

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

West Springfield High School

West Springfield, MA

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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 West Springfield 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 West Springfield 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 Commission on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), and the Commission 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 show continued progress addressing identified needs.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At West Springfield High School, a committee of seven members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included students and parents.

The self-study of West Springfield High School extended over a period of 18 school months from September 2012 to June 2014. The visiting committee was pleased to note that various members of the school community joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

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, West Springfield 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 16 evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the West Springfield High School. The Committee members spent four days in West Springfield, 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 team was comprised of evaluators representing public schools as classroom teachers, building and central office administrators from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of West Springfield High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 45 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day
- a total of 32 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 32 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 West Springfield High School.

West Springfield High School School and Community Profile

West Springfield High School is located in the city of West Springfield, Massachusetts, in the Pioneer Valley region of the Connecticut River Valley. West Springfield, bordered by Holyoke on the north, Agawam on the south, Westfield on the west, and Chicopee and Springfield on the east, is known as the home of The Big E, the sixth largest agricultural fair in the United States. Its land use is characterized by a combination of suburban and urban neighborhoods with some farms and light manufacturing plants, each with a small work force. The Riverdale Street corridor is a major regional shopping center, with a number of retail stores, restaurants, and car dealerships.

The 2010 census records a West Springfield city population of 28,391. It is part of the larger Springfield, Massachusetts, Metropolitan Statistical Area, with a median 2007-11 household income of \$54,251, placing it below the state average of \$65,981. The census reports also that in the 2007-11 period, 11.3% of the population lived below the poverty level, placing it slightly above the state average of 10.7%.

West Springfield High School includes grades 9-12, with a total enrollment, as of September of 2013, of 1,175 students, divided between 595 males and 580 females. The ethnic, racial, and cultural composition includes 72.2% White; 15.6% Hispanic; 5.5% Asian; 3.7% African-American; 2.5% Multi-Race/Non-Hispanic; 0.3% Native American; 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

West Springfield High School receives students from one middle school, Cowing Alternative School, and Saint Thomas School, a parochial school, located in West Springfield. West Springfield School District's average per-pupil expenditure for 2012-2013 was \$12,618, compared to the state average of \$13,361. Sources of revenue include 53% local, 40% state, with the remainder from federal and other sources. Local property taxes for school expenditures are earmarked at 32.6%.

Students attend school for 180 days, for a minimum of 1080 hours. Teachers work 185 days. The average daily student attendance is 95% and the average attendance rate among teachers is 98%. There are 89.4 teachers in West Springfield High School, which creates a 13.5:1 student/teacher ratio; and 98.8% of teachers are licensed in their teaching assignments. Additionally, 96% of the core academic classes are taught by teachers designated Highly Qualified. The ninth grade Terrier House is a professional learning community staffed with an assistant principal, sixteen teachers, an adjustment counselor, and a guidance counselor. The Alternative School runs with its own dedicated staff including director, adjustment counselor, four core content teachers, and four paraprofessionals. The Alternative School is housed within the same building.

West Springfield High School benefits from collaboration with local business organizations such as the Rotary Club and the Chamber of Commerce, which provide scholarships, supports clubs, and student mentoring. West Springfield also has an established business-to-education team, the West Springfield Partnership for Education, composed of teachers, administrators, and community business leaders. The Partnership provides grant opportunities for teachers, the mini-grants are awarded to educators who propose to provide creative and innovative programs that enrich the educational experience.

All students at West Springfield High School must earn 110 credits to graduate. Members of the classes of 2015 and 2016 need 92.5 credits in required courses. Members of the classes of 2017 and

beyond need 102.5 credits in required courses, as the high school moves toward MassCore Requirements. As a consequence of recent changes in graduation requirements, 100% of the 2013 graduating class earned credits beyond the designated graduation

Approximately 25% of students attending high school are provided IEP and Section 504 services in all core academic areas, and 4.7% of students are designated as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP). However, 21.9% of the entire student population has a primary language other than English. Honors and Advanced Placement students constitute 35% of the population, with 1% of students enrolled in local college offerings under the Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program (CDEP).

West Springfield High School 2013 SAT mean scores, with 51% of students tested, are Critical Reading, 477; Mathematics, 490; and Writing, 465. The 2013 SAT Massachusetts state averages are Critical Reading, 506; Mathematics, 523; and Writing, 500. The 2013 Spring MCAS showed students the majority of students scoring Proficient to Advanced: ELA, 87%; Math, 75%; and Science/Technology/Engineering, 55%.

Among the graduating class of 2013, 89% of students continued their education: 37% attended four-year colleges or universities; 49% attended two-year colleges; 3% attended vocational, trade, preparatory schools, while another 3% joined the military.

A school improvement plan has been developed by administration and approved by the High School Council, and was last updated and implemented for the 2013-2014 academic year. The plan has four primary conditions (among seven other conditions) for school effectiveness: (1) effective school leadership; (2) aligned curriculum; (3) effective instruction; and (4) family-school engagement. At the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, the needs of the faculty, staff, and students in the areas of curriculum and instruction will be assessed (leadership). Secondly, faculty will also implement an aligned curriculum and improve their instructional practices to result in improved results in student learning as demonstrated by performance on common assessments, and standardized tests (aligned curriculum). Thirdly, faculty will improve their instructional practices to improve results in student learning as demonstrated by performance on common assessments and standardized tests (instruction). Fourth, the entire community, especially families of WSHS students, will be knowledgeable of all school-related activities and initiatives (family-school engagement).

West Springfield High School has been designated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as a Level 3 school on the Framework for Accountability and Assistance Level placement scale. Our level three status is due to our scores being among the lowest-performing 20% based on quantitative indicators. In response, the high school has implemented a series of initiatives to reverse this designation. The school has created a target goal for student support and intervention by improving daily attendance by 10%, and thereby increasing the likelihood of higher academic success rates.

To promote effective instruction, the school has increased enrollments in upper level courses, and with the grant support of the Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative, we have significantly increased enrollments in Advanced Placement classes. To promote our students' emotional, social, and health needs, the school has implemented a Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS); Reconnecting Youth (RY), a specialized curricular offering that addresses the emotional needs of students in crisis; and X-Block, which connects each student with at least one adult in the school. Currently 21 students, who are on an IEP for a social/emotional disability, are placed in our Alternative School where they can

receive the support they need toward the goal of earning a high school diploma. The Alternative School's capacity is 30 students. West Springfield High School also offers Credit Recovery/Natural Connections, for students who wish to earn lost graduation credits.

The retention rate since has improved from 3.1% (2010-2011) to 2.5% (2011-2012). The out-of-school suspension rate has improved from 8.1% (2010-2011) to 7.3% (2011-2012). The dropout rate has improved from 5.1% (2010-11) to 2.1% (2012-2013).

Challenging student academic and social needs during the transition from middle to high school prompted West Springfield to develop a Terrier House Professional Learning Community in 2006. A year later, in 2007, the Terrier House PLC was recognized by NEASC as a Model Program for their work in closing the gap between teaching and student learning. All Terrier House freshmen are in non-leveled teams concentrating on the four core academic areas of English, mathematics, science and social studies. To maximize student achievement, the Terrier House teachers have time dedicated for collaboration and professional development that allows them to continually review their practices, analyze student data, and revise their teaching strategies. Through its unique organizational structure, Terrier House teachers work together to design and implement teaching strategies that encourage student growth and provide academic, social, and emotional support to students. Since the creation of the Terrier House, the high school has seen an annual decrease in the 9th grade retention rate. In 2007, the 9th grade retention rate was 32%, and by the end of 2013 it was below 10%.

West Springfield High School participates in an online educational program, Edgenuity, designed to assist students with a variety of courses. Students are enrolled in MCAS preparation and remediation, tenth grade credit recovery, and eleventh grade credit recovery courses. During semester two of the 2013-2014 school year, there are roughly 41 students enrolled in this program. Through our Dual Enrollment Program, students at West Springfield High School may also elect to enroll at a local college or university, take college classes, and earn college credit while continuing their high school coursework

West Springfield High School partners with the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (LPVEC) to provide career and technical skills through their Career and Technical Education Center (CTEC). We also participate in the 21st Century Skills Academy, located at LPVEC, created for dropout prevention by allowing at-risk students an opportunity for an Adult Education Diploma while meeting the curricular goals of the state and at the same time acquiring pragmatic, work-based skills.

Additionally, West Springfield High School has partnered with Springfield Technical Community College through a DESE initiative, the nationally recognized Pathways to Prosperity (P2P), that identifies freshmen and sophomores who may have an interest in manufacturing and engineering, and provides a route to internships, externships, mentoring, and Dual Enrollment. Through this two-year career pathways project managed by Jobs for the Future, Massachusetts schools like ours will receive technical assistance to integrate technical programs of study into broader career pathways. West Springfield High School is in collaboration with the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Springfield Technical Community College (STCC), and employers in the precision manufacturing sector to develop pathways for advanced manufacturing careers.

Students at West Springfield High School are recognized for many achievements throughout the year. In the spring, students are honored for their academic achievements in the Undergraduate Awards Assembly (freshmen and sophomores), Junior Awards Night, and Senior Awards Night. In the fall, the National Honor Society holds an evening ceremony for its inductees. Under the Renaissance program,

students who earn a quarterly 85% average, have good attendance and complete a required service project are eligible for additional privileges. Underclassmen receiving full Renaissance privileges for the first three terms are recognized in June at the junior and underclass awards ceremonies. Lastly, the Program vs. Program competition was created to encourage athletic teams to earn higher G.P.A.'s by creating a competition among teams within the respective season to highlight academic as well as athletic accomplishments. The team with the highest combined G.P.A. within the athletic season receives an award and recognition during our seasonal pep rallies.

In February 2014, faculty, staff, and students moved into the new West Springfield High School, and demolition of the old building began. The new four-story 273,000 square foot high school includes the latest state-of-the art instructional technologies, large group instructional spaces, expansive library/media center, television studio, three greenhouses, a 650-seat auditorium, 120-seat mini-theater, seven station gymnasium with elevated walking track and natatorium.

West Springfield High School
Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

The West Springfield High School believes its mission is to educate all students to be well rounded, responsible individuals who contribute to our evolving 21st century society.

The West Springfield High School community has identified the following learning expectations for all students.

Academic Expectations:

- The West Springfield High School Learning Community will demonstrate target language proficiency through effective communication: reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing for a variety of purposes.
- The West Springfield High School Learning Community will be able to collaborate, think creatively, critically, and logically while using a variety of problem solving tools and methods; technology, research techniques and various mediums.

Civic and social Expectations:

- The West Springfield High School Learning Community will demonstrate respect and responsibility by recognizing the impact of their decisions on others and themselves. They will also participate in meaningful activities within the learning community.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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

While the West Springfield High School (WSHS) community engaged in a dynamic and collaborative process informed by current research-based best-practices to identify and commit to its core values about teaching and learning, evidence is unclear as to the level of involvement by parents, students, and the community in this process. However, WSHS's two-year plan includes developing and implementing a procedure for collecting data and feedback from parents and the community, suggesting that the school staff is aware of the need to solicit input regarding this area. According to evidence provided in the self-study, department chairs began the conversation related to identifying the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations on September 24, 2012. The results of this meeting were shared with the WSHS steering committee in October 2012. The steering committee followed up with a faculty meeting to survey the staff for ideas as to what qualities, skills, and knowledge a WSHS graduate should possess. In addition, the creation of the core values and beliefs statement included surveying other schools as to their 21st century expectations, as well as reviewing the "21st Century Crosswalk" and Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) data. The core values statement was approved by the faculty on November 27, 2012 and has since been shared with the student body and is posted throughout the school. However, there is no evidence that the document was presented to or approved by the school committee. Concurrently, department heads developed and proposed a draft of the school-wide rubric. After at least one revision, the faculty approved the academic and civic school-wide rubrics on January 8, 2013. The core values and belief statement and learning expectations are posted throughout the school in most classrooms, on the school's website, and is in school documents and materials such as the student handbook and program of studies catalog. Many, but not all, teachers incorporate these values and beliefs into their instruction and assessment. Although faculty and students have adopted and taken ownership of the core values and beliefs and 21st century learning expectations, including all stakeholders such as parents, students, and the school committee in the development of these key principles will ensure wider and more encompassing support for the implementation of WSHS core values and beliefs and will assist students in meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations. (classroom observations, self-study, teacher interviews, students, facility tour)

West Springfield High School has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies. While rubrics have been developed they are holistic rather than analytic and as such they currently lack the specificity necessary to define competencies and identify targeted levels of achievement. A statement of core values and beliefs is displayed prominently upon first entering the building. Each classroom has posted the rubrics developed to assess academic, civic, and social learning expectations. Most students are familiar with WSHS's values and beliefs and have been introduced to the rubrics, however teacher interviews and student work samples suggest that faculty do not yet use the school-wide rubrics in their instruction. Teachers and department leaders across the curriculum report using the rubrics to guide the development of department-based rubrics. Twenty-first century skills are being fostered in many areas of the school community through technology, real-world application of skills, cultural literacy, and innovation. Students at WSHS have the benefit, not only of a state-of-the-art facility, but also a global community represented in the school's unique diversity. School-wide analytic rubrics that clearly and comprehensively define agreed-upon learning expectations and desired levels of achievement will set the stage for effective and efficient feedback and thus raise the level of student academic and social success. (facility tour, student work, teacher interviews, curriculum documents, classroom observations)

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are reflected in the culture of the school. In addition, they are increasingly used to inform curriculum, instruction, and assessment in many classrooms and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. There are

numerous examples of how WSHS's core values and beliefs are reflected in the culture of the school. The school has a wide variety of activities and programs that reflect WSHS's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. While there are numerous extracurricular clubs and activities from which students have to choose, students also have the freedom to start a new club as long as they can garner enough interest and a faculty advisor. Additionally, WSHS offers a variety of opportunities, such as Pathways to Prosperity (P2P), job coaching, college preparation activities, and Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (LPVEC) that prepare students for post-secondary education, training, and employment. WSHS students and faculty have the opportunity to engage in the school and local community through community service, community events, and cultural awareness programs. School-wide initiatives and programs address authentic learning, the use of technology, positive behavior, the school community's current needs and provide proactive programs which reflect the WSHS core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. WSHS has made specific changes to its curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices to address the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. WSHS has and continues to use its core values and learning expectations to form the curricula across disciplines. Teachers have received training through Keys to Literacy (KTL) and Laying the Foundation (LTF) in order to learn strategies to support literacy and critical thinking. Data analyses, as well as summative and formative assessment strategies, are used to inform and improve instruction. The new high school building provides 21st century technology that is available to all students and faculty members, and learning objectives are posted in most classrooms. WSHS has implemented specific changes to school policies to align with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, such as implementing programs to support instruction and student learning, increasing academic requirements for graduation, implementing "60 is Passing," and establishing more stringent requirements for participation in extracurricular activities. WSHS has adapted resource allocation to support the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st learning expectations. The new high school facility provides an environment that is conducive to learning, provides access to technology, and includes learning space that reflects the school's emphasis on academic growth. Additionally, WSHS has allocated time and resources to support the development of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), has implemented credit recovery classes, MCAS preparation classes, and mandatory PSATs for all 10th and 11th graders. When every component of the school is driven by the core values and beliefs, and supports all students' achievement of the school learning expectations, policies, decisions, and allocation of resources will be directed toward supporting the success of the school community. (self-study, teacher interviews, classroom observations, facility tour, parents)

West Springfield High School does not have a system in place to review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Faculty and administration are clear that this is a need and the school has included the creation of a review and revision team as part of their two-year plan. A School Council meets five times over the course of the academic year, and includes representatives of all stakeholders: parents, teachers, administrators, students, and community members. Council members report discussion of WSHS's values, beliefs, and learning expectations, as well as influence on policy. Changes have been made to some school-wide policies, such as attendance, grading, and extracurricular participation, to promote and encourage a higher level of achievement. Currently, some faculty meet regularly in primarily department-based Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to analyze results of standardized assessments, discuss areas of strength and/or weakness, and plan for changes in instruction to address these findings. However, the extent to which the school's core values and beliefs or current research on learning is discussed in these meetings is unclear. Regular review and revision of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations is necessary for maintaining a culture of high achievement and preparedness for a 21st century global community. When schools engage in active dialogue with all

stakeholders, and commit to staying current on educational innovation, the entire community has ownership of values, beliefs and expectations, and ultimately, student learning improves. (teachers, department leaders, curriculum documents, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The use of a dynamic and collaborative process informed by current research-based best-practices to identify and commit to the school's core values about teaching and learning
2. The implementation of specific changes to school policies to align with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
3. The effort to raise expectations for student learning and promote a higher level of student achievement
4. The abundance of activities and programs which support the diverse needs and backgrounds of the student body and provide opportunities for them to achieve the school's academic, social, and civic expectations for learning

Recommendations:

1. Review and revise school-wide holistic rubrics to analytic rubrics and ensure each component within learning expectations is represented and clearly defined with identified acceptable levels of performance for each rubric
2. Utilize revised school-wide rubrics consistently in all areas of the school community
3. Devise a plan or strategy to ensure the inclusion of parents, students, and community in the process of developing, reviewing, and revising the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
4. Develop and implement a process for review and revision of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

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

The West Springfield High School (WSHS) curriculum has not been purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Although not explicitly stated in each curriculum guide, the curriculum does inherently provide opportunities for students to practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations. While each curriculum area has not assumed responsibility for a specific learning expectation at this time, members of the Curriculum Standard Committee believe that all teachers are responsible for these learning expectations in the aggregate, and many examples of their use in practice were observed in classrooms including the use of technology to improve student reading and writing. It is not clear in the curriculum where students practice the 21st century learning expectations by grade and course level, nor do the curriculum guides identify clear connections between course content and the learning expectations. However, many courses in a number of curricular areas offer learning experiences related to each of the school's learning expectations. Individual teachers understand they are responsible for teaching the 21st century learning expectations as evidenced by the fact that their individual teacher-created rubrics are frequently informed by the school-wide rubric. Incorporating the 21st century learning expectations into curriculum will ensure that all students regularly and consistently practice and achieve each of the school's learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, student work, teacher interviews, teachers, school committee, department leaders, central office personnel)

The curriculum is written in a format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, skills, instructional strategies, and assessment practices that include the use of course-specific rubrics. Although the curriculum guides, available on the WSHS website, include essential questions, concepts, content, and skills, they do not include the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations. The guides also include instructional practices which are identified as “instructional strategies” in WSHS documents. The guides include assessment practices, but they do not reference, nor in every instance reflect, the school-wide rubric. However, many individual teacher rubrics as well as department-designed rubrics are aligned with the school-wide rubric. The school has curriculum guides for all subject areas. When the curriculum is written in a common format which includes the 21st century learning expectations, the written curriculum will become a framework within the school that clearly aligns and personalizes twenty-first learning expectations for students. (self-study, panel presentation, student work, teacher interviews, teachers)

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, and informed and ethical use of technology. At WSHS, the curriculum's emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills in many courses and levels as evidenced by the student learning activities in curriculum guides is a notable strength. Student work shows evidence of higher order thinking skills and inquiry in such projects as a report on Andalucía in a Spanish 2 class, a panel discussion on civil rights and civil liberties in an Advanced Placement U.S. Government course, and multiple student product options at the end of an Italian class unit on Pinocchio. Problem-solving questions are also evident in student work such as a real-life application question of a tested skill on an algebra quiz. Cross-disciplinary learning is evident in such collaborative efforts as common reading and writing standards shared by English language arts and social studies classes and shared assignments that require students to use ninth grade common vocabulary lists that include words from biology and other subjects outside of the English department. Cross-disciplinary projects at Terrier House connect English, math, social studies, and science in one shared project. A visit to a Terrier House Professional Learning Community (PLC) meeting made it very clear that this is a part of the culture at WSHS. The teachers were enthusiastic participants in cross-disciplinary learning and were observed planning additional

interdisciplinary units. WSHS emphasizes authentic learning opportunities such as The Lower Pioneer Vocational Educational Collaborative which provides students with off-campus learning experiences in a variety of vocational and technical fields, dual enrollment at local colleges, business internships, mock trials in law classes, the school newspaper published by journalism students, props for school plays created by art students, and the Food Lab run by Life Skills students. Conditions are in place to ensure that the curriculum emphasizes informed and ethical use of technology. All students and faculty are required to read and sign the Acceptable Use of Computers Policy, which includes the standards for the ethical use of Google Apps for Education, the use of Internet sources and documentation in research, social media, and website navigation. For example, informed and ethical use of technology is promoted in many classes during the research process in which students receive instruction on evaluating the credibility of Internet sources and how to cite them. Opportunities for students at WSHS to inquire, problem solve, engage in cross-disciplinary and authentic learning, as well as the informed and ethical use of technology provide for depth of understanding and application of knowledge in the curriculum. (classroom observations, self-study, student shadowing, panel presentation, student work, teacher interviews, teachers)

There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum at WSHS. Periodically, school committee members on the curriculum subcommittee visit the high school to compare what is being taught in the classroom to the curriculum guides they have reviewed prior to their visits. Curriculum guides are also prescriptive about when in the school year specific units are to be taught. English and math curriculum coaches visit classrooms and conduct classroom observations to ensure teachers are following the established curriculum. When the written and the taught curriculum are aligned, students receive consistent instruction and have the best chance to meet 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, teachers, school committee, department leaders, central office personnel, school leadership)

WSHS has some effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among some academic areas within the school and with sending schools in the district. There is consistent curriculum review, revision, and creation among the mathematics department and the history department. Other departments in the school are in earlier stages of curriculum review and revision. The majority of faculty members believe that they do not have sufficient time to work on the review and evaluation of curriculum. Course-specific Professional Learning Communities in mathematics and English at WSHS are able to meet consistently, which allows them to ensure vertical articulation and alignment of curriculum, however other departments are unable to do so. While some members of the school community, especially the Terrier House, regularly implement cross-curricular content, the formalized development and implementation of interdisciplinary curriculum is inconsistent among all faculty and grade levels. The department leaders have taken on the responsibility of starting conversations with sending schools, but have not yet developed a defined process that provides clear feedback and fosters alignment. There are curriculum guides present; however, there is little evidence of coordination. When there is sufficient time, appropriate support, and clear communication and expectations set for curriculum review and revision, students and teachers will benefit from longitudinal articulation and consistency in effective teaching and learning throughout the school system. (teacher interviews, department leaders, school website, curriculum documents, self-study)

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies and facilities, resources of the library, co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum. Class sizes vary at WSHS, ranging from 20 to 25 students with a student-to-teacher ratio of 13:1, making the quantity of staffing acceptable. Due to budgetary restraints some electives are not able

to run every year; however, students do have a variety of courses available to them. A one-to-one technology initiative allows each student to have a Chromebook for use at home and in school. The technology in the classroom is up-to-date and varied, including document cameras and interactive whiteboards. While the library collection includes approximately 6,500 books, students have access to multiple online databases, including access to the Boston Public Library online. Most courses were able to get funding for adequate textbooks and resources from multiple grants including *Race to the Top*. While these resources are not complete, faculty members are well on their way to having physical and online resources for all students in all curriculum areas. The facility itself, being newly built and adequately supplied, enhances the delivery of curriculum with technology being present and in working order. There is some funding for co-curricular programs; however, many clubs and programs use fundraising to financially support student activities. As a result of a new building, available resources, new technology, ample staff and acceptable funds, WSHS is able to fully implement its established curriculum. (self-study, teachers, curriculum documents, classroom observations, students)

The West Springfield District does not consistently provide 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. The former superintendent of schools was responsible for curriculum coordination and articulation and some of that responsibility filtered down to the department leaders. Due to administrative changes, the high school, in conjunction with central office, is exploring strategies and processes for meaningful curriculum development and alignment. The Terrier House allows for teachers of the ninth grade to meet regularly to work on curriculum, and the mathematics department has certain PLCs that meet every day. Unfortunately, this is not true for the entire school, leaving certain subject areas only able to collaborate on curriculum outside of the school day. Most teachers are involved in curriculum revision and development, however, the time allowed and the amount of work done is not consistent. Only 27 percent of faculty believes that they have sufficient time to work on curriculum. There is no regular curriculum review cycle, resulting in inconsistent and varied updates. Through grant funding, minimal time has been created for some PLCs to meet to discuss curriculum; however, this is inconsistent, inadequate, and unsupported by research. Many content areas use data to analyze student results from MCAS and their own common benchmarks and assessments. Again, this varies by department, but those looking at data and working on curriculum are using resources such as Edwin Analytics, a reporting and data analysis tool provided by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. For the 2014-2015 school year, one early release day per month has been set aside for professional development focused on curriculum and PLCs. Allocation of additional time, financial resources and a specific plan for evaluation and revision of curriculum will ensure WSHS students receive a purposeful, well-designed 21st century curriculum. (teacher interviews, Endicott survey, self-study, teachers, school leadership)

Commendations:

1. The use of higher order thinking skills, inquiry, problem solving and cross-disciplinary learning in most courses and levels
2. The cross-disciplinary collaboration among Terrier House teachers resulting in interdisciplinary projects that include almost the entire ninth grade
3. The implementation of PLCs in mathematics, English and the Terrier House
4. The new facilities, technology, resourceful staff, and supplies and materials, which provide multiple opportunities for students to grow and become involved in the WSHS community
5. The development and adoption of a common curriculum template across all disciplines

Recommendations:

1. Include the 21st century learning expectations in all curriculum guides
2. Ensure all students have the opportunity to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Provide the necessary time, leadership, and training to ensure longitudinal curriculum development, revision and alignment for all courses
4. Develop and utilize formal curriculum review cycles and provide time for research, review, and articulation of curriculum and data collection/analysis
5. Develop processes for planning and supporting a wider range of cross-disciplinary opportunities for integrated learning

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

While teachers' instructional practices at West Springfield High School (WSHS) are continuously examined, they are not done so consistently in all grade levels and content areas to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. All departments utilize quarterly benchmark assessments and the math and English departments devote professional time to the analysis of MCAS data to evaluate student learning and improve instruction. Teachers in WSHS' Terrier House program make effective use of Professional Learning Community (PLC) time to collaborate with colleagues both inter-departmentally and intra-departmentally to create meaningful units of instruction. Observations by math and English coaches are beginning to help teachers link instructional practices to the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. However teachers state that in grades 10-12 and in particular non-MCAS subjects, there is an inequity in time allotted for the collaborative examination of instructional practices. Teachers in those courses express a greater desire to have more time to work with their department leader and colleagues both within and outside of their department to better align curriculum with core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Over 52 percent of teachers feel that they continuously examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Academic supervisors, coaches, and department leaders described WSHS' instructional practices as "developing" and "transitioning" but that clarity does not exist yet. The core values are inherent in their instruction but the presentation and linkage to core values is not uniform. When alignment of instructional practices and strategies with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st learning expectations is universal, instructional practices will be most effective and meaningful. (Endicott survey, teacher interviews, department leaders, self-study)

Overall, the majority of teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students as active and self-directed learners, emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills, applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, and integrating technology; however cross-disciplinary learning, applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, and engaging students in self-assessment and reflection are less prevalent. Student work samples provided an abundance of information that personalization in instruction does occur; for example, the history department revised the curriculum in order to connect instruction and content to the school's diverse student population. Teachers' instructional practices encourage students to be active and self-directed learners and in some classes teachers send home learning style surveys to parents in order to gather information about their children's specific learning styles. Teachers report that the use of instructional practices that emphasize inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills are continuing to be developed and it is apparent that they have been largely successful at implementing this focus. Many teachers use open-ended questions to begin units of instruction. For example, in a history class, the teacher began the unit with a question, "What caused the weather pattern to shift in France pre-Revolution?" Students were asked to analyze short primary sources and weather charts to piece together a hypothesis as to what may have happened. Teachers at WSHS integrate new technology such as the one-to-one Chromebook initiative, interactive whiteboards, and document cameras into their instructional practices. Teachers across all content areas utilize interactive whiteboards, projectors, Chromebooks, Google Forms, and Google Docs in their daily lessons, and the majority of students feel the Chromebook initiative is helpful in improving their teacher's instruction. One benefit of this use of technology is that it provides greater opportunities for students to follow more individual learning paths to access the curriculum. As teachers at WSHS utilize this technology to a greater degree, instruction will require students to become active and self-directed learners who will be more effectively able to achieve 21st century expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, classroom observations, student work)

There is limited evidence that teachers' instructional practices are consistently involving students in cross-disciplinary learning, applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, and engaging students in self-assessment and reflection. Teacher interviews and the self-study both confirmed that while the 9th grade Terrier House program is an exemplar of inter-disciplinary and cross-curricular collaboration, the rest of the school does not participate in a unified process to create the same level of collaborative units and assignments as Terrier House. Teachers involved in the Terrier House speak very highly of the program and cross-curricular collaborations and evidence of the effectiveness of their collaboration was apparent in the emphasis of shared vocabulary among all subjects areas in the Terrier House and in projects such as the "Identifying the Inherent Nature of Man: Good or Evil" which was a collaboration involving the 9th grade core classes. However, teachers at WSHS state they need to increase the collaboration across the content areas in grades 10-12 to engage students in more cross-disciplinary learning. The Endicott survey echoes these same sentiments, where only 41 percent of teachers report that they plan inter-disciplinary lessons. The lack of student samples of interdisciplinary work indicates the need for more collaboration time and a focused effort to increase interdisciplinary learning at all levels. Secondly, while the use of authentic tasks has been an area of increased focus at the school, it has not yet been fully integrated into instructional practices across the school. During classroom observations in classes such as photography and graphic design, students were learning how to "touch-up" old photographs and restore them digitally. Students in the Life Skills and Transitions classes learn practical and essential skills needed to live more independently such as grocery shopping, managing money, cooking, and working as a team to accomplish tasks. Students are also given opportunities to learn practical vocational skills and trades in programs such as the Paths to Prosperity (P2P) and in the numerous Career and Technical Education Center (Career TEC) offerings, which enable students with specific interests to get hands-on experience and even to complete certifications and fulfill requirements for an actual career in a trade. However, in many of the academic core classes, the evidence of teachers instructing students to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks was limited. A survey examination of the student work samples provided by teachers affirmed this assertion. Teachers report they need more professional development and time to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks in their instructional practices. Furthermore, teachers' instructional practices are inconsistent in engaging students in self-assessment and reflection. Most students indicate that only in some classes do teachers routinely have students evaluate, reflect and rework their assignments. The self-study also validates that teachers need to be more consistent at implementing ways for students to engage in self-assessment and reflection. However, since the self-study was conducted and the one-to-one Chromebook initiative was implemented, the majority of teachers express that they are beginning to implement ways of giving feedback and providing opportunities for self-assessment utilizing Google Forms. When teachers routinely include student assessment and reflection, cross-disciplinary learning, and apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks as part of their lessons, students will build on the skills and key concepts necessary for mastery of the curriculum. (teacher interviews, students, self-study, student work, Endicott survey)

Teachers utilize a variety of formative assessment strategies to gauge the success of their instruction. Many teachers routinely use exit tickets. In human biology students were required to individually identify seven bones on a human skeleton at the front of the room before the end of class. Samples of student work provided several examples of practice MCAS questions with accompanying rubric scores and teacher comments. Student journals of fitness training recorded the scheduled workout and resulting improvement. Close to 58 percent of the students and 52.6 percent of the parents report that teachers provide information for revising and improving assignments. Formative assessments allow students and teachers to monitor the student progress so that errors or lack of understanding can be corrected before a summative assessment. Some teachers examine effective ways to strategically differentiate instruction

and inclusion classes for students with IEPs exist in all core content classes. When differentiation occurs in the classroom and assessment strategies are varied and relevant, students are better enabled, no matter their learning level, to access the curriculum.

Occasionally, during group activities, students are purposefully placed in groups by the teacher. Students report that sometimes they are placed in groups but most often they are allowed to select the members of their team. Terrier House teachers report that they sometimes set the groups but other times allow students to self-select. Math students in algebra and geometry work on motivational problem sets in groups. The science department rubric has a reporting category based on the level of leadership within the group. Having students work in purposefully organized group allows a teacher to enhance instruction to provide students with the opportunity to practice the 21st century learning goal of collaboration with team members. (There is some evidence that teachers provide students with additional supports and alternative strategies within the regular classroom by providing course-specific rubrics to help students to know what they are expected know and be able to do. Sixty-six percent of students say teachers use a rubric and 62.8 percent of students claim to understand the rubrics that are provided to them. In addition, students stated that they believed that most teachers clearly want them to succeed. The majority of teachers provides students with a rubric prior to some assessments. Other examples of support and alternative strategies were seen in several classrooms where teachers employed graphic organizers and scaffolding to help students access the material. Additionally, the Terrier House professional learning community routinely focuses on developing strategies to support student learning through alternative means. When teachers provide students with alternative means to demonstrate their learning as well as corresponding rubrics prior to assessments, students are made aware of the specific course criteria on which they are being assessed, and are better able to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (student work, classroom observations, teacher interviews, students, Endicott survey)

Teachers at WSHS, both individually and collaboratively, use student achievement data and, to a lesser degree, formative data, to analyze student performance and improve instructional practices. WSHS provides opportunities for teachers to collaboratively improve their instructional practices. For example, in Terrier House, freshman teachers meet daily in a PLC in which they analyze both formative and summative assessments to gauge the effectiveness their instruction. However, the availability of time to analyze data is not universal throughout the school. The majority of teachers who do have it available to them described their PLC time as being “driven by measuring student data.” While the analysis of formative assessments does occur, it is not relied upon as heavily as the data from summative assessments and standardized exams, and often occurs more frequently by individual teachers working with their own students. All core classes incorporate quarterly benchmark assessments, in order to measure the effectiveness of instruction and its impact on student learning. In addition, common assessments have been developed and are utilized by most departments in the form of midterm and final examinations. The adoption by the high school of web-based data analysis programs such as Edwin and assessment creation software such as Google Forms have allowed teachers to more easily and effectively collect and analyze data. The faculty has clearly indicated a desire for more training to make the analysis of assessment data for the improvement of instruction a universal practice. Faculty meetings, half-day and full-day professional days have been devoted to analyzing data and using it to improve instructional practices. Additionally, while the department chairs were trained in the use of Edwin analytic software and Google Suites to analyze benchmarks and assessment data, some department chairs feel less confident in their ability to fulfill this responsibility. The analysis of data has led to the creation-specific interventions in the school. For example, the ELL department has used a variety of data to respond to achievement gaps, the special education department meets regularly and makes instructional accommodations as necessary, and the Terrier House teachers collaboratively analyze data and evaluate

student failures by categories such as gender, ethnicity, and economic status to change instructional practices.

It is apparent that a plethora of formative assessments are utilized in most classrooms, but evidence of universal analysis of formative assessment data was not apparent. Specific teachers reveal that they use programs like Google Forms and Google Suites to provide quicker comments and feedback to students, and assess their own effectiveness of instruction. These feelings are echoed as well in the self-study, as teachers express a need to ensure that formative assessment data is continually examined. Analyzing formative data provides teachers with minor benchmarks during each unit of instruction to evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction.

There is minimal evidence showing that parent feedback impacts instruction at WSHS. However, parents can monitor student progress in real time via Powerschool, and through the traditional communication of student progress such as the issuing of quarterly progress reports and report cards. In addition, parents can contact teachers directly via email and monitor a teacher's instructional units and assignments via teachers' homework pages linked to the WSHS website, and social media applications such as Twitter, the Remind App, Homework.com, and Google Drive make the teachers' course more transparent. However, despite the opportunities for parents to provide feedback, there is little evidence this takes place, and if it is provided that the teachers use feedback from the parents to improve instruction. Administrators also provide feedback to teachers regarding their instruction through formal and informal observations and evaluations. Additionally, the creation of math and English coach positions have been instrumental in aligning curriculum, helping teachers analyze data, and improving instructional practices. Math and English coaches have attended professional development workshops offered by the state on extrapolating data and subsequent analysis of that data in order to improve instruction. Department chairs have the opportunity to provide informal feedback on instruction. The use of department meeting time to improve instruction has resulted in some significant developments; for example, the math and history departments responded to feedback from parents and teachers by developing new courses such as Algebra 1A/1B and realigning the curriculum in US History I and II in order to improve instruction. Monthly department meetings also provide allowance for some time for common planning, curriculum alignment, examining student work, and discussion of effective classroom practices. In most departments it is clear that the taught curriculum is aligned with the written curriculum. With regard to including current research into instructional practices, it appears by design that PLCs and professional development have been devoted to the inclusion of the most current research into instructional practices, most notably in strategies the academic coaches are using to guide their departments' instructional practices. When all teachers have consistent and equitable opportunities to analyze data, examine student work, read and discuss current research, use feedback from a variety of sources, and engage in professional discourse related to instruction, improvements in instructional practices occur systematically and students have a better opportunity to achieve stated learning expectations. (self-study, teachers, Endicott survey, teacher interviews, department leaders)

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Ninety percent of teachers report that they maintain currency in their fields. Sixty-eight percent of teachers at WSHS hold a master's degree. In addition, WSHS administrators, curriculum coaches, and department chairs are committed to providing teachers with opportunities to improve their instruction through professional development. Examination of student work provided ample proof that teachers are utilizing strategies learned during professional development to improve their instruction in the classroom. For example, "Laying the Foundation" in some math, science, and English classes, and "Keys to Literacy" in all subject areas are implemented into

instructional practices by many teachers. Moreover, many opportunities exist within the school to improve instruction in the form of workshops on teaching methods, and technology training through professional development and voluntary training sessions. Some teachers state that in order to maintain expertise in their content area or expand their content knowledge, they often have to travel outside the school to access other resources. The school district reimburses teachers for one class per year as funds allow. For example, two history teachers report that they took a week-long course in their content area during the summer, and were reimbursed by the school. In addition, at least 33 percent of teachers at WSHS take advantage of classes to improve content knowledge and instructional strategies funded by the Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative (MMSI). Utilizing professional development to expand teacher's content knowledge and content-specific instructional strategies allows for more effective teacher instruction which insures student success in meeting stated learning expectations. (student work, teacher interviews, assistant principal)

Commendations:

1. The emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills that have been implemented as a result of recent curriculum initiatives and support the 21st century learning
2. The engagement of students in cross-disciplinary instruction in the Terrier House
3. The creation of math and English coaching positions to align curriculum and assist teachers in the analysis of data and improving instructional practice
4. The opportunities and programs the school provides for students to personalize instruction such as CTEC, P2P, Life-Skills, and the Alternative High School
5. The professional development opportunities within the school to improve instruction through workshops and voluntary training sessions in teaching methods and technology integration
6. The extensive effort to integrate technology into daily instructional practices through the one-to-one initiative
7. The use of benchmark exams and common assessments to analyze effectiveness of instructional practices

Recommendations:

1. Provide equitable time for all departments and grade levels to consistently examine and align teachers' instructional practices with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
2. Develop more formal opportunities to engage students in cross-disciplinary experiences
3. Ensure that teachers continue to adjust their instructional practices to strategically differentiate and create lessons in which students apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks
4. Develop and implement a process to allow parents and students opportunities to provide feedback to teachers on improving instructional practices
5. Provide more staff training and technical support on using technology to analyze data and alter instructional practices based on that data



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 at West Springfield High School (WSHS) has yet to employ a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess the whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Through a collaborative process, involving teachers and administrators, WSHS developed a school-wide rubric in the fall of 2012 based on the school's 21st century learning expectations and core values. The rubric was officially adopted in January 2013. While the school-wide rubric is posted in many classrooms and most teachers are aware of the school-wide rubric, teachers state that they rarely use the school-wide rubric to assess student progress toward 21st century learning expectations. However, most departments utilize department-wide rubrics that indirectly address the school's 21st century learning expectations. Department-wide rubrics and teacher-created, assignment-specific rubrics are regularly used to assess student progress and indirectly assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving 21st century learning expectations. When there is consistent use of the school-wide rubric, and a formal process for collecting and analyzing individual student and whole-school progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations, the school community will have a better understanding of the strengths and needs of the student body and will be able to adjust instructional practice to better meet the needs of the students. (teacher interviews, student work, self-study, classroom observations, students)

Because there is not a formal process to assess student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, the professional staff has not generated the data which will be necessary to communicate individual student and whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students, families, and the community. The self-study indicated that professionals at WSHS communicated academic progress with students, parents, and the community through PowerSchool, quarterly progress reports, report cards, the state-generated school report card and the superintendent's blog. These documents, however, do not directly address 21st century learning expectations or provide any information regarding whole-school progress. Until the faculty members effectively utilize the school-wide rubric and the school develops and implements a means of communicating student and whole-school progress in meeting stated expectations, educators, students, families, and the community, will not have a clear idea of how well individual students and the whole-school are progressing toward the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, classroom observations, student work, students, school leadership)

The vast majority of professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. Individual teachers use a variety of formative assessments such as Google Forms and exit tickets to collect and analyze data in order to identify inequities in student achievement. Across the school, every department created common assessments and benchmarks in order to collect student achievement data. Department members collaborate to analyze benchmarks, MCAS data, SAT scores, and Advanced Placement (AP) test results. Faculty members evaluate student performance in relation to demographic categories such as gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. Many departments made changes in instruction based on the results of data analysis. For example, the science department increased the number of open-response and inquiry-based learning activities and the math department developed new courses such as Algebra 1A/1B. While all departments use data to inform their practice, the amount of time that is formally allocated for teachers to collect, disaggregate, and analyze data varies greatly across departments. The English department, math department, and the Terrier House faculty members have dedicated time during the school week in order to analyze data and to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. At the school-wide level, administration implemented specific programs to respond to achievement gaps in MCAS scores and to reduce dropout rates. For example, they developed a dropout prevention committee, MCAS preparatory classes,

mathematics and English foundational skills courses, and the Reconnecting Youth (RY) program. The pervasive collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement enables professional staff to consistently respond to inequities in student achievement and to provide all learners with opportunities for success. (self-study, teacher interviews, students, teachers, department leaders, school leadership, school documents, classroom observations)

While teachers frequently communicate related unit-specific learning goals prior to each unit of study, they rarely communicate to students the school's 21st century learning expectations. In fact, faculty members rarely reference the 21st century learning expectations. While teachers infrequently identify the 21st century learning expectations that are related to units of study, most teachers communicate unit-specific learning goals prior to each unit of study. Some teachers post unit-based learning objectives on their homework pages within the school's website. A few faculty members distribute unit-specific learning goals on class handouts. Approximately 69 percent of students agree that teachers explain the learning expectations before each unit of study. When teachers directly communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations, students are better able to understand how their coursework prepares them for the future and are better able to achieve the school's stated expectations. (Endicott survey, teachers, students, department leaders, self-study, classroom observations, student work, school website)

Prior to summative assessments, teachers often provide students with corresponding department- and teacher-created or course-specific rubrics. Approximately 66 percent of students feel that teachers use rubrics to assess their work and 55 percent of students understand the rubrics that they receive. Departments across the school develop and utilize department-wide rubrics to assess student work. For example, the world languages department uses a common rubric for scoring open-response questions. The science department has two common rubrics, one for investigation and another to assess writing. The English and math departments have many common rubrics. Advanced Placement (AP) teachers utilize rubrics that mirror the AP board's scoring rubric. Students note that prior to summative assessments, teachers frequently provide them with the corresponding rubrics. The frequent practice of providing students with the corresponding rubrics, prior to summative assessments, helps students to identify and understand teachers' expectations and guides students' work. (teachers, students, self-study, student work, classroom observations)

Teachers consistently employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Eighty-one percent of staff agrees, "teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments." Submitted work samples revealed the pervasive use of formative assessment at WSHS across all academic disciplines. In addition, both teachers and students report that the purchase of Chromebooks for each student and the transition to Google Suites has facilitated immediate evaluation of formative assessments. Common summative assessments exist for most courses in history, English, mathematics, science, and world languages. In addition, common benchmark assessments, aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, are given in some courses and results are used to guide instruction. The widespread employment of a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments, allows teachers to adapt instruction to better meet the needs of students and to foster student achievement. (Endicott survey, teachers, students, self-study)

In some areas, WSHS teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways to the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Established Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in mathematics, English, and in Terrier House collaborate

regularly on the creation, analysis, and revision of assessments. PLC minutes revealed a consistent focus on the analysis and revision of previously created assessments; teachers also report that the creation of common assessments was embedded in curriculum writing over the past two summers. Furthermore, teachers from several departments report using their personal time to meet with colleagues to develop, revise, and analyze the results of course-specific assessments. However, PLCs are not established school-wide, which significantly limits opportunities for teachers to engage in formal collaboration, especially in 11th and 12th grade courses. Faculty members express concern over the inequitable opportunities for participation in PLCs and the loss of X-block release time this academic year for PLC work. Another inequity exists in the amount of time PLCs are allocated—the Terrier House PLC meets daily, while Geometry and English 10 and 11 meet twice weekly. When teachers have opportunities to formally and regularly collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments, they are better able to adjust curriculum and instructional practices to ensure the equitable student achievement of the school’s learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, student work, teachers)

While teachers frequently offer timely feedback, especially through formative means, examples of specific and corrective feedback that ensures students receive guidance to revise and improve their work in a more substantive manner is limited. Several students commented on the improvement in both the frequency and timing of feedback since the school transitioned to Google Suites, which suggests that instructional practice has improved since the Endicott survey, when only 58.7 percent of students agreed that their “teachers offer suggestions to help me improve my work.” This is consistent with the percentage of parents (56.2 percent) who agreed, “teachers provide timely and corrective feedback to assist... in revising and improving assignments.”

The math department regularly offers both timely and corrective feedback to students to guide revision and reflection on assessments; students speak of the benefit of this practice to their overall understanding and of their desire to see this practice expand. The use of rubrics to offer feedback in the math department appears to be limited to MCAS rubrics; students in AP Statistics report that their work is not scored according to an AP-style rubric. Both the social studies and English departments have department-wide rubrics prominently displayed in classrooms; however, the practice of using these rubrics to offer specific and corrective feedback is not widely evident. Few of the submitted student work samples contained teacher feedback using these rubrics. Submissions included blank rubrics and lacked feedback; several examples submitted were of exemplary work and contained no specific feedback to facilitate student improvement. Another example of a formal, multi-draft essay contained limited formative feedback on drafts that did not attend to all areas of the attached rubric; the rubric itself was not used to assess the final draft of the work. Similarly, another formal assignment had a rubric embedded in the assignment sheet, but the different students’ final projects submitted were not assessed using the rubric and instead had limited comments and grades. Consistently offering more specific and corrective feedback to students in a timely manner will provide opportunities for students to revise and improve their work, to expand their learning, and to achieve the school’s 21st century learning expectations. (Endicott survey, students, student work, classroom observations)

PLC minutes and observations suggest that many teachers are highly attentive to student performance and focus their attention on adapting instruction to improve student performance. Teachers report that the role of formative assessment and responsiveness to student data is clear and they highlighted the ways in which the adoption of Chromebooks and Google Suites, especially Google Forms, have allowed them to receive immediate formative feedback and then tailor classroom instruction accordingly. Moreover, students consistently report that a majority of their teachers, “want to make sure we’re really

understanding” classroom content. The self-study documents a myriad of methods of formative assessment, and classroom observations revealed a variety of formative assessment practices in use such as the use of small white boards to record student responses to review questions, mini-quizzes, and requiring students to complete a “ticket to leave”. The widespread and consistent use of formative assessment to inform and adapt instruction positively impacts student learning and better enables students to achieve 21st century expectations. (teacher interviews, students, self-study)

The practice of individually and collaboratively examining a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice is widespread among the staff and administration of WSHS. The self-study documents that the examination of student work and assessment data is an established practice in PLC, department, curriculum, and administrative meetings throughout the school year. Furthermore, submitted artifacts and teacher interviews revealed that individual teachers consistently examine a range of student work to reflect on their own classroom instruction such as the use of subject-based benchmark assessments, the analysis of common assessment data, and the continual alignment of curriculum to state frameworks. Teachers from several departments articulated that evidence of student learning is consistently used to revise curriculum; one example is an increased focus on vocabulary and measurement for the 2012-2013 cohort of Terrier House students as a result of 8th grade MCAS results. In teacher meetings, the world languages department described their detailed examination of student benchmark data to inform curricular revisions and changes in instructional practice. The examination of benchmarks and common assessments, including double-blind scoring of student assessments, has improved instructional practice and led to more consistent assessment within the English department. The self-study does not document the use of any survey data, including the Endicott survey, to reflect on curricular choices or instructional practices. Expanding the practice of examining a range of evidence of student learning to include progress in achieving the school’s 21st century learning expectations and survey data from a variety of constituents, improves instructional practice and student achievement of 21st century expectations. (self-study, student work, teachers)

Minimal evidence exists that the staff of WSHS regularly reviews and revises grading policies to ensure alignment with the school’s core values and beliefs about learning. Only 39.4 percent of staff agrees with the statement, “school-wide grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised”; moreover, teacher interviews revealed that review or revision of grading practices has not been considered within the context of WSHS’s core values and beliefs about learning. The self-study notes that student access to grades in PowerSchool aligns with the school’s core value of student responsibility. The only recent change in grading practices referenced by teachers in interviews and in the self-study was a change in the failure threshold from 65 to 60 as a result of a review of grading policies in September 2012. This policy change appears to be at odds with the core value of student responsibility, and several teachers expressed disappointment over this change. Teachers state that there are no concrete plans for future review or revision of grading practices. Establishing a practice of regularly reviewing and revising grading policies creates opportunities to ensure these practices align with the school’s core values and beliefs about learning which insures student opportunity to achieve stated expectations. (self-study, Endicott survey, teachers)

Commendations:

1. The pervasive collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data to identify and respond to disparities in student achievement
2. The regular distribution of department- and teacher-created corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments

3. The extensive use of a range of formative and summative assessment strategies
4. The purposeful and habitual use of formative assessment to inform and adapt instruction
5. The use of subject-area benchmark assessment data to improve teaching and learning

Recommendations:

1. Develop a formal process, based on school-wide analytic rubrics, to assess individual student and whole school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. Implement a formal process for communicating individual student and whole-school progress in achieving 21st century learning expectations
3. Regularly communicate to the students, the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations prior to each unit of study
4. Expand and equitably distribute opportunities for formal collaboration to create, analyze, and revise formative and summative assessments
5. Increase the practice of offering specific and corrective feedback using school-wide and departmental rubrics
6. Expand and equitably distribute opportunities for teachers to examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice
7. Create and implement a process for the review of grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

SUPPORT 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

The West Springfield High School community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning, ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. The WSHS student handbook communicates clear, high expectations to students and parents. Through informal interactions in class and in the halls, faculty and staff have shown a deep concern and caring for their students' overall well-being and education, and students at WSHS have reported that they feel a connection to many of their teachers. Students, parents, and staff at WSHS frequently and consistently report that they are in a safe learning environment. WSHS has reinforced a safe environment through its relationship with the school resource officer who is housed at the high school and whose primary responsibilities are to assist administration by developing, informing, and overseeing safety and emergency protocols and to work closely with administrators in regards to discipline. School safety protocols and features, such as locking doors, security cameras and staff electronic IDs are in place.

WSHS has high expectations for its students and staff and expects all to be involved in creating a positive school climate. Over 20 percent of students at WSHS have a primary language other than English, and almost 30 percent of students report different ethnic backgrounds other than white. The school community has embraced this diversity with warmth and respect. The history department's heritage night drew over 300 student, faculty, and parent participants last year. WSHS addresses the school climate issue of bullying by having students participate in the Training Active Bystanders (TAB) program in which volunteer upperclassmen are trained in appropriate bullying response, and then they train the ninth graders in the Terrier House. The expectation is that the newly trained ninth graders will then train the eighth graders in the middle school. This program has permeated all levels of the school and allows the school to positively address school culture in a positive, systematic, uniform manner. School pride is evident from students, staff, and faculty. WSHS also fosters pride and ownership by encouraging school initiatives such as Clean Up 4/25 as well as displaying student work throughout the school. WSHS also publishes the *Terrier Times*, a student newspaper that also highlights different aspects of school culture and pride. WSHS funds many clubs, sports, and after school activities. In addition, WSHS has made a conscious effort to implement Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) protocols and gather School Wide Information System (SWIS). WSHS has used the SWIS data to help drive decisions such as assigning freshmen students to the third lunch. However, many staff members report that they have recently moved away from the formal PBIS program. WSHS also has implemented the Renaissance program to offer incentives and rewards to students who are meeting academic and behavioral expectations.

In February of last year, WSHS moved into a new facility. Many students and staff report that they as yet do not feel a connection to the new learning environment. The school community builds and maintains a safe, positive learning environment allowing students and teachers to engage fully in the process of teaching and learning and deepening the connection to the school allowing the students to experience academic success. (self-study, students, parents, teachers, classroom observations, Endicott survey)

WSHS is equitable, inclusive, and ensures access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. All students entering the school's ninth grade Terrier House PLC find a school that fosters an equitable and inclusive learning experience for all students. All freshmen are required to take Modern World History, which is an unleveled, heterogeneous course. In addition, students have the opportunity to select courses and desired academic levels and are able to stretch

academically by enrolling in Advanced Placement classes. Athletes must pass six classes per quarter to be eligible to participate. There are multiple opportunities for students to choose their classes and to attend other heterogeneous elective and non-core classes throughout a student's career. In addition, teachers and guidance counselors report that they honor and support student requests for classes. When a school is equitable, inclusive and fosters heterogeneity that challenges students with learning opportunities designed to help them reach their individual potential, students will have greater success in achieving 21st century expectations. (students, self-study, department leaders)

There is a limited formal, ongoing program or process through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. WSHS has many programs that connect a student with an adult that helps the student in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. Students in the Alternative School have dedicated time with staff to work on social skills and empowerment. The school also has a strong Reconnecting Youth program that provides a specialized curricular offering that addresses the emotional needs of students in crisis. The ELL and special education programs each offer unique opportunities, such as the ELL open house, to help foster connections with parents to provide additional support. The Terrier House has also taken responsibility for consistently helping students reach the 21st century school expectations through the use of multi-disciplinary units and varied instructional practices. WSHS also has a variety of clubs, activities, and interscholastic sports that provide students the opportunity to form relationships with adults in the school community.

Although WSHS has individual programs, a systematic process to ensure every student is connected with an adult is limited. WSHS employs an X-Block period that has existed for some time, but has changed formats annually in the last three years. Currently, students attend X-Block on most Wednesdays by remaining in their second period class for an extra hour. Students can sign up with other teachers for extra help or to work on specific skills. Students often report that the X-block is used as a "study hall" while teachers report that this model has potential to assist all students in gaining the 21st century skills, but is lacking a formal curriculum and focus. Sporadically, X-Block is used to introduce a targeted, school-wide lesson plan but the lack of a formal curriculum hampers the effort to assist the students in meeting the school's 21st century expectations. Implementing a systematic process to ensure every student is connected with an adult, who is not their counselor, will enable students to better meet the school's mission and achieve 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, students, teachers, panel presentation, classroom observations, Endicott survey)

The principal and professional staff dedicate formal time to implement professional development in order to improve student learning. There are professional learning communities, which are effectively used for professional discourse, however they are implemented inequitably. Currently only the Terrier House, grade 10 and 11 English and grade 10 and 11 math currently participate in formal PLCs during time set aside during the regular school day. Teachers in the existing PLCs have the opportunity to develop common assessments, analyze data, discuss effective instructional practices, and revise curriculum. There have been some "Peer to Peer" observations started in the 2013-2014 school year, during which teachers are afforded time to observe instruction in colleagues' classrooms, and then to take the time to reflect and inform their own instruction. However, teachers express a wish to see this program expanded. WSHS has five full professional days and eight early release days built into the school calendar specifically to support teacher professional development. Teachers report that the topics for the professional development are driven by administration. Schools that create meaningful, teacher driven professional development that supports school-wide initiatives and expectations for all staff will

improve teaching and learning and ultimately will assist students achieve learning expectations. (teachers, school leadership, self-study)

West Springfield High School has implemented an evaluation system that is based upon research and processes focused upon student learning. The school reports that observations focus upon clear, measurable daily objectives, alignment to the written curriculum, sound instructional strategies, literacy, and meaningful assessment of student learning. The link between curricular expectations and implementation are included in the process, as well as the creation of a positive environment created to impact student learning. West Springfield High School has effectively implemented the mandated evaluation process determined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary (DESE) and Secondary Education and the principal and the administrative team acknowledge that the evaluation cycle is a key process in guiding instructional leadership at the school and have formed a professional learning community in order to share best practices and to develop consistency in conducting classroom observations and teacher evaluations according to DESE. Adherence to these practices promotes effective instruction and greater opportunity for student learning. (self-study, teachers, school leadership)

The organization of time at WSHS sometimes allows for researched-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. Terrier House faculty meet in daily common planning time supporting freshman academic and behavioral success. In addition, some teachers in the ELA and mathematics departments participate in a PLC twice a week. The X-Block allows for students to get remediation, while at the same time it is used for some faculty to participate in PLCs. Double blocks for some science lab classes as well as the SEI program provide the needed time for student success. The school schedule rotation is setup to allow some students to attend Career and Technical Education (CTE) programing at an off-campus site and minimizes the effect of tardiness on student learning in the same class each day. The school is in process of making time available for all faculty to collaborate in order to improve student learning, however at this time, the whole school is not fully engaged in professional collaborative time. Providing time for all faculty to participate in professional collaboration supports research-based instruction in all courses and allows teachers to consistently meet the learning needs of all students across all disciplines. (self-study, teachers, master schedule, student handbook)

Student load and class size enable the teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. WSHS reports that the student-to-teacher ratio is 13:1, and at the start of the 2014-15 academic year, class sizes have been limited to 24. The master schedule shows that an overwhelming majority of classes at WSHS fall within that range with only a few classes exceeding the limit. Sixty-nine percent of students report that their class sizes are reasonable, while 62 percent of parents think that class sizes enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. The special education program, the Alternative School, and the ELL program have made an active effort to keep class sizes small in order to meet student needs. For these specific class programs smaller class sizes have allowed at-risk students to thrive and form meaningful relationships with each other as well as with faculty and staff. With optimal student load and class size, teachers at WSHS have the opportunity to personalize learning and help students meet and achieve the school's 21st century skills for learning. (self-study, Endicott survey, classroom observations, students, teachers, parents, panel presentation, school leadership)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides some instructional leadership rooted in the school's core value, beliefs, and expectations. Faculty and administration at WSHS worked together to create the core values and beliefs document. The administration and faculty were also involved in developing and implementing functional Professional Learning Communities. The principal has held a

series of “working lunches” in which teachers and administration discuss different topics such as instructional practices and the use of data. The staff reports that they have been consulted before important decisions have been made but there seems to be a lack of regular communication and staff input with regard to professional development needs. Department chairs are encouraged to observe lessons and provide non-evaluative feedback on instructional practices. Recent faculty meetings focus on the sharing of instructional techniques, using data to drive decision-making, and methods to keep the focus on learning. The principal has shown instructional leadership by focusing on academic success by supporting the Renaissance program. The Renaissance program rewards academic achievement by recognizing student who hold above an 85 average for the term, have good attendance, and complete a required service project. The principal also recognizes academic achievement through an Undergraduate Awards assembly (freshmen and sophomores), Junior Awards Night, and Senior Awards Night. However, some students feel that more could be done to equitably emphasize academic achievement. Students also report that they feel athletics is overly emphasized, while other clubs may not receive the same attention or notoriety. Students express disappointment of an awards assembly that was cancelled because of a conflict with a sports event. Development of a more coordinated effort from the principal and building leaders to base instructional leadership in the school’s core values, beliefs, and learning expectations will help ensure that students are progressing toward the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teachers, students)

Teachers, students, and parents are involved to a certain degree in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Through surveys, parents, teachers, and students are given the opportunity to provide feedback. In addition, many teachers may volunteer to participate on the School Council and other various committees. Some teachers are currently working on a committee to determine how to make the schedule work best for WSHS, while others serve on the “Follow-up” Committee designed to help plan and implement NEASC recommendations after the visit. However, only 42.4 percent of staff feel that teachers, students, and parents are meaningfully involved in decision-making that promotes responsibility and ownership. Many teachers at WSHS would like to have more opportunities for input in the decisions made and to see their decisions implemented.

Some students have occasional opportunities to provide meaningful input in decision-making. Students and teachers report that the student government process at the school could be improved to allow greater student input. Overall, only 33.3 percent of students feel that they have input in important decisions. However, teachers and counselors report that students have tremendous influence and choice in their schedule and in determining which courses they will take in their high school career. There are also two student representative positions on the school committee and student representatives on the School Council.

Parents have been given a limited opportunity to make meaningful decisions at WSHS. Parents have the ability to access grades and attendance through the PowerSchool parent portal. This allows parents to monitor student progress and contact teachers directly when issue arise thereby taking responsibility and ownership of academic performance. Parents are invited to participate in the interview process. Parents may also participate on the School Council via an election. The history department and the ELL program each host special events that are well attended by parents. WSHS report that parents are invited to 504/IEP meetings and have a role in the decision-making process. Forty-five percent of parents feel that they have opportunities to be involved in the decision-making at WSHS. Engaging all constituents of the school community in carrying out the school’s core values and beliefs helps to create ownership and ensure its success. (teachers, students, parents, self-study, Endicott survey)

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and work extensively to increase students' engagement in learning. Teachers provide students with supervision for after-school clubs and activities either as paid or volunteer advisors. The math and ELA coaches run their respective Professional Learning Communities and all department chairs run department meetings. There is a spirit of collaboration among teachers as evidenced by the work in the PLCs. Teachers report that collaboration in the art department has been significantly improved by the expanded spaces in the new facility. The students affected by the TAB program and the Reconnecting Youth program have expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the teachers in the building. The involvement of the faculty providing leadership has created a strong culture of learning at WSHS. (self-study, school leadership, teachers)

The school committee, superintendent, and principal are consistently collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The principal is expected to provide ongoing updates and clarifications about school policies, decisions, and events to the school committee. The school committee reports that they are invited and visit the school during the day at different times during the year. The unique situation of having the former principal serve as the interim superintendent has ensured that he is very familiar with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations as he was involved in the process to create them. The school committee, superintendent, and interim principal report that there is effective ongoing communication and collaboration in order to successfully articulate a clear vision for the school and to achieve the school's stated 21st century learning expectations. Also, school staff members report that this collaboration occurs. The collaboration of the school committee, superintendent, and principal have provided a platform of support for the school to ensure all students have the opportunity and resources to meet the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, school committee, superintendent, principal)The school committee and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school and they demonstrate a high degree of trust and confidence in her ability to lead the school. The school committee respects and supports the interim principal and interim superintendent and gives both leaders authority to make decisions about policy and readily collaborate with them to keep the school's focus on student learning. As a result of the school committee and superintendent providing the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school, the principal is able to make decisions in order to meet the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. (school leadership, self-study, school committee)

Commendations:

1. The diverse school culture that reflects high expectations for student behavior and fosters a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment
2. The implementation of and commitment to school-wide programs that foster a positive and safe school culture
3. The commitment to the development of Professional Learning Communities to improve teaching and learning
4. The introduction of peer observation to encourage collaboration and allow teachers to reflect upon and improve their own instruction
5. The optimal student load and class size which enables teachers to personalize learning for their students and help them achieve the school's 21st century expectations for learning
6. The commitment to ensuring all students have access to the curriculum by fostering heterogeneity and by removing barriers to Advanced Placement classes
7. The collaboration of the superintendent, school committee, and principal

Recommendations:

1. Increase opportunity for teachers, students, and parents to engage in meaningful and defined decision-making roles within the school
2. Provide meaningful professional development for teachers that supports school-wide initiatives and school-wide academic, civic, and social expectations
3. Provide equitable professional collaboration time for all faculty
4. Implement a systematic program or process to ensure that every student is connected with an adult, who is not their counselor, that assists students in achieving the school's mission and 21st century learning expectations
5. Ensure that all student achievement is recognized equitably

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.
7. Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
 - collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
 - provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students
 - perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Conclusions

West Springfield High 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. WSHS has a formal referral system regularly used to identify at-risk students, as well as, students in need of specialized instruction. Members of the support team, including guidance and adjustment counselors, special education liaisons, and administrators, meet regularly to discuss and refer at-risk students. WSHS incorporates programs to improve student performance. The Terrier House, a professional learning community for ninth grade students, supports freshmen in the transition from middle school to high school. English language learners (ELL) instruction takes place in separate learning environments that provide academic support to meet second language (L2) learning needs. Terrier House teachers identify and understand the academic needs of ninth graders. In collaborative brainstorming sessions, teachers challenge conventional teaching practices and adopt new, research-based teaching strategies to help individualize instruction. Teachers develop cross-curricular academic curriculum units that target learning issues to promote student engagement and academic achievement. Multiple student support services are available. The "X" block is designed to schedule opportunities for students to receive tutoring. Identified at-risk students have the opportunity to earn credits by participating in the grant-funded Graduation Success summer program. Dropout Prevention/Outreach programs facilitate open communication between teachers/staff and parents/guardians through home visits and meetings with students outside of the classroom. Credit Recovery classes have been formed and allow students to regain credits lost because of past course failure. Edgenuity, an online credit recovery tutorial, is used for students in need of academic support and for specific students who did not pass ninth grade English language arts.

WSHS participates in the Massachusetts Mathematics and Science Initiative (MMSI) to offer more Advanced Placement courses to a wider range of students. WSHS also offers academic preparatory classes for biology, English, and math to help selected students prepare for the MCAS. Additionally, the math and English departments offer a Foundations of Math and English curriculum to help struggling students premised upon past MCAS exam data. Students, identified as having special education needs, have a variety of learning supports available to them at varying levels. The developmental Life Skills program provides support for students with cognitive impairments. For students who need less support and who are able to be successful within the regular education setting, WSHS offers some inclusion support and co-taught classes by special education and regular education staff. WSHS recognizes the whole student when planning for learning needs. In order to address the emotional needs of students, WSHS offers a variety of programs which help ensure healthy, well-adjusted students. WSHS offers Reconnecting Youth, a program for students who may be in need of mentoring and/or skill-building strategies. WSHS also partners with the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative to offer the 21st Century Skills Academy, which allows students to learn at a different pace and has a low student/teacher ratio. West Springfield High School's Alternative School allows for students who may have difficulty focusing in large classrooms to be successful in a smaller and more structured environment. Rick's Place, an outside partnership, works with students who are dealing with the bereavement process. Additionally, TAP (Transitional Alternative Program) is a short-term, off-site placement that is an alternative to external suspension. Therapists from Behavioral Health Network (BHN) are available during the school day to assist students who are in need of weekly counseling but may not have access to an outside therapist. The school participates in a Positive Behavior Intervention Support Program (PBIS) and offers Training Active Bystanders (TAB), a program designed to train students to recognize and to intervene appropriately to bullying and other negative interpersonal behaviors. As a result of the multitude of programs, disseminated information and services being implemented at WSHS, timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies are available for all students. (teachers, panel

presentation, self-study, classroom observations, students)

WSHS offers information to families, in a variety of formats, about available student support services. WSHS has a multi-level approach for communicating with stakeholders, especially those who may experience access issues amid socio-economic difficulties. According to the Endicott survey, 66.4 percent of responding parents acknowledge communication is effective. Similarly, 61.3 percent of students reply that they know who to report to with their personal problems. Methods of communication include the website, guidance newsletters, monthly phone calls, Parent Portal, Kuder Navigator, Facebook, Twitter and a new liaison with the Chamber of Commerce to reach out to ELL families. Most faculty and staff share resources for learning through individual and departmental sites. The high school guidance and counseling website details information along with comprehensive resources on a variety of topics. Counselors spend much of their time in direct service to students and families via meetings, phone calls, and emails. As a result WSHS efforts to use various modes of communication and outreach, students, families and the community are given the opportunity to be well informed and have access to available support services. (teacher interviews, self-study, Endicott survey, school support staff)

WSHS support service faculty members use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Coordination of services for students depends significantly on the use of technology. PowerSchool Administrator is used to access student information such as grades, parent contacts, demographics, academic schedules, and teacher schedules. The school nurse uses SNAP software to track students' visits to the nurse's office. The special education office uses SEMSTracker to communicate IEP and 504 services. While software products are unique to the respective providers, reports via Excel are readily available for faculty and administration. The guidance department uses varied technologies to assist students including PowerSchool Administrator and KUBER Navigator. Access to various software products allows teachers and administrators to review needs and services to provide learning opportunities for all students. (self-study, teacher interviews, classroom observations)

WSHS school counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staffs; however, they lack a written developmental program and a lack of relevant assessment data. Six certified guidance counselors, three certified school adjustment counselors, two evaluation team leaders (ETL) and one certified school psychologist provides services to the students at WSHS. One guidance counselor and one adjustment counselor are designated for the Terrier House, ELL, and the collaborative program for approximately 125 students who attend the Career Tech Education Center (CTEC). The four remaining guidance counselors provide services for students in grades ten through twelve. One adjustment counselor provides services to students enrolled in the Alternative High School along with other students in grades 10-12. Two evaluation team leaders and one school psychologist are available to address educational and emotional needs. Guidance counselors formally meet with each student at least two times a year. Students may make appointments to discuss any concerns regarding personal, social, and career planning. School adjustment counselors meet regularly with students who require additional social/emotional support, and provide frequent responsive services and crisis intervention working closely with guidance and special education team. All members of counseling services are involved in the referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. Staff members collaborate with the outside agency, Behavioral Health Network (BHN), to provide therapeutic supports to students in need. Students are referred to BHN to address depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. Staff members are encouraged to refer students to counseling groups so that students have the opportunity to receive support services. School adjustment counselors review case recommendations. Guidance counselors utilize a questionnaire that seniors complete in order to determine post-graduate plans. This data are used to make appropriate changes to programs and services offered to students. The

guidance/counseling department does not have a formalized program audit system in place to gain feedback from students, parents and teachers to evaluate and improve their programs. Although WSHS offers many support services with adequate and qualified personnel, the lack of a written comprehensive guidance program combined with a lack of data collection does not provide means to measure the effectiveness of the many services they supply. (self-study, teacher interviews, school support staff)

WSHS health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff that provide a wide variety of preventative and direct intervention services. WSHS is staffed with two registered nurses who provide medical services to over 1,100 students and 160 staff members. The district's health coordinator, located at the West Springfield Middle School, is available for assistance at the WSHS as necessary. In addition, WSHS subcontracts a full-time athletic trainer from Attain Performance Therapy, who oversees the preventative and immediate care of student-athletes to ensure their mental and physical readiness for sport participation.

The WSHS nursing staff works collaboratively to provide health and wellness services to students, staff and families. The nurses provide education, documentation and follow-up services to staff and students. Referrals are made to community health providers, primary care providers and mental health providers as appropriate. The nurses work closely and frequently to collaborate with parents, guardians, physicians, community agencies, guidance counselors, adjustment counselors, translators, the athletic trainer, faculty, and administration to ensure the health and safety of students. Education is provided to staff regarding student health needs in compliance with HIPPA and FERPA regulations. Ongoing training is done with staff, regarding life-threatening allergies, EpiPen administration, universal precautions, seizure precautions, diabetic issues and post-concussion interventions. Nurses are also responsible for education regarding disease management for students, staff, and families. The nurses collaborate with the Public Health Department and local physicians to ensure students, staff, and family have current information regarding public health issues. Health information, sent home with students, is available in the nurse's suite regarding a wide variety of health issues such as flu, immunizations, pregnancy, drug and alcohol use, allergies, asthma, and cancer. The nurses are also members of the Wellness Committee, At-Risk Team, Crisis Team, and Concussion Committee, during which they collaborate with staff, community agencies, and community members to establish a healthy school environment to promote wellness. Nurses maintain electronic medical records using the SNAP program, which allows the tracking of medical data and the recognition of trends and needs of students from kindergarten through grade twelve. All nursing services, documented using the SNAP program, generate referral letters, parent notifications, accident reports and other district and school-specific reports. Nursing care plans are developed for students with special medical needs to make sure they are able to function within the school setting to the best of their abilities. The nurses have no adequate means of measuring student, parent, or teacher satisfaction. The staff does, however, keep all lines of communication open to ensure satisfaction. The nurses work closely with teachers, administration, counselors, community agencies and parents/guardians, to effectively promote wellness and healthy lifestyles for all students to ensure they are able to meet their 21st century learning expectations. (teacher interviews, school support staff, self-study)

The library/media services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff; however, the library/media services are not fully integrated into curriculum and instructional practices. The current school library media specialist is new and is the third librarian in the last three years. A half-time library assistant helps students with circulation and technology questions. The librarian has created a freshman orientation curriculum to introduce the library through the English classes. No other curriculum was in evidence. The library budget is split between digital resources and print material. The

library webpage is a center for disseminating scheduling information and provides access to digital resources available for all subject areas. The library uses its physical collection, computer workstations and peripheral equipment to promote modern research methodology. Practices range from accessing databases, using Google Search effectively, navigating the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC), evaluating web resources, and generating proper citations using EasyBib. The physical collection of the library was weeded and re-catalogued during the 2012-2013 school year. The online Follett Destiny catalog and databases are available to all students at school and home. In addition to the physical collection, the library purchases online services and digital resources, such as Libguides and EasyBib. The collection of 6,586 books is a work in progress. The librarian is currently working in conjunction with the principal to implement new, technology-focused library collection development strategies that will work hand in hand with the new 1:1 Chromebooks initiative starting in 2014-15 school year. The library is currently open from 7:10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Although the library is fully staffed, it has yet to integrate curriculum and instruction in collaboration with all stakeholders across the curriculum. When library/media services staff are actively engaged in the development and implementation of the school's curriculum they, and the facility, are better able to support the staff in the delivery of instruction and students in becoming independent learners. (library/media staff, teachers, self-study)

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff. WSHS employs 14 full-time special education teachers, a school psychologist, two evaluation team leaders, three Section 504 coordinators, and 26 paraprofessionals. The staff also includes many district-shared positions such as an occupational therapist, occupational therapy assistants, a speech and language pathologist/consultant, physical therapists, and an ELL family liaison. The school also shares an adaptive physical educator and an educational technology coordinator. Additionally, a speech and language assistant, three sheltered English immersion teachers, one ELL assistant, one applied behavioral specialist, and internal academic support staff provide educational, behavioral and emotional support to identified students. Special educators collaborate and encourage inclusion within the general classroom. However, in some regular education classes, observation and conversations suggest that there is an imbalance in placement of special needs students. Additional supports are provided through outside resources including vision services and augmentative communication services, vocational services, which includes job coaching, vocational exploration, work study programs, social pragmatic language support and psychological supportive services. Other educational support services exist in the form of Read 180, learning center settings and 21st century learning portable labs that utilize Chromebooks. Students receive a technology evaluation through a speech and language pathologist. Additional support is implemented by plans and programs such as Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative educational and vocational assistance. WSHS provides ongoing assessment using relevant data, including Individual Education Plans, initial evaluations, three-year evaluations, quarterly progress reports, MCAS Alternative assessments, and MCAS-Alt portfolio assessments. While relevant data is used to improve student services, there is no evidence that shows relevant feedback from the school community exists to ensure that each student achieves the schools 21st century learning expectation. (teachers, school support staff, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The comprehensive information sent out in various formats by guidance and the administration regarding services to students
2. The Terrier House professional learning community to transition freshmen into the high school culture

3. The effort of the school nursing staff to collaborate with a wide range of constituents and outside agencies to ensure the health and safety of all students
4. The initiative to create a liaison with the Chamber of Commerce to reach out to ELL families
5. The 21st century technologies available to all students
6. The collaborative use of various technologies
7. The high degree of collaboration among student support service providers

Recommendations:

1. Continue to build the library collection both in print and digital collection to meet the needs of all students and staff
2. Develop library/media connections to ensure library services are engaged in the implementation of the curriculum that supports and enhances student achievement
3. Develop formal strategies for securing feedback from a variety of sources including parents, students, and staff to improve student services programs
4. Develop and implement a formal, written comprehensive guidance curriculum as well as implement the Program Audit system to ensure that it impacts student learning



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 engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.
8. The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

Conclusions

The community and district's governing body has sufficiently supported dependable funding for a wide range of West Springfield High School's programs and services with reliable funding for professional and support staff personnel, ongoing professional development, curriculum revision, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies in a level service budgetary environment. Various grants have been accessed to supplement WSHS' funding needs. The district participated in *Race to the Top (RTTT)*, which granted the school district close to one million dollars used to support curriculum revision and realignment as well as teacher training in various pedagogical sound instructional methods. The Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative (MMSI) grant program has funded professional development opportunities and stipends for teachers in math, science, and English, and has increased Advanced Placement (AP) offerings and enrollment in these departments. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the average per pupil expenditure for FY 2012-2013 for the West Springfield School District was \$13,039 compared to the state average of \$13,636. Sources of revenue include 53 percent local; 40 percent state; with the remainder from federal and other sources. Local property taxes for school expenditures are earmarked at 32.6 percent. WSHS's budgetary process begins with the department chairs or team leaders who submit requests for equipment and supplies to the principal, who in turn submits them to the central office. Before the school budget is presented to the mayor, he asks for three different budgets: one with level funding, one with a 5 percent decrease, and a budget with a 10 percent decrease. This year, the school has rolled out its one-to-one technology initiative with students and staff. Each student in the building has been issued a Chromebook device. WSHS shares its technology support personnel with other schools in the district. New technologies and applications are made available to the various district schools on as-needed basis. New technologies rotate into use with no formal district plan beyond meeting the needs of a particular school or teacher. WSHS allows for faculty to participate in professional development, which is district driven, throughout the school year. Plans for the 2014-2015 school year include specially designed professional development that aligns with the needs of the high school with a focus on the effective analysis of MCAS data to address and remedy the school's Level 3 status. The faculty will be divided into groups based on their understanding of data that is driving the school toward a Level 3 school on the Frameworks for Accountability and Assistance Level placement scale. The school is planning to use professional development to find ways in which the school can improve. Because the high school opened for students and staff in February 2014, the support and financial implications for the operation and maintenance of the new building are still being determined. As a result, support staff and maintenance personnel have expressed the need for more extensive system and technology training. The sufficient funding by the community and governing body to support school programs, services, professional development and support staff, professional development, curriculum revisions, technology support, and instruction materials provides the resources necessary for students' achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (panel presentation, school leadership, teachers, students, teacher interviews, parents, facility tour, self-study)

While the school is a new facility, there is no evidence of a plan to ensure the proper operation and maintenance of the building. During the day, the head custodian and two custodians are available. Approximately, seven custodians work from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Although the school plant is well maintained, staff reports that some areas are not being cleaned on a daily basis. Even with seven custodians in the afternoon/evening shift, inconsistencies with the cleanliness and maintenance of the new facility were reported by staff; namely, ceramics and art rooms, bathrooms, science labs, locker rooms, hallways and general daily upkeep. There are two full-time groundskeepers responsible for the regular upkeep of grounds at all the district schools and athletic fields. All maintenance work orders and equipment needs are submitted electronically. Trained and licensed professionals are contracted to

maintain and repair specialized infrastructure. A plan is in place to hire an HVAC technician and a building systems coordinator. Because of the newness of the facility, there is a growth period of at least 18 months for the HVAC system to operate fully. Due to the newness of the school, a specific facility plan cannot yet be implemented as it is impossible to anticipate many of the unknown problems that may arise in the near future and, therefore, at this time the full cost operation, maintenance and services cannot be estimated. For example, the new parking lots have obstacles like islands and walkways which were not anticipated and may increase the cost of snow removal. WSHS has a structured "Help Desk Request" protocol in place for teachers and district employee to report problems with technology. The network administrator, located in the WSHS library/media center, is responsible for all technology and addresses helpdesk requests. There is a computer technician located in the high school to assist the network administrator. All stored computer equipment is kept in locked facilities with the network administrator charged with the responsibility for maintaining an electronic inventory of all equipment. No plan is yet in place for the Chromebook initiative, specifically with the end of the year returns, maintenance plans, and future usage. While the school has many different funded initiatives, there is a no plan in place for managing the facility, the maintenance staff, and the use of Chromebooks in the future. When an appropriate plan is developed and implemented, the building will be properly maintained on a daily basis and Chromebooks will have a set standard of care and expectations, both of which will help promote an environment in which students are better able to achieve the school's stated expectations for learning. (self-study, facility tour, teacher interviews, school leadership, school support staff, department leaders, central office personnel)

The community provides reliable funding for school needs that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes, and staffing needs, facility needs, and technology, and capital improvements however, there is no long-term plan in place that all of these important areas. Key grants such as *Race to the Top*, Level 3 state funding, and a National Education Association (NEA) grant, awarded to the West Springfield Education Association, have helped the district meet new challenges with innovative programs. Long-range district planning takes future student enrollment and incurred staffing needs into account. The FY 2013 Foundation Program (Education Reform) statement reports a budgetary increase to the minimum local contribution of \$332,175 in FY 2012, an increase of \$640,850 in FY 2013, and a decrease in the local contribution of \$123,071 in FY 2014. The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) reimbursed the school district 80 percent for construction of their new building. The administration creates the annual program of studies, which details course offerings for the upcoming academic year, and shares them with the community. In response to changes in enrollment, staffing, student interest, state regulations, funding and the school improvement plan, the school revises courses, services, and program offerings in the program of studies. Available funding permits the school and the district to address the district and school improvement plans and maintain the level of educational services the citizens of West Springfield expect from their schools. When long-range plans for programs and services, enrollment changes, staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements are developed and implemented, the school will be able to create a stable and sustainable environment for teaching and learning and, as a result, students will be better able access the school's 21st century curriculum and achieve success. (self-study, facility tour, teacher interviews, school leadership, central office personnel, department leaders)

The faculty and building administrators at WSHS are actively involved in the development and implementations of the budget. Funding at the state and local levels has been uncertain and, as a result, the district needs to present three different budget options: a level funded budget, a budget with a 5 percent cut, and a budget with a 10 percent cut. The budget development process at WSHS typically begins in the fall. The current administration asks the department chairs for input related to their

respective departments. In turn, the department chairs ask their department members for their input and then provide recommendations to the principal. The administration reviews the data and develops the total building budget, which they then recommend to the central office. Administrators and department chairs incorporate a programmatic review which assists in adding or deleting courses, modifying graduation requirements, and changing the delivery of instruction. The School Council is also part of this review process. The budget must be approved by the school committee, mayor, and the town council. Once approved, the budget is implemented by the central office and the school administration is notified of the new budget, which includes each line item, the budgeted amount, the amount expended, and the amount encumbered. When the budget accurately reflects the input of the faculty in the development and implementation of the budget regarding the priorities needed to support student learning, there is an assurance that student learning needs will be considered and met. (self-study, teacher interviews, school leadership, teachers, department leaders)

West Springfield High School's site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. Due to the new facility which has been operating since February 2014, the students, faculty, and staff have been able to experience and embrace the high quality school programs and services which include the incorporation of 21st century technologies. There is wireless Internet connectivity throughout the facility and classrooms are equipped with BriteLinks™, ActiveInspire™, and Hovercam™ technologies. All students have been provided with a Chromebook™ which allow the students and the faculty to interact both in and out of school. There are five large group instruction spaces (LGI) including a mini-theater and an additional LGI space available for use within the library/media center which is dedicated to specific academic disciplines. The LGIs are equipped with a media station that includes a docking station for faculty laptops, wireless microphones, and a BlueRay player. Classrooms within the academic disciplines feature trapezoidal desks that allow for flexible seating arrangement to support dynamic and varied instructional strategies. Science classrooms feature lab benches which allow for increased student collaboration during labs and other class activities. The main office suite includes the guidance department which houses one adjustment counselor, and five guidance counselors. The guidance area also houses six offices, one meeting room, and a career center. In Terrier House, the ninth grade academic wing, there is one guidance counselor and one adjustment counselor. In the Alternative School, there is one adjustment counselor. The athletics office area includes two private offices, one full-time secretary, and a full-time athletic director. In the health office, there are two certified nurses and two work stations as well as four private sick bays and one private office. There is one treatment room and one storage room. There are also two handicap accessible bathrooms. The gymnasium includes three full basketball courts, which can be divided into smaller areas, and a walking track on the second floor encircles the gymnasium. Also included inside the gymnasium are a cardio room, a weight room, and a multipurpose room. The swimming pool supports new course offerings in the physical education program. There is an artificial turf athletic field, tennis courts, outdoor track, and maintenance facility building. The auditorium is equipped with 650 seats, a large high quality projector and retractable screen. Overhead LED stage lighting is operated in the control booth by use of a touch screen control panel which allows for audio to be delivered through a high quality sound system. The open space concept cafeteria accommodates the student population comfortably in three thirty-minute lunches. Two large projection screens are located at both ends of the cafeteria. Because the school is able to provide all students and faculty with a new, well-equipped physical plant which supports and promotes high quality services and programs, and teaching and learning, teachers are better equipped and able to help students achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (panel presentation, self-study, facility tour, teachers, classroom observations, teacher interviews)

WSHS 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. The building is in compliance with all state and federal fire, safety, and health mandates. Documentation of compliance is maintained by the director of buildings and grounds, the food service director and the food lab teacher. Documentation is prominently displayed. Because West Springfield High School maintains the plant to meet all federal and state laws, students, faculty, and staff members who come to school daily feel safe and secure. (facility tour, central office personnel, students, classroom observations, self-study, certification documentation)

To some extent, the professional staff engages parents and families as partners in each student's education and reaches out to those families less connected with the school. The school district, the high school, and in the individual academic departments all have websites which are updated regularly. These websites give parents and families as well as students, access to useful information such as school and district calendars, the superintendent's blog, information about events within the schools in the district, the scope and sequence of the school's curricula, and available extracurricular activities/clubs. Teachers use a variety of ways to communicate with students at home or after school using technology, including the school's website, Google Drive, and Twitter. Teachers communicate on topics such as homework assignments, notes from class, worksheets, upcoming assessments, and links to outside resources. With the implementation of Chromebooks for everyone, students and teachers can collaborate, review and assess student work on Google Drive. Importantly, there is a link to the PowerSchool parent portal which enables students and parents to view students' grades, attendance, and teacher comments online. Additionally, the parents may access information about statewide tests and community resources such as the West Springfield Public Library, the Local Teen Center, and West Springfield Partnership for Education, as well as pertinent topics like Internet safety, bullying prevention, and nurturing children. The new facility is equipped with digital flat screen display boards which broadcast messages and information of upcoming events. The school offers translated documents for students who are English language learners and non-English speaking families. The school uses SchoolMessenger™ to send automated messages, including voice messages, text messages, and emails to families about upcoming events, school cancellations and delays, crisis updates, and statewide testing dates. Teachers communicate with parents regarding their child through phones messages and email correspondence. The school offers parent/guardian events such as Back-to-School Night, parent teacher conferences, and Open House, all of which are often poorly attended. There are additional parents' nights for the ELL population. The purpose of this meeting is to make families feel welcome in the school through interpreters and topics that are important to ELL students and their families. There are parent boards and councils available for parents to become involved in the school community such as Parent Advisory Council, School Council, and parents of Terrier House ninth graders, the Terrier House Board. Parents are also invited to attend school committee meetings. Athletic teams, school band, and the drama club have parent Boosters to help raise money for specific interests. Broader and deeper contact with families, particularly those families who are not well connected to the school, will enhance the partnership that results from close school engagement and will lead to increased student learning. (parents, teacher interviews, department leaders, school leadership, teachers)

WSHS develops community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. The development of parent partnerships support student learning through the West Springfield Parent Advisory Council which supports special education programs and students. Students at WSHS created a community school partnership called Terrier Closet which supports student learning and well-being by helping students in need. There are many community partnerships that support student learning. Guidance has several community-based partnerships that support student welfare. Rick's Place, Bay State Health Network, YMCA, Phoenix House, and James Levine and Associates provide services for

students in need or crisis. The Bethany Church and Lutheran Church assist families that are new to the community and are in need of support services. The Lions Club sponsors youth contests and grant need-based support for special education students. The Kiwanis Club sponsors the Key Club. The West Springfield Public Library partners with the WSHS media center. The Ramapogue Historical Society and the West Springfield Historical Commission have supported projects through the social studies department. Business partnerships that support student learning include the Computer Business Technology Engineering Program with local colleges, banks and businesses to deliver curriculum that teaches real-world skills. West Springfield Partnership for education, a coalition of local businesses offers a variety of programs such as teacher and student grants. K&M Electronics assists with the Robotics program. WSHS has developed higher education partnerships that support student learning such as The Pathways to Prosperity program, which, in collaboration with Springfield Technical Community College (STCC), helps fifty ninth grade students gain the skills necessary for advanced manufacturing jobs. Westfield State University sponsors activities for student participation. Lastly, Holyoke Community College hosts a “Credit for Life” fair that helps students gain life skills and improve understanding of personal finances. There are multiple scholarships available for graduating seniors from the community and businesses. Despite the lack of parent involvement, WSHS students connect to the larger community, increase student involvement in that community, and provide opportunities for authentic learning beyond the school walls. (self-study, teacher interviews, department leaders, parents, school leadership, school support staff)

Commendations:

1. The Terrier Closet which is an exemplar of community involvement within the school
3. The community support for the new facility
4. The active participation of teachers, supervisors, and administrators in the development of the budget
5. The extensive community partnerships that provide both services and educational opportunities for students
6. The effort of administration and maintenance staff to keep the building current with health and safety regulations and codes
7. The 21st century technologies available in all classrooms, supporting all instruction, learning, and communication
8. The one-to-one technology initiative which supports teaching and learning and allows students and the faculty to collaborate both in and out of school

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a plan to expand parental involvement
2. Improve parent communication and follow-up
3. Create and implement a formal long-rang plan to address future programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements
4. Provide training for support staff in the areas of technology and the systems maintenance
5. Develop and implement a plan for the effective and efficient maintenance, collection, and redistribution of student Chromebooks
6. Address custodial assignments to ensure that the facility is appropriately cleaned on a daily basis
7. Address the need for the coordination of building maintenance and the provision of reliable HVAC services

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 at West Springfield 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 West Springfield 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 xx. 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.

The visiting committee extends its appreciation to West Springfield High School for the hospitality extended throughout the visit. From the inspiring video during the panel presentation and the wonderful welcoming reception, to the comfortable accommodations provided to the visiting team, all of which contributed to a very positive experience for visiting team members. The visiting committee is very appreciative of the effort expended by everyone at West Springfield High School to produce an especially candid and accurate self-study. This contributed to making the work of the visiting committee significantly more efficient which allowed the members to focus more appropriately on crafting purposeful and productive recommendations to help drive school improvement. The visiting committee also thanks the school's faculty and staff for their participation in various meetings, including the thirty-two teacher interviews on Sunday afternoon, and for the willingness of teachers to welcome visiting team members into their classrooms as the team shadowed sixteen West Springfield High School

students for half a day each. Thanks as well to the shadowed and interviewed students, parents, school board members, and central office personnel who took time from their professional and personal schedules to meet with the visiting committee members on Sunday and during the three school days of the visit.

Finally, congratulations and thank you to the co-chairs of the West Springfield High School steering committee, the remaining members of the steering committee, the chairs of the seven self-study subcommittees, and to the superintendent, principal, and administrative staff members for their assistance and their support throughout the visit.

**West Springfield High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
October 19-22, 2014**

Visiting Committee

<p>Paul Mangelinkx New England Association of Schools and Colleges Burlington, MA 01803</p>	<p>Kathy LaFlash Nipmuc Regional High School Upton, MA 01568</p>
<p>Dr. Ruth Gilbert-Whitner Whitman Hanson Regional School District Whitman, MA 02382</p>	<p>Matthew Bishop Pittsfield High School Pittsfield, MA 01201</p>
<p>Judith Campbell Hamden High School Hamden, CT 06514</p>	<p>Dr. Kathleen Koljian Windham High School Willimantic, CT 06226</p>
<p>Megan Normandin Fitchburg High School Fitchburg, MA 01420</p>	<p>Dr. Sarah Bousquet Tantasqua Regional High School Fiskedale, MA 01518</p>
<p>Sarah Loveland Simsbury High School Simsbury, CT 06070</p>	<p>Kathryn Sheridan Pelham High School Pelham, N H 03076</p>
<p>Thomas Davis Burncoat High School Worcester, MA 01606</p>	<p>Katherine Gabriel Whitman-Hanson Regional High School Whitman, MA 02382</p>
<p>Dustin Santomenna Milford High School Milford, MA 01757</p>	<p>Heidi Hurley Braintree High School Braintree, MA 02184</p>
<p>Pamela Graves Millbury Memorial Junior-Senior High School Millbury, MA 01527</p>	<p>Tina Rigas Monomoy Regional High School Harwich, MA 02645</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

West Springfield High School

Commendations:

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

1. The use of a dynamic and collaborative process informed by current research-based best-practices to identify and commit to the school's core values about teaching and learning
2. The implementation of specific changes to school policies to align with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
3. The effort to raise expectations for student learning and promote a higher level of student achievement
4. The abundance of activities and programs which support the diverse needs and backgrounds of the student body and provide opportunities for them to achieve the school's academic, social, and civic expectations for learning

Curriculum

1. The use of higher order thinking skills, inquiry, problem solving and cross-disciplinary learning in most courses and levels
2. The cross-disciplinary collaboration among Terrier House teachers resulting in interdisciplinary projects that include almost the entire ninth grade
3. The implementation of PLCs in mathematics, English and the Terrier House
4. The new facilities, technology, resourceful staff, and supplies and materials, which provide multiple opportunities for students to grow and become involved in the WSHS community
5. The development and adoption of a common curriculum template across all disciplines

Instruction

1. The emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills that have been implemented as a result of recent curriculum initiatives and support the 21st century learning
2. The engagement of students in cross-disciplinary instruction in the Terrier House
3. The creation of math and English coaching positions to align curriculum and assist teachers in the analysis of data and improving instructional practice
4. The opportunities and programs the school provides for students to personalize instruction such as CTEC, P2P, Life-Skills, and the Alternative High School
5. The professional development opportunities within the school to improve instruction through workshops and voluntary training sessions in teaching methods and technology integration
6. The extensive effort to integrate technology into daily instructional practices through the one-to-one initiative
7. The use of benchmark exams and common assessments to analyze effectiveness of instructional practices

Assessment of and for Student Learning

1. The pervasive collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data to identify and respond to disparities in student achievement

2. The regular distribution of department- and teacher-created corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments
3. The extensive use of a range of formative and summative assessment strategies
4. The purposeful and habitual use of formative assessment to inform and adapt instruction
5. The use of subject-area benchmark assessment data to improve teaching and learning

School Culture and Leadership

1. The diverse school culture that reflects high expectations for student behavior and fosters a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment
2. The implementation of and commitment to school-wide programs that foster a positive and safe school culture
3. The commitment to the development of Professional Learning Communities to improve teaching and learning
4. The introduction of peer observation to encourage collaboration and allow teachers to reflect upon and improve their own instruction
5. The optimal student load and class size which enables teachers to personalize learning for their students and help them achieve the school's 21st century expectations for learning
6. The commitment to ensuring all students have access to the curriculum by fostering heterogeneity and by removing barriers to Advanced Placement classes
7. The collaboration of the superintendent, school committee, and principal

School Resources for Learning

1. The comprehensive information sent out in various formats by guidance and the administration regarding services to students
2. The Terrier House professional learning community to transition freshmen into the high school culture
3. The effort of the school nursing staff to collaborate with a wide range of constituents and outside agencies to ensure the health and safety of all students
4. The initiative to create a liaison with the Chamber of Commerce to reach out to ELL families
5. The 21st century technologies available to all students
6. The collaborative use of various technologies
7. The high degree of collaboration among student support service providers

Community Resources for Learning

1. The Terrier Closet which is an exemplar of community involvement within the school
2. The community support for the new facility
3. The active participation of teachers, supervisors, and administrators in the development of the budget
4. The extensive community partnerships that provide both services and educational opportunities for students
5. The effort of administration and maintenance staff to keep the building current with health and safety regulations and codes

6. The 21st century technologies available in all classrooms, supporting all instruction, learning, and communication
7. The one-to-one technology initiative which supports teaching and learning and allows students and the faculty to collaborate both in and out of school

Recommendations:

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

1. Review and revise school-wide holistic rubrics to analytic rubrics and ensure each component within learning expectations is represented and clearly defined with identified acceptable levels of performance for each rubric
2. Utilize revised school-wide rubrics consistently in all areas of the school community
3. Devise a plan or strategy to ensure the inclusion of parents, students, and community in the process of developing, reviewing, and revising the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
4. Develop and implement a process for review and revision of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

Curriculum

1. Include the 21st century learning expectations in all curriculum guides
2. Ensure all students have the opportunity to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Provide the necessary time, leadership, and training to ensure longitudinal curriculum development, revision and alignment for all courses
4. Develop and utilize formal curriculum review cycles and provide time for research, review, and articulation of curriculum and data collection/analysis
5. Develop processes for planning and supporting a wider range of cross-disciplinary opportunities for integrated learning

Instruction

1. Provide equitable time for all departments and grade levels to consistently examine and align teachers' instructional practices with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
2. Develop more formal opportunities to engage students in cross-disciplinary experiences
3. Ensure that teachers continue to adjust their instructional practices to strategically differentiate and create lessons in which students apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks
4. Develop and implement a process to allow parents and students opportunities to provide feedback to teachers on improving instructional practices
5. Provide more staff training and technical support on using technology to analyze data and alter instructional practices based on that data

Assessment of and for Student Learning

1. Develop a formal process, based on school-wide analytic rubrics, to assess individual student and whole school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations

2. Implement a formal process for communicating individual student and whole-school progress in achieving 21st century learning expectations
3. Regularly communicate to the students, the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations prior to each unit of study
4. Expand and equitably distribute opportunities for formal collaboration to create, analyze, and revise formative and summative assessments
5. Increase the practice of offering specific and corrective feedback using school-wide and departmental rubrics
6. Expand and equitably distribute opportunities for teachers to examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice
7. Create and implement a process for the review of grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

School Culture and Leadership

1. Increase opportunity for teachers, students, and parents to engage in meaningful and defined decision-making roles within the school
2. Provide meaningful professional development for teachers that supports school-wide initiatives and school-wide academic, civic, and social expectations
3. Provide equitable professional collaboration time for all faculty
4. Implement a systematic program or process to ensure that every student is connected with an adult, who is not their counselor, that assists students in achieving the school's mission and 21st century learning expectations
5. Ensure that all student achievement is recognized equitably

School Resources for Learning

1. Continue to build the library collection both in print and digital collection to meet the needs of all students and staff
2. Develop library/media connections to ensure library services are engaged in the implementation of the curriculum that supports and enhances student achievement
3. Develop formal strategies for securing feedback from a variety of sources including parents, students, and staff to improve student services programs
4. Develop and implement a formal, written comprehensive guidance curriculum as well as implement the Program Audit system to ensure that it impacts student learning

Community Resources for Learning

1. Develop and implement a plan to expand parental involvement
2. Improve parent communication and follow-up
3. Create and implement a formal long-rang plan to address future programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements
4. Provide training for support staff in the areas of technology and the systems maintenance
5. Develop and implement a plan for the effective and efficient maintenance, collection, and redistribution of student Chromebooks
6. Address custodial assignments to ensure that the facility is appropriately cleaned on a daily basis

7. Address the need for the coordination of building maintenance and the provision of reliable HVAC services

