

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS



REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

**Hanover High School
Hanover, New Hampshire**

April 21 - April 24, 2013

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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 of Hanover High School 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 Hanover High School in terms of the Committee'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.

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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), the Committee on Public Elementary and Middle Schools (CPEMS), and the Commission on American and International Schools Abroad (CAISA).

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public secondary school member institutions, CPSS requires visiting committees to assess the degree to which the evaluated schools meet 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 committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study and the valid recommendations of the visiting committee 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 shows 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 Hanover High School, a committee of seven members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering

committee assigned all teachers in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people.

The self-study of Hanover High School extended over a period of seventeen school months from September 2011 to March 2013. There was a broad representation of teachers, students, parents, board members, community members, and school administrators participating in the self-study to share in the development of core values and beliefs about learning at Hanover High School.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their adherence to the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's mission, 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, Hanover 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 Committee

A visiting committee of sixteen evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the Hanover High School. The Committee members spent four days in Hanover, New Hampshire, 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 meets the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools and central office administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Hanover High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 36 hours shadowing students for a half day
- a total of 24 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 30 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers
- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

Each conclusion in the report was agreed to by visiting committee consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting committee appear in parenthesis in the Standards sections of the report. The seven Standards for Accreditation reports include commendations and recommendations that in the visiting committee's judgment will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better meet Committee Standards. This report of the findings of the visiting committee will be forwarded to the Committee on Public Secondary Schools which will make a decision on the accreditation of Hanover High School.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SUMMARY

Hanover High School is part of the Dresden School District, an interstate district comprising the communities of Hanover, New Hampshire, and Norwich, Vermont. Eighty-six percent of our students come from these two communities and 14% are tuition students (9.3% of tuition students are from the New Hampshire towns of Lyme, Cornish, and Piermont; 4.8% are tuition students from the Vermont towns of Hartland, Sharon, Strafford/South Strafford, Weathersfield, and Corinth). The high school is located in Hanover, NH in the Upper Valley region of Grafton County. Hanover is on the western edge of New Hampshire about halfway up the state near the intersection of two interstates, I-91 and I-89. It is a two-and a-half hour drive from Boston, three hours from Montreal, and five hours from New York City. A bus station, Amtrak station, and airport are all within five miles. A 2011 survey published by CNN/Money lists Hanover as the sixth best place to live in the United States. The largest area employers are Dartmouth College, the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, and several engineering and technology firms.

The high school is within easy walking distance of the public library, Main Street, Dartmouth College campus, the Appalachian Trail, and nature preserves. The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center is 1.8 miles away. A free public bus system allows students access to the major population centers in the Upper Valley. Our location allows us to take advantage of local and regional resources for field trips that enrich our curriculum.

With a combined population of 12,150, the communities of Hanover and Norwich are racially, ethnically, and culturally similar. There is a wider diversity in the region nearer to Dartmouth College. Separated from Hanover by the Connecticut River, Norwich, VT, has a population of 3,414 (US Census 2010). 90.5% is White, 3.5% is Asian, 1.1% is Hispanic or Latino, and 0.7% is African American. Hanover's 2010 population was 8,636, with 77.5% White, 12.4% Asian, 4.6% Hispanic or Latino, 4.3% African American, and 1% Native American.

According to the US Census' American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2007-2011), in Norwich, VT, the median family income is estimated at \$124,800 (compared to \$66,340 for the median family income for the State of Vermont) and the median family income in Hanover is estimated at \$135,714 (compared to the \$78,310 median family income for the state of New Hampshire). The estimated median price of a home in Norwich is \$421,600 and \$476,000 in Hanover. In the 2012-2013 school year, thirty-two HHS students receive a free or reduced lunch.

There are four schools in the Dresden School District: the Marion Cross School in Norwich, the Bernice A. Ray School in Hanover, the Frances C. Richmond Middle School, and Hanover High School. Hanover High serves students from grades 9 to 12. The state average per pupil expenditure for high school students in 2010-2011 was \$12,649.66, and Hanover High School's per pupil expenditure for the same time period was \$14,800. In 2010-11, the percentage of school funds obtained from local resources was 66.9% in Hanover and 33.1% in Norwich. In 2012-11, the percentage of local property tax allocated to schools was 62.2% in Hanover and 78% in Norwich.

Total student population in the school district (2011-12) is 1,928. The population of Hanover High School has been stable over the past decade with a mean of 749 and a standard deviation of 15.34, with a low of 712 in 2008. In the fall of 2012, it is 736. The average two-year dropout rate is less than 0.01% and the average daily attendance rate for students is 95%. The attendance rate of teachers (excluding professional days) is 96%.

There are 71.7 certified staff members at Hanover High School. The total student to certified staff ratio is 1:10.3 (this number includes regular classroom teachers plus ancillary staff (media, learning specialists, read/write specialist, counselors, Dresden Plan, psychologist, theater)). The classroom instructional staff/student ratio is 1:14.7. The number of students each teacher is assigned varies from department to department, but the average teacher's student load is 89 students and the average class size is 17.5 students. Students attend school for 180 days.

The graduation rate is 99.5%. In the class of 2012, 85% of graduates planned to attend four-year colleges (48% will attend private four year colleges; 37% will attend public four year colleges), with 3% enrolling in two-year colleges, 1% entering the workforce, 4.5% choosing a GAP year, .5% enrolling to attend prep school for post-graduate course and no students enlisting in the military. Three percent of students graduating in 2012 did not enroll in a formal post-secondary education programs.

All students are required to complete four years of English, three years of math (including algebra), three years of social studies, two years of science (one physical and one life science), one year of physical education, one year of fine/practical arts (one semester must be in the fine arts), and half a year each in health and in information and communication technologies. Students may choose from among all course offerings, from independent study and from other community resources to complete the other five credits required for graduation.

Freshmen are placed in math, science and world language based on middle school teacher recommendations and placements tests. All freshmen enter non-leveled English and social studies classes. After freshman year all students can choose courses from the English and social studies electives.

While Hanover High does not offer Advance Placement courses, there are honors-level courses which prepare students well for these exams. In 2012, 85 students took 105 AP exams and 89% of the students taking the exams scored 3 or above (77% scored 4 or above). Students took 32 Dartmouth College courses during the 2011-12 school year. In 2012-13, 488 students are enrolled in at least one course with an honors designation.

Besides their courses at Hanover High School, students may also study at Hartford Area Career and Technology Center as an extension of the HHS program. Dartmouth College offers students the opportunity to take classes once they have exhausted the offerings at Hanover High School for high school credit. River Valley Community College and the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS) offer credit for certain Hanover High School courses. Students also have access to other area colleges including the College for Lifelong Learning (UNH affiliated), Vermont Technical College, Lebanon College, NH Technical College at Claremont, and the Community College of Vermont. Students also have the opportunity to earn elective credit for independent work experiences through the Dresden program and the Jobs Program.

Dresden Internships afford students the opportunity to spend 4-5 hours per week at a local business or nonprofit organization. The Senior Bridges Interdisciplinary Project is an opportunity for second-semester seniors to work on an intensive project of their own choosing, based on the idea of exhibition-based learning. Seniors engage in independent study projects in subject areas extending beyond the boundaries of the current curriculum.

Hanover High School has a Student-of-the-Month program. In addition, students are frequently recognized for their excellence in academic work. Math modeling, for example, participates in the Consortium for Mathematics and its Applications' (CoMAP) high school math-modeling competition and has received rankings of outstanding from 2010-12. Students from chemistry and physics problem-solving (CAPPS) class participate and receive rewards at an annual competition at the University of Vermont. World languages offer recitation contests in which our students perform quite well. The music department has students participate in band, orchestra, and choral all-state competitions. And weekly, the principal writes to parents commending specific students for excellent work. Each spring students from all grades are recognized for their achievements in academics, music, drama, and community service at our Underclassman Awards Day.



Hanover High School's Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Mission Statement

Hanover High School is an active learning community that provides broad academic and co-curricular programs. We engage students' minds, hearts and voices so that they become educated, caring and responsible adults. All students are given the opportunity and encouragement to use their

- *Minds* to pursue excellence, academic challenge, and personal success.
- *Hearts* to respect and care for the emotional and physical well-being of themselves and others, and for the environment.
- *Voices* to contribute to the academic process and the common good.

School-Wide Core Competencies (Expectations for Student Learning)

Academic Skills

1. Reads actively and critically.
2. Writes/creates effectively.
3. Speaks/presents effectively.
4. Listens attentively and critically.
5. Identifies and utilizes a variety of resources for obtaining information.
6. Employs multiple strategies in critical thinking, problem-solving, and performance.
7. Demonstrates knowledge and skills in a variety of forms in different disciplines.

Social and Civic Skills

8. Works effectively and responsibly as an individual and in groups.
9. Acts as a responsible citizen using the democratic process to address concerns and effect change in the community, state, nation, and world.
10. Demonstrates an understanding of the necessary balance between the resource needs of human beings and the finite nature of the environment.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

CURRICULUM

INSTRUCTION

ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

1

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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 best 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, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify 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.

Conclusions

The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its mission statement. Hanover High school is a self-proclaimed “democratic school” and has been a democratic school since 1977. The school’s Council is the decision-making body for all non-academic policies. In 2001, they revised their core values and beliefs into a three-pronged mission statement emphasizing minds, hearts, and voices. The mission was reviewed again in 2010 based on a student request to the Council asking for inclusion of community members under the umbrella of the mission statement. The Council is the decision-making body of the school for all non-academic entities. The mission was re-evaluated and analyzed by the Council who as a group, decided the mission should not be changed for the following reasons: student concerns should be the primary focus; inclusion of community members would not be feasible economically; the addition of community members was not a realistic goal.

The mission statement is readily available on the school-wide website and has been posted in every classroom throughout the school building since 2001. There is widespread knowledge and acceptance of the mission statement among teachers. Most students are familiar with the overall school mission which contains academic, social, and civic skills. Specific examples demonstrating academic challenge and quest for common good include an environmental science course that assigns the students a project that involves the study of a stream close to campus. This study included the effects of erosion, pollution studies and the history of the watershed itself, followed up by a 20-page lab report articulating the impact on the environment.

Students have the luxury of being in a “wrap around” environment of school resources that apply to every student. Examples include the following: the work that the guidance department coordinates with special education, the formative assessment experience of the “x” period, a Common Ground advisory period, the Dresden Plan, the freshman mentoring system, peer mentoring, Civitas class in which the structure of democratic principles is the focus for the first half of the year, modeling how the school functions as a democratic school. School culture is also nurtured through physical education in which students participate in a wide variety of team building and leadership activities. There is a collaborative working environment for the whole school community which demonstrates a commitment to the core values and beliefs of encompassing hearts, minds and voices. (self-survey, parents, Council by-laws, classroom observations, panel presentation, The Hanover High School Council document written by Marilyn Blight)

The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-

wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement, although there is no quantifiable means to demonstrate proficiency. Hanover High School has many of the 21st century learning skills embedded in the academic, civic, and social competencies and a number of these competencies were witnessed in the classroom. There is a disconnect between the recognized 21st century learning skills and the list of academic, social, and civic skills to which Hanover High School subscribes. Academic, social, and civic skills rubrics have been created, but there is no evidence that these rubrics are being used universally or consistently in the classroom by the staff. Thirty-three percent of the staff reports that the school has adopted school-wide analytic rubrics that define all of the 21st century learning expectations; however, teachers do not exhibit use of social and civic rubrics in the school. Students are not aware of the specific school-wide rubrics against which they will be evaluated and do not receive a copy of them prior to a unit of study, and parents seemed confused regarding specific requirements for lessons within courses that do not reference the school's learning expectations. Classes for which there are multiple teachers do not always employ common learning expectations or assessments despite teachers' claims that they are doing their best to collaborate while not having specific time to do so. One parent of a high school student was quoted as saying, "My child did not enter Hanover High School as an independent learner, but he left here one." Although application of the school-wide competencies articulated through the use of the analytic rubrics is apparent, the rubrics' use is not widespread or consistently implemented throughout the school. Until there is consistent application and use of analytic rubrics to assess the school-wide competencies, Hanover High School will not be able to ensure that the entire student body has equitable exposure to the 21st century academic, social, and civic competencies and that all students have achieved proficiency. (classroom observations, student shadowing, teachers, self-study, Endicott survey)

While the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school and drive curriculum and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, but they do not at this time drive instruction and assessment. The school's core values and beliefs drive the culture of the school specifically in curricular offerings, but are not consistently reflected in the 21st century learning competencies directly in every classroom because of the individuality of the teaching styles. The school's democratic nature, which is applauded by faculty, students, and parents, is the guiding force in the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. The school's Council, which meets Friday's during fourth period, is the governing body. "[I]t has...the authority to act on all matters at Hanover High School not controlled by school policy, state policy, administration regulations, established by the superintendent of schools, and rules and regulations in the student handbook." An example of how the curriculum is driven by the core values is the creation of the Civitas class and the multiple projects in that class including democracy in action and the creation of a proposal to bring to

Council. Examples of proposals that went before Council are a later morning start time and the co-curricular code of conduct. The school has a multi-grade level advisory program called Common Ground. The activity period events are student generated, and they offer a variety of different experiences that enhance student learning and provide them a voice about how to spend their time.

Teachers are modeling the democratic process in their use of a budget committee to prioritize how resources might be spent. They also enjoy the freedom to expand their course offerings with a consensus of their department members and administrative support. The interaction between faculty members and their students helps create an environment that fosters creativity and individualism. As Hanover High School's 21st century learning expectations, core values, and beliefs drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment as well as guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, the students and faculty benefit from and share the democratic spirit that emanates throughout the entire school community. (school board, Council, by-laws, student handbook)

Hanover High School does review its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, but the school's review process is not an annual or formal process, but one that comes about because of district and school community priorities. The last revisions were precipitated by two distinct reasons. The first revision was the school's attempt to satisfy the 2001 NEASC committee recommendation. The mission has always been kept intact but NEASC wanted the school to develop school-wide rubrics and learning expectations. As a result the school completed a tremendous amount of work creating learning expectations and analytic rubrics for the entire staff. The second formal review of the core values and beliefs occurred in response to a student proposal to include community members within the body of the mission statement. This student proposal went before the school Council and went through the time-honored process during which all stakeholders came to consensus to keep the core values and beliefs intact. When the Council worked on the last proposal, voting by members led to the retention of the mission statement without reference to research or data sources. Teachers in various departments speak about their own process of self-reflection about student work, and their own practice of insisting on high levels of learning and their expectations that they know what is best for their students. However, there is no plan to provide a process for regular review of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Although students know the adage hearts, minds, and voices, the corresponding learning expectations and 21st century skills are not universally known, understood, or applied. Once a consistent review of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations is based on research and data, the school's core values and beliefs and learning expectations will become a meaningful vision for the school community. (teachers, student work, department leaders, parents)

Commendations

1. The time-honored mission statement that is embedded in the culture of the school
2. The democratic principles that are embodied in the Hanover High School Council
3. The personalized instruction that translates into notably high academic achievement for a majority of HHS students
4. The welcoming and supportive school culture that fosters respect for student-to-student relationships and student-to-teacher relationships
5. The school's embrace of hearts, minds, and voices
6. The integration of the core values into the curriculum (Civitas Class)

Recommendations

1. Ensure that a wide variety of current best practice research is used to inform revisions of the school's 21st century skills and learning expectations
2. Review and revise the school-wide analytic rubrics for each academic, civic, and social expectation to ensure that the targeted level of successful achievement fully challenges and supports all students to reach their highest academic potential
3. Create a process and timeline for implementation of 21st century school-wide academic, social, and civic learning expectations and rubrics
4. Identify and integrate the school-wide learning expectation and 21st century skills to create a holistic and fair learning environment for everyone
5. Develop and implement a practice by which the school's core values and beliefs about teaching and learning as well as the 21st century learning expectations are regularly reviewed and revised by all stakeholders including students

2**Curriculum**

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 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.

Conclusions

Due to the recent adoption of a 21st century learning framework at Hanover High School, the school is in the process of designing a curriculum to ensure that all students practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations. The existing expectations at the school are utilized in a variety of ways within classrooms and focus on academic, civic, and social elements. Many existing expectations overlap with the new 21st century learning framework. Curriculum documents informally reference student learning expectations. Some, but not all, teachers are in the process of adapting the new expectations to their particular classes. There is no evidence of an updated document that addresses each department's responsibility of specific learning expectations. Most of the curriculums presented need to be aligned with 21st century learning expectations. Fifty-five percent of staff believes the school's formal curriculum design ensures that all students practice and achieve all of the school's learning expectations. There are clear connections between course content and school-wide core competencies as demonstrated through student work. Academic skills of critical reading and writing, problem-solving, and listening were observed in many classes. School-wide rubrics have been created which are designed to allow faculty members to assess whether or not students are meeting expectations, and, according to teachers and students, these rubrics are used by teachers of specific departments to assess student learning, although the rubrics are not used widely by all teachers in all subjects. After the curricula of all subjects includes specific references to the school's expectations and all teachers use the school-wide rubrics consistently, interpretation of assessment data will be an effective measure of student achievement of the expectations, and the teachers will be able to revise the curricula effectively so that students will be able to successfully practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (classroom observations, self-study, student work, teachers, curriculum committee, Endicott survey)

The Hanover High School curriculum is written in department-specific formats. Some departments include core assignments, concepts, instructional strategies, and assessments in line with the 21st century learning expectations; with the exception of the English department, few curriculums include course-specific or school-wide rubrics and instructional strategies. The school is in the process of aligning curriculum to a common format by implementing *Rubicon Atlas*, a web-based curriculum management tool. Some departments have curriculum binders that are accessible to teachers. Binders are not arranged in a particular format but serve as a template for courses and include content, assessments, some rubrics, and instructional strategies. Twenty-two percent of staff agrees that there is a common formal curriculum template that is used in all subject areas. Six school-wide rubrics are available in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, utilizing resources, and thinking. The majority of staff does not utilize these rubrics. The English department often uses the writing rubric; consequently, the majority of students are familiar with the English writing rubric.

Departments across the school tend to create course-specific rubrics while using course-specific textbooks that outline essential questions in each chapter. Few teachers make students aware of these essential questions for the lesson or unit. However, students have a general understanding of the essential questions they should be able to answer by the end of a lesson or unit. Most teachers refer to a set of questions, but there is no concrete procedure for addressing essential questions. Without a complete curriculum that is written in a common format including uniform rubrics that measure all students' learning, the school will not be able to move forward to ensure that the learning goals, instructional practices, and assessment techniques meet the needs of all learners, and there will not be accurate data to inform curriculum development. (Endicott survey, students, teachers, department leaders, classroom observations)

The Hanover High School curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge, and in some classes observed, through inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities, and informed and ethical use of technology. Several departments take advantage of cross-disciplinary learning. The curriculum emphasizes inquiry and problem-solving. Ninety-two percent of students believes the content in courses challenges them to think critically and to solve problems. Ninety percent of the staff also agrees that the formal curriculum in their subject area emphasizes inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking and some teachers engage in formal and informal cross-disciplinary learning. Yet, of the 50 classrooms observed, 13 classrooms or 26 percent of those observed showed a preponderance of evidence of higher-order thinking skills; 22 classrooms or 44 percent showed a preponderance of evidence of middle-order thinking skills; while, 15 classrooms or 30 percent showed a preponderance of evidence of some lower-order thinking skills. Science and math occasionally integrate content to help students to gain a better understanding of material from a cross-curricular perspective. Social studies and English departments have also begun discussions about integrating curriculum content. Sixty-one percent of students reports that their teachers include topics from other subject areas. However, only 27 percent of staff agrees that the curriculum emphasizes cross-disciplinary learning. March Intensive week provides educational opportunities both in and out of school by providing students the opportunity to choose and pursue a topic of their interest. As well, some opportunities exist for experiencing authentic learning both in and outside of school. Some include performing a puppet show for local school children, museum study projects, community concerts, and interviewing inmates at correctional facilities, to name a few. The social studies department and a media literacy class inform students of the ethical use of technology which is embedded in the "voice" element of the mission statement. When there is inclusion of inquiry, problem-solving, higher-order thinking, authentic learning opportunities, informed and ethical use of technology, and when students have numerous opportunities to participate in cross-curricular initiatives, they

are enjoying an education rich with deep understanding and application of the knowledge and skills they are learning. (classroom observations, self- study, student shadowing, student work, students, Endicott survey)

There is a clear alignment between written and taught curriculum, yet within several departments the curriculum is not periodically revised and approved. However, teachers consider the curriculum a living document which is always subject to change. Seventy-nine percent of teachers believes the written and taught curriculums are aligned. The adaptable nature of the curriculum allows for new ideas and concepts to be incorporated without an annual review. Departmental resource rooms provide space and opportunity for informal teacher collaboration about curriculum revisions. To ensure the written curriculum is delivered, there is a teacher evaluation system in place that was collaboratively developed and adopted within the Hanover Public Schools. HHS evaluations incorporate formal as well as informal evaluations. Department leaders and administrators engage in ten walk-throughs per teacher every year. Teachers also solicit and receive evaluations from students twice per course and institute a self-evaluation once a year. Veteran teachers can participate in a confidential mentoring program to engage in a process that solicits additional feedback and reflection regarding teaching methodologies and strategies while new teachers are required to participate in the mentoring program. As soon as curriculum is consistently taught and presented in clear alignment with the written curriculum across the school, all students will have the opportunity to practice, develop, and achieve all of the school's academic expectations. (classroom observations, student shadowing, Endicott survey, teachers, students, department leaders)

Although time is allotted for curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with the sending schools in the district, this time is not effectively used. Vertical articulation between departments is accomplished through a grades K through 12 meeting once a month. Department-specific meetings occur every week on Wednesday, as well. For example, grades 6 through 12 social studies teachers meet and grades 8 through 12 geometry teachers meet. A leadership council also meets once a month to review curriculum direction and goals for the district in relation to school-wide core competencies. However, due to other school initiatives, the grades K through 12 meetings have been neglected during the last two years. This created time constraints for collaboration on vertical articulation. The primary sending middle school has moved to the *Rubicon Atlas* system to create a common curriculum format which is accessible to all middle school teachers. Hanover High School has collaborated with the Richmond Middle School to implement this system. As a result the curriculum is not yet aligned to a common format and students are not consistently prepared for transition into HHS. Completed alignment is essential to the coordinated curricular needs of the district and to the continuity of student

learning, and if absent, will limit student opportunities to practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, department leaders, school leadership team, central office leadership team, Endicott survey)

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are somewhat sufficient to fully implement the curricula, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. Fifty-two percent of staff agrees that staffing levels are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. Most observed classes had a reasonable student-teacher ratio; however, honors classes were comparably larger in some departments. Larger class sizes of 27-28 students make it difficult for differentiated instruction and teachers' ability to participate in cross-curricular initiatives. Eighty-percent of staff agrees that supplies, school facilities and library/media resources are sufficient to implement the curriculum. For example, resource rooms staffed with education assistants for all departments are available to students throughout the school day. Library resources include laptop carts, a silent study room, and a library classroom. Bring your own device (BYOD) is a process within the school that provides students with opportunities to access the Internet with their own devices. Technology personnel express concerns with the increased use of network beyond its capacity with an increasing demand of technology access by both students and staff. Grant monies provide a reservoir of funding for co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. When the school has sufficient staffing, instructional materials, technology, and supplies, students and teachers are successfully able to achieve the school's 21st century expectations for student learning. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, department leaders, Endicott survey)

The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel and financial resources, but would benefit from additional time for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. Twenty-two percent of teachers agrees that they have sufficient time to be engaged in formal curriculum evaluation, review, and revision work. Much of this work is done during teacher prep time, and there is no common planning time for each department to work on curriculum using assessment results and current research. Teachers often develop the curriculum individually and disseminate that information to their department on an informal basis, and they are not usually compensated for time spent conducting this important work. However, the principal has the option of funding curriculum work during the summer and plans to exercise that option over the summer of 2013. Department coordinators meet every other week with members of the committee on instruction, which includes school board members, student representatives, administrators, and community members. Departments meet three-to-four times a month for about an hour each time, and the agenda may or may not

allow time for curriculum work. Teachers frequently comment that the lack of time specifically designated for curriculum work has a negative impact on the amount of curriculum revision. Common time to meet for interdisciplinary time is problematic. Some departments find the development of curriculum is often a rushed process and results in inconsistencies in their curriculum. Greater support of time and resources for the collaborative development and revision of curriculum will support the school's comprehensive program offerings and its ability to fully implement its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in the curriculum. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, department leaders, Endicott survey).

Commendations

1. The higher order thinking, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school , the informed and ethical use of technology, and the diversity of inquiry and problem-solving opportunities which enables students to achieve the school's current academic expectations
2. The higher order thinking and authentic learning opportunities both inside the classroom and within the community that promote current civic and social expectations
3. The informal time during which teachers engage in curriculum development without compensation
4. The provision of personnel and financial resources for curriculum development
5. The supplies, school facilities, and the resources of the library/ media center
6. The adoption of the *Rubicon Atlas* curriculum mapping software

Recommendations

1. Create a timeline for teachers to implement the *Rubicon Atlas* system
2. Redesign and implement a standard curriculum format for all courses that includes units of study (with essential questions, knowledge and skills), instructional strategies, assessment practices (including the use of school-wide and course-specific rubrics) and connections to the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Expand common planning time to include all curricular areas
4. Use a common data collection protocol to analyze common benchmark assessments to inform, monitor, and adjust the curriculum

5. Ensure improved curriculum articulation among departments within the middle school
6. Provide leadership for the regular review, evaluation, and revision of curriculum

3**Instruction**

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.

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices are frequently examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Teachers are clearly familiar with the school's core values/mission statement. Teaching practices in all classes consistently and overtly support the school's mission statement of "minds, hearts, and voices." This mission is embedded in the daily instructional practices of the school.

Teachers engage in reflective practices, such as a Critical Friends group approximately once a month, to examine instructional practices and best practices in a cross-curricular setting. This is consistent with the school's culture of collaboration and democracy. Additionally, teachers within a department observe each other's classes on a rotating schedule. This is meant to ensure that teachers are reflecting and collaborating on instructional practices on a regular basis, but teachers express a concern that these peer observations have not been consistent in the first year of implementation.

Instructional practices are also examined and influenced through the use of course evaluations. Students evaluate their courses and their teachers at least twice during the length of a course. This is consistent with the core belief of students having a "voice" in the school and the school's emphasis on the democratic process. Teachers use the data gathered in the course evaluations to set goals and to alter instructional practices. Because the school's core values and 21st century learning expectations are focused on democracy and collaboration, teachers utilize many avenues to examine and inform instructional practices. (school leadership team, teachers, department leaders, students)

Most teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction; engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning in some areas; 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. Many teachers' practices include differentiated strategies to personalize instruction. Students are offered a choice of topics to study and books to read based on interest. For example, in an English class, students are given a variety of assessments to choose from such as writing a chapter summary or creating a comic strip that illustrates a chapter within their book. All teachers meet regularly with individuals or small groups of students to address individual learning needs through the use of "x"-periods. The "x"-periods are available once per week for all classes, and are used in a variety of ways by teachers and students to make up work, to provide and receive extra help, to participate in writing conferences, and to explore enrichment opportunities. The "x"-period allows students and

teachers a built-in time to address individual learning needs. There are formal courses and programs for personalized instruction. The Dresden Plan independent study option and the Senior Bridges course respond to the need for personalized instruction by “developing opportunities for independent student learning.” Students, in consultation with their parents, guidance counselor, department leaders, and classroom teachers have the ability to individualize a course at any time to fit a specific need. Examples of situations when such a change is made include an extended absence due to illness, family issues, or course conflicts.

Students are engaged in cross-disciplinary learning in some classes. One teacher cites an example of an English class and a social studies class that meet in adjoining rooms and have the opportunity for collaboration and cross-disciplinary study. Teachers are also excited about DARMA, a new class to be implemented in the 2013-2014 school year, in which students will be given a problem to study and solve for the semester. This class will combine design, art, math, science, and other disciplines and will be taught by five or more teachers at different times. Students say that instruction in some classes does include topics from other classes as evidenced by covering math topics in biology and producing formal writing in non-English classes.

Students are engaged as active and self-guided learners formally with March Intensive and independent study options. During the March Intensive week, students choose a course that appeals to them and work in small groups led by faculty members. The focus is to engage students in topics of interest and to offer them the opportunity for active learning separate from their daily classes. Additionally, students have the option for self-guided learning through the selection or creation of an independent study in a topic of their choosing. In their daily classes, students are often engaged in hands-on, project-based learning, which challenges their thinking.

Inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking are three tenets of many classes at Hanover High School. Students engage in a variety of classroom activities that extend beyond acquisition of knowledge and offer many authentic learning opportunities that require students to problem solve, create, and analyze. In Physical Science, a remedial-level science course for 9th graders, Methods, a mid-level ninth grade science course, and in Honors Methods, an upper-level ninth grade science course, students design and build rockets before testing them on the athletic field. If their rockets are unsuccessful, students have the opportunity to go back and redesign their rockets in the hopes of being more successful on the second launch. English Essentials and English Phase 1 and 2 classes use templates, like the literature wheel template, to develop an emphasis on inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking. Teachers report that they must provide students with opportunities to solve problems and think in a way that surpasses rote memorization so that students are provided

with a meaningful and relevant education. Of the 50 classes observed, 23 classes or 46 percent showed a preponderance of evidence that reflected personalized education (differentiated learning, student-centered, and student accommodations, etc.) However, 13 classes or 26 percent of classrooms visited showed evidence of a preponderance of higher order thinking skills.

Teachers regularly ask students to apply their knowledge to other situations, such as employing math skills to solve real life problems in national competitions and within a Young Entrepreneur project where students develop a viable business plan. All ninth graders are required to participate with a speaking part in the Shakespeare Festival each December. Each ninth grade English class puts together a scene from a play it has studied and all perform in the auditorium. This assignment requires students to recognize the authentic purpose of the plays (that they were written to be performed) as well as to analyze character and themes. These authentic tasks require collaboration, creativity, knowledge, communication, and critical thinking. Of the 50 classrooms observed, 28 classes or 56 percent showed evidence of a preponderance of active learning, engaged students, or instruction that is related to a comprehensive product.

Students are encouraged to participate in a process to self-assess and self-reflect in each of their classes. As part of a democratic high school, teachers are required by the Council to have students complete a course evaluation at the end of each quarter that requires both self-reflection and self-assessment. In a number of courses, students engage in self-reflection and assessment to improve their work before they place the work into their portfolio. In particular, students in English classes self-assess and reflect upon their writing before they enter the writing pieces into their portfolios. Students self-assess their work with the use of the school-wide writing rubric. Their portfolio is transferred to each of their English teachers over the four years they are at the high school and returned to them in the spring of their senior year.

Teachers also use a variety of technology as part of instruction such as *Edmodo*, an online learning tool and assessment vehicle, educational apps, 3D printers, and classroom websites to enhance instruction and to increase student learning. Most teachers assign a digital media project that includes a variety of technology. Teachers have access to computer carts, iPads, computer labs, blogs, Twitter, SMARTBoards, iPods, document cameras, and a variety of digital software for instructional and student use. As teachers' instructional practices support the school's 21st century learning expectations, students become active learners, engage in higher-order thinking and gain 21st century skills for real world situations; however, increased opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning would further prepare students for the real world and enable them to practice and demonstrate proficiency on the learning

expectations. (classroom observations, teachers, Dresden Plan, Senior Bridges, students, school leadership, self-study)

Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by strategically differentiating; purposefully organizing group learning activities; providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom; and sometimes using formative assessment. Formative assessment is sometimes used at Hanover High School. Teachers use formative assessments such as ticket to leave, thumbs up and thumbs down, and prediction activities. Teachers within the math department use homework and small white boards to get quick feedback on student understanding. In addition, the English and social studies departments use rough drafts as formative assessments. Although formative assessment is used, it is not evident through student work and classroom observations that it is consistently used across the school to adjust instructional practices.

Differentiation is widely used within the school and across departments. For instance, in a Latin class a teacher instructs both honors and college prep level students using a variety of teaching strategies that fit students' learning styles and that promote depth of understanding; the math essentials and pre-algebra classes move students at their own pace and only advance students to the next concept once they have mastered that concept or skill; and in a grade 9 English class, the teacher alters the syllabus to offer a variety of essay options. The teacher assigns and models a digital narrative essay that incorporates technology and addresses personal instruction. The special education department cites many examples of differentiation that include offering audio books for struggling readers and utilizing a font program for students with dyslexia. In addition, teachers state that they differentiate by giving students a choice in paper topics, texts to read, and still life examples to paint.

School leaders indicate that teachers purposefully organize group learning activities designed to engage students in in-depth learning and to assist students in collaborating with one another to participate in a group assignment. This is evidenced by their observations during classroom walk-throughs and formal evaluations. Examples of group learning can be seen in calculus classes in which students work in teams with 3D shapes, in science classes that foster collaboration through lab partners, in robotics teams that collaboratively work together to solve problems, and in art class when students are asked to collaboratively critique their peers' artwork. Additionally, teachers tailor instruction to include group learning as part of a lesson. For example, a science teacher used a group strategy in which he asked students to explain to a group member the concept that was just taught. Ultimately the goal is to have all students acquire the same level of knowledge.

Teachers provide additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom in a variety of ways. Teachers state that in the math essentials and pre-algebra classes, students move at their own pace and only advance to the next concept once they have mastered that concept or skill. In the advanced prose class, students utilize feedback from writing circles and in the grade 9 composition classes teachers conference with individual students to offer feedback and to assist in the development of skills. Students also indicate that teachers are helpful in offering alternative means of instruction in order to clarify content through one-on-one check-ins. Educational assistants are scheduled into classes where they are needed to assist either an individual student or groups of students. Many courses have a scheduled “x”-period once a week and all students are required to use the x-day if they have missing work or have been absent. Some students also use the “x”-period to get extra help or to check on their progress in class. It is worthwhile to note, however, that Hanover High School is a democratic school and that student use of the “x”-period is self-directed and the use of this time varies from department to department and course to course. Class time during the “x”-period is self-directed for students, and teachers have the time to touch base with each student individually. Additional support is given where and when it is needed, and alternative strategies are developed by the teacher as necessary. When teachers adjust instructional practices by differentiating, organizing group learning activities and offering additional support and alternative strategies, students are given an opportunity to reach their full potential; however, the widespread use of formative assessment across the school would positively impact student learning. (school support staff, classroom observations, self-study, teachers, student shadowing, school leadership team, student work)

Although most teachers within all departments use student achievement data from assessments to improve instruction, there is no formal opportunity for professional discourse or feedback from parents and other teachers when it comes to instructional practices. Most teachers report that they use student work and achievement data to improve instruction. Teachers often improve instruction by utilizing the peer evaluation protocol in which teachers observe other teachers within their department in order to improve, collaborate and reflect on their own teaching. This is a new school protocol and not all teachers participate or adhere to this initiative. Teachers would benefit from a specific time to meet and review assessment data. Although there is a fifteen minute break every Wednesday morning and students are released fifty-five minutes earlier at the end of the day, there is no designated time, other than department meetings, for teachers to engage in a formal collaborative process to examine student assessment and/or instructional practices.

Teachers often use summative and formative assessments to improve instructional practices. Students take the Stanford Achievement Test, which the English and math departments use to examine student skills and to tailor instructional practices based on annual

student needs. Students are also required to take the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) test administered in grade 11, and a number of students also take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the Advanced Placement (AP) test during their high school career. All students and staff are given a summer reading assignment, which informs writing instruction. Teachers in the social studies department state that they use formative quizzes as well as recording software when teaching rhetoric to help students improve their presentation and to inform instruction. Science department teachers indicate using student predictions as formative assessments and faculty members in the world language department have been experimenting with a *Sound Cloud* program to evaluate student pronunciation and to improve instruction. Teachers in departments across the school administer quizzes, end-of-chapter tests, major tests and projects, mid-term and final examinations to guide instruction.

Feedback is an important part of the school's instructional improvement plan and does permeate into the culture of the school as it supports its core values, yet there is an inadequate amount of time dedicated to reflecting on feedback. When surveyed, 70.2 percent of students and 76.6 percent of teachers report that teachers often use student surveys and use student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments to address instructional deficiency and to improve student learning. Teachers administer student surveys twice over the course of each class and use the feedback to inform instruction. For instance, one teacher took the feedback from a grade 9 course and used it to alter the syllabus to offer a variety of essay options. The teacher assigned and modeled a digital narrative essay that incorporated technology and addressed personal instruction. Teachers generally utilize the feedback from the formal and informal observations by department and building leaders. Most teachers use the feedback to improve instruction; however there are some teachers, regardless of feedback, who are still reluctant to change their instructional practices as they attest that their students continue to perform at high levels of achievement. Eighty-eight percent of parents indicates that teachers do not seek their input or ideas to improve instruction.

The staff often examines current research and engages in professional discourse through the Critical Friends group, department meetings, and the mentoring program. Moreover, as part of the certification process, teachers are required to earn 30 hours of training in each area of certification and 45 hours of training toward building and district goals over a three-year period. Many teachers belong to professional associations and receive professional journals that add to their professional expertise. Teachers are taking additional courses in their fields of expertise, designing curriculum, and engaging in research. A number of teachers have attended the Learning and the Brain Conference over the past ten years to learn and participate in conversations about the most recent brain research. Teachers who attend professional conferences are encouraged to share these topics with members of their

department. Departments meet on a bi-weekly basis to attend to department-focused administrative tasks as well as to improve practice within a particular discipline. While teachers note that some time is allotted to discussing teaching and learning initiatives, often the agenda concentrates more on administrative considerations rather than on teaching and learning. Consequently, a small number of teachers engage in professional discourse aimed at improving instruction and some teachers informally discuss, in the staff room, in the hallways, and in their classrooms, ways to improve their practice. As soon as all teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment, especially during instructional time; strategically differentiating instruction; purposefully organizing group learning activities; providing time for professional collaboration regarding current research; and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom, they are more effective in ensuring that all students achieve 21st century learning expectations. (students, teachers, self-study, Endicott survey, school leadership team, department leaders)

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, actively maintain expertise in their content area and in their content-specific instructional practices. Nearly 82 percent of teachers at Hanover High School holds a master's degree or higher. Teachers are allowed up to \$1,000 each year (\$1,100 in previous years) of professional development funds to attend workshops and trainings. Additionally, there is \$25,000 in enrichment grants for professional development opportunities outside of the traditional format. Three social studies teachers, for example, have written a proposal that has been approved for an enrichment grant to visit India in June of 2013, to inform their instruction in their eastern religion and economics classes. Teachers seek out opportunities in the surrounding community to maintain expertise in their content areas. One art teacher, eager to improve her jewelry unit in her design class, took a local jewelry class. An English teacher, wishing to keep her writing skills sharp, writes for a local publication. Teachers also engage in professional discourse about instructional practices in the monthly Critical Friend groups. Individually, teachers attend instructional conferences such as the Learning and Brain conference to improve instructional practices by learning about the latest findings on brain research. A math teacher created a sabbatical project, "Students as Mathematicians: A Modeling Approach," which allowed her to focus on bringing the modeling philosophy to schools around the state. The goal was to promote the learning of important mathematics in context, in a collaborative setting. Hanover has integrated four of the ten projects she created into the Hanover High math curriculum. When teachers maintain a high level of expertise in their content areas and in content-area instructional practices, Hanover students continue to receive high quality instruction from a highly qualified faculty so that they may benefit from current professional knowledge. (teachers, self-study, school leadership team)

Commendations

1. The teaching practices which are clearly reflective of the school's mission statement
2. The use of "x"-periods as built-in time to address individual learning needs
3. The quality of differentiated learning activities in many classes
4. The support an options available to teachers to maintain expertise in their content area and in their content-specific instructional practices
5. The introduction of the peer evaluation protocol in which teachers observe other teachers within their department in order to improve, collaborate and reflect on their own teaching
6. The wide variety of instructional uses for technology
7. The use of a writing portfolio for students in English classes
8. The emphasis placed on inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking in classes
9. The March Intensive and independent study options which provide students with formal opportunities to be engaged as active and self-guided learners
10. The high level of expertise of teachers and their desire to be authentic lifelong learners
11. The pervasive use of student feedback to teachers to assist them in improving instruction

Recommendations

1. Provide time for teachers to collaborate in the development of cross-disciplinary units, themes, topics, and essential questions that allow students to understand and pursue concepts in depth
2. Maximize the use of common planning time as a vehicle for examining student work and student achievement data to improve instruction
3. Collaboratively develop and individually implement formative assessments on a frequent basis to adjust instruction on a timely basis
4. Design and implement a plan to ensure that peer observations among teachers are consistently implemented and adhered to within all departments

5. Devise and implement a process for parents to give feedback to teachers regarding instructional practice that impacts student learning
6. Develop and implement additional time both within and across departments for collaborative discussion specifically regarding instructional practices



Assessment of and for Student Learning

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, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
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 the corresponding rubrics.
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.

Conclusions

The professional staff does not continuously employ a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school recently developed school-wide analytic rubrics that are based on 21st century learning expectations. Teachers are aware of school-wide rubrics but state that they have not been trained to use them to assess whole school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Teachers also report that the use of school-wide rubrics varies from department to department and teacher to teacher. Although school-wide rubrics exist, only one-third of the staff acknowledges implementing them on a regular basis as many prefer to use content-specific rubrics. Common assessments and rubrics are frequently used intra-departmentally, but not inter-departmentally. Informal discussion around student achievement is held consistently and school-wide. A formalized use of school-wide rubrics to assess this proficiency is limited. Recently, the school-wide core competencies have been divided by department, and different departments have taken ownership of different competencies. How this will translate into assessment is unclear. When surveyed, 90.1 percent of students and only 41.2 percent of parents indicate familiarity with the school's learning expectations and school-wide rubrics. Also, 55.8 percent of staff reports that the school's 21st century learning expectations are challenging and measurable for all students while only 33.8 percent of staff believes that the school has adopted school-wide analytic rubrics that define all of the 21st century learning expectations. Moreover, 54.5 percent of staff indicates that they understand the formal process, based on the use of the school-wide rubrics, to assess school and individual student progress in achieving learning expectations, and only 31.2 percent of the staff acknowledges using school-wide rubrics when assessing student work. Teachers acknowledge that school-wide rubrics are adapted and sometimes used with modifications to make them content specific. The English department is consistent in its use of a writing rubric that nearly mirrors the school-wide rubric for "writes effectively." This rubric, however, is not implemented on a school-wide basis across departments. The science department has its own rubric to assess labs; the social studies department uses STEPS essay rubrics to assess grade 9 and grade 10 thesis papers. The core competencies are implied but not explicitly stated in these rubrics. Staff members sporadically use the school-wide rubrics for speaking and listening. Most submitted student work shows assessment via a rubric, and there are numerous examples of student writing assessed with the English department's writing rubric (also known as the pink rubric). None of the student work was assessed using school-wide writing rubric. Staff members speak openly about the limitations of using school-wide rubrics that are too general and vague for specific assignments. The implementation of a formal process to employ the use of school-wide rubrics will ensure that every student, no matter the course, level, or teacher, will be regularly assessed on the school's core competencies and 21st century learning

expectations; this will facilitate measuring individual student and school-wide progress in meeting these expectations. Because the staff almost unilaterally agrees that existing school-wide rubrics are too vague and general to provide meaningful feedback to students, re-evaluation and possible revision of the rubrics would authenticate their use. A formal assessment process based on school-wide rubrics will ensure that every student is regularly assessed using those rubrics, thus enabling the school to assess the entire program in relation to its 21st century learning goals. (Endicott survey, self-study, panel presentation, teachers, students, school leadership team, department leaders, assessment committee)

The school's professional staff provides limited communication of individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families as well as the school's progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations to the larger community. Although the school has established 21st century learning expectations and these expectations are posted in most classrooms, the school has not assessed the students' or school's performance regarding these expectations. Teachers report that students' learning expectations are communicated in quarterly progress reports and report cards through the use of teacher comments. However, the specific learning expectations of the school are not stated on the report card of every student. Classroom observations, as well as teacher, student, and parent panel discussions highlight teachers' commitment to communicating individual student's progress through informal checks for understanding, one-on-one conferencing, and after-hours email and phone discussions. Students indicate receiving plentiful and valuable written and oral feedback from teachers regarding writing assignments, though there seems to be some disparity among teachers regarding the number of rewrites allowed for one assignment. There is consensus among parents, students, and teachers that writing effectively is a clear, school-wide expectation. However, parents, school board members, and students seemed unclear regarding other 21st century learning expectations. Parents acknowledged inconsistencies in the measuring of student proficiency in various skills and noted that the measuring of proficiency seemed to vary by teacher. Only 37 percent of parents agrees that the school provides them with a formal report, in addition to course grades, which explains their child's progress in achieving school-wide learning expectations. Some teachers write paragraph-to page-long comments, while other teachers include no comments. During the 2012-2013 academic year, staff voted against mandating that all teachers provide report card comments. The principal of the school acknowledged that parents and community members value a traditional letter-grade-based report card versus a skills-based report card, since traditional report cards facilitate entrance into competitive colleges. Every fall, the chair of the guidance department communicates SAT results and reviews the school profile with the school board. These results, as well as ACT and AP results, are available to the community online. Monthly board meetings attended by the principal formally set aside time at each meeting to review assessment data, ranging from NECAP standardized assessment results to

student work. The school's numerous events showcasing student achievement are well attended by the community. Some of these events are parents' nights and open houses, a world language banquet, robotics contests, Earth Day, and numerous programs to highlight the fine and performing arts. There is a co-curricular literary magazine and a school newspaper, which community members can access online. Through the social studies department, all grade 9 students engage in an oral presentation project through their Civitas class. The best projects are chosen by students to be presented to the school Council. All grade 10 students are assessed on both a semester-long research paper and the Lilian Bailey Recitation contest; the community is invited to review and even assess student work in these two areas, though, again, it only has access to top-quality work. As a result of the varying degrees of understanding of the use of school-wide rubrics and the data system that is yet to be put in place, communication is not systemically designed to provide reports of students' or the school's progress on the achievements of each of the 21st century learning expectations and this diminishes the importance of the expectations and the goal-setting process. (observations, school board, students, teachers, parents, Endicott survey)

Professional staff members inconsistently collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. While departments and teachers have developed content-based rubrics, assessment for the purpose of improving teaching and learning is inconsistent at Hanover High School. In most cases, the assessments in use are not used consistently for the purpose of collecting and analyzing data to improve teaching and learning. The science department uses a number of common assessment tools, including a common mid-term and final exam. The results of this data are used to identify students in need of additional help in specific content areas. Stanford Achievement Test results are used by the English department to determine if early student intervention is required and if that intervention includes modified class expectations and tutoring during class "x"-periods. Nearly every assessment used by the math department is a common assessment, and the disaggregated results are used to determine appropriate supplemental materials and instructions for identified students. Departments also collect data from other assessments including comprehensive course assessments, examinations, and quizzes and have used these results to make some changes in curriculum and instruction as well to place students in classes. However, statistical information is not shared across departments to enhance curriculum development or drive instructional changes. Although the teachers' common planning time is limited, many teachers meet on an intermittent basis to examine student performance. Email communication among department members appears to be one of the preferred and easiest methods of communication to confer on student performance. Teachers indicate that time restraints are obstacles in collaboratively analyzing student achievement to inform the curriculum and their instructional strategies and modifications. Although many teachers want to analyze data from the mid-term and final exams, it is time prohibitive due to

the onset of the new marking period, new semester courses and/or the close of the academic school year and end-of-school deadlines. Because the review of assessment data and its analysis is inconsistent and not generally used to adjust curriculum, Instruction, and assessment strategies, teachers, departments, and the school are hindered from being more effective as they address students' learning needs or as they use the review and analysis of data to serve as a formal basis on which decisions can be made. (self-study, assessment committee, teachers, school leadership team)

Teachers clearly communicate to students course-specific and unit-specific learning goals before commencement of study; however, teachers do not consistently, formally, and explicitly communicate the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations prior to units of study. Teachers are required to and do provide clear course expectations to students within one week of a new course; these expectations include course objectives and assessments. Students indicate that these course expectations often encompass a packet of information. Teachers also provide students with information on upcoming expectations and assessments via a regularly and continuously updated course calendar. Many teachers, notably those in the biology and world language departments, post these calendars via a teacher website. These websites, however, are not required, so teachers across departments also disseminate this information via handouts, and teachers regularly post a daily agenda on the board. All classrooms post the ten school-wide core competencies that mostly align with the 21st century learning expectations. Teachers indicate sporadic references to the 21st century learning expectations. Though 73.7 percent of students believes that teachers explain what the learning expectations are before each unit of study, only 45 percent of both parents and teachers agree. Once teachers consistently communicate the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations, students will be able to relate them to the unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. (teacher handbook, department leaders, observations, students, teachers, Endicott survey)

Prior to summative assessments, teachers frequently provide students with corresponding content rubrics. Many teachers use a variety of content rubrics and provide students with copies of such rubrics prior to introducing a unit, lesson, or assessment. Content rubrics are widely implemented throughout and across the curriculum and in most subject areas, such as in math, science, art, social studies, world languages and English. The rubrics vary in detail, length, and complexity; however, one social studies rubric shows great detail and specificity and is also connected in a marginal way to the school-wide rubric. Teachers are using content rubrics for most summative assessments. English teachers continue to use the department-wide writing rubric on a consistent basis and the majority of content rubrics apply to course-specific learning goals rather than 21st century learning goals. Eighty-two point four percent of students reports that teachers consistently provide them with content and

assignment-specific rubrics prior to summative assessments and 85 percent of students clearly understands assessment criteria for those assignments. By providing students with corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments, teachers assist students to better understand the course expectations. (observations, student work, teachers, parents, department leaders, Endicott survey, self-study)

Teachers regularly employ a wide range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Almost 94 percent of staff agrees that teachers at Hanover High School use a wide range of formative and summative assessments to gauge student achievement. Ninety percent of students and 70 percent of parents agree that teachers use a variety of methods to assess student learning. Student work and classroom observations show differentiated assessments are in use. Students are assessed via numerous ways both in and out of the classroom: writing assignments, both formative and summative; projects; presentations; students teaching the class; skits; warm-ups; tickets to leave; Socratic discussion; games; thumbs up and thumbs down; as well as traditional unit quizzes, tests, and exams. The English department keeps a writing portfolio for each student, which follows the student and documents his/her progress as a writer throughout the four years at the high school. The use of varied assessments allows students to effectively demonstrate competency in content areas and should also be used to adjust teaching and curriculum to support improved learning for all students. (student work, self-study, Endicott survey, observations, teachers, panel presentation)

Some teachers collaborate informally, formally, and creatively on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Although there are limited formal opportunities for collaboration with colleagues, many teachers painstakingly find time to meet with colleagues to discuss student results and create common assessments. World language teachers collaborate via email and *Google docs* on many common assessments such as writing assignments, student exhibitions, and major projects, whereas some teachers meet sporadically during lunch, hall patrol, activity period, before and after school, on weekends, during vacations, and during their individual planning periods to collaborate with colleagues because time is not provided in the current daily school schedule. In an assessment survey designed and distributed within the school, time spent on collaborating was varied. Typically, more time was spent collaborating on summative than on formative assessments. Despite evident time restraints within the daily schedule and lack of a designated formal time for collaborating over assessment results, teachers are very creative and resourceful in the ways that they are able to collaborate with colleagues regarding curriculum, instruction and assessment. (self-study, teachers, assessment committee, observations)

Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. Eighty-four percent of students agrees that teachers provide helpful feedback on work and do so in a reasonable amount of time, and 73 percent of parents agrees that their child receives corrective feedback to assist him/her in revising and improving assignments. This timely feedback is a mandated requirement of teachers as a result of a school Council directive for teachers' return of student work within six days including essays, projects, and end-of-unit assessments. Beyond this requirement for timely feedback, however, parents and students uphold teachers' own personal commitments to providing meaningful and timely feedback. Teachers make themselves available to students to provide in-depth, individualized feedback through email, *Google docs*, before and after school meetings, and use of their own free periods. This availability has been formalized school-wide through department resource centers and the weekly use of the "x"-period. Though the infrastructure and culture of the school encourages individualized and in-depth teacher feedback, students must initiate much of it, aligning with the school's core values to form independent learners who take responsibility for their own educations. The use of the PowerSchool portal updates grades at a minimum of every two weeks. When teachers consistently give students specific, timely, and corrective feedback, students are encouraged to work toward mastering skills or tasks. (Endicott survey, student work, parents, students, teachers)

Many teachers use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. In class, teachers engage students in a variety of oral/written activities and give appropriate feedback; for example, posing questions or assigning a task to students working in small groups or pairs. Writing samples in English classes are collected and edited by the teacher in order to give written feedback to the students. Students in biology classes report that multiple formative assessment opportunities are provided such as practice quizzes to practice content before a grade is earned. Teachers state that formative assessment opportunities help to identify areas of difficulty and to identify students in need of help, for example during "x"-period. Students have the opportunity to clear up misconceptions and to revise their work before a major summative assessment. When surveyed, 62.3 percent of teachers states that they meet formally to discuss and improve both formative and summative assessments. Both teachers and students are in agreement that homework is formally assessed on completion and effort rather than a written score. Entrance and exit cards are common strategies to check student comprehension in content areas. Science and art teachers use the model of supervisory observation by teachers during class time. Included in the follow-up of observations are descriptions of the teaching process and suggestions to adapt how instruction is delivered, and, sometimes, to adjust content. The use of formative assessments is essential to ensuring that instruction effectively meets the needs of students and personalizes their learning. (observations, teachers, students, parents, department leaders, Endicott survey, self-study)

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice; however, this is not completed consistently through a formal process. Fifty-seven point one percent of teachers reports that teachers and administrators examine student work and common assessments to revise and improve curriculum and instruction. Teachers describe extensive collaboration and discussion of student work and assessment on an informal though regular basis. The ethos of the school and community make reflection on, discussion about, and acting on student outcomes “virtually mandatory.” The use of the PowerSchool portal has lent some urgency to this discussion. Despite this, there appears to be no formal process to disseminate standardized assessment data to teachers; teachers are responsible for gathering that data on their own. For example, no staff member is tasked with providing teachers with disaggregated NECAP results, and teachers access AP test results by initiating contact with the guidance department during the summer. Teachers have undertaken several initiatives to formalize the examination of assessment data to impact curriculum and instruction. They are required to use student surveys twice a semester and use that feedback to adjust instruction and course expectations. During the 2012-2013 academic year, administration and department leaders committed to ten classroom teacher walk-throughs per year per teacher. Departments do meet weekly and have developed aligned course curricula and assessments through these meetings, but there is limited time formally set aside in both faculty and/or department meetings to review data. Common assessments are used throughout the math, science, and art departments. The science and math departments review these assessments annually to determine their efficacy. Common assessments are used in social studies classes in grades 9 and 10. The English writing rubric is used throughout all grades in the department. The department also conducts a grade norming activity at least once a semester, in which multiple teachers grade the same pieces of student work using the writing rubric in order to assess their own consistency or inter-rater reliability in grading practices. The world language department is seeking to move toward standardized proficiency-based assessments. A Critical Friends initiative has been put in place; part of the group’s work is to review student work with the purpose of effecting curriculum and instruction. Once teachers and administrators, as part of their individual and collective examination of a range of evidence of student learning, include data from post-secondary institutions and survey data from current students, then the curriculum will more accurately reflect student needs in regards to 21st century learning expectations. (panel presentation, department leaders, assessment committee, observations, self-study, Endicott survey)

Grading and reporting practices are reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school’s core values and beliefs about learning; however, these practices are yet to be consistent across all curricular areas. Although teachers within the same department regularly

consult and collaborate regarding grading practices, there are a variety of grading practices evident throughout the school resulting in inconsistencies. Students report that every teacher has his/her own method of grading. Some teachers allow the re-taking of summative assessments whereas others do not; this results in tension among students and among teachers within and across departments. Students state that grading practices are very different by department, teacher, and course, yet they are very clear about understanding the grading practices of each of their teachers. Students and parents state that grading practices vary among different teachers of the same course. Teacher grade books vary in quantity of assessments as is evidenced through the electronic reporting of student achievement through the PowerSchool grading portal. A calibrated grading policy aligned with the school's core values and beliefs, and consistent with teaching and assessment practices, will help ensure equity in learning for all students while also providing more accurate information about student performance levels in all classes and courses. (self-study, teachers, panel discussion, students)

Commendations

1. The wide and varied use of multiple and creative assessment strategies
2. The abundance and variety of content-specific rubrics
3. The school-wide, formalized commitment to specific, timely and corrective feedback on student work
4. The consistent department-wide use of common assessments and rubrics
5. The creative efforts to collaborate among colleagues despite the lack of formal time to do so
6. The use of "x"-periods to provide individualized remediation/tutoring and enrichment based on assessment results

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a clear protocol for the use of school-wide rubrics to assess student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. Communicate with parents and the community to what degree students, individually and as a whole school, are meeting all of the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Align course-specific rubrics with the 21st century learning expectations and school-wide rubrics
4. Ensure course objectives reflect 21st century learning expectations

5. Schedule time for teachers to collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, and analytic rubrics to improve instruction in all classes
6. Develop and implement a process to aggregate student performance data and to formally discuss inequities in student learning as well as identifying students who need additional support to drive improvements to instruction and curriculum
7. Provide formal opportunities for teachers to collaborate to develop common assessments based on course-specific outcomes

SUPPORT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

5

School Culture and Leadership

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, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course (English/language arts, social studies, math, science, or world languages).
3. There is a 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.
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.

Conclusions

Hanover High School makes a conscious, deliberate effort to build a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility and results in a shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. A strong school culture is evidenced in a range of points that indicate positive perceptions of safe school and shared ownership as well as a strong collegial student-teacher relationships and inter-student relationships. HHS has a democratic community that includes the students in all aspects of school decision-making based on a Council that is made up of representatives of all stakeholders including students, teachers, parents, community representatives, and a resource officer. An emergency planning committee is in place and is responsible for designing the school's comprehensive safety plan, which is reviewed annually. The committee meets once a month to discuss issues regarding evacuations, fire drills, and other emergency situations. The school utilizes Common Ground, a program with peer student leaders, two-to-three staff members and 15-17 students in a mentoring program for students in grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve that ensures all students have a positive academic and social experience in the school. In addition, there are 52 clubs and activities in which students have the opportunity to be involved, as well as opportunities to participate on varsity and junior varsity sports teams. Eighty percent of the student population is involved in at least one sport or activity. March Intensive, a four-day intensive program of an interest-specific study, was initiated by the student population, embraced by the faculty and staff, and implemented by the whole Hanover community. The March Intensive program grew out of a shared goal of promoting a school environment that encourages students to be actively involved in creating their own learning experiences, and to organize and lead activities for fellow students. The school's open campus policy allows students, grade 10 and older, to exercise the freedom to make their own decisions and to give them the opportunity to grow as responsible individuals. There are also no predetermined study halls or lunch periods at Hanover. Students are responsible for structuring their free time to use it in the most productive and positive manner. The judiciary committee formed by the Council is a committee made up of nine student members and acts as a check and balance regarding administrative disciplinary cases. Student may utilize this committee when they feel they have been unjustly punished. The conscious and continual efforts of the school community to build a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared, pride, ownership, and high expectations for all. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, students, school support staff, Endicott survey)

Hanover High School is equitable, inclusive, and offers heterogeneity where every student is required over the course of his high school experience to be enrolled in two heterogeneously grouped core courses with the option to take other heterogeneously grouped

classes as well. English 9 and Civitas, a social studies class, are both graduation requirements and are heterogeneously grouped. Other non-core classes that are heterogeneously grouped include health, science electives, beginning world language, physical education, art, music, drama and industrial technology courses. After freshman year, options are available for students to choose the level of the classes that they take and are guided by teacher and guidance counselor recommendations. There is a broad range of student abilities levels apparent in many classes including homogeneously grouped classes. Common Ground was created to provide “an ongoing, comfortable and familiar structure for staff and students to interact in an informal atmosphere.” In these heterogeneous groupings, students can interact across grade levels, academic abilities, and ideally, social groups. The current structure is such that students remain in the same Common Ground group for all four years. Given the school staff’s recognition of the importance of offering and supporting equitable and inclusive learning opportunities for all students, they cultivate the belief among the wider school community that all students are capable of attaining high standards of academic achievement. (self-study, teachers, department leaders, school leadership team)

There is one formal and several informal programs that provide each student with a connection to at least one adult in the building in addition to the guidance counselor who knows the student well and assists him/her in achieving the school’s 21st century learning expectations. Common Ground is a formal program that meets once a week for thirty minutes and is comprised of two-to-three staff members and 15-17 students. Students remain in the same Common Ground with the same staff members through their high school experience. Common Ground was developed to give students a sense of community within the school and to ensure that each student has the opportunity to voice concerns and to celebrate successes with a familiar group of people. The ability to share in the democratic nature of the HHS environment is alive and well in the Common Ground environment and the culture of trust is fostered by all involved members. In addition to this formal mentoring program, there are many other informal avenues of inviting student-teacher relationships. The Dresden Plan offers students with different learning styles whose needs are not met through the regular high school program the opportunity to develop a rapport with a faculty member who helps the student to improve his social-academic performance through programs that can include an internship, community service, or an independent study. Each department has a resource room with a staff member who is available to tutor students individually. There are supervised study halls and study skills classes that allow students to build relationships outside a regular classroom environment. A faculty member certified in special education, learning disabilities, and reading teaches the study skills classes. Educational assistants and the school secretaries are also very connected with the students and many students feel that they are instrumental in providing a feeling of trust and family within the HHS community. Club advisors and athletic team coaches also foster relationships with their team members. In

the most recent survey of graduating seniors, 98.4 percent indicated that they felt connected with at least one adult at the school. The school's implementation of ongoing programs and other opportunities for students to meet with adult members of the staff, in addition to their guidance counselor, results in students receiving additional support in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations and there is a shared sense of community that reflects the school's core values. (students, teachers, school support staff, parents, Endicott survey)

Hanover High School teachers are highly motivated to increase their teaching prowess and to take advantage of as many professional development opportunities as they are able, but time constraints do not allow them the opportunity to share with their peers the skills, practices, and ideas that they gain. Professional development is encouraged by the administration and sought by the teachers to increase their understanding of best practices and to encourage the pursuit of those topics about which teachers are most passionate. Ninety-one percent of teachers reports the school's professional development program enables them to acquire and use skills to improve instruction and assessment. Teachers pursue advanced degrees through area colleges and universities and others take advantage of online offerings. Critical Friends is a group that meets once a month to discuss teaching experiences and strategies to improve practices. Among the most recent professional development activities are *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins, McTighe), iPad workshops and staff meeting discussions centered around 21st century learning skills and their place in instruction and curriculum. Many teachers belong to their content professional organizations and attend state, regional, or national conferences as professional development monies allow. The principal also belongs to his professional organizations and utilizes opportunities to make the most of professional development opportunities locally and nationally. It is obvious that the educators at HHS are interested in bettering themselves and their teaching practices. Teachers express the regret that there is not more time allotted for discussion with their peers. Teachers noted that the funding for professional development has been reduced from \$1100 to \$1000 per full-time teacher for the 2013-2014 school year which is less than it was ten years ago. Teachers indicate the need for more time to collaborate with peers and to disseminate information. Many teachers note that as they implement what they have learned, they are consistently reflecting on successes or failures in the classroom to determine how best to deliver instruction to students. An ongoing and focused professional development program that is guided by the school community's core values and beliefs about teaching and learning enables all teachers' ability to align teaching and learning in support of sustaining all students in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. (school leadership team, teachers, self-study, school culture and leadership committee)

Hanover High School has revised its teacher evaluation and supervision processes many times over the past several years to implement research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning through an evaluation process agreed upon by the school board, superintendent, principal, and teachers. The current evaluation system incorporates formal as well as informal evaluations by leadership personnel and peer evaluators on a regular basis. The evaluation system has shifted from one that focused on teacher behavior to one that focuses on student learning, and from administrative reflection to teacher reflection. The work of educational innovators such as Robert Marzano, Grant Wiggins, and Tony Wagner served as a theoretical framework to guide district, school leadership, and teacher investigation and ultimate formulation of a revised evaluation instrument. The new evaluation has been phased in over the past two years with full implementation during the 2012-2013 school year. The principal's council, superintendent, and committee on instruction (COI) made recommendations and finalized the current plan which was adopted in 2011. Current evaluation practices include ten walk-through observations of between five and ten minutes by the principal, dean of students, and department coordinators. Five of these walk-throughs will be conducted each semester. In addition to that, teachers are required to submit three-to-five annual goals that may relate to building and district goals. By April, teachers must provide and submit a formative self-evaluation document based on personal goals set for the year including samples of student work to support their self-reflection and professional growth that is then evaluated by the principal. Each of these documents and examples of evidence will be evaluated by the principal with the intent to provide a more evident focus on student outcomes and to support effective growth and best practices across the disciplines and throughout the HHS school community. A research-based evaluation and supervision process along with peer observation that truly focuses on improving instruction enables the school community to achieve substantive gains in effective instructional practices that are aligned with and support student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, department leaders, school leadership team, central office leadership team)

The organization of time at Hanover High School partially supports research-based instruction but limits professional collaboration among teachers. Fifty minute periods are scheduled throughout the week as well as an activity period of thirty minutes each morning with the exception of Wednesday. Forty-five minute periods are scheduled on Wednesday with a fifteen minute break in the morning for both students and staff, and students are released fifty-five minutes earlier in the afternoon. However, the time allotted to the learning needs of students is always first and foremost in the minds of the staff at HHS. Current practices dedicate two hours every Wednesday for meetings. Whole staff and department meetings are held twice a month; Critical Friends groups meet once a month and each member brings a personal perspective to the cross-curricular group; and once a month there is time allotted for K through 12 alignment meetings, work on *Understanding by Design (UbD)*

planning and other professional development committee meetings as determined by the leadership team. There are five in-service days that are allotted for preparation at the beginning of the school year, and extended time is provided for district-wide school administrative union (SAU) initiative meetings and for curriculum-specific work. Students voice a positive opinion of the schedule and availability of options within the school and other venues outside of school to expand on their educational opportunities. For example, students are able to take classes at Dartmouth College if they have exceeded the level available at HHS; Hartford High School's Career and Technology Center at which they take advantage of course work in computer technology, cosmetology, and building trades where they build a house every two years. Students believe that they are fortunate to have the opportunity to take part in a greater number of courses during their four years of high school. Within the current schedule there is no formal regular time set aside for teachers to collaborate, but teachers make a concerted effort to meet informally for professional discussion whether it is before or after school hours, on weekends, or during the summer. Although teachers use the time currently allotted to them in the schedule to tend to matters of immediacy, the lack of time for professional collaboration among teachers may inhibit teachers' ability to meet for inter-departmental and cross-departmental collaboration to share instructional ideas to improve the learning needs of all students. (self-study, teachers, school support staff, school leadership team, panel presentation)

Student load and class size at Hanover High School enable many teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. While teachers in honor-level classes cite that the increase in class size has affected their ability to regularly differentiate classroom instruction, many class sizes have remained manageable even in light of the recent economic downturn. Appropriate adjustments are made to teachers' schedules in the fall and spring to accommodate changes to enrollment and to meet the needs of the individual learners. Particular attention is placed on keeping enrollments low in courses tailored to students identified as needing extra support such as Math Essentials A, Math Essentials B, Pre-algebra 1A and Pre-algebra 1B, U.S. History Survey, Modern America/Global Studies and the general sciences. Special education assistants are deployed throughout the high school to assist students. Upon parent request or teacher recommendation, the Dresden Plan is available in which a facilitator is appointed to meet with 504 students and/or those who do not qualify for special education services weekly to check on their progress in their courses. Students are strongly encouraged to visit department resource centers during their free periods to receive tutoring from teachers. An "x"-period is built into the schedule to provide additional help to students on an individual or group basis. The classroom instructional staff/student ratio is 1:14.7. The number of students each teacher carries varies from department to department, but the average teacher's student load is 89 students and the average class size is 17.5 students. Consequently, the appropriate class sizes ensure

opportunities for individualized attention, contribute to the atmosphere of student-centered learning, and strengthen the school's ability to deliver 21st century learning experiences. (self-study, student shadowing, facility tour, students, teachers, Endicott survey)

There has been ample opportunity and commitment from the entire school community for the principal to work with other building leaders to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values. Although the principal is in his first year, he is a veteran administrator who has quickly established a strong relationship with the district administration, dean of students, department coordinators, faculty, staff, and students to continue on with the student-centered vision of Hanover High School. This highly visible, approachable new leader has proven a quick study in the programs, policies, and procedures that the school has held important for many years. The principal meets bi-weekly with the committee on instruction (COI) and every week with the department coordinators to discuss curriculum, instruction, student services, teacher evaluation, and to examine and analyze standardized test data. The principal regularly sits in on the democratic governing body of the school called the Council. The principal works with the technology committee to ensure that the latest 21st century technology tools are available for the members of the Hanover High School learning community. The principal also oversees the faculty's goal setting through the department coordinators. The building principal emphasizes research-based instructional leadership rooted in collaboratively developed and deeply held beliefs, resulting in the wider school community's understanding of the commitment to high expectations for all students. (self-study, teachers, school leadership team, school board, central office leadership team)

Teachers, students, and parents are actively involved in meaningful and defined roles on decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. As one of a handful of democratic public high schools in the country, the shared decision-making process is evident in many aspects of the educational framework. The teachers and students have benefitted greatly from the deeply held beliefs promoted by the community to a stable, predictable, supportive, and creative learning environment. There is widespread support from the faculty for the many academic, athletic, artistic, and co-curricular activities. The teachers of Hanover High School practice decision-making roles through representation on the Council, as department coordinators, on hiring committees, at roundtables, course registration, and Common Ground. Students work in conjunction with their teachers to create over 50 clubs that range in focus from chess and model United Nations to alternative energy and dog rescuing. Students and their parents worked with and within the committee on instruction (COI) and Council in partnership with the administration and the school board to create the by-laws, co-curricular conduct code, and the March Intensive. Students and parents are included on hiring committees, which include the new principal and faculty

members. Roundtables provide an opportunity for staff, students, parents, and administration to discuss issues facing their school, and these issues are brought back to the school community to be discussed with and between staff and students during the Common Ground sessions at Hanover High School. Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making resulting in the promotion of responsibility and ownership. Shared leadership is cultivated, engaging all members of the school community in efforts to ensure the improvement of teaching and learning and promoting an incredibly positive school culture that is tied to their school values. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, parents, school board, school leadership team)

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase student engagement in learning. The teachers of Hanover High School display a great concern and understanding for their students when it comes to engagement in learning. Teachers are accessible to students to provide assistance before, during, and after school, allowing for student ownership for learning beyond the classroom. All teachers are available in their department resource centers to tutor students and during their prep time to offer as much help as is necessary. The March Incentive program's service learning opportunities are a direct result of the partnership between teachers and students. The four faculty members that serve on the Hanover High School Council are welcome to bring motions that center on the needs of students. Staff members are also encouraged to bring forth ideas during staff meetings. The teachers advise over 50 clubs at Hanover High School, including the academic competitions in which students have taken home top honors such as Quiz Bowl, math modeling, engineering, Model United Nations, and debate, as well as promote international trips by hosting international students in their homes; this clearly demonstrates their commitment to student learning outside the school. On the walls of some classrooms and hallways is evidence of student learning including assessments and presentations. The willingness on the part of the teachers to initiate new programs and to take leadership improves student engagement and is a relative strength of Hanover High School. As a result, the students of Hanover High School are engaged in learning intellectually, emotionally, and socially using their hearts, minds, and voices. (observations, self-study, teachers, parents, department leaders)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. During the 2011-2012 school year, three initiatives were brought forward from the committee on instruction resulting from a request from the Dresden and Hanover school boards on needs separate from the rest of the budget. Requests for expanding and upgrading the technology infrastructure and support personnel, March Intensives, and the need for a writing center emerged. The school board supported the technology and March Intensives initiatives but not the writing

center. However, the commitment to this collaborative process bodes well for the future planning of similar 21st century learning expectations. The agenda planning committee consists of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, and all SAU principals. The committee meets with the school boards quarterly on issues and themes that SAU schools are facing. The Dresden Educational Committee, which consists of the school board members, the superintendent, and the school principals, meets to address district goals. An annual half-day retreat includes Dresden board members, the superintendent, and all SAU principals. Consequently, this constructive and reflective collaboration among the school boards, central office administration, high school leadership, staff, parents, and students reinforces their ability to work in a cohesive manner to achieve Hanover High School's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, students, parents, school board, central office leadership team)

The school board and the superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. Although this is the principal's first year, he has demonstrated passion, kindness, strength, and concern for students, staff, and all parties concerned. The principal has a productive, collaborative, and appropriate relationship with the school board. The board seeks information from a variety of stakeholders (i.e., principal, committee on instruction, agenda planning committee) before deciding upon a policy. The board's primary functions are to manage the budget and to collaborate with the superintendent and the principals in the district regarding policies. However, the board allows the principal to define the specific rules and regulations for Hanover High School. A recent example of this is the restorative justice proposal that Council is formulating as a process by which students can appeal disciplinary measures. The principal also makes recommendations to the board regarding the hiring of faculty and staff based on recommendations from committees comprised of staff, parents, and students. Because the principal is given decision-making authority, he is able to provide a solid basis from which students can meet 21st century learning objectives. (self-study, panel presentation, parents, school board, department leaders, central office leadership team)

Commendations

1. A safe, positive support system for students, which fosters a sense of ownership, pride and high expectations
2. The many heterogeneous course offerings beyond those required
3. Relationships between staff and students, which ensure a connection with an adult who helps each student achieve success with 21st century learning expectations

4. The strong student-based leadership that has been actualized by Council provides meaningful, authentic student leadership opportunities
5. The administration's creation of a positive environment in a time of transition
6. The variety of academic support and co-curricular opportunities that support student involvement and success in and outside of the classroom
7. The institution of Common Ground to assist students throughout high school
8. The dedication of faculty members to support a broad array of co-curricular activities
9. The commitment of administrators and faculty members to revise and implement a research-based evaluation system
10. The instructional leadership of the principal
11. The authority and support of the principal by the superintendent and school board

Recommendations

1. Provide more time for teacher interaction following professional development to share skills and implement ideas
2. Provide increased formal time separate from individual preparation time for teachers to collaborate on topics involving teaching and learning both within their content areas and across content areas

6

School Resources for Learning

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.

Conclusions

Hanover High School has a variety of 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. Comprised of a cross-section of support areas including guidance, health services, school psychologist, student assistance counselor, and others, the pupil services committee meets weekly to discuss any potential at-risk students and to develop strategies of intervention. The student assistance team also meets weekly to discuss and make supportive plans for students with suspected or known substance abuse issues. Some of the additional intervention strategies utilized are routine guidance reviews of all students' academic progress, the Dresden Plan, Dresden Independent Study, and referrals to outside services such as family physicians, area counselors, psychologists, or nutritionists. The Dresden Plan works in collaboration with core teachers on a rotating basis to support identified or referred regular education students who may be struggling academically with personalized goal setting and academic mentoring. Additional academic interventions include supplemental tutoring services, supervised study/study skills courses, the academic support center, departmental resource centers, and referral for special education. Because of the successful implementation of timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified at-risk students, Hanover High School continues to have a very low drop-out rate, high levels of post-secondary enrollment for graduating students, and comprehensive supports for all students. (Endicott survey, students, parents, school support staff, self-study, teachers)

The school provides information to families, especially those most in need, about available student support services. Eighty-nine percent of students and 70 percent of parents agree that the school provides them with information about available support services. The school uses on-line resources to provide information to parents and students, including a PowerSchool portal that permits access to student schedules and grades, and websites maintained by the guidance department, library, and health center. Parents receive regular mailings from the guidance department regarding upcoming events and services, and they are comfortable accessing services as they need them. The guidance department also runs evening events, such as transition nights for upcoming freshmen and for students who are involved in college planning. The school nurse contacts families in need directly, by telephone, to assist them in accessing resources both within and outside of the school. Teachers are also able to focus energy on student mastery of the learning expectations because of their confidence in the supports available. Because of the timely and extensive provision of information, both students and parents feel confident in their ability to access resources and trust in their school, and a focus on student learning is maintained. (Endicott survey, websites, parent panel, documents, school support staff)

Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Parents, students, teachers, and support staff all access PowerSchool on a regular basis to assess student progress and the need for, or effectiveness of, the support services being provided. The guidance department uses programs such as Naviance and on-line personality and career surveys to assist students in transition planning. The library website provides links to on-line writing and reading tools, and training in their use is provided to all students through the library classroom. There is widespread use of *Google docs* in the school, both as a means for student collaboration and as a teaching tool, allowing teachers and staff to support students' writing. As noted previously, technology is widely used to communicate information and concerns to parents and students. For example, students and parents participating in the Dresden Plan have access to group email supporting collaboration and communication. Finally, the use of technology to support students receiving special education services and Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) within the classroom is extensive and varied, including assistive technologies, text-to-speech and speech-to-text programs, note-taking pens, and amplification systems for students who are hearing impaired. The school is installing a Read Write Gold scanning station and the technology department works with the special education department to implement supportive technologies into the school and classrooms. Special educators and staff from the library and technology departments have a commitment to continue to develop these resources and have a plan in place, supported by a consultant from the state department of education, to do so.

The use of technology at Hanover High School is both widespread and targeted. Programs and equipment provided through the library, or to all students, such as *Google docs*, allow teachers to better support all students' learning and to provide more access to instruction than might be available during the school day. Thus, students feel empowered and supported by their teachers. The school is working with a consultant from the state to develop its use of technological supports. Individualized use of technology supports learning for students with special needs in and out of the classroom and provides these students with an access to the curriculum with which they might otherwise struggle and has allowed some to increase their skill levels dramatically as documented through formal testing conducted by the special education team. (student support staff, observations, parents, teachers, self-study)

Hanover school counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental program and who meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling. The school counseling services engage with students in individual meetings and in group meetings, delivering collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. The school counseling services are in the process of developing additional ongoing relevant tools to solicit feedback from the school community to

improve services and to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. Five school counselors, the equivalent of 4.6 full-time (FTE) of counseling and .4 FTE of administration, split a student caseload by alphabet spanning grades nine through twelve. Important additional support staff includes a full-time student assistance counselor/substance abuse counselor, a full-time registrar, and a full-time school psychologist. The full-time student assistance counselor works with students using varied approaches to assist students in their personal/social needs, which supplements a lack of time that guidance counselors have to support students' personal or emotional needs due to a majority of the guidance counselors' time being dedicated to academic and college planning. The counseling department has a written developmental program that aligns with the American School Counseling Association Standards for high school guidance programs. Delivery of the program relies on group visits to grade 9 physical education classrooms for explanation and introduction to services by the guidance department and the student assistance counselor, visiting grade 10 health classes, and an individual meeting with students' guidance counselor once each year. The grade 10 health curriculum also provides explicit instructions on how students can seek help in crisis scenarios and cautions for students participating in risky behaviors. As students enter grades 11 and 12, they begin to meet with their guidance counselors more intensively for career and college counseling and 92 percent of graduates attend a four-year university.

Academic counseling is supplemented by collaboration with the Dresden Plan and student tutorial services. An active referral process to the student-assistance counselor, pupil services committee, the school psychologist, school nurse, and referral to outside services is the primary support for students with personal, social, or emotional needs. Guidance counselors work with students on a regular basis to develop supportive academic schedules for all students including options outside of the school in a nearby technical center. In addition to collaborating with Hanover support service personnel and intervention groups, the counseling department also collaborates with other school counselors in the district and the greater Upper Valley.

The school counseling services utilize survey results from parents that are regularly distributed by administration to improve services and to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. Additional assessment data includes the use of the annual Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) results, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation's (VSAC) annual senior survey, and Naviance college statistics. School counselors are also in the process of creating and distributing a Hanover student feedback survey to improve services.

Hanover counseling services benefit from strong support and collaboration with the student assistance counselor, school psychologist, health services and the Dresden Plan staff to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. Because school counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personal and support staff, a developmental program that meets students' needs and provides personal, academic, career, and college counseling is delivered. (self-study, parents, teachers, students, school board)

Hanover High School's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff, comprised of two certified nurses employed on a 60/40 basis and a third certified nurse/social worker who works as an educational assistant within the health center. The staff in the health center provides basic health services, such as screenings and immunizations, and attends to daily concerns and injuries presented. The health center staff conducts basic health screenings, such as height, weight, blood pressure, vision, and hearing, on all students in their sophomore year to assess students for possible concerns. If there are any concerns, parents and students are notified for referrals as necessary. Students are confident and comfortable accessing these services and the office records approximately 10,000 student visits each year. Through membership on the pupil services and student assistance teams, the health center staff is involved in the intervention and referral process for students of concern. As members of these teams, they are involved in a yearly review of the YRBS. The school nurses maintain relationships with a wide range of services in the outside community and refer students and families to those services as needed. Health center staff members are members of the school's suicide prevention team, a student-led group that educates the school community to recognize suicidal ideation and to intervene appropriately. The health center staff also provides information and education to the student body through the "Stall Smith Education" program, formally the HHS Herald, which disseminates information using newsletters and advertisements posted in school bathroom stalls. The health center's website is also extensive and accessible to students and their families. It adds to the overall sense of well-being and safety in the school environment. Students feel well supported and are provided with the information they need to care for themselves and their peers. As a result of the accessibility of the health center and its integration into the school community, students clearly identify it as a place to seek advice and assistance. (self-study, school support staff, school website, school resources for learning committee, students)

Hanover's library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staffs who are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum, and who provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum. The staff consists of a full-time library/media specialist; an audiovisual specialist who serves in a half-time position within the library and half-time within the technology

department; a half-time paraprofessional; and one secretary who serve half-time in the library and half-time in technology. The library/media services ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school, and the staff is responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning. The Hanover library/media services are particularly involved with the social studies, science, and English departments. Upon request, library personnel are available to provide direct research instruction in any course. Annually, the library provides expert research instruction in the U.S. History course, anatomy and physiology course, and the Civitas course. There is also space for classes to meet in the library for ease of access to additional learning resources.

The library/media services provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum. The media supervisor regularly makes available written guidelines for Modern Language Association (MLA) citation. The services also include online tutorials, digital access to online research tools including but not limited to Ebscohost, LibGuides, Noodletools, Paper-Cut, and additional online databases. There are a number of digital tools available in the library to support learning including audiobooks, digital readers, and text to speech software programming. The library also routinely orders additional nonfiction and fiction books for students to access as necessary. The library has six computer carts that can be checked out, document cameras, overhead projectors, and other video equipment for classroom use.

The library/media service facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school. The library/media center keeps routine hours of 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursdays, and is open until 3:30 p.m. on Fridays. During exam week the library is sometimes open additional hours. The library/media specialist is responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning. The library/media center provides a wide array of topical reading and research resources to meet the students' interests and educational needs. Students may use inter-library loan to request any materials that the library may not have. The library area is set up to meet the varied needs of students by having different zones, including an intra-library classroom, quiet study area, individual study areas, sofas and soft chairs for reading, and groups of tables for group study.

The library/media specialist utilizes some ongoing assessments and is in the process of developing additional surveys for the school community to provide feedback on how to improve library/media services. Because the library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices of the school and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff, students' needs are well met through a range of materials, technologies, quality use of space, and instructional support which enables students

as they strive to meet the 21st century learning expectations. (Endicott survey, students, teachers, facility tour, self-study)

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members. The school staff includes certified English as a second language (ESL) teacher, who also serves as the English language learners (ELL) Coordinator, a 504 coordinator, a district-wide special education director, and a high school coordinator of special education. In addition, the department is comprised of seven special educators or learning specialists, a .8 FTE speech and language pathologist, a .5 FTE adaptive physical education instructor, 15 educational assistants, and a full-time school psychologist. Each learning specialist manages a caseload of 13 to 16 students for whom they provide direct instruction, academic support, coordination of services, individual education program (IEP) development, and progress monitoring and reporting. Outside consultants are also part of the special education team, including a behavior consultant, occupational therapist, and technology consultant. The administration supports the special education team, as evidenced by the recent hiring of a full-time special education director, a position that was formerly a combined special education director and curriculum coordinator. Staff at all levels universally report that the special education team collaborates with them in order to achieve student success within the regular education classroom. Students who receive accommodations through special education are scheduled to attend six regular education classes and one period of a supported special education class, Learning Strategies. These students have access to the same departmental learning labs as all students at Hanover. Special educators are available to the general education teachers on a consult basis, and selected classes are co-taught on the basis of need. The speech pathologist is embedded into selected regular education classes as are educational assistants. The special education team has recently added a position to oversee student testing and to support the learning specialists' focus on their other responsibilities. Data gathering and analysis are embedded throughout the special education process and are adequately addressed in the programs and services provided. Because of the high levels of support, both for identified students and for the adults who work with them on a daily basis, there is a structure that enables all students to succeed. (Endicott survey, self-study, teachers, school leadership team, students)

Commendations

1. The timely and directive intervention for any and all students, especially those at-risk, with unique and individualized programming, which widely is supported by the teachers, administration, community and student body
2. The quality of the websites and information made available by individual departments

3. The use of technology to support students receiving service through special education and 504 plans allowing a high degree of access and success in the regular education curriculum
4. The plan to increase the use of assistive technologies to support students receiving services through special education and 504 plans within the regular education classroom
5. The outreach efforts made by the health center staff to provide education and assistance to the school community, students, and families
6. The integration of library/media services into the curriculum with particular attention to provision of on-line tools, research, and writing supports

Recommendations

1. Devise a method to provide a holistic picture to the students, families, and staff of the available support services and the appropriate means of accessing them
2. Develop capacity within the guidance office to better meet the expressed needs for personal, social, and emotional support to avoid over-reliance on auxiliary support services for student needs outside of academic and college planning support
3. Increase solicitation of feedback by school counseling services, health services, library/media services and special education services from the school community, including students, families, and staff, to improve services and to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations



Community Resources for Learning

The achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations requires active community, governing board, and parent 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 school develops, plans, and funds programs:
 - to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant
 - to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment
 - to keep the school clean on a daily basis.
3. 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.
4. Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.
5. The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services.
6. 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.
7. All professional staff actively engages parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less Connect-Ed with the school.
8. The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

Conclusions

The community and district provide adequate funding for a wide range of school programs and services, as well as sufficient professional and support staff for current needs. In addition to the guidance department, the district funds the Dresden Plan that provides support for any student in need of added academic monitoring through regularly scheduled guided opportunities during which students are taught study skills, problem-solving, and self-advocacy skills. In addition, a number of community funding sources are available to enhance the school's programs include The Friends of Hanover-Norwich Schools, the Zantop Fund for Foreign Language, the Byrne Foundation which has generously supported initiatives such as March Intensive, and the Silver Lining Fund which provides assistance for disadvantaged students. The Dresden Plan also provides assistance to upper class students pursuing independent study opportunities. These unique services provide valuable support in helping all students realize their academic potential. Diverse fine arts, music, and practical arts electives are among the extensive electives offered. The physical education staff instructs a student acclaimed ninth grade program which helps to introduce the core values of HHS through team-building experiences that build trusting relationships within the community of incoming students. The program challenges students' physical and mental potential while teaching them to respect their limitations as they train to safely navigate a world-class ropes course. A combination of budget and private funding sources provide extraordinary co-curricular and athletic opportunities for students. Current funding for equipment, instructional supplies and materials across the programs is impressive.

District-wide and school-wide curriculum revision initiatives are a work in progress although adequate funding is budgeted by the district. Additionally, the district reimburses the cost of professional development at the recently decreased rate of \$1000 per teacher for a variety of endeavors that correlate to a teacher's individual annual goals. Additionally, teachers may apply for mini-grants from a variety of private funds as seed money to fund new initiatives. These community and district funds are crucial to facilitate the planning and implementation of initiatives that will support the school's identified 21st century teaching and learning expectations.

The district's funding reflects recent initiatives to improve technology support. A new technology support specialist was hired in the high school and the district added a district-wide technology administrator in 2012 - 2013 school year. This staff is currently keeping pace with the school's technology needs. New technology initiatives are budgeted for the 2013 - 2014 year for iPads and wireless infrastructure updates that may include additional bandwidth network capacity to ensure implementation of technology throughout the curriculum.

Because the community and district resources have been generously and consistently invested in Hanover High School, it is well equipped and staffed with talented and committed individuals who foster a holistic educational experience in keeping with their core values and beliefs. Consistent funding to maintain the cadre of qualified committed professionals and support staff is of vital importance to safeguard the high caliber programs and services that support the highly effective education practices at Hanover. (facility tour, self-study, teachers, students, parents)

The school develops, plans and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. The district director of facilities develops plans and manages the maintenance of the building. The capital improvement plan is in place and identifies needed funding for repairs and mechanical systems improvements projected within a five-year time frame. The school was totally and carefully renovated in 2007 to provide for effective daily maintenance that provides beautiful spaces that are conducive to learning. Students, staff, and parents agree that highly dedicated custodial staff maintains Hanover High School in nearly impeccable condition. Staff can now access an online system to report maintenance needs. Work orders are then delegated to the appropriate person. An annual Indoor Environment Report is now submitted to the state in accordance with “Tolls for School” checklists and reviews. In an effort to be as “green” as possible while still using a quality cleaning and germ killing agent, the cleaning supplies used are either certified green or are hydrogen peroxide-based. All products are tracked with Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) that are kept on file in the custodial lunchroom as well as in the SAU facilities office, which is located in the high school. The ropes course undergoes an annual safety inspection, records of which are kept on file in the athletic director’s office. The clean and comfortable learning environment afforded to the students of Hanover High School assists the district in providing its students with the best chance possible for achieving its 21st century learning expectations and encourages students to reciprocate the commendable efforts of the nighttime custodial staff by taking personal responsibility in helping to maintain the pristine learning environment during the day when only one custodian is on duty. (facility tour, self-study, Endicott survey)

Currently, there are no long-range plans that address programs and services. The school board funded two initiatives that included March Intensive program and to improve the computer network infrastructure. Neither of these initiatives have long-term impact on programs; they only improved current programs. Although the building is currently generally well suited to meet the learning needs, there are reported issues that need to be addressed. The cooling systems present a problem notable on the third floor where temperatures were

reported to be above 80 degrees on warm days. This situation causes students to be relocated when high temperatures interfere with learning. New initiatives are considered on an annual basis such as the current technology initiative being considered for the 2013 - 2014 year. Every year projected enrollments are looked at and discussed. In the fall of 2011 the new superintendent hired a new consultant to generate projected enrollments. The projected long-term enrollments were lower than that seen in previous years and for the 2012 - 2013 school year; however, enrollment actually increased. This has resulted in some skepticism within the school community of the reliability of future projects. If this skepticism proves valid it could negatively affect the school's ability to ensure adequate funding to continue current programs or to start new initiatives. As the community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services; enrollment changes and staffing needs; facility needs; technology; and capital improvements, its short and long-range plans will be completed which will enable students to meet their learning expectations. (self-study, central leadership team, school leadership team, teachers, parents)

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. The school board has a firmly established process for annual budget development. Hanover High School receives budget guidelines from the school board and the superintendent. These guidelines are then shared with the committee on instruction (COI) who in turn present the guidelines to the school's department leaders. Each school department meets to discuss the coming year's budget, sets priorities, and if necessary, requests additional funding or line item changes. After departmental agreement, the principal, along with the department chairs, review the budget. Any request made for increased funding or moving of expenditures receives consideration from the principal at this time. The principal may make his own changes to line items. If this occurs, the document is returned to departments for review. Once each department has agreed to its spending plan with building administration, the plan is submitted to COI. This committee, comprised of a cross section of the school community, meets for an entire day in October to review and discuss the school's proposed funding plan for the following school year. Adjustments may be made to department budgets. During the entire budget process, the building's principal takes advantage of a recent change in community policy and speaks to civic and government entities about the school's mission and the level of funding needed to meet that mission. This practice is in its infancy, and the school would greatly benefit from increasing this community outreach. Once the school year starts, budgets are reviewed and expenditures tracked periodically throughout the year by department leaders and administrative personnel in the school's main office to ensure all allocated funds are encumbered and used as intended for teaching and learning. In addition, the district sets aside contingency funds to adequately respond to unforeseen emergency expenditures. For example, this year a portion of these funds are being used to enhance security as part of the nation's response to the tragedy in

Newtown, Connecticut. As a result of the community's established budget process, the high school's level of funding ensures it has adequate resources to support student learning. (self-study, school board, department leaders, teachers, school leadership team, director of facilities)

There is adequate and appropriate space, with a few minor exceptions, to ensure full implementation of the school's mission statement and learning expectations. Hanover High School underwent a \$42 million dollar school construction project between 2004 and 2007 that included expanding into adjoining space that was previously occupied by the middle school, a total renovation of both spaces, and the addition of a new gymnasium. The resulting structure is well equipped to deliver the school's 21st century curriculum. The school has seven well-equipped science classrooms and labs. In addition, there is ample storage space for equipment and securing hazardous chemicals. The school's library/media center is well designed to support the school's democratic principles. Spaces are large and diverse enough to accommodate individual students and classes. There are ample resources, both print and electronic, to support Hanover High School's 21st century curriculum as well as to promote independent research and inquiry. The cafeteria has a large food preparation area that allows food service to supply an extensive menu and cater to special dietary needs of individual students. The school renovations reflect the Hanover's "minds, hearts, and voices" mission. Nowhere is this more evident than in the design of the building's fine arts and practical arts spaces. There are multiple rooms for drawing, drafting, design, pottery, sculpture, woodworking, photography, drama, band, chorus, and videography. These spaces are impressive in size, design, and equipment. The Hanover community is justifiably proud of these spaces and programs. Core academic classrooms are bright, clean, and have enough space to accommodate multiple seating arrangements and kinesthetic activities. Offices are open and inviting and most have waiting areas with comfortable seating and décor. Both the nurse and guidance offices have designated areas that ensure privacy for students when needed. The outside areas that surround the school are well maintained by a contracted service. Snow removal is budgeted and handled by the town of Hanover. The school's athletic fields and ropes course were constructed during the renovation project and serve to enrich the learning environment at Hanover High School. Over the course of three years, the educational complex underwent an extensive renovation to address space, usability, and safety issues. Unfortunately due to budget constraints, some modifications to the facility were implemented. The entrance to the building, administrative offices, design and modification to the auditorium were significantly downsized, as well as no additional space for the Council to meet. The most mentioned inadequacy of the school building is its ventilation system. Lack of air conditioning in some classrooms infringes on the quality of teaching and learning during periods of warm temperatures. Additionally, the absence of a building cooling system severely limits the school and community use of this outstanding space during the summer months. The renovated facility does, however, include ventilation infrastructure to accommodate air

conditioning, which drastically reduces the required investment if the community were to approve funding at a future date for a cooling system. While, in general, the site supports the effective delivery of most programs, the lack of a dependable heating and ventilation system throughout parts of the building does negatively impact the staff's ability to deliver high quality instruction and services. (student handbook, teachers, students, panel discussion, school leadership team, school board, self-study)

Hanover High School is in compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations. There is appropriate documentation on file with the district's director of facilities located in the SAU facilities office. Fire, safety, and health inspections are done annually and reports are filed with the state of New Hampshire. All areas of the building are handicap accessible. There are two elevators strategically placed so there is equal distance between the each elevator and from each end of the building to an elevator. The staff unanimously agrees the school is kept clean. Staff and students laud the efforts, diligence, and dedication of the custodial staff. In addition, the school's democratic culture has instilled a sense of responsibility and community among students who help maintain the positive appearance of the building by assuming responsibility of maintaining and keeping clean the inside of the school and returning materials to their storage places. The recent renovations left a few adjoining areas on different levels of grade, however, ramps now connect these areas and levels of grade meet or exceed state requirements. Regular evaluation and inspection of the building ensure the safety of the learning environment for students and staff. (self-study, teachers, students, parents, facility tour, Material Safety Data Sheets)

The staff uses a variety of methods to engage families in their student's education throughout all four years of high school. Hanover High School hosts an open house in the fall and again in the spring to give families an opportunity to meet their child's teachers and to learn about course expectations. The PowerSchool portal provides parents an opportunity to monitor their student's progress in all courses throughout the school year. Teachers are required to post grades on the portal within two weeks of an assessment and on many occasions grades are uploaded sooner. Also, teachers and parents contact one another directly. Many staff members provide multiple ways for families to contact them including email and telephone. When necessary, teacher and support staff avail themselves of face-to-face meetings. A growing number of staff members maintain websites with assignments and education links for students and their families to view. The principal publishes a weekly letter, posted on the Hanover website and emailed to parents, informing families of upcoming events and important happenings at the school. When necessary, the district's *Alert Now* phone and email system is used for urgent announcements. Additionally, the high school hosts a grade eight parents' night to review the multitude of academic and enrichment opportunities available to students entering Hanover at the start of the next school year. This event is

followed by a grade 9 orientation night during which a panel of grade 10 and 11 students presents additional information, answer questions, and seek to alleviate anxieties of incoming freshmen. Guidance hosts several parent nights regarding the college process for juniors and their families. Additionally, guidance invites grade 10 students and their parents for a full one-period meeting to review course progress, to plan the remaining two years of high school, to discuss standardized testing, and to familiarize families with the Naviance program, an online tool for college and career planning. The school also reaches out to parents to encourage their participation in school events. Parents judge events, speak to classes, and tutor. With a significant number of students participating in co-curricular activities, parents have a great number of opportunities to connect with the school. Hanover has numerous music recitals, drama productions, art shows, and sporting events that bring parents to the school and unite the community. These activities are promoted through emails and the school website. Parents are active members of Council, COI, and various other committees. The Dresden Plan, a supplemental tutorial program, and 504 programs provide support to students across a wide range of academic proficiencies and are particularly effective in engaging families that may be less connected with the school. A supplemental tutorial program serves ten students at a time and serves to increase each family's level of involvement with the school. As a result of all professional staff's active engagement of parents and families as partners in each student's education, and outreach specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school, the school is effective in ensuring students are safe and successful in their learning outcomes. (self-study, parents, panel presentation, school leadership team, school board)

The Hanover School has developed productive partnerships with parents, community, businesses, and higher education to support student learning. The school has partnerships with Dartmouth College, New Hampshire Community College, and the Community College of Vermont where students, with authorization from their guidance counselor and after meeting appropriate entrance requirements, may take courses for college credit. In addition, the high school's relationship with Hartford High School's Area Career and Technology Center allows students to take courses not offered at Hanover and to receive additional high school credits. The school partners with the non-profit Youth-In-Action (YIA) which connects Hanover High School students with volunteer opportunities within the community. A new program for special education called Project Search matches students with internship/job experience at various community locations. Operation Day's Work connects student with members of the community to do work at people's homes and businesses to raise money for charity. At Christmas time, Common Ground groups volunteer to donate gifts to children as part of Partners in Health. The school fosters productive relationships with parents through the Dresden Plan, the school's website which is updated frequently, the principal's weekly letter, the Power School portal, and a culture that encourages frequent communication with the school's support staff and teachers. Additionally, the school's annual March Intensive

encourages partnerships with parents, local business and the community. This program allows students to choose a subject that appeals to them and study it in-depth for an entire week. Parents are invited to teach a March Intensive course in areas in which they have a passion. The Norwich police, the Town of Hanover, Cover Home Repair, yoga studios, dance studios, karate studios, local farms, and local community access television, among others, have worked with staff members to facilitate the March Intensive. Given the school's development of productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning, students are allowed and encouraged to reach beyond the walls of their school and to develop 21st century learning outcomes. (teachers, students, parents, school leadership team, student handbook, self-study)

Commendations

1. The budget process that gives a voice to many stakeholders within the school and in the community
2. The dedication of funding sources to enhance the school's programs by The Friends of Hanover-Norwich Schools, the Zantop Fund for Foreign Language, the Byrne Foundation, and the Silver Lining Fund
3. The school's fine arts and practical arts learning rooms that provide unique learning opportunities that clearly demonstrate the school's commitment to its mission statement
4. The school's custodial staff's dedication and commitment as valued members of the school community
5. The students who take responsibility and pride in the appearance of their school
6. The commitment of staff to communicate and inform families of student progress, school programs and co-curricular events
7. The school's partnerships with institutions of higher learning and other partnerships as well
8. The extensive multi-million dollar renovation to the educational complex

Recommendations

1. Resolve all climate control issues in the school
2. Identify and implement long-range goals for facility improvement
3. Revisit long-range enrollment projections

4. Articulate long range plans for student-centered programs and services
5. Increase bandwidth network capacity to ensure implementation of technology throughout the curriculum

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

This comprehensive evaluation report reflects the findings of the school's self-study and those of the visiting committee. 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 Hanover High School. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting committee 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 Committee requires that the evaluation report be made public in accordance with the Committee's Policy on Distribution, Use and Scope of the Visiting Committee Report.

A school's initial/continued accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing valid recommendations of the visiting committee and others identified by the Committee 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 Committee requires that the principal of Hanover High School 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 Committee 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 committee recommendations by the time the Five-Year Progress Report is submitted. The Committee 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 Committee has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Committee within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts on the school's adherence to the Committee'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 Committee's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 75. 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 Committee office has current statistical data on the school.

The Committee 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 Committee'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 Committee staff following the on-site visit.

Finally, the visiting committee would be remiss if it did not express its appreciation for the hospitality, openness, and candid responses extended to committee members by the school board, central office and school leadership teams, faculty and staff members, parents, and students. The members of the Hanover High School community made us feel welcome.

**Hanover High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
April 21-24, 2013**

Visiting Committee

<p>Stephen E. Mitchell Retired Principal Chepachet, RI 02814</p>	<p>Jennifer Frederick Newport School District Newport, NH 03773</p>
<p>Kathleen Montagano NEASC/CPS Burlington, MA 01803</p>	<p>Gina Hammett Hinsdale Middle/High School Hinsdale, NH 03451</p>
<p>John D. Allen Kennett High School North Conway, NH 03860</p>	<p>Robin L'Etoile Hinsdale Middle/High School Hinsdale, NH 03451</p>
<p>Dana Babcock Quaboag Regional Middle/High School Warren, MA 01083</p>	<p>Michael McRaith Enosburg Falls High School Enosburg Falls, VT 05450</p>
<p>Josephine Carter Nashoba Regional High School Bolton, MA 01740</p>	<p>Colleen Mulligan Winnisquam Regional High School Tilton, NH 03276</p>
<p>Daniel Clary Belmont High School Belmont, NH 03220</p>	<p>Hebert Perez Burlington High School Burlington, VT 05408</p>
<p>Lori Dow-Moore South Burlington High School South Burlington, VT 05403</p>	<p>Timothy Sullivan Bulkeley High School Hartford, CT 06114</p>
<p>Sara Feshazion Bristol Eastern High School Bristol, CT 06010</p>	<p>Beth Tippet Killingly High School Dayville, CT 06241</p>

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Committee on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

Principals of member schools must report to the Committee 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 Committee'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

Hanover High School

Commendations

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

1. The time-honored mission statement that is embedded in the culture of the school
2. The democratic principles that are embodied in the Hanover High School Council
3. The personalized instruction that translates into notably high academic achievement for a majority of HHS students
4. The welcoming and supportive school culture that fosters respect for student-to-student relationships and student-to-teacher relationships
5. The school's embrace of hearts, minds, and voices
6. The integration of the core values into the curriculum (Civitas Class)

Curriculum

1. The higher order thinking, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school , the informed and ethical use of technology, and the diversity of inquiry and problem-solving opportunities which enables students to achieve the school's current academic expectations
2. The higher order thinking and authentic learning opportunities both inside the classroom and within the community that promote current civic and social expectations
3. The informal time during which teachers engage in curriculum development without compensation
4. The provision of personnel and financial resources for curriculum development
5. The supplies, school facilities, and the resources of the library/ media center
6. The adoption of the *Rubicon Atlas* curriculum mapping software

Instruction

1. The teaching practices which are clearly reflective of the school's mission statement
2. The use of "x"-periods as built-in time to address individual learning needs
3. The quality of differentiated learning activities in many classes
4. The support an options available to teachers to maintain expertise in their content area and in their content-specific instructional practices
5. The introduction of the peer evaluation protocol in which teachers observe other teachers within their department in order to improve, collaborate and reflect on their own teaching
6. The wide variety of instructional uses for technology
7. The use of a writing portfolio for students in English classes
8. The emphasis placed on inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking in classes
9. The March Intensive and independent study options which provide students with formal opportunities to be engaged as active and self-guided learners
10. The high level of expertise of teachers and their desire to be authentic lifelong learners
11. The pervasive use of student feedback to teachers to assist them in improving instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

1. The wide and varied use of multiple and creative assessment strategies
2. The abundance and variety of content-specific rubrics
3. The school-wide, formalized commitment to specific, timely and corrective feedback on student work
4. The consistent department-wide use of common assessments and rubrics
5. The creative efforts to collaborate among colleagues despite the lack of formal time to do so

6. The use of “x”-periods to provide individualized remediation/tutoring and enrichment based on assessment results

School Culture and Leadership

1. A safe, positive support system for students, which fosters a sense of ownership, pride and high expectations
2. The many heterogeneous course offerings beyond those required
3. Relationships between staff and students, which ensure a connection with an adult who helps each student achieve success with 21st century learning expectations
4. The strong student-based leadership that has been actualized by Council provides meaningful, authentic student leadership opportunities
5. The administration’s creation of a positive environment in a time of transition
6. The variety of academic support and co-curricular opportunities that support student involvement and success in and outside of the classroom
7. The institution of Common Ground to assist students throughout high school
8. The dedication of faculty members to support a broad array of co-curricular activities
9. The commitment of administrators and faculty members to revise and implement a research-based evaluation system
10. The instructional leadership of the principal
11. The authority and support of the principal by the superintendent and school board

School Resources for Learning

1. The timely and directive intervention for any and all students, especially those at-risk, with unique and individualized programming, which widely is supported by the teachers, administration, community and student body
2. The quality of the websites and information made available by individual departments
3. The use of technology to support students receiving service through special education and 504 plans allowing a high degree of access and success in the regular education curriculum

4. The plan to increase the use of assistive technologies to support students receiving services through special education and 504 plans within the regular education classroom
5. The outreach efforts made by the health center staff to provide education and assistance to the school community, students, and families
6. The integration of library/media services into the curriculum with particular attention to provision of on-line tools, research, and writing supports

Community Resources for Learning

1. The budget process that gives a voice to many stakeholders within the school and in the community
2. The dedication of funding sources to enhance the school's programs by The Friends of Hanover-Norwich Schools, the Zantop Fund for Foreign Language, the Byrne Foundation, and the Silver Lining Fund
3. The school's fine arts and practical arts learning rooms that provide unique learning opportunities that clearly demonstrate the school's commitment to its mission statement
4. The school's custodial staff's dedication and commitment as valued members of the school community
5. The students who take responsibility and pride in the appearance of their school
6. The commitment of staff to communicate and inform families of student progress, school programs and co-curricular events
7. The school's partnerships with institutions of higher learning and other partnerships as well
8. The extensive multi-million dollar renovation to the educational complex

Recommendations

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

1. Ensure that a wide variety of current best practice research is used to inform revisions of the school's 21st century skills and learning expectations
2. Review and revise the school-wide analytic rubrics for each academic, civic, and social expectation to ensure that the targeted level of successful achievement fully challenges and supports all students to reach their highest academic potential

3. Create a process and timeline for implementation of 21st century school-wide academic, social, and civic learning expectations and rubrics
4. Identify and integrate the school-wide learning expectation and 21st century skills to create a holistic and fair learning environment for everyone
5. Develop and implement a practice by which the school's core values and beliefs about teaching and learning as well as the 21st century learning expectations are regularly reviewed and revised by all stakeholders including students

Curriculum

1. Create a timeline for teachers to implement the *Rubicon Atlas* system
2. Redesign and implement a standard curriculum format for all courses that includes units of study (with essential questions, knowledge and skills), instructional strategies, assessment practices (including the use of school-wide and course-specific rubrics) and connections to the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Expand common planning time to include all curricular areas
4. Use a common data collection protocol to analyze common benchmark assessments to inform, monitor, and adjust the curriculum
5. Ensure improved curriculum articulation among departments within the middle school
6. Provide leadership for the regular review, evaluation, and revision of curriculum

Instruction

1. Provide time for teachers to collaborate in the development of cross-disciplinary units, themes, topics, and essential questions that allow students to understand and pursue concepts in depth
2. Maximize the use of common planning time as a vehicle for examining student work and student achievement data to improve instruction
3. Collaboratively develop and individually implement formative assessments on a frequent basis to adjust instruction on a timely basis
4. Design and implement a plan to ensure that peer observations among teachers are consistently implemented and adhered to within all departments

5. Devise and implement a process for parents to give feedback to teachers regarding instructional practice that impacts student learning
6. Develop and implement additional time both within and across departments for collaborative discussion specifically regarding instructional practices

Assessment of and for Student Learning

1. Develop and implement a clear protocol for the use of school-wide rubrics to assess student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. Communicate with parents and the community to what degree students, individually and as a whole school, are meeting all of the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Align course-specific rubrics with the 21st century learning expectations and school-wide rubrics
4. Ensure course objectives reflect 21st century learning expectations
5. Schedule time for teachers to collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, and analytic rubrics to improve instruction in all classes
6. Develop and implement a process to aggregate student performance data and to formally discuss inequities in student learning as well as identifying students who need additional support to drive improvements to instruction and curriculum
7. Provide formal opportunities for teachers to collaborate to develop common assessments based on course-specific outcomes

School Culture and Leadership

1. Provide more time for teacher interaction following professional development to share skills and implement ideas
2. Provide increased formal time separate from individual preparation time for teachers to collaborate on topics involving teaching and learning both within their content areas and across content areas

School Resources for Learning

1. Devise a method to provide a holistic picture to the students, families, and staff of the available support services and the appropriate means of accessing them
2. Develop capacity within the guidance office to better meet the expressed needs for personal, social, and emotional support to avoid over-reliance on auxiliary support services for student needs outside of academic and college planning support
3. Increase solicitation of feedback by school counseling services, health services, library/media services and special education services from the school community, including students, families, and staff, to improve services and to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations

Community Resources for Learning

1. Resolve all climate control issues in the school
2. Identify and implement long-range goals for facility improvement
3. Revisit long-range enrollment projections
4. Articulate long range plans for student-centered programs and services
5. Increase bandwidth network capacity to ensure implementation of technology throughout the curriculum