sports programs. In addition, foreign cultural tours are conducted annually by the world languages faculty. Hingham's unique Global Citizenship Program (GCP) promotes global competence through interdisciplinary academic study, community service and international travel. Participants increase their global awareness, heighten their appreciation of diversity, and enlarge their capacity to work and contribute in an increasingly interconnected world through participation in the GCP club or Certificate Program. The GCP club offers social, educational, and service activities that promote global competence and furthers the mission of the entire GCP. The Global Competency Certificate Program is application based and intricately connected in terms of social activities, leadership, vision, and purpose to the GCP Club. The Certificate Program demands a higher level of commitment and involvement from accepted students in addition to other academic and extracurricular activities. In 2015, 40 students earned their certificates. Because of Hingham High School's commitment to environmental stewardship, student and staff health, and sustainability education Hingham High School was recognized as a 2015 United States Department of Education Green Ribbon School.

There are a variety of educational opportunities in Hingham available to students and the community. Students at Hingham High School who maintain at least a B average may participate in the Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Students who meet the requirements can take courses in any of the state's colleges and universities. Hingham High School students may also participate in the Harvard Extension School's Lowell Scholarship Program. Lowell Scholarships enable high school students in Boston area schools to take one Extension School course per term, fall and spring, at half the regular tuition rate. Students wishing to take courses not offered at Hingham High can also take online courses through the Massachusetts Virtual High School program. There are a limited number of seats available in virtual courses which can be taken at no cost to the student. Students also have the

opportunity to apply to vocational schools. In addition, the school's construction technology course provides students with an opportunity to explore a wide range of construction skills in trades such as architectural design, carpentry, electricity, welding, sheet-metal fabrication, machine shop, interior design, and decorating. Juniors and seniors electing to participate in the cooperative work experience course attend school in the morning and work in a related business in the afternoon and/or evening.

Hingham High School has established partnerships with local businesses and organizations, which benefit both the students and the community. In the 2015-2016 school year, the school piloted its first career day for juniors, inviting local residents from a variety of industries to share their professional experiences with students. Students may earn course credit for work in a local business as part of a work study program. The school is also supported by local organizations such as the Rotary club, parent-teacher organization (PTO), Hingham Sports Partnership, Hingham Educational Foundation, and booster groups for various extracurricular activities, which offer both educational and financial support.

Hingham High School invites representatives from a wide variety of universities and colleges to visit the school each year and meet with students. In the 2015-2016 academic year, Hingham High School hosted visits from 142 colleges, 140 of which were four-year institutions and the remaining two were two-year institutions. In addition, the counseling department hosted visits from two technical schools and from the military, including representatives from the Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, and Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC).

Students are recognized for their achievements in a variety of ways. Each year, the century club recognizes the top 25 students in each grade based on unweighted grade point average (GPA). The school is home to a chapter of the National Honor Society, which recognizes outstanding student achievement. Each spring two awards nights are held, one for seniors and one for juniors, which recognize outstanding academic performance and exemplary effort in all disciplines. In addition, locally sponsored scholarships and monetary awards are presented to graduating seniors. The athletic department also hosts an awards night to recognize special athletic achievements. On an ongoing basis, student accomplishments are acknowledged in the *Hingham Journal*, *Patriot Ledger*, *Boston Globe*, the principal's newsletter, a student newspaper, daily announcements, and the student-produced weekly Friday Show, which is broadcast to all classrooms on Friday mornings.

Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations

MISSION

The mission of Hingham High School is to graduate students with the academic, civic, social, and personal skills necessary to become productive, responsible members of a democratic and ever-changing global society. With the support and involvement of the community, Hingham High School will engage all students in a challenging, well-balanced educational program complemented by cocurricular activities.

CORE VALUES

- Fulfillment of Individual Potential
- Respect for Self and Others
- Civic Responsibility
- Commitment to Life-long Learning
- Environmental Stewardship
- Global Citizenship

Beliefs about Learning

All students learn and succeed best...

- in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- with comprehensive educational programs that offer opportunities to explore, experiment, and excel in academics, arts, athletics, and other extracurricular interests.
- with a curriculum that promotes essential 21st century skills – notably creativity, curiosity, resilience, teamwork, and global awareness.
- in a culture that establishes a commitment to both high academic expectations and the support of intellectual, social, emotional, and physical well-being for all.
- in a community that fosters environmental responsibility.
- with teachers who employ a variety of instructional practices and assessments.
- in an atmosphere that encourages independent learning, self-advocacy, and intellectual risk-taking without fear of failure.
- in a community that actively promotes the development of personal responsibility, integrity, and ethical behavior.

Expectations for Student Learning

All Hingham High graduates will

1. Read purposefully
2. Write effectively
3. Communicate effectively
4. Identify, analyze, and solve problems
5. Demonstrate self-respect and respect for others
6. Work independently and cooperatively with others
7. Fulfill their responsibilities and exercise their rights as members of local and global communities.

Introduction

Introduction

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) is the oldest of the six regional accrediting agencies in the United States. Since its inception in 1885, the Association has awarded membership and accreditation to those educational institutions in the six-state New England region who seek voluntary affiliation.

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees which supervises the work of four Commissions: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE), the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS), the Commission on Public Schools which is comprised of the Committee on Public Secondary Schools (CPSS), the Committee on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), and the Committee on Public Elementary and Middle Schools (CPEMS), and the Commission on International Education (CIE).

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public secondary school member institutions, CPSS requires visiting teams to assess the degree to which the evaluated schools align with the qualitative Standards for Accreditation of the Committee. Those Standards are:

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

The accreditation program for public schools involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the Committee's visiting team, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study, the valid recommendations of the visiting team, and those identified by the Committee in the follow-up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school be reevaluated at least once every ten years and that it show continued progress addressing identified needs.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Hingham School, a committee of 8 members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included members from the parent teacher association, booster club and school council.

The self-study of Hingham High School extended over a period of 16 school months from January, 2016 to June, 2017. The visiting team was pleased to note that students, parents, community members, school committee and faculty members were integral to the development and review of the schools self study.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their alignment with the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Committee, Hingham High School also used questionnaires developed by The Research Center at Endicott College to reflect the concepts contained in the Standards for Accreditation. These materials provided discussion items for a comprehensive assessment of the school by the professional staff during the self-study.

It is important that the reader understand that every subcommittee appointed by the steering committee was required to present its report to the entire professional staff for approval. No single report developed in the self-study became part of the official self-study documents until it had been approved by the entire professional staff.

The Process Used by the Visiting Team

A visiting team of 15 members was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Hingham. The visiting team members spent four days in Hingham, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the members of the visiting team represented classroom teachers, guidance counselors, library/media specialists, school administrators, and central office administrators, *(Chair: Cite only those groups who were actually represented)* diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Hingham High School.

The visiting team built its professional judgment on evidence collected from the following sources:

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 45 hours shadowing 15 students for a half day
- a total of 14 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility
- individual meetings with 29 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

Each conclusion in the report was agreed to by visiting team consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting team are included with each Indicator in the Standards sections of the report. The seven Standards for Accreditation reports include commendations and recommendations that in the visiting team's judgment will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better align with Committee Standards.

This report of the findings of the visiting team will be forwarded to the Committee on Public Secondary Schools which will make a decision on the accreditation of Hingham High School.

Standard 1 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The Hingham High School (HHS) school community engaged in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. Most recently, the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations were collaboratively developed and/or reviewed based on research-based practices implemented by Team 21, which is a collaborative effort of cross-discipline educators, administrators, and community members. Team 21 used information gathered from a Massachusetts Computer Using Educators (MassCUE) annual conference to determine if the school's mission and learning expectations included the skills needed for students to be successful in the future. Team 21 conducted many meetings, completed surveys with staff, students, and the Hingham community, and shared their findings and recommendations at monthly staff meetings. During the 2014-2015 school year, a professional development session, known as the High School Utopia Design, was dedicated to analyzing the extent to which the school's existing mission statement represented the core values and drove the policies and procedures. Faculty collaborated to identify the characteristics of an ideal high school environment. The same exercise was conducted in a freshman advisory session and with the school council. It was determined that all existing documents were aligned with the mission and expectations for student learning. Teachers and administrators are readily able to discuss specifically the impacts of these documents on the school community; students and parents are not able to discuss the school's core values, or beliefs about learning in general terms. Both constituencies are able to discuss in general terms the expectations of students as learners, and the impact these expectations have on their school experience. As a result of the dynamic, collaborative and inclusive process, the school community identified and committed to its core values and beliefs about learning.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- community members
- school leadership

Standard 1 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students, which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success in the form of a school-wide analytic rubric, which defines targeted high levels of student achievement. There are seven 21st century learning expectations. The academic learning expectations challenge students to read, write, communicate, and problem solve effectively, and all students are expected to fulfill their social and civic responsibilities. Specifically, all graduates are expected to read purposefully; write effectively; communicate effectively; identify, analyze, and solve problems; demonstrate self-respect and respect for others; work independently and cooperatively with others; and fulfill their responsibilities and exercise their rights as members of local and global communities. Although there is a school-wide rubric, each academic department revised and modified this rubric to support their students' individual learning requirements. Teachers readily acknowledge the specific rubric is not used with fidelity. Teachers adapt the rubric to course content, although elements of the rubric can be found embedded in other rubrics. The school provides challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students that strive to encompass academic, social, and civic competencies. Each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success in the form of a school-wide analytic rubric; however, using the rubric with fidelity will assist all students in understanding the specific and measurable criteria for success.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 1 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. There is overall strength and enthusiasm in the culture at Hingham High School. In a video, a student describes the opportunity for "every student to find a place to pursue their interests" within the school, aligning neatly with their core value of "fulfillment of individual potential." Additionally, posters with the school's core values, beliefs, and expectations for student learning hang in every classroom and in numerous common spaces in the building, and teachers repeatedly and enthusiastically believe that they accurately capture their community's philosophy about instruction. Resource allocations such as the athletic facilities renovations, construction of a state-of-the-art greenhouse, and programmatic offerings such as auto and wood shop support the core values of "fulfillment of individual potential," "environmental stewardship," and "commitment to life-long learning." The core values, beliefs, and expectations for learning also implicitly drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment. For example, the Biology I culminating project reflects nearly all of the community's core values, beliefs, and expectations for learning, as does the curriculum for the freshman advisory program. Because the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, implicitly drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, they accurately depict, and powerfully affirm the school's overall culture.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 1 Indicator 4

Conclusions

The school reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities on an as-needed basis. Formal review occurred in the past corresponding to the time frame of the school's self-study; however, there is no formal schedule in place. The last review was based on some research and district and community priorities, but did not include multiple data sources. However, the school community has the willingness and ability to do so in the future as these documents inform teaching practice and the culture of the school. Currently, there are multiple mechanisms in which the core values, beliefs and learning expectations are discussed in formal settings, such as department and faculty meetings and informal settings, such as parent-principal-counselor coffee hours. When the school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities, explicit connections will further develop awareness and understanding of the importance of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to drive all that is done in the school community.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership

Standard 1 Commendations

Commendation

The school's commitment to the identified core values and beliefs about learning that accurately capture a powerful, positive school culture invested in preparing students for future success

Standard 1 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, which define targeted high levels of achievement

Recommendation

Develop and implement a regular review and revision of the core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations to allow all stakeholders to articulate and identify the community's evolving values and the impact of these values on teaching and learning

Standard 2 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The curricula was developed in concert with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and provides teachers the framework to drive students to achieve 21st century learning expectations. The curriculum development and review process is focused on the school's 21st learning expectations. Curriculum development and revision are facilitated by curriculum directors and includes teachers and administrators. Several projects and activities such as the final Biology 1 project and previous computer applications project illustrate the purposeful design of the curriculum. Department-driven collaboration allows for teachers to modify curriculum so that all students are able to practice their skills and achieve the requisite levels of content mastery. Teachers also have ownership of the curriculum design. Many teachers use their professional learning community (PLC) time and a few professional development days to work on and design curriculum to ensure that all students achieve. For example, teachers had time with their department director to work on curriculum during the summer. A freshman Integrated Science course was created. Teachers were also given a day to revisit the curriculum in the fall and again in the spring. Another curriculum group was in charge of revising the curriculum of Spanish 4 because students moving onto Spanish 5 and Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish had extensive knowledge of grammar but a lack of knowledge on culture and literature of the language. These teachers used their own time to work on this curriculum during their free periods, lunches, and before and after school. As a result, the curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- Endicott survey

Standard 2 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The curriculum is consistently written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; sometimes references the school's 21st century learning expectations; consistently provides a variety of instructional strategies; and regularly suggests a variety of assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. School curriculum documents are similar in form, containing a descriptive overview, which combines concepts and content; goals and objectives, which highlight the skills that will be assessed and practiced; units to be taught; instructional models; and assessments. Curriculum is written based on a variety of data points including staffing needs, interest from student based enrollment, and interests of teachers. Curriculum documents are available within each department through a shared Google folder. For example, all language teachers are able to contribute to the live curriculum document and add new instructional resources throughout the year. Some departments, such as math and world language, replaced essential questions with essential skills. Essential questions are included in the English and industrial technology curriculum, although the format is not consistent. The 21st century learning expectations are listed as part of the objectives of certain courses such as Advanced Placement (AP) World History; however, this is not consistent for all curricula. The Endicott survey indicates that 52 percent of teachers agree that there is a common formal format in curriculum. All curriculum guides have a section entitled instructional model, which outlines instructional strategies for the course. The measurable criteria for success is communicated to students through the use of rubrics and with exemplars that they are able to review. Students know the expectations for assignments through the use of the rubrics. Content-specific rubrics are used to specifically assess the skills of a course, for example, the electronics craftsmanship rubric. Some of the course-specific or assignment-specific rubrics reflect 21st century learning expectations. For example, a current events PowerPoint presentation rubric included the expectation that students work collaboratively and consider societal impact within their research. The school-wide rubric is only used to assess the biology final project. The rest of the staff uses it in a broad sense to make their own assessment-specific rubrics. Rubrics are routinely used in student assessments, but the rubrics are different depending on the task, differ within departments, and differ with each assignment. There is a public version of the curriculum on the school's website. When curriculum for all disciplines is written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's 21st century learning expectations; instructional strategies; and assessment practices that include the use of specific, measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics; teachers, students, and parents will understand what is expected in all curricular areas in terms of content attainment and 21st century skill development.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teachers
- students
- department leaders

Standard 2 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Across the school, the written and practiced curriculum emphasize depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology. Faculty, students, and parents take pride in the opportunities available in the curriculum for advanced learning, such as the variety of AP offerings and the requisite 15 writing assignments in every English course. In an AP Biology course enzyme lab, students were required to write their own procedure, test a variable that was decided among group members, and work through a collaborative data collecting environment. Classes in American Literature, American Studies, and industrial technology also have units that are designed and implemented to promote a depth of understanding and an application of knowledge. Higher order thinking, including evaluation, analysis, and creation are components of instructional strategies and content objectives that are communicated to students through unit overviews, such as “The Constitution” unit in American Studies. Students can quickly refer to several projects in which they selected areas for further research and had opportunities to problem solve. In an assignment for Holocaust and Human Behavior, students self-selected a topical issue regarding human behavior, which they researched in order to provide a sustainable solution. A project in algebra has students apply mathematical principles as they prepare a hypothetical water balloon launch, which requires understanding of both physics and math. The teachers revamping the Spanish 4 curriculum considered several concepts from art and culture to support cross-disciplinary connections. For example, the study of Spain and their speaking dialects by region can be connected with the artists and art styles from those regions. There are numerous authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school as demonstrated in the course of studies as well as curriculum documents. In a marketing project students collaborate and apply their marketing knowledge to businesses in the local community, for example, rebranding a daycare. In the family and consumer science course, students learn about child care before eventually participating in a day care program at the high school. In graphic arts, students produce the “photo of the week,” which is then displayed and celebrated in the school. Students also have their artwork displayed in town. The botany course may prepare students to join the Green Team, which produces vegetables for the food service program. All ninth grade students are provided instruction on research skills to support informed and ethical use of technology. The library media specialists provide assistance in using technology for research projects in various subjects. History and English teachers use Turnitin.com to submit work to ensure originality. Due to the dedication of teachers and planning strategies, students have a curriculum which emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, and cross-disciplinary learning; however, further delineation about informed and ethical use of technology will further deepen learning for students.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 2 Indicator 4

Conclusions

There is clear and consistent alignment in all subjects between the written and taught curriculum. According to the Endicott survey, 93 percent of staff agree that the written and taught curriculum are aligned. Unit overviews from a variety of departments such as English language arts (ELA), social studies, and industrial technology have a clear sequence of content and skills that are taught in class. These unit overviews match the content of curriculum guides provided by department directors. Students note that there is a shared content among different sections of courses regardless of the instructor. English teachers have uniformity in what is taught, assessed, and provided as a measurement by common departmental assessments for sections of the same class, which are taught by multiple instructors. The biology final research project, required of all biology students, has a rubric that directly aligns to the 21st century learning standards as does the writing portfolio from the American Studies class. In an AP science course, students worked with various pieces of lab technology, which is in direct alignment with the AP curriculum. In other classes, students took tests and quizzes that contained questions and activities that were directly related to the written curriculum. Further alignment was observed between the written curriculum of the "Satire Irony and Humor" Senior Seminar course that utilizes a rubric as well as a course syllabus to highlight curricular and programmatic expectations. The school has a clear and tangible process for validating the integrity of the taught curriculum that is embedded into the classroom and faculty practices. Teachers maintain student portfolios, which many times include common assessments that can be reviewed to ensure the implementation of curriculum. And, directors routinely review these portfolios, providing the district with an authentic view of the alignment between written and taught curriculum. This process of validation and review of implemented curriculum is linked to each director's evaluation by the superintendent. Because there is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum, the school ensures clear and consistent delivery of the curriculum for all students.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students

Standard 2 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district; however, there is limited curricular coordination between academic areas within the school. Common planning time for teachers facilitates curriculum coordination within individual core academic departments. Department directors and faculty collaborate within their department when implementing and revising curriculum and standard assessments. For example, the changes made to the Spanish 4 curriculum were in direct response to observations of assessments in the Spanish 5 and AP Spanish courses. The social studies math and science departments utilize common assessments for midterms and finals to look at various levels of the same course to ensure they align horizontally. There is limited deliberate cross-curricular alignment between departments. According to the Endicott survey, 45 percent of students agree teachers explain how the curriculum can be applied in other courses and life outside of school. However, teachers seek assistance from other departments allowing for some organic cross-curricular coordination. The integrated science course curriculum was designed after science teachers coordinated with the literacy teacher and English and history teachers to ask for advice on how to teach strategies of writing open response questions that students will encounter during the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) testing. The art department worked with the Spanish 4 teachers to further discuss the difference between vandalism and art to highlight what might look to vandalism may be interpreted as art to the viewer or artist enhancing the Spanish curriculum with more aspects of culture. There is a purposeful connection between industrial technology and science in the design of a robotics curriculum. There is some alignment between the history and the English language arts (ELA) curriculum, but it is not often reviewed or revised to reflect cross-curricular coordination. Although faculty who teach core courses are able to work with their departments during common planning time, teachers that do not teach core courses do not have common planning time. There is very little time provided for cross-curricular planning unless teachers work on their own time as curriculum alignment efforts are mostly devoted to horizontal and vertical alignment. There is also professional development time available to meet with faculty from the feeder schools to discuss alignment. The grades K-12 department directors are tasked with ensuring vertical curricular coordination and alignment between the sending schools and the high school. Parents noted smooth transitions from the sending schools to Hingham High School. As a result of effective curricular coordination, students arrive prepared. Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between the high school and sending schools in the district; however, effective curricular coordination between and among all academic areas within the school will provide additional rigorous academic experiences for all students.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey

Standard 2 Indicator 6

Conclusions

Staffing levels, instructional materials, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are often sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. However, in some areas, technology has limitations. Core courses average 20.3 students per course with some courses, particularly electives, containing up to 25 students. Classes are consistently capped at 24 students for science courses. Many levels 3 and 4 courses have fewer than 20 students and a co-taught history course has 16 students. Instructional materials and supplies are sufficient and are adequately funded to deliver the curriculum effectively. One teacher claims he has never been turned down for money to fund his course. Textbook adoption and implementation is managed by the department directors and executed in conjunction with the assistant superintendent. Technology is available and used in a variety of ways to support curriculum and instruction. The majority of classrooms have projection units and many have and are actively using Smart Board technology. Science, history, health, and math teachers have dedicated laptop carts for each of the departments, some that were obtained by grants, such as the Chinese language program laptops. However, carts are in high demand, teachers must plan their lessons accordingly and sign up for the carts weeks in advance, making spontaneous use of technology difficult. There is inconsistent WiFi availability and dependability. At the middle school, students have a 1:1 computer environment; therefore, the transition to the high school was described by one teacher as “walking back into the 80s once they are in high school.” The lack of technology limits teachers' ability to collaboratively work on curriculum during their preparation periods because of the inability to be in their classrooms with a working computer. Despite these challenges, the Endicott survey reveals 86 percent of students report teachers have them use technology for assignments. The library and media center is staffed with two library faculty members who oversee a set of desktops, laptop carts, a robotics lab, and a 3D printer. The library media specialist also teaches the AP Capstone course. The library/media center is equipped to support the curriculum. However, the laptop carts, originally obtained through a grant, are five-years-old and in need of repair. Because staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities; teachers and student will have additional opportunities for 21st century learning.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey

Standard 2 Indicator 7

Conclusions

The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. There is sufficient personnel for ongoing collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum. One or two days every year, by department, teachers devote time to annual curriculum review and vertical department meetings. The Endicott survey reveals 73 percent of the staff agree they are involved directly in curriculum development. Faculty has access to a dedicated grades K-12 department director in each of the core academic subjects for collaboration and support. The department directors provide continuous review of the curriculum, while assisting and supporting staff in the implementation of the curriculum. There are annual vertical articulation meetings including all departments. The creation and implementation of new curriculum is constructed mindfully in phases, providing sufficient time for faculty, such as the recently launched AP Capstone course and the anticipated addition of a robotics course for the 2018-2019 school year. Core academic department teachers have common planning time. Curriculum revision, evaluation, and reflection can be conducted during this time. It is part of the culture for teachers to use their own preparation time to work collaboratively with the rest of their department. However, teachers need to find their own time to do additional work if needed. The Endicott survey indicates that 37 percent of staff agree that they had sufficient time to work on curriculum. For new courses, such as integrated science, teachers are given time during the summer to develop the curriculum and some time in the fall and spring to review the work that was completed during the summer. Teachers examine student performance data. For example, across disciplines, students are given common assessments in order to align the courses with one another. In some disciplines, such as science and math, almost all tests and quizzes are common, and among all departments the midterm and final are the same in like courses. During meetings, math and science teachers conduct analysis of tests and quizzes to ensure that there is vertical and horizontal alignment among courses. The recent revision of Spanish 4 was guided by performance results in Spanish 5 and AP Spanish. Due to lower performance in literature and culture, there was a need to revamp a grammar-heavy Spanish 4 curriculum. Research used in developing and revising curricula includes *Understanding By Design*, *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction*, *A Framework for K-12 Science Education, Practices, Crosscutting Concepts and Core Ideas*, the International Society for Technology Education (ISTE) standards, and national standards for science and the arts. Teachers also attend a variety of conferences, which influence the revision of the curriculum including but not limited to the following organizations: National Council for the Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Massachusetts (ATMIM), National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), Massachusetts Science Teacher Association (MAST), American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL), Massachusetts Association of Foreign Language (MAFLA), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the New England Council of Teachers of English (NECTE), National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), Massachusetts Council for the Social Studies (MCSS), New England Regional Conference for the Social Studies (NERC), South Shore Social Studies Supervisors (5S), the South Shore English Directors, and English Language Arts Collaborative (ELAC) and the Math and Computer Science Collaborative at Bridgewater State University. The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research, which results in developing curriculum and courses that meet the needs of students in the 21st century.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- department leaders

- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Commendations

Commendation

The depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology incorporated into the curriculum

Commendation

The effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation that exist among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district

Commendation

The provision of sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research

Standard 2 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure all curriculum is written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's 21st century learning expectations; and a variety of assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics

Recommendation

Ensure the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through formal cross-disciplinary learning

Recommendation

Ensure sufficient technology to fully implement the curriculum

Recommendation

Ensure curricular coordination between academic areas within the school

Standard 3 Indicator 1

Conclusions

Teachers engage in a continuous, thoughtful review of instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Data from the Endicott survey supports that 84.8 percent of teachers agree that they examine instructional practices. The core academic departments share a common planning period with either their department members or with others who teach a common subject. There is collaboration on lesson plan development and review of student learning outcomes. All teachers maintain sample folders of student work products used during observations and evaluations with the department director to ensure consistency in addressing the identified 21st century learning expectations. Department and faculty meeting agendas document review of instructional practices through the review of end of course surveys and best teaching practices. By engaging in a process of ongoing review of instructional practices using a variety of measures, teachers demonstrate their commitment to the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey

Standard 3 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Teachers instructional practices consistently support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by engaging students as active and self-directed learners; applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; engaging students in self-assessment and reflection; and integrating technology; and often personalize instruction and emphasize inquiry, problem-solving; and higher order thinking. Ninety-six percent of teachers agree that they personalize instruction for their students, while only 32.9 percent of students report on the Endicott survey that they agree their teachers personalize learning, and 48.3 percent agree that they are able to engage in one-on-one time with their teachers. Similarly, 56.5 percent of parents agree that their children's teachers personalize instruction to support their achievement of the school's learning expectations. Math, English, social studies, science, and world languages are grouped by ability level. When a large range of abilities was determined in geometry classes, the course was separated into two further levels, Geometry Linear-Based and Geometry Quadratic-Based. Students have access to the same geometry concepts with different levels of algebra embedded in the course. The computer-based learning program ALEKS is used in the lower level Algebra 1 courses to allow students to work at their own pace with teacher direction and support. There is a clear expectation by administrators that teachers differentiate instruction as necessary and teachers state that differentiation is key to their instruction. In an English class, teachers connected and personalized a vocabulary lesson for a group of level 3/4 learners. Engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning is happenstance and not formally planned. Students are enrolled in World History and World Literature concurrently and US History and American Literature concurrently. Pre-calculus and physics courses often reference similar content and are taken concurrently often. However, there is limited formal collaboration between the teachers of these courses. Students are engaged in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking through student-led discussions (SLD) in English and history classes in which they actively lead the class and are expected to participate in discussion. The students are given questions ahead of time to prepare their responses for the SLD and are held accountable for participation and preparation. Many math classes begin with a warm-up set of problems that students work on collaboratively. Teachers pose inquiry-based questions consistently to students in their classes, which led to higher order thinking opportunities for students. For example, in an English class the teacher provided a compelling presentation on an assigned reading. The students were charged with looking at different perspectives and meanings of the writing passages and derive ulterior meanings and perspectives of the writing. Students are expected to prepare projects and reports in many classes across disciplines and present these to their classmates. In a Holocaust and Human Behavior course, students choose a social issue or challenge and come up with a plan to try to solve the problem. In a biology class, students examine samples from a local pond and create a food web from the samples. Students in graphics classes design and print posters and t-shirts for school and outside use. Peer editing is a regular tool used in English classes for major pieces of writing. Across disciplines, teachers use varied technology and classroom tools such as Kahoot and "thumbs up/thumbs down" for students to review and practice before summative assessments. Students have an opportunity to rewrite one paper per term for a better grade in English class after reading teacher feedback or sitting and discussing the first paper with the teacher. Teachers use a variety of technology tools to aid instruction including iPads, SmartBoards, graphing calculators, and Chromebooks. Training in many of these tools was offered in professional development sessions that teachers could choose to attend. Teachers share what they have learned during department meetings. There has been professional development in technology hardware and applications but some teachers state multiple computer platforms make effective use of technology cumbersome. Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction; engaging students as active and self-directed learners; emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking; applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; engaging students in self-assessment and reflection; and integrating technology; therefore, when students are afforded more consistent opportunities to engage in cross-disciplinary learning, the 21st century learning expectations will be further supported.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 3 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Teachers deliberately adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessments. These adjustments are purposefully organizing group learning activities; however, teachers adjust their instructional practices alternatively by strategically differentiating instruction and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.

Teachers use of a variety of formative assessment tools to inform instruction. One teacher discussed with students how he evaluates their work and how that informs his teaching. Various tools such as “thumbs up/thumbs down,” electronic data collection through the use of Google Forms and Edmodo as well as by teacher-prepared assessments provide more immediate feedback to students regarding their level of success. The common perception of the faculty is that differentiation in instructional methodology is driven initially by class grouping and course leveling. Students are enrolled in various levels of courses based on abilities and needs including Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, College Prep, and Standard, and many heterogeneously-grouped courses. In courses with multiple levels of students, differentiated assessment is used more, but differentiated instruction is less consistent. Curriculum documents articulate the use of a variety of the types of assignments used to provide access to the curriculum and assessment of student learning. Various types of activities and scaffolding tools are used in some classrooms. Teachers' sometimes strategically differentiate instructional practices to help learners in either homogeneous or heterogeneous classes. In 2014-2015, math teachers piloted the use of ALEKS, a web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system, with lower level Algebra I students in an effort to identify strengths and weaknesses and to strategically differentiate instruction to prepare students for the high school mathematics curriculum. In selected history classes, teachers use tools that support students' individual learning needs within the context of the classroom as a whole. To provide additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom, teachers provide students with multiple means of access to the curriculum by varying classroom activities employed and use technology to support classroom practices. Innovative approaches through the use of technology to engage students, such as through the use of Google Classroom provide additional means for teacher-student interaction and personalized feedback to students. Student support services provided by Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) further improve identified students' access to the curriculum. Because teachers consistently adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment many students are receiving instruction that is appropriate and meaningful; therefore, when all teachers strategically differentiate instruction, the needs of all students will be met.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- teachers
- Endicott survey

Standard 3 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Teachers, both individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices consistently by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, examining student work, using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents, examining current research, and engaging in professional discourse focused on practice. Each teacher maintains a systematic collection of student work to evaluate progress and achievement. Common midyear and final exams as well as standardized testing provide data that teachers use to examine instructional practices. Teachers use formative assessments during class time such as questioning, listening to group work discussion, "thumbs up/thumbs down," Kahoot, and other electronic tools to assess the need to review or reteach. As part of the formal evaluation cycle, teachers and department directors or appropriate administrator review student work to ensure that teachers use varied assessments, align with the curriculum, and give quality feedback to students. For example, a gap was noticed in an Algebra 2 common assessment. That led to discussions with both Algebra 1 and Algebra 2 teachers regarding improving instruction in a particular topic. Teachers may administer surveys to their students to help guide instructional practices. Pretests are administered in some classes to help guide instruction during the unit. Based on feedback from students and parents, teachers use a variety of means to improve instruction. The book, *Teach Like a Champion*, was given to all staff to use and apply current research. Teachers are able to talk to each other and discuss components of teaching and learning with a common vocabulary. Department directors may also suggest that teachers review a particular chapter of the book after a classroom observation. Department directors are members of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and other professional organizations and regularly receive information on current best practices that they then share with staff. The director may recommend a conference after viewing a need in a classroom observation. Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) data is examined by departments for which it exists at department meetings and during common planning time. Common assessment data is also reviewed at the department level to ensure consistent instructional practices and access to the curriculum. Standardized exams such as the National Latin, AP, and SAT exams are used on a regular basis. In courses with common assessments, teachers review the assessment data during department meetings and common planning time and plan their instruction to meet needs that may arise due to that review. As a result of consistently using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, examining student work, using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents, examining current research, and engaging in professional discourse focused on practice, teachers are able to meet many of the needs of their students.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- teachers
- Endicott survey

Standard 3 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Teachers consciously and intentionally maintain expertise in their subject areas and maintain their knowledge in content-specific instructional practices. According to the Endicott survey, 100 percent of teachers agree they maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. In addition, 87.2 percent of students agree that their teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. A mentoring program exists for new teachers and an ongoing professional development program allows teachers to maintain their expertise in their content areas. A new online portal for professional development registration and management has been established for teachers to register for school-based, district-wide, and local professional development opportunities. Teachers state that there are “plenty of opportunities” for professional development. Teachers can attend courses offered by Primary Source at no cost due to a district membership. Teachers attend training workshops when new technology resources are purchased for the classroom and then share that training with department colleagues during department meetings and common planning time. Several teachers also attend conferences sponsored by professional teacher organizations and the College Board. Teachers who attend conferences and workshops are expected to then share what they have learned at department meetings. There is support and reimbursement available for teachers who seek to attend outside professional development opportunities. Reimbursement is offered for graduate coursework for staff with at least one year of experience in the district. First year teachers are sometimes given approval for course reimbursement with department director or principal approval. Because of the faculty's commitment to maintaining expertise in their subject areas and in content-specific instructional practices, instruction is delivered in purposeful manner.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey

Standard 3 Commendations

Commendation

The active engagement of students in the classroom through the use of varied activities

Commendation

The commitment to maintaining expertise in subject areas and in content-specific instructional practices by staff

Commendation

The extensive use of student work and assessment data to drive instruction

Standard 3 Recommendations

Recommendation

Provide more consistent opportunities to engage in cross-disciplinary learning

Recommendation

Employ differentiated instruction strategies to meet the needs of all students and emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills consistently in all content areas

Standard 4 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The professional staff has yet to employ a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics in all areas. Rubrics were developed and updated in 2014-2015; however, few teachers use them with fidelity. Mostly, teachers use parts of the rubric to create their own assignment-specific rubrics. Most student work is assessed by a teacher or department-generated rubric, which may include some of the 21st century learning expectations. According to the Endicott survey, 70.7 percent of teachers report that they understand the formal process, based on the use of the school-wide analytic rubric, to assess school and individual student progress in achieving learning expectations, while only 37.4 percent of teachers agree they use them. In the math department, the usefulness of the rubric is discussed and there is a departmental expectation that the learning expectations are embedded in every part of the lesson. Biology teachers use the rubric for the fourth-term project and all students who take biology see the rubric in its entirety. Freshmen are exposed to the 21st learning expectations during their advisory course. A teacher stated that he used part of school-wide analytic rubric on one assignment. However, there is minimal overt reference to, or overt use of the school-wide rubrics or any other school-wide metrics to assess these skills. When the professional staff employs a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, with fidelity, students, faculty, and families will have an effective means to measure growth.

Sources of Evidence

- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school's professional staff inconsistently and on a limited basis communicates individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families and does not yet communicate the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community. Most students and parents surveyed are unaware of the school-wide 21st century learning expectations. Most parents are satisfied with the level of communication with regard to overall student progress. There are four report cards each year and four mid-quarter progress reports. The progress reports may not always provide parents or students with grade information, but frequently with comments pertaining to effort and progress. Limited communication exists specifically in regard to individual student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. Likewise, the school community regularly receives reports of the school and students' progress, but not with any emphasis explicitly indicated toward the 21st century learning expectations. When the professional staff communicates individual student progress to students and their families, and whole-school progress to the school community, all stakeholders will be informed about achievement of the learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 4 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Staff continuously collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. The Endicott survey shows that 58.6 percent of staff members collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. All teachers use a variety of formative assessments including but not limited to dip-sticking, exit tickets, Kahoots, and Quizlet that assist teachers to benchmark student comprehension of delivered content. Teachers analyze Advanced Placement (AP) Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) data to inform instruction and raise scores; in particular, the scores of students who need to retake the exam. Additionally, teachers use Scantron forms, to analyze MCAS item analysis to inform future instruction. This analysis is also used to gauge any gender or special education gaps. Teachers use common planning time to analyze data, specifically, to create and revise common assessments to further align to the curriculum, such as midterm and final exams. Assessment data is disaggregated by department to monitor achievement gaps and feedback is provided to teachers by department. Because the staff continuously collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement, students' needs can be identified and instruction can be tailored to meet those needs.

Sources of Evidence

- teachers
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Prior to each unit of study, teachers inconsistently communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and the related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. Teachers preview units and lessons at the beginning of class. Many teachers give a forecast of upcoming events, classroom changes, projects, test, and quizzes. Many teachers provide rubrics to students so they understand the expectations and students report that content-specific rubrics are received regularly at the start of lessons, projects, and units. Although teachers do not define the learning goals as 21st century learning expectations, they are articulated through the assignment specific-expectations of the assignments. Teachers acknowledge and recognize the importance of rubrics and making learning visible. Once teachers specifically communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations, in addition to the unit-specific learning goals, these expectations will become a regular part of the students' learning experiences and enhance the existing positive academic and social climate.

Sources of Evidence

- student work
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Prior to summative assessments, teachers consistently provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement. Teachers provide rubrics and exemplars with most assessments to inform students of performance expectations. According to the Endicott survey, 90.3 percent of students agree with the statement, "My teachers regularly use rubrics to assess my work." For the most part, teachers review rubrics with students before beginning work in order to help students understand expectations. About 70 percent of staff members agree with the statement, "Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate to the students the school's learning expectations and corresponding rubrics to be used." Additionally, 80 percent of students agree with the statement, "I understand in advance what work I have to accomplish to meet my teachers' expectations." For example, English and Spanish teachers use of common grading rubrics for final exams. Students have seen and have been assessed on these rubrics throughout the year. Because teachers consistently provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics and exemplars, which define targeted high levels of achievement, students are aware of expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 6

Conclusions

In each unit of study, teachers consistently employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. As reported in the Endicott survey, 73.9 percent of parents agree that teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments. Paper and pencil assessments are used. There is also an increased use of technology, which allows for a variety of other formative assessments. Multiple teachers in various content areas use Kahoot and Quizlet during class. Each department also measures student growth through the use of summative assessments. All departments have instituted district-determined measures (DDMs) as well, which vary from a pre- and post-document-based question (DBQ) essay in AP European History, to a pre- and post-test on units in health class. Other summative assessments are used throughout the year, and though there are still standard written assessments, departments also assess through a variety of other means. In a social studies class and an English class, exit tickets were used to gauge student learning. In a Spanish 1A class, summative assessments involved students working on a calendar project in the computer lab to demonstrate their knowledge of vocabulary associated with days of the week and months of the year. The Construction Technology class completed a group project, which demonstrated student knowledge of mortise and tenon joinery. English teachers require a variety of types of essay writing for students to express their ability to write and communicate effectively. All core departments use common midyear and final exams and many departments also use common summative unit assessments. Because teachers consistently employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments in each unit of study, students are able to demonstrate mastery of skills and content in a variety of ways.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of both formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. The goal of common department planning time is teacher collaboration. As a result, collaboration amongst teachers of common grade levels and courses has allowed for the exchange of ideas which aid in the development of common assignments and assessments. Monthly department meeting time is used to review homework assignments and assessment strategies, such as department rubrics and common exams. One professional development day is also dedicated to vertical teaming each year. For example, recently social studies teachers in grades 6-12 split into two groups, one focusing on the research paper and one focusing on document-based questions. All core academic areas have common summative unit assessments in addition to common midyear and final exams. Professional development time is also made possible with the provision of substitutes, allowing teachers to collaborate on lengthy projects, such as the creation of the biology final project. As a result of teachers collaborating regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments within courses and course levels, all students in the same courses are ensured the same curriculum and afforded equal opportunities to master skills.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders

Standard 4 Indicator 8

Conclusions

Teachers provide timely, specific, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work in a variety of ways. The Endicott survey indicated that 67 percent of students agree their teachers assess their work in a reasonable amount of time. English teachers give students specific and corrective feedback through the use of writing rubrics and allow students to revise and improve their work. English and social studies teachers frequently allow or require students to submit second drafts of formal essays. Some science teachers use Google forms to correct and edit homework and writing assignments line by line, providing specific feedback. In other curriculum areas, teachers use a variety of formative assessment activities to offer students immediate feedback, such as Kahoot and Quizlet Live, prior to taking summative assessments for a unit of study. This feedback allows students to reinforce learning and provide a timely confirmation of student comprehension of specific topics. Teachers are contractually required to update their grades in the Aspen grading portal once per term; however, parents and students consistently commented about more frequent reporting of student progress through the Aspen student information portal. By providing students with specific, corrective, and timely feedback, teachers ensure that all students have the opportunity to revise and improve their work.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 9

Conclusions

Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Teachers use a variety of formative assessments to allow for immediate feedback; therefore, teachers are able to make adjustments to daily instruction. According to a school-wide survey, 83 percent of students agree that teachers use a variety of methods to assess student learning. As teachers check in with students verbally, visually, or with technology applications, they frequently make changes or adaptations in the current class period. Teachers also use information from formative assessments to adapt and make changes to future classes or future teaching of the same course. Many teachers use formative assessment to shape the path of the class or to decide what will be formally assessed in a summative form. Math classes engage regularly in warm-up exercises at the beginning of class, which allow the teacher to circulate and check homework while students provide important data that can be used to modify the instructional approach, especially the pacing of the lesson to ensure student understanding and learning. Technology, such as Google Forms and Edmodo discussion forums, have augmented formative assessment techniques and allowed for “on-the-spot” adjustment to instructional strategies focused on improved student learning. Teachers analyze data from a variety of assessment data to inform instruction and assessment mastery of subject matter. Because teachers regularly use formative and summative assessments for the purpose of guiding and informing instruction, students are able to clarify misconceptions and master concepts.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- school support staff

Standard 4 Indicator 10

Conclusions

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including common course and common grade-level assessments; standardized assessments; survey data from current students; some student work; but not yet from individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations; data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions; and survey data from alumni. Teachers and administrators examine multiple types of evidence of student learning outcomes for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instruction. Through the analysis of data from standardized tests such as end-of-course departmental exams, MCAS, SAT, and Advanced Placement (AP) exams, changes have been made to the curriculum, such as the structure of the grade nine English course to focus heavily on writing in semester one and critical reading in semester two. Teachers use data team analysis of mid-year exams to inform instruction and to revise curriculum for the following school year. Additionally, many teachers collaborate during informal meeting time to revise and improve instructional practices after evaluating student progress and work. While teachers use student work, common grade-level assessments, and standardized assessments to revise curriculum and instruction, they are not currently collecting data regarding individual or school-wide progress in achieving most 21st century learning expectations. The cyclical revision of curriculum and consequent improvement of instruction is based upon progress in achieving these expectations. All teachers must solicit feedback from students as part of the teacher evaluation system. Teachers examine survey data both individually and collaboratively by using informal surveys including polls and exit tickets at the end of the school year. Attempts have been made to collect survey data from alumni; however, response rates are low and pose a challenge to collecting meaningful data. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, work toward improving curriculum and instructional practices including common course and common grade-level assessments and standardized assessments; therefore, when a formalized review of data from student work; school-wide progress regarding 21st century learning expectations, data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions; and survey data from alumni are examined, instructional practices and student achievement will improve.

Sources of Evidence

- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 11

Conclusions

Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed but are not often revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. As a part of the teacher evaluation, department directors regularly review teachers' grades in Aspen, in addition to examining teachers' assessments of student progress from the individual student folders. Teacher grading practices are regularly discussed at biweekly building leadership meetings with the principal and feedback is shared to focus on consistency. Despite this regular review by the department directors of teachers' grades, students and parents report inconsistencies between teachers in terms of how much homework and assessments are weighted in the calculation of a term grade. This has caused frustration for all members of the school community. The inconsistency of grading structures from class to class and department to department has been brought to the attention by the department leaders and is an area where the administrators will focus their efforts. Once grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, stakeholders can be assured grading and reporting practices reflect their collective goals and aspirations for all students.

Sources of Evidence

- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Commendations

Commendation

The consistent use of data to identify inequities in student achievement

Commendation

The consistent use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics and exemplars, which define targeted high levels of achievement, to ensure students are aware of expectations

Commendation

The use of a wide range of assessment strategies, such as formative and summative assessments

Commendation

The use of regular collaboration, in formal ways, on the creation, analysis, and revision of both formative and summative assessments, including common assessments

Commendation

The commitment to using common planning time for the creation of common assessments and analysis of data

Commendation

The specific and corrective feedback provided by teachers to ensure students revise and improve their work

Commendation

The regular use of formative assessment to inform and adapt instruction for the purpose of improving student learning

Commendation

The examination of a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including common course and common grade-level assessments; standardized assessments; and survey data from current students

Standard 4 Recommendations

Recommendation

Employ a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, with fidelity

Recommendation

Communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st learning expectations to students and their families and whole-school progress to the school community

Recommendation

Communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and the related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed consistently

Recommendation

Ensure teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice

Recommendation

Develop and implement a regular review and revision of grading practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about student learning

Standard 5 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The Hingham High School (HHS) community deliberately and consciously works to build a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. There is an overall sense that the school is a safe place for students. The Endicott survey indicates that 86 percent of students agree they feel safe at school and 85 percent of staff feel the school's culture is safe, positive, and supportive. Additionally, 80 percent of parents surveyed agree the school provides a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive school culture. There are a variety of ways in which the school community builds a positive learning environment. Class size averages approximately 20 students, which allows for more individualized learning according to students. Additionally, more mixed level classes were created so that all students, regardless of academic ability, can have an opportunity to learn together. The establishment of a climate committee, driven by students and a faculty advisor, serves to establish a positive rapport among all sports teams and clubs. Approximately half of the faculty serve as either a coach or an advisor, which helps to foster positive student and faculty relationships. The Endicott survey reveals that 71 percent of students agree teachers respect students. Sixty-five percent of students agree that students respect the teachers. Additionally, 55 percent of students feel that students respect one another. Since the results of the survey were received, students, staff, and administrators have attempted to create a more supportive culture among students by developing and/or supporting the climate committee's efforts. For example, sports teams and clubs sign up through their coaches or advisors to go to other teams' or club events. Students share ownership and pride as well as a responsibility to the school community at large through their participation in various groups and organizations including, but not limited to, the climate committee, the Senior Community Service Day, the Green Team, the Global Citizenship Club, the Gay Straight Alliance, and the Peer Mediation program. All of these programs have the same goal of improving or supporting the school community in some way. Because of the deliberate and conscious efforts to build a positive, respectful, and supportive culture, students have the confidence to challenge themselves academically and to participate in numerous extracurricular activities, resulting in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Hingham High School is equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school works to create an equitable and inclusive environment for its students. According to the Endicott survey, 75 percent of students agree that they have a number of opportunities to take courses in which students of varying levels of ability are enrolled. The school has developed more mixed-level courses in recent years. Although elective courses have always supported heterogeneous grouping, it is only recently that some of the core departments have started to follow suit. For example, grade 12 social studies and English classes are mixed levels. While this shows a commitment by administrators and faculty to promote courses with diverse learners, many classes within the core departments are leveled. The school is attempting to create additional inclusive opportunities for students. For example, all departments have some mixed-level classes, except math and world languages, after a student's first year of taking a language. Specific examples of mixed-level instruction include Environmental Science, Botany, and Biotechnology in the science department and grade 12 English and social studies classes. There are currently two courses using a co-teaching model for special education. In addition, there are 20 paraprofessionals that help support students who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and are integrated into mixed-level classes. Many of these students are assigned throughout the year into a Strategies for Learning class that gives them extra support in the mixed-level courses in which they are enrolled. Students with IEPs have the opportunity to participate in Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses and appropriate modifications are made when necessary. The school provides access to challenging academic experiences for most students through open enrollment in numerous classes. Administrators ensure all students, regardless of socio-economic status, have the opportunity to take the AP exams by having a fund to support students unable to pay for the exams. Although students are recommended for honors and AP courses based on previous coursework, as well as teacher and counselor recommendations, students and parents have a significant voice in the courses they select. Teachers' recommendations are often overridden by parent requests, which leads to frustration among staff. The process for opting into a class is managed by the guidance department with significant oversight by administrators. Students have the opportunity to take numerous online classes that are mixed by level. The school attempts to populate courses throughout the curriculum with students reflecting diversity of the student body. There are currently 14 students participating in the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) program. The METCO program promotes educational opportunity and diversity to students from the city of Boston and partnering school districts. The director of the METCO program created a mentoring program, Mentoring for Young Minds, in order to provide support in learning and to encourage and foster participation in challenging courses. As a result of the school's consistent commitment to creating an equitable and inclusive environment, making certain courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting diversity of the student body, and fostering heterogeneity, students can be challenged academically and supported in the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- school leadership

- school support staff
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 3

Conclusions

There is a very limited formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. A Freshman Advisory is offered to assist all ninth grade students with their transition to high school and to support them as they acclimate to the high academic expectations of the school. Many of the advisory meetings take place during the first half of the freshman year. During these meetings, advisors challenge students to cultivate good decision-making skills, act maturely, take responsibility for their work and actions, and respect others. The curriculum is built on essential 21st century skills such as communication, social networking, interpersonal relationships, time management, and organizational skills. Although this particular program is only open to freshmen, students have an opportunity to connect informally with various adults in the building, for example, staff who are coaches of sports teams and staff who are advisors to clubs. Approximately half of the staff members serve in one of these additional capacities. Although informal, this helps build strong teacher-student relationships. When there is a formal, ongoing program or process, through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, there will be opportunities for all students to forge relationships in a consistent, universal manner.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview

Standard 5 Indicator 4

Conclusions

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff consistently engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning; use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices; dedicate formal time to implement professional development; and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. There are multiple formal opportunities for the principal and staff to engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis. Faculty and department meetings are held monthly, providing formal occasions for reflection on and discussion of professional practice, goals, curriculum, and new initiatives. Staff has worked collaboratively to enhance opportunities such as common departmental rubrics and the writing of district-determined measures (DDMs). Common planning time allows teachers the opportunity to meet with colleagues in their discipline. Department directors provide and lead quality professional development for staff. The social studies department has used this time to encourage vertical teaming between the middle school and high school. This time was also used to create clear scaffolding expectations for research papers and document-based question essays (DBQ). The math department has focused on exploring many of the new technologies available and how they can be most successfully used in the classroom. Interdisciplinary opportunities are informally presented during faculty meetings and within departments. The principal encourages teachers to enrich their professional development through outside opportunities as well. Faculty are offered up to \$800 per year in reimbursements for courses and workshops. During the 2016-2017 school year, over \$118,000 was spent on opportunities for teachers to gain professional development with the intent of impacting instruction. One example of an opportunity outside the school is Primary Source. The school district is responsible for planning professional development opportunities in coordination with building administrators and department leaders. The professional development calendar is comprehensive and contains a variety of pedagogical and mandated training opportunities such as 21st century skills/learning, differentiated/tiered instruction, classroom behavior management, positive behavior intervention and support, 1:1 personalized computing, Google apps, teaching students with emotional/behavioral disabilities, executive function skills, Common Core Literacy Standards, and empowering writers. In addition, the online professional development system, Smart EDU, provides teachers with choices from a variety of offerings. There are dedicated, specific in-school professional development times for the staff through early release/late start inservice days and full-day professional development. These offerings include cross curriculum expectations/goal setting, school safety, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) self-study, and flipped classroom techniques. For example, staff at the high school completed a training on armed intruders. Staff also were trained in differentiated homework and flipped classroom techniques. Also, teachers in all departments have attended various workshops, seminars, and classes to improve their professional practice and apply it in their classrooms. For example, a social studies teacher participated in "Understanding Sacrifice," a year long program designed to promote understanding and teaching of World War II. As a result, a new elective has been offered on the subject. Other teachers have completed similar programs. Teachers have also taken training on teacher websites such as Edmodo and Schoology as well as courses on subjects such as Chromebooks in the Classroom, and Google Classroom. Teachers are also provided opportunities to work with colleagues at the middle school to ensure vertical curriculum alignment. Because the principal and staff consistently engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning; use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices; dedicate formal time to implement professional development; and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained from these activities, curriculum, lesson planning, instructional strategies, and best practices are continually reassessed, revised, and improved to improve student learning.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview

- teachers
- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 5

Conclusions

School leaders consistently use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. The evaluation cycle and process employed for professional evaluation is consistent with the process mandated by the state of Massachusetts. The evaluation process is extremely helpful in providing opportunities for teachers to reflect upon their practice and to identify target areas for growth. The majority of teachers describe the process as constructive, non-threatening, and critical in strengthening outcomes for students in their classrooms. Professional teacher status (PTS) staff complete a self-assessment and set goals both for student learning and professional practice, with the assistance of their evaluator. Teachers submit their self-assessment and goals by October professional professional status. PTS teachers generate SMART goals and are required to include their induction and mentoring activities in the goals. Their self-assessment and goals are submitted to their evaluator. The process for evaluating teachers with non-PTS is similar, but takes place over a two year cycle. Non-PTS teachers are observed at least five times each year. Two observations must be a full period, including one full-period announced observation. The remainder are unannounced, and can be between 15 and 57 minutes in length. These observations are divided between the teacher's department director and a building administrator. One teacher in particular reported appreciation for the 10-minute mini-observations and the discussions they generated for providing their evaluators "snapshots" of their practice. Some walk-through observations are used to provide feedback to teachers to support their SMART goals and overall school instructional goals. School administrators are visible and walk in and out of classrooms. As a result of school leaders using consistent, research-based evaluation and supervision processes, teachers are engaged in healthy conversations regarding improved student learning, and feel supported by the administrators in the continual development of their teaching practice.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 5 Indicator 6

Conclusions

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of students. Math, science, English and social studies teachers have common planning time one block per day to provide regular collaboration and opportunities for staff to talk about instruction and connect learning standards to classroom practices. The world languages department has common planning time by language taught. Other non-core departments do not have common planning time. The school schedule is flexible, accommodating, and conducive to a comprehensive educational experience for students. The daily school schedule allows students to pursue curricular and extracurricular activities. The schedule operates on a 7-day cycle with 57-minute blocks of instruction. Each day, one class is dropped; therefore, each class meets six times within the seven-day cycle. Because the opportunity of time supports research-based instruction and professional collaboration among teachers, the school is able to meet the learning needs of its students and can share ideas to improve instruction.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. According to the Endicott survey, the majority of students, parents, and teachers agree that the current class sizes allow the opportunity for teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. The school strives to provide teacher loads that allow for effective instruction and individualized learning. Class sizes are generally good, averaging about 20 students; however, there is some inconsistency of student loads among departments and sometimes even within departments. This is largely due to popularity of the courses or some that have low enrollments. Some classes have 24 students and some classes under 10. Students feel comfortable with their class sizes and feel as though they have the ability to have more individualized instruction. The school has made a commitment to run low subscribed classes as a commitment to meeting the needs of diverse learners, for example, Chinese II, Core Literacy Strategies, AP Latin, and AP Chemistry. As a result of the reasonable student loads and appropriate class sizes, teachers are able to meet the learning needs of individual students.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 8

Conclusions

The principal, working with other building leaders, consistently provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. Although the current principal has been in this position for a few months, he was a former assistant principal in the school for 10 years. As a result, he has established a positive working relationship with the staff. The principal meets regularly with the other building administrators and program directors to plan a collective approach to ensure continual awareness and alignment to the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. For example, the principal models the school's core values and beliefs in starting the Tennoji Exchange program, and being one of the founders of the Green Team. By being immersed in the school operations and creating opportunities for students to engage further in the life of the school, the principal models traits that support his leadership. As a result of the principal, working with other building leaders, to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, students and staff have the opportunity to be part of a vibrant and thriving educational community.

Sources of Evidence

- teacher interview
- teachers
- students

Standard 5 Indicator 9

Conclusions

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Teachers, students, and parents often collaborate in many aspects of the educational process. Departmentally, teachers work with colleagues on curriculum development, design, and implementation. Within core departments, teachers reflect on the curriculum through common planning time. Additionally, teachers take an active role in recommending students for placement in future classes. Many teachers take a broader role within the school community by participating in various committees, advising numerous clubs, and coaching athletic teams. Students are largely involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision making that promote responsibility and ownership. For example, 80 percent of students play at least one sport. Captains of sports teams and seniors in all clubs, participate in a two-day leadership workshop, the goal of which is to foster school climate that leaves a positive legacy for their class. The student body took the initiative to resurrect the climate committee, along with a faculty advisor, for the purpose of developing strong relations with students and the school community including parents, teachers and community-at-large members. They developed a plan where teams would support other teams by attending their events. There are 135 students who participate in student council, whose goal is to promote leadership development among students. Parents are actively involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision making that promotes responsibility and ownership through school council, booster clubs, and the parent-teacher organization (PTO). As a result of teachers, students and parents being actively involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making processes, there is a clear sense of responsibility and ownership that contributes to the success of students.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 10

Conclusions

Teachers consistently exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning in a variety of ways. For example, a teacher wrote a grant to build the greenhouse that was constructed in the courtyard of the school. Teachers show initiative and leadership by participating as coaches and proposing student club ideas and serving as club advisors. Approximately half of the teachers are involved as coaches or advisors. Some clubs that are integral to the culture of HHS include the climate committee, the Green Team, the Tennoji Exchange in which baseball players from Japan and Hingham travel to play baseball with one another to learn to appreciate and respect different cultures, and the global citizenship program, which promotes global competence, a key 21st century skill. There are many innovative teacher-led initiatives both in and out of the classroom. For example, several new courses have been developed to enrich curricular offerings including Global Issues in Literature, History of Mystery, AP English Language and Composition, Journalism, Seminars in History: World Word II, International Affairs, Computer Science, Biotechnology, Botany, and AP Chinese Language and Culture. Faculty council meets monthly and is a venue for teachers to voice questions and concerns to the principal. Also, teachers can discuss and propose changes through their department directors and resource teachers. As a result of teachers exercising initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school, students are engaged in active learning in and outside the classroom.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 11

Conclusions

The school committee, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The superintendent and the principal actively participate and communicate with the school committee. Annually, there are numerous scheduled meetings as well as a number of opportunities for both formal and informal discussions between the superintendent, school committee, and principal. Generally, the superintendent, school committee, and principal meet during school committee meetings throughout the year, for example, when the principal presents the school improvement plan, Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) data, and potential student handbook policy changes. There is active engagement and collaboration between the principal and the superintendent. There are also monthly leadership team meetings which include all principals, assistant principals, department directors, and resource teachers, monthly administrative council meetings between the superintendent and district principals, and teacher advisory council meetings in which the superintendent meets with teacher representatives from schools. A school committee member is assigned as a liaison to the high school council and attends the monthly meetings. As a result of the school committee, superintendent, and principal working collaboratively, reflectively, and constructively in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, students have opportunities to develop creativity, curiosity, resilience, teamwork, and global awareness.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school board
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 12

Conclusions

The school committee and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. The Endicott survey indicates that 85 percent of teachers and parents agree that the school committee and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. There has always been a good working relationship between the superintendent and the principal. For example, there were over 90 applicants for the athletic director's position, and although the superintendent selected the hiring committee, she appointed the principal as the chair of the committee and gave him significant decision-making authority. For the three months the principal has been in this position, he works closely with the superintendent and school committee to foster a collaborative communication process. The principal has the trust of the superintendent and school committee to make decisions necessary to accomplish the goals and mission of the school. There is a cordial and strong collaborative relationship between and among the principal, school committee, and superintendent resulting in the development of a positive school culture. The provision of sufficient decision-making authority to the principal from the superintendent and school committee ensures that important decisions are made at the appropriate level and are embraced by all members of the school community.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Commendations

Commendation

The deliberate and conscious efforts to build a positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all

Commendation

The consistent efforts to ensure access to challenging academic experiences and make certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body

Commendation

The common planning time provided for core subject teachers and for the world languages department that is used for reflection, data analysis, and improving practice

Commendation

The variety of professional development opportunities both district offered and out of district afforded to staff to maintain and improve practice

Commendation

The commitment to reasonable class size, which enables teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students

Commendation

The teacher-led initiatives that foster high academic expectations, positive culture, and rapport between staff and students

Commendation

The collaboration between and among faculty, students, and parents to enhance the educational process

Commendation

The collaborative relationship between the superintendent and the principal

Commendation

The autonomy provided for the principal to lead the school

Standard 5 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement a school-wide formal, ongoing program or process through which each student has an adult in the school who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations

Standard 6 Indicator 1

Conclusions

There are timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The instructional support intervention team (ISIT) is a school-based team chaired by the school adjustment counselor. It includes school counselors, regular and special education teachers, and the school nurse when applicable. The team employs a systematic and professional process of early identification, screening, referral, and support for students with identified needs that may affect school performance and healthy development. The school has numerous intervention strategies in place. The transition room is staffed by one full-time paraprofessional to provide support for students returning to school after prolonged absences and assists the student in managing the transition in the short term. Homework club, peer tutoring, and National Honor Society (NHS) tutors provide academic support to students needing help in specific subjects. The school adjustment counselor can also provide referrals to outside community services so ongoing therapeutic relationships can be established and maintained when necessary. The school adjustment counselor regularly consults with teachers, families, school counselors, and administrators to provide appropriate support services within the school setting. Guidance counselors follow up with students referred to these services. Programs such as the Anti-Defamation League, Freshmen Advisory, and Breathe Out are designed for students to reduce stress, prevent conflict, or create a climate of acceptance, respect, and emotional well-being. When conflict is identified, trained staff and students are available to intervene with peer mediation, the crisis team, the school resource officer, and school counselors. Because the school has a comprehensive timely, coordinated and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, all students are supported in their achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey
- school website

Standard 6 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school consistently provides comprehensive information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. The Endicott survey indicates that 79.8 percent of parents and 80 percent of teachers agree that the school provides information about available school support services. Both the school counseling and support services webpages provide detailed information about services available to students including preparation for after high school, tutorials on programs such as Naviance, and pages dedicated to each grade level. In addition, the school uses Aspen/X2, the student information management system, to provide an abundance of information to students and parents such as grades, attendance, and discipline. It is also the primary method for school/family communications. Parent-teacher organization (PTO) bulletins, school newsletters, district level publications, school webpage, and social media are also methods used to disseminate information regarding student services and programming. The school also welcomes phone and face-to-face interactions with families. The counseling staff hosts parent information nights throughout the year. These include The Application Process: Keeping it all in Perspective, College Kickoff, Financial Aid Night, a panel presentation by college admissions representatives, freshman parent night, and sophomore parent night. In addition, the school offers monthly parent/principal/counselor coffee hours to discuss topical issues such as the use of Naviance, course selection, emotional issues of teenagers, and standardized testing. As a result of making effective use of various electronic communication tools, traditional methods of communications and in-person interactions, the school consistently provides comprehensive information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- Endicott survey
- school website

Standard 6 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Support services staff use a variety of technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. The district-wide use of Aspen/X2, Google Education Applications, Naviance and access to the school website are the primary tools. Teachers and those in a supportive role utilize Aspen to maintain records and data for demographics, attendance history, and student academic performance. Additionally, student health information and education plans such as Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 504 Plans, and Curriculum Accommodation Plans (CAP) are maintained through the student management system as are other alerts such as legal notices and medical alerts. Teachers and support personnel always use this information to evaluate the needs of individual students and to personalize their learning experience. Guidance counselors use Naviance. As a result, school support staff use technology effectively to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- department leaders
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 4

Conclusions

School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling; engage in individual and group meetings with all students; deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations; however, do not yet deliver a written, developmental program. The school has 5.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) counselors serving 1,223 students. Each counselor is responsible for students in grades 9-12 within a specified alphabetical split and has an average caseload of 236. There is one full-time secretary providing clerical support for the counselors and a support staff member split between the counseling and special education departments. There is one school adjustment counselor (SAC). Counselors meet with students in a variety of ways in groups and individually and topics vary from year to year depending upon need; however, there is no formal written, developmental program. The counseling department publishes a school counseling handbook designed to help students and parents understand high school requirements in general and specifically guidance services. Additionally, the counseling website is extensive. Each student in the school is assigned a guidance counselor and meets with that person regarding college, academic, personal, financial aid, and career advising. Freshmen meet with their counselors at least once and all students meet with their counselor during the course selection process. The department provides guidance seminars for all grades delivered through health and physical education classes. These seminars cover guidance services, Naviance, learning style assessments, careers and personality inventories, and post-secondary planning. Guidance staff spend a majority of time on personal counseling and post-high school planning. Course selection, special education services, group counseling, and crisis intervention comprise the remainder of their duties. The school counseling department provides parent nights, assemblies, and parent coffees, such as grade-specific parent nights and financial aid nights. The school adjustment counselor (SAC) is intended to be a resource for all students. Working both individually and in small groups, the school adjustment counselor's role is to promote the social-emotional well-being of students. The school adjustment counselor also provides referrals to outside community services for social and emotional support regularly consult with teachers, families, school counselors, and administrators to provide appropriate support services within the school setting. Although the SAC is available to all students, the majority of time is spent with special education students due to social-emotional goals and services listed on their IEPs. This does not allow adequate time to support a variety of regular education students who have significant short-term mental health and behavioral needs impacting their school performance. Emerging mental health issues of students are consuming more and more of the counselors' time. The time spent is being monitored by the department head. The department conducts periodic parent and student surveys to assess understanding of guidance services. Graduating seniors are surveyed yearly. Additionally, data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, conducted under the supervision of the grades K-12 health director, is utilized for planning purposes. Data derived from these surveys are used to adjust services. As a result of a sufficient number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who meet regularly with students to provide personal academic, career, and college counseling; engage in individual and group meetings with all students; deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community to improve services; when counseling staff deliver a written, developmental program; students will have even greater supports to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- students

- department leaders
- school website

Standard 6 Indicator 5

Conclusions

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who always provide preventative health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The health office is staffed by two full-time registered nurses (RN). The health suite provides privacy for students and meets the needs of the staff. The health office has between 60-80 visits per day. This number includes the administration of daily medications. Additionally, the staff responsibilities include reviewing and updating the HHS Emergency Response Plan, allergy action plans for 53 students, asthma protocol for 75 students, daily monitoring of diabetes for 9 students, servicing 3 students with a diagnosis of PANDA or PANS, action plans for students with epilepsy, unexpected injuries, immediate mental health issues, impact testing, sports physicals, intake of new students, review of emergency medical cards, injuries incurred in the child development program, toileting total care, transition room assistance, and staff care. Additionally, the staff conducts ongoing preventative student health screenings and assessments such as ninth grade scoliosis checks, tenth grade body mass index (BMI), and vision and hearing screenings. All data is entered into the Aspen/X2 system or other appropriate database. Health staff coordinate with the school adjustment counselor, guidance counselor, building administrators, and parents when making outside referrals. These agencies include pediatrician offices, the Beal Street residential program, South Shore Hospital Concussion Clinic, South Shore Medical Center Concussion Clinic, and visiting nurse programs. The health services section of the school website provides comprehensive information regarding services provided, forms, upcoming events, and a student/parent/guardian survey. The survey results indicated a misconception about health services staffing. Respondents indicated an assumption that all staff were certified RNs when, in fact, only one staff member was employed as a full-time RN. The situation was rectified with the hiring of a second RN. As a result of appropriate staffing, the school health office certified/licensed personnel and support staff are always able to provide preventative health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- Endicott survey
- school website

Standard 6 Indicator 6

Conclusions

Library/media services are consistently integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum; provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum; ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school; are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning; however, do not yet conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community. The library/media center has a licensed media specialist who functions as a library manager, teacher, and research specialist; a communication teacher working toward state certification in instructional technology; and a part-time library aide. The current staff created and established the library instructional program by working with department directors and teachers of each core subject so that consistent research methods are being taught and used throughout the high school. A collaborative research guide was electronically published in the spring of 2015 and made available for student use at any time during a research project. The guide is based on the ninth grade curriculum and aligns with library/media standards which are based on the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Standards for the 21st Century Learner and the Common Core State Standards for research skills. The library media center provides a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum. There are 12 desktop computers and four Apple computers on site, and two carts of Chromebooks, each with enough devices for a full class. Print holdings include almost 7,000 non-fiction titles, over 2,000 fiction titles, and over 2,000 reference materials. Library title selection is not only based on school curriculum but is often done collaboratively among the school librarian, classroom teachers and department directors. Teachers are formally invited to request materials at least once a year via email but are also encouraged on an ongoing basis through conversations generated during library research time with classes. In an effort to increase at home access to library materials multi-user e-books are purchased through the Follett Titlewave service and cataloged within the Follett Destiny online catalog. The library media center (LMC) provides support for independent learning by securing a grant and using funds to create a new makerspace, Virtual High School Access, and a home base for the high school technology squad that serves to assist students and staff in accessing technology through instruction and troubleshooting. The library is the location of the school television production and editing rooms, which establish additional opportunities for independent learning. According to the Endicott survey, 84 percent of students, 92.9 percent of staff, and 74.5 percent of parents agree that the LMC provides a wide range of resources. The library is open before and after school and presents a welcoming and accessible environment, which accommodates the needs of students and staff, including space for team study sessions, National Honor Society (NHS) tutoring, and multiple clubs and school sponsored organizations. The data tracking with Weebly and Destiny Library Manager software tracks and reports on usage and visits to library. LMC staff make conscious efforts to meet student needs and interests and work closely with staff to order books and resources to support the needs of students. Independent learners coming from a study hall are able to sign up electronically for a space in the LMC starting the day before the scheduled time. There are some budgetary constraints for purchasing materials outside the scope of the curriculum and opportunities for additional funding to support the LMC are sought through grants. Books and Banter is a book club organized by the media specialist that caters to students interested in pleasure reading. This program, funded by a grant from the parent-teacher organization (PTO), involves members in title selections and meets during all three lunches in the library workroom about six times a year. The LMC staff reviews data to help inform programmatic purchasing but there is no formal process of collecting feedback to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices, and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel support staff who are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum; provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum; ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school; are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning; therefore, when ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, is used, services will further support teaching and learning.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- school support staff
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and English language learners (ELL) have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations; and provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; however, have yet to perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services. Support services staffing includes 4 special education teachers for moderately disabled students, 2 teachers for severely disabled students, 1 special education team chair, 1.5 school psychologists, 1 school adjustment counselor, 5.4 school counselors, 1 part-time speech and language therapist, 1 part-time occupational therapist, 1 part-time physical therapist, and a .4 reading/decoding teacher. In addition, every teacher who works with an English language learner has a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) endorsement. In addition, ELL students and students who have a 504 plan are monitored by the administrators and align supports as necessary. Counselors, psychologists, special educators, paraeducators, and classroom teachers frequently collaborate on behalf of special education students on a daily and weekly basis. Various IEP team members collaborate both in person and through email on a day-to-day basis. The student information management system, Aspen/X2, allows for immediate access to student and classroom information for all team members. The extensive use of paraeducators as well as the strategic use of technology such as Chromebooks allows for identified students to have meaningful inclusive learning opportunities. Parents report a high level of satisfaction with special education services. Speech therapy, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and reading/decoding support services personnel perform ongoing assessment using relevant data to improve services and ensure each student achieves the 21st century learning expectations. Because support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff; and provide learning opportunities for all students; when ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community is used, services can be continuously improved and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- parents
- department leaders
- school leadership
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Commendations

Commendation

The comprehensive timely, coordinated and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students

Commendation

The full-time staffing of the Transition Room, which successfully supports students returning to school after an extended absence

Commendation

The comprehensive information provided to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services

Commendation

The use of technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student

Commendation

The personal academic, career, and college counseling; individual and group meetings with all students; collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and the use of ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community to improve services by the counseling staff

Commendation

The preventative health services and direct intervention services; use of an appropriate referral process; ongoing student health assessments; and use of ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services by health services

Commendation

The integration of library/media services into curriculum and instructional practices, including the active engagement of the staff in the implementation of the school's curriculum; the wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum; the availability and staffing of the media center for students and teachers before, during, and after school; and the responsiveness to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning by library media staff

Commendation

The collaboration with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff to provide learning opportunities for all students by support services staff

Standard 6 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure counseling staff deliver a written, developmental program to support students

Recommendation

Ensure library/media services conduct and use surveys, using survey data, including feedback from the school community to improve services

Recommendation

Ensure support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and English language learners (ELL) perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services

Standard 7 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, sufficient equipment, materials and supplies for most programs. However, a full range of technology support is limited. The school budget has had modest increases from year-to-year to sustain dependable funding in existing programs. District funding is supplemented by community organizations and donors such as the Hingham Education Foundation (HEF), the Hingham Sports Partnership, parent donations, and other sources. Hingham High School offers and dependably funds an impressive range of classes and extracurricular activities. In addition to the wide array of core academic offerings, student have access to rich elective offerings including music and arts courses, shop classes, fashion design, and video production. The school also boasts a number of sports programs and unique clubs like robotics. Students also have unique access to an operational greenhouse and a broadcasting studio. Classrooms are mostly equipped with basic technology for instruction including Smart Boards, LCD projectors, and one computer for teacher use, but student access to technology resources varies between classrooms and departments. Two school-wide computer carts are available through the library/media center, and there are also two computer labs available for student use. All other computer access is department specific, with some departments far better resourced than others. Teachers who must travel between classrooms also report deficiencies in the technology available to them; for example, teachers using Chromebooks rely on quick Internet access to deliver instruction, but travel time combined with spotty WiFi can make transitions between classes difficult. Administrators and curriculum coordinators work closely with teachers to develop and revise curriculum in most areas. In addition, the curriculum coordinators and building administrators work closely with central office administrators to align resources and articulation both vertically and horizontally. Professional development opportunities are organized at the district level and there is input from the high school administrative team to ensure professional development needs are met at both the department and overall school level of needs and requirements. The source of funding for computer carts/iPad carts is through HEF grants. Technology resources are stretched by repurposing older equipment. The existing resources are overbooked and older equipment has slower processing speeds. Most programs have sufficient staffing to meet their needs; the overall student-teacher ratio is 14:1. The school currently has one adjustment counselor for a student population of over 1,200 students, and has requested funding to address the growing social and emotional needs in the student population. The school committee acknowledged these growing needs but deferred consideration to a future budget. One information technology (IT) director is responsible for the needs of the high school and several other schools in the district. The school currently supplements technology support when the director is off-site by providing a stipend for an audio-visual (AV) coordinator and providing student-staffed technology support through a help desk and technology squad. Teachers have difficulty with pressing technology needs being addressed when the IT director is out of the building. All other computer access is department specific, with some departments far better resourced than others. Consistent and dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, and sufficient equipment, materials and supplies positively impacts teaching and learning; however, sufficient funding for staffing and a full range of technology support will support student needs and enhance teaching and learning.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers

- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the routine maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, to properly maintain and catalogue existing equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. The school is fully staffed by a head custodian and enough day and evening staff to keep the building very clean and in good repair. Classrooms and common areas are cleaned daily. During school vacations, floors are stripped and waxed, and over the summer, furniture is moved for a deep cleaning of each room. Routine maintenance requests are dealt with promptly. According to the Endicott survey, 76.8 percent of staff agree that requests for maintenance are addressed in a timely fashion. The budget includes funding for annual maintenance and repairs. For example, repairs are currently being made to a leak in the roof that lead to drips in classrooms, which impedes learning. The boiler system has been regularly maintained and has had many pipes and other parts replaced over the years. The school develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the routine maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, to properly maintain and catalogue existing equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis, providing an environment conducive to learning.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The community funds and the school implements a long range-plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, and capital improvements; however, funding and implementation of a long-range plan to address technology is limited. The district has a five-year strategic plan for the years 2016-2021 with five major goals driving the work. New funding has been approved to undertake a ten-year master plan analyzing enrollment, facilities, and educational needs with a completed asset inventory to support this work. This master plan will help the district prioritize upgrades and repairs to the high school building. A five-year capital plan identifies key capital needs through fiscal year (FY) 2022 and specifically addresses the heating, ventilation, air-conditioning (HVAC) needs identified by the faculty. Plans are in place to maintain and repair the existing boiler until it is 20 years old in 2021, at which point it will be potentially eligible for Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) funding participation. The five-year proposed capital budget for the district assumes that the boilers will continue to need repair until 2021, when \$889,152 is budgeted for replacement. Capital planning for technology in the district emphasizes needs at the elementary and middle schools; investments at the high school level are limited to equipment needed for Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) testing and some science needs. The wireless infrastructure at the school was updated last year to improve reliability, and additional upgrades are needed to enhance student and teacher access to web-based resources for learning. The grant funding that often provides the initial technology does not provide reliable funding for replacements and upgrades when it reaches the end of its life cycle. The school and district leadership identified a major need for the Health and Wellness Center (HAWC), and have requested design funding to move forward with that initiative. The community funds and the school implements long-range plans and financial forecasts to address programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, and capital improvements that are comprehensive and anticipate critical initiatives; however, funding and implementing a long-range plan for technology will support the achievement of 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teachers
- school board
- community members
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 4

Conclusions

The majority of faculty and all building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. The principal oversees the budget process using input from department directors and resource teachers, who seek input from teachers in their departments to establish budget needs and priorities. The directors and resource teachers submit budgets and requests to the principal, giving consideration to class sizes, equipment needs, textbooks and software, and curriculum changes to support their requests. Once the principal uses this information to create the overall budget, there is a meeting with the superintendent, which the directors can attend. The budget moves on to the school committee for consideration and discussion before it is ultimately approved. Last year's budget included requests that the school committee did not support because of funding limitations, including funding for staffing related to students' social and emotional health and well-being. The school committee expressed its support for revisiting these requests in a future budget year. When cuts to the budget are required, the principal seeks input from department directors to establish spending priorities. The majority of faculty and all building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget, ensuring feedback from multiple stakeholders.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership

Standard 7 Indicator 5

Conclusions

The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. Classrooms have ample space for students to do effective work. Science lab facilities are safe and well equipped, with space for classwork and separate lab benches and preparation space. Practice and performance spaces support music and drama. Students studying video production have space for filming and editing. The library/media center has space for classes and space for individual students at work. The auto and wood shops are well-equipped as are the rooms housing the consumer and family science program. While many of these facilities are older, they are well maintained and support student learning well. Some recent enhancements to the facility created new opportunities for students. For example, the greenhouse and garden space provide rich opportunities for experiential learning in the sciences. A recent upgrade to the track and sports fields was undertaken with great community support and partnership, creating facilities where students are excited to play under the lights. The current weight room and fitness area are cramped and poorly ventilated. The school community expressed broad support for the creation of a new health and wellness center to address this need, and preliminary plans have been proposed. The high school has a recommended capacity of 1,100 students and is currently serving over 1,200, which leads to some crowded conditions in the cafeteria at lunch time. Because the school site and plant are maintained, delivery of high quality school programs and services are supported.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teachers
- community members
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 6

Conclusions

The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations. As part of maintaining a safe school environment, the school complies with all federal and states laws and fire, health, and safety regulations, such as through a town inspection report, and automated external defibrillator (AED) inspections, and bleacher inspections. In addition, the safety of the building is further bolstered by the 30 cameras located throughout the school, the presence of hall monitors in the corridors, quick radio communication among administrators, and locked entrances during school hours. Because the school meets all applicable federal and state laws and maintains documentation to prove its compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations, the resulting environment is conducive to teaching, learning, and extracurricular activities.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Most professional staff engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and staff; however, reaching out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school is limited. According to the Endicott survey, 51 percent of parents agree that the staff actively engages them in the learning process. Ninety-three percent of the staff is in agreement that teachers actively involve parents and families in students' education. The school has a website through which much information is readily available for parents and families, and parents indicated that they are easily able to find what they need by either visiting the website or by calling the school directly. Various schedules and links to both monthly newsletters and teacher websites are included on the school's website. A number of school personnel and extracurricular activities also utilize social media to get their messages out. In addition, parents commended the weekly communications provided by the parent-teacher organization (PTO) that alert them to the events at school. Each student has an Aspen/X2 account which allows them to keep track of their grades and extracurricular profiles, but the rate at which teachers update grades varies. Parents and families have a variety of opportunities to visit the school to obtain important information; for example, the guidance department holds a number of evening programs throughout the year dedicated to introduce parents to the curricular options available and to prepare them for the college search process and financial aid opportunities. The school's adjustment counselor works closely with students who are experiencing social or emotional difficulties and engages families in this process. As part of a re-evaluation of the district's approach to the social and emotional needs of children, parents have been recruited to participate as both team members and ambassadors of a Boston University (BU) study that will assess these needs. Direct communication home varies by individual teacher; parents report that some teachers are more proactive than others, but the general feeling is that teachers are responsive when contacted. No child is denied access to a program or extracurricular on account of cost, but how that message is communicated to students and their families is unclear. Professional staff engage parents and families as partners in each student's education; therefore, specifically reaching out to those families who have been less connected to the school will enhance and support learning for all students.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- parents
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 8

Conclusions

Hingham High School has cultivated an extensive range of productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. Parents have worked hand and hand with the school administrators and program directors to provide opportunities of support for school programming and enhanced opportunities for student participation. For example, the parent-teacher organization (PTO) helps to connect the wider parent population with important school information that is intended to enhance student engagement. This connection is accomplished in the form of newsletters and parent communication that helps to engage the greater parent population. In addition, there are monthly meetings that are open to the parent community at large and the school administrator is an active member of the PTO. The Hingham Education Foundation (HEF) has provided monetary support to assist the school district to fill budgetary voids. The HEF has provided support to purchase technology for classroom upgrades as well as funding a wide range of academic and extracurricular grants for school and teacher access. The Special Needs Athletic Partnership (SNAP) provides special needs children with athletic opportunities. Hingham High School partnered with Boston University to seek input from parents via a survey to gauge the social and emotional wellness of their children. This information will be used to create opportunities for parents and students to engage in social and emotional theme based programming. In addition, some community organizations engage students to work on projects. For example, graphic arts students were hired to design posters that can help to promote community based activities. The construction and implementation of the greenhouse originated with a variety of community partners, and local businesses. Other business sponsored partners such as Crow Point Pizza and the local the REI store provide donations to sports teams or incentives for environmental initiatives. Students may be eligible to participate in the Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Students who meet the predetermined school requirements can take courses in any of the Massachusetts state colleges and universities and can take courses not offered at the school through Harvard's Extension School. As a result, the school's extensive range of productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships has a positive impact on student learning.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Commendations

Commendation

The dependable funding for a wide variety of course offerings and extracurricular opportunities

Commendation

The care taken to ensure a clean, safe, orderly, well-maintained building and site

Commendation

The long-range plans that address key needs including HVAC upgrades, roof repairs, enrollment projections, and major facilities enhancements

Commendation

The wide range of information available and ease of access to faculty to engage parents and families in their children's education

Commendation

The positive relationships the school has built with community organizations and businesses to support the school

Standard 7 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure the community funds a full range of technology support and the school implements a long-range plan to address technology needs

Recommendation

Ensure all professional staff reach out specifically to those families that need additional support

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

This comprehensive evaluation report reflects the findings of the school's self-study and those of the visiting team. It provides a blueprint for the faculty, administration, and other officials to use to improve the quality of programs and services for the students in this school. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting team recommendations.

Since it is in the best interest of the students that the citizens of the district become aware of the strengths and limitations of the school and suggested recommendations for improvement, the Commission requires that the evaluation report be made public in accordance with the Commission's Policy on Distribution, Use, and Scope of the Visiting Team Report.

A school's initial/continued accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing valid recommendations of the visiting team and others identified by the Commission as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. To monitor the school's progress in the Follow-Up Program, the Commission requires that the principal submit routine Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports documenting the current status of all evaluation report recommendations, with particular detail provided for any recommendation which may have been rejected or those items on which no action has been taken. In addition, responses must be detailed on all recommendations highlighted by the Commission in its notification letters to the school. School officials are expected to have completed or be in the final stages of completion of all valid visiting team recommendations by the time the Five-Year Progress Report is submitted. The Commission may request additional Special Progress Reports if one or more of the Standards are not being met in a satisfactory manner or if additional information is needed on matters relating to evaluation report recommendations or substantive changes in the school.

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Commission has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Commission within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Commission's Substantive Change Policy is included on the next page. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Commission office has current statistical data on the school.

The Commission urges school officials to establish a formal follow-up program at once to review and implement all findings of the self-study and valid recommendations identified in the evaluation report. An outline of the Follow-Up Program is available in the Commission's Accreditation Handbook, which was given to the school at the onset of the self-study. Additional direction regarding suggested procedures and reporting requirements is provided at Follow-Up Seminars offered by Commission staff following the on-site visit.

The visiting team would like to express thanks to the community for the hospitality and welcome. The school community completed an exemplary self-study that clearly identified the school's strengths and areas of need. The time and effort dedicated to the self-study and preparation for the visit ensured a successful accreditation visit.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES Commission on Public Secondary Schools

Principals of member schools must report to the Commission within sixty (60) days of occurrence any substantive change in the school which has a negative impact on the school's ability to meet any of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of a substantive change must describe the change itself as well as detail the impact on the school's ability to meet the Standards. The following are potential areas where there might be negative substantive changes which must be reported:

- elimination of fine arts, practical arts, and student activities
- diminished upkeep and maintenance of facilities
- significantly decreased funding - cuts in the level of administrative and supervisory staffing
- cuts in the number of teachers and/or guidance counselors
- grade level responsibilities of the principal
- cuts in the number of support staff
- decreases in student services
- cuts in the educational media staffing
- increases in student enrollment that cannot be accommodated
- takeover by the state
- inordinate user fees
- changes in the student population that warrant program or staffing modification(s) that cannot be accommodated, e.g., the number of special needs students or vocational students or students with limited English proficiency

Roster of Team Members

Chair(s)

Chair: Dr. Gary Maestas - Plymouth Public Schools

Assistant Chair: Joyce Edwards - Franklin Public Schools

Team Members

Christina Allen - Duxbury High School

Karen Borges - Foxborough High School

Heather Carney - Westford Academy

Tracy Ciulla-Monteiro - Brockton High School

Peter Dobrowolski - Tantasqua Regional High School

Chris Farnsworth - Needham High School

Ms. Kristen Keenan - Taunton High School

Diane Kruse - Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School

Kelly Ochoa - Old Rochester Regional High School

Jonathan Rosenthal - Marlborough High School

Janet Simpson - Plymouth South High School

Kate Sjogten - Bellingham High School

Karen Whitaker - Westfield High School