

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

Commission on Public Schools



Committee on Public Secondary Schools

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

Brookfield, CT

December 02, 2018 - December 05, 2018

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

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

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values and Beliefs About Learning

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Teaching and Learning Standard

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

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

CURRICULUM

Teaching and Learning Standard

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

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

INSTRUCTION

Teaching and Learning Standard

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

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

ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Teaching and Learning Standard

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

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

core values and beliefs about learning.

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Support Standard

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

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

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

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Support Standard

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

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

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

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Support Standard

The achievement of the school's 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 community 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.

School and Community Summary

School and Community Summary

Brookfield is a picturesque suburban community of 16,466 residents in northern Fairfield County in Western Connecticut. Our town is bisected into two parts by the heavily traveled Route 7 and its bypass which opened in 2009 after years of planning. The western section of the town borders Candlewood Lake and accounts for much of the commercial real estate, while the eastern side of town contains most of the schools and municipal services. A municipal center with an adjacent police department, fire department, and senior center were constructed near the new post office in the 1980s. The public library is also located in the eastern section of town. There is a volunteer fire department in each of the two sections of Brookfield. Three of the four public schools, including the high school, are located in the eastern section of town. All school property grounds and other athletic facilities are maintained by the Park and Recreation Department. The municipalities of Danbury and New Milford border Brookfield to the south and north respectively. Both offer additional commercial opportunities and hospitals to Brookfield residents. Newtown lies on the town's eastern border, which is defined in part by the other man-made lake, Lake Lillinonah. On the northeastern corner of Brookfield lies the small bedroom community of Bridgewater. Brookfield is easily accessed by several heavily traveled state roads and the major highway I-84.

According to the 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, the median household income is \$112,674 and 96.4 percent of residents over 25 have at least a high school education. The latest unemployment figures for Brookfield show 5.4 percent unemployment rate. The largest employers in the town are Shoprite, Costco, Kohl's, Photronics, and Brookfield Public Schools. There is a small percentage of residents (2.9 percent) who have incomes below the poverty level.

There are four public schools serving 2,681 students. [Center School](#) serves students in grades Pre-K-1; [Huckleberry Hill School](#) serves students in grades 2-4; [Whisconier Middle School](#) serves grades 5-8; and the [Brookfield High School](#) serves students in grades 9-12 with an adjunct alternative high school. The community can follow BPSD events on Charter channels 192 and 194 as well as our [YouTube channel](#).

Brookfield High School was built in 1959 on a pastoral 150-acre site as Long Meadow Hill Junior High School. The building has had a series of renovations and was renamed Brookfield High School when it graduated its first class in 1967. The most recent expansion was completed in 2008 and includes a video production studio, renovated library learning commons, classroom updates, and two new wings which house science, social studies, and business classrooms. The onsite athletic field renovations were completed in 2009.

There are two private schools in Brookfield: [St. Joseph Parochial School](#) (grades preK-8) and [Christian Life Academy](#) (grades K-8). There is also a regional Catholic high school, [Immaculate High School](#) located in Danbury, and [Canterbury Preparatory School](#) in New Milford; approximately 9.75 percent of students in Brookfield choose to attend these independent schools.

The current population for Brookfield High School is 866 for grades 9-12. The student body is 81.5 percent White, 7.9 percent Asian, 8 percent Hispanic, 1.9 percent Black/African American, and .3 percent American Indian. The minority population at the high school has increased from 6.7 percent in 2004 to 18.1 percent in 2017. Subsequently, the district has established a program for English learners (EL) and an administrative position to coordinate the K-12 program. The population of the high school has shown a consistent decrease in recent years (2012-2013: 918; 2013-2014: 901; 2014-2015: 895; 2015-2016: 880) that mirrors a projected population decrease from 16,904 (2015) to 15,780 (2020).

Currently, there are 66 teachers on staff with a 96 percent attendance rate in 2016-2017. The median class size in 2016-2017 is 19 students and the average student load for a teacher is 95 students.

After reviewing our priorities, examining research, visiting schools, and discussing options, the [A/B Block Schedule](#) was selected as our schedule and implemented in 2009-2010. Students have four 83-minute blocks per day with two 24-minute sections at midday to accommodate lunch and a "flex block" that can be used for advisory activities, tutoring, independent reading, homework, and making up missed assignments. The block

scheduling has transformed our teacher meeting times. Teachers now have collaborative learning time (CLT) which allows teams to align assessments to standards, analyze student data, and adjust instruction accordingly.

There are several grouping arrangements for students according to the following levels: academic, honors and Advanced Placement. Advanced Placement (AP) courses offerings have increased to 20 courses with 72 percent of students achieving scores of 3 or higher. In the 2016-2017 school year, students took 485 AP exams reflecting 28 percent of our student population.

The alternative school on site receives its population through teacher recommendations and currently has 10 students. Brookfield High School receives students from the Whisconier Middle School and a small percentage from St. Joseph's Elementary School, Christian Life Academy, and from the neighboring community of Sherman which has no high school. The average daily attendance rate for students in 2016-2017 was 98 percent.

The graduation rate was 98.4 percent with a dropout rate of .9 in 2016-2017. Brookfield provides opportunities at the [Brookfield Learning Center](#) (BLC) for students who are in need of academic intervention and/or enrichment.

In 2017, 207 students took the SAT with mean scores of 570 and 554 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math, respectively. In the same academic year, 203 juniors sophomores took the PSAT with mean scores of 541 and 512 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math, respectively. In addition, 206 sophomores took the PSAT earning mean scores of 499 and 482 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math, respectively. Finally, 119 freshmen had mean scores of 482 and 459 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math, respectively.

The class of 2017 had 80 percent of its graduates attend four-year colleges, 12 percent attend two-year colleges and 2 percent joined the military or other employment. Secondary educational opportunities are offered at the nearby [Henry Abbott Technical School](#) (Danbury) or at the vocational agriculture program at [Nonnewaug High School](#) (Woodbury). Students can earn college credit from Western Connecticut State University and the [University of Connecticut](#) in a variety of departments.

There are a number of school-business partnerships including lectures and scholarships offered by Chick Fil A, Boehringer Ingelheim, Danbury Hospital, and UPS. A successful robotics program begun in 2002 staffed with students from both the high school and other area towns and coordinated by faculty members and local engineers receives sponsorship from corporations and private individuals including Lockheed Martin, United Technologies Corporation, and Sealed Air. There is also a great deal of support given by the Brookfield business community in sponsoring ads for student athletic calendars, the yearbook, the school newspaper, and programs for the band and color guard, and drama club productions.

The current freshmen, Class of 2021, will be required to complete 50 hours of community service as a graduation requirement.

According to the Director of Business and Operations, in 2015-16 the school's per-pupil spending (\$14,125) was lower than the state average (\$16,259). The school expenditures comprise 65 percent of the town budget.

Related Files

- [2016-01-26-11:31_5YPRMEMO1.doc](#)

Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations

Academic Expectations

Brookfield High School students demonstrate their ability to solve authentic problems by:

- Conducting proper **research** in order to gather, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of sources
- **Thinking critically** in the course of developing opinions, making decisions, or arriving at solutions
- **Communicating** their research, opinions, decisions, or solutions in a variety of formats to a variety of audiences.

Social Expectations

Brookfield High School students demonstrate their commitment to our learning community by:

- **Collaborating** effectively to achieve a goal
- Exhibiting **respectful behavior**

Civic Expectation

Brookfield High School students demonstrate their commitment to engaged citizenship by:

Positively contributing to the community through **active involvement**

Introduction

Introduction

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

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

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

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

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

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

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

The self-study of Brookfield High School extended over a period of 10 school months from September 2017 to June 2018. The visiting team was pleased to note that a variety of students, members of the school's PTSSO, and members of the community had opportunities to review and comment upon the self-study.

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

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Team

A visiting team of 16 members was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Brookfield High School. The visiting team members spent four days in Brookfield, Connecticut, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the members of the visiting team represented classroom teachers, library/media specialists, school administrators, and central office administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Brookfield High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 48.5 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day
- a total of 12 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

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

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

Standard 1 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The Brookfield High School (BHS) community engaged in a dynamic, collaborative, and somewhat inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.

In February 2015, a committee composed of five teachers, two administrators, a student, a parent, and a community member consulted a variety of district studies, staff surveys, and NEASC models, as well as research on 21st century skills, to develop a list of terms and expressions that the committee used to draft a core values document. Several small and large group faculty groupings participated in a feedback and revision cycle, culminating with adoption by the full faculty in January 2016. Almost two years later, the faculty met in groups to consider the presence of the core values and beliefs in the curriculum and around the school. While a desire exists to have the students take ownership of the core values, there has not yet been a sustained, systematic effort to develop in the students an understanding of each element of the statement other than to have it posted in every room in and around the school building and to have it read aloud each day.

When all stakeholders are actively engaged in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to core values and beliefs about learning, then the core values and beliefs will reflect the beliefs and values of the entire school community, and students, teachers, and parents will better comprehend the connections between the daily school activities and the achievement of the school's 21st century expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- students
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 1 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Brookfield High School (BHS) has identified challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies. While the specific and measurable criteria for success for the three academic competencies - researching, critical thinking, and communication - have been defined through school-wide standards-based rubrics, no such instructional and evaluative tool has yet been created for the social competencies - "collaborating effectively to achieve a goal" and "exhibiting respectful behavior" - or the civic expectation of "positively contributing to the community through active involvement,"

The school is considering using current measures, such as attendance, discipline, and co-curricular participation as the means through which individual student and whole-school progress could be gauged in meeting social and civic competencies, but the school has not yet identified a means of aggregating and quantifying these data. The school community is also considering an electronic portfolio system as a means of collecting information on students' volunteer service, acts of kindness, charitable work, and contributions to a positive school culture, but this idea is also in its infancy and has not yet been finalized. In addition, for these collection and/or cataloguing mechanisms to be of any valid benefit, all members of the BHS community have yet to collaboratively develop a common understanding of the identifiable behaviors by which students demonstrate their commitment to the learning community: effective collaboration, respectful behavior, and engaged citizenship.

Because the school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic competencies, students have a clear understanding of the academic expectations and can work purposefully to meet those expectations. When social and civic standards are defined to the same level of specificity as the academic standards and defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement, targets can be defined and monitored, ensuring all students will be able to reach high levels of achievement in all academic, social, and civic expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 1 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Brookfield High School's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are somewhat reflected in the culture of the school, but have not yet begun to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and are not purposefully used to guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.

Brookfield High School (BHS) has created six challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations, three of which are evident in school-wide rubrics and have been implemented in all classes as of fall 2018. Teachers, administrators, and staff have begun the process of helping students understand their civic and social responsibilities. For example, students engaged in learning from the Rachel's Challenge organization culminating in the formation of a Friends of Rachel club, which promotes kindness, acceptance, and positivity within the school community, and, beginning with the graduating Class of 2021, students must complete 50 hours of community service.

When Brookfield High 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, all stakeholders will have a sense of ownership and pride in Brookfield High School as well as the tools to assist students in the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- students

Standard 1 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Brookfield High School has no formal process or plan to review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities. When the school develops a plan and a formal process by which they review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities, BHS will be assured that its values, beliefs and learning expectations reflect the changing needs of students as well as the changing priorities of the school community, thereby ensuring ownership by and commitment from all stakeholders.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 1 Commendations

Commendation

The identification of core values and beliefs that accurately reflect the culture of the school community

Commendation

The thoughtful process undertaken in the development of the specific and measurable criteria for success on the standards-based rubrics for the academic expectations for learning

Standard 1 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement the use of specific and measurable criteria for success for the civic and social expectations for learning that clearly define targeted high levels of achievement

Recommendation

Ensure that 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

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan for a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process to regularly review and revise the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities

Standard 2 Indicator 1

Conclusions

Brookfield High School is beginning the process of creating a purposefully designed curriculum that will enable all students to practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Brookfield Public Schools are in the second year of professional development designed to enable teachers to create a purposefully designed standards-based curriculum, using Rubicon Atlas as the platform to host the district's curriculum. Currently, the emphasis is on identifying standards for each unit, along with big ideas, essential questions, content, skills, and vocabulary. They have not yet explicitly incorporated the 21st century academic expectations for learning, and there is not a provision for explicitly identifying these expectations within the template.

Although not explicitly expressed in the curricular documents, some Brookfield teachers are offering learning experiences related to each of the school's learning expectations. Based on observed and reviewed student work, 44 percent reflect experiences related to the school's 21st century skills. However, the Endicott survey indicates that only 47 percent of teachers believe that the school's formal curriculum design ensures that all students practice and achieve all of the school's learning expectations.

While Brookfield High School has created and articulated learning expectations and are beginning to offer some learning experiences related to them, only when the school's 21st century learning expectations are fully embedded in the curricular documents will teachers have a curriculum that purposefully connects course content to the school's 21st century learning expectations thus ensuring consistency in common courses and enhancing students' ability to master these expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- Endicott survey

Standard 2 Indicator 2

Conclusions

A few courses have a curriculum that is written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; some have begun to identify assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics. This curriculum work is in its infancy, and even these few courses have not yet begun to develop the learning plan section which will include instructional strategies and might enable teachers to embed the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Previous curriculum has been written in a variety of templates that do not consistently emphasize a standards-based approach. The school has adopted the use of Rubicon Atlas curriculum tracking software to house its curriculum and has developed a template following the Understanding by Design (UbD) model. The program provides a common format for all units of study that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills, instructional strategies, assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide rubrics or course-specific rubrics, but the template does not provide a specific place for the identification of the school's 21st century learning expectations to be explicitly embedded. The template does provide for the development of a learning plan which might enable teachers to specifically embed these expectations; however, none of the curriculum units that have been started have included information in this section of the template.

A few courses, such as Global Themes, English I, Earth and Energy Essentials, ninth and tenth grade physical education, and geometry, have listed some or all units of study and have identified essential questions, concepts, content, and skills. A few of these documents have begun to identify assessments, but few have included the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics. The school's 21st century learning expectations are not explicitly identified in any of the curriculum documents.

When all curriculum units of study are written in a common format that includes essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; instructional strategies, 21st century skills; and identified assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics, these documents will better drive content to enhance and improve student achievement.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- central office personnel

Standard 2 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Because the standards-based curriculum development process is in its infancy, there are no documents with completed learning plans - the portion of the template that houses instructional practice that would emphasize depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities outside of school, and informed and ethical use of technology.

The adoption of a common format for curriculum in Rubicon Atlas, through which courses will identify big ideas, essential questions, content, and skills, indicates that curriculum documents are being written to foster depth of understanding through inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills in all courses and levels. However, at this time few classes have completed these areas in Rubicon Atlas.

When all curricular documents are comprehensively written in the new format and include a complete and detailed learning plan that emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology, teachers will have the tools they need to provide students with many opportunities to practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- central office personnel
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Brookfield High School has a number of structures in place to ensure a clear alignment between a written and taught curriculum. The process of revising their curricular documents and housing them in Rubicon Atlas will enable all staff access to the written curriculum. Written curriculum is not complete for teachers to align with entirely, therefore, there is a limited degree of clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum.

Many departments are using their collaborative learning time (CLT) for curricular collaboration. In an observed Global Themes CLT, teachers of both academic and honors level courses were using the language of the standards to discuss the skills they taught and are planning to teach. The discussion in this CLT helps to ensure a common experience for all students taking these courses. This built-in time that is in place at Brookfield helps ensure that teachers are in fact teaching a similar curriculum. For a few departments further along in writing units in Rubicon Atlas, such as science, as units are being written, all teachers are following them.

Department chairs are charged with helping to ensure that teachers are teaching the written curriculum. These department leaders may conduct non-evaluative walk-throughs, review teacher grade books in PowerSchool, and attend some CLT sessions to assure alignment between written and taught curriculum.

The evaluation process also aims to ensure that there is alignment between the written curriculum and the taught curriculum. Domain two of the Common Core of Teaching (CCT) Rubric for Effective Teaching and the pre-observation planning form attempts to ensure that there is alignment between student learning and the written curriculum. Teachers establish student learning objectives (SLOs) that align with curriculum and standards and are evaluated on their success in doing so. How lessons are aligned with curriculum is one area in which teachers are evaluated. Although the curriculum writing is not complete in any subject area, teachers are still being evaluated on alignment to standards.

Once the curriculum is complete and stored in a manner that will allow all educators access, teachers will have the tools to clearly align all written and taught curriculum, and the platform will allow for living documents that allow for continual revision of curricula.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 2 Indicator 5

Conclusions

There is some curricular coordination between and among departments within the school. However, there is little vertical articulation among departments in the school and almost no articulation with the sending schools.

Brookfield High School has created a humanities department chair to oversee curriculum and evaluate instruction in English and social studies. Similarly, a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) department chair coordinates curricular areas and evaluates instruction. Brookfield has clearly identified a curriculum review cycle that includes the four phases of curriculum design, curriculum mapping, external alignment to standards, and standards-based grading and reporting. Currently, the core subjects (English, math, social studies, and science) are engaged in developing a standards-based curriculum under the direction of an outside consultant. The district's intent is to develop a train-the-trainer model, but this concept has not yet been fully implemented, resulting in a group of highly enthusiastic teachers who are building their expertise and another group of teachers who have had little experience to date. Some CLTs use their time to work on curriculum; others do not as there are several competing demands on this 83-minute block of time that occurs every four days. Teachers may also use department meeting time, release time, and receive paid extended duty time for curriculum writing.

There is limited vertical articulation within the school and with the sending schools in the district. CLT groups are generally course-based, which does not afford opportunities to work across disciplines. The K-12 department chairs in physical education and world languages have provided some professional development time for teachers to work on curriculum and have begun the curriculum development process. For example, some work has been done on the ninth and tenth grade physical education curriculum. Currently, there are monthly K-12 meetings within some core disciplines. These meetings are held after school, and any interested teachers may attend. However, vertical articulation is not the major focus of these meetings.

When there is planned and purposeful curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within Brookfield High School as well as with the sending schools, teachers will have the tools they need to design instruction based on a curriculum that builds on the skills that students acquire as they progress from kindergarten through grade 12, and students will have ample opportunities to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- department leaders
- central office personnel

Standard 2 Indicator 6

Conclusions

Brookfield High School's 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 program and other learning opportunities.

The average class size is at or below the board of education's class size guideline, but there are some classes that exceed these guidelines. According to the Endicott survey, 85 percent of students and 87 percent of parents agree that the school provides instructional materials that are needed. In addition to providing all students with Chromebooks, the school has three computer labs and a new digital language lab which can be used to support the implementation of the curriculum. The business class is also equipped with a computer lab to support its curriculum which is ever-changing to match the evolving business field. The initiative to provide students with one-to-one technology has also been helpful, as students feel they have resources readily available to them. This allows the promotion of 21st century learning, collaboration, and communication among students and between students and teachers. A writing/math center is also in place to allow students to drop in to seek extra help with math as well as with writing across all disciplines. The school also has shown dedication to supporting the curriculum by providing additional instructional and assessment materials, such as ABC-CLIO and Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Language (AAPPL).

The library learning commons (LLC) staff (two certified library/media specialists and a clerk) has also been very helpful in the search for resources for courses. The LLC provides an additional computer lab, a mobile cart, and additional desktop computers that can be used by students during their study halls and with specific classes when using the space. Beyond technology, the LLC has a vast collection of print and digital material. At times, teachers work collaboratively with the LLC staff to find resources and to help develop projects. For example, the Global Themes course has been provided with suggested resources from the LLC staff to use in their units. Business courses have discussed projects with the LLC staff to decide what is the best product for the assignment, and U.S. history teachers have found the LLC helpful when working on research and for the integration of citation and note-taking tools such as Noodletools, for students. The LLC staff give support outside of the classroom setting, as they often help with CLTs in providing resources for the entire curricular course team and provide a visible space for the teams to meet.

There is sufficient support to implement co-curricular programs, as is evident in the various opportunities students can participate, including sports, game club, and the newly created Rachel's Challenge. The school is willing to ensure students have the ability to create and participate in programs to which they can genuinely relate.

The school provides a breadth of other opportunities to their students. The offerings of various college-level programs, including Advanced Placement courses, UConn ECE, and courses that are articulated with Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) afford students the opportunity to experience college courses while still in high school. The school also provides an in-house alternative education program and online learning opportunities to help meet the needs of all students.

Because staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient for the implementation of the curriculum, including the co-curricular program and other learning opportunities, students have the tools and programs they need to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour

- teacher interview
- students
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Indicator 7

Conclusions

The district is beginning to 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 district has shown significant support by providing for an increase in curriculum and professional development funding the past two years. With increased funding, they have sent a team of 14 for intensive professional development called "Bold Moves Boot Camp." These staff members then have been tasked with providing training for other staff members; however, this has yet to be fully implemented. The district has also developed a curriculum review cycle that has started to be implemented. A consultant has been contracted to work with the district as teachers develop the new curriculum. The district and the school have restructured the roles of department leaders to be full-time curricular leaders in the areas of STEM and humanities and has created a K-12 world languages/ELL department chair to support the curriculum. However, not all staff feel they have sufficient support from these leaders beyond professional development and department meetings. Funds have also been allocated to support extended duty time to support some of the curriculum writing.

When the district consistently provides sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research, the school will be able to continually evolve with the needs of the school community and current research and therefore better inform the instruction taking place in the classroom to prepare students for our ever-changing world.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- school board
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey

Standard 2 Commendations

Commendation

The establishment and beginning use of a common writing format for curriculum and the adoption of a software package that provides access to curricula for all staff

Commendation

The intensive training in the Understanding by Design model afforded to teacher-leaders in a train-the-trainer model to enable ongoing and collaborative development of the curriculum

Commendation

The collaborative learning time for 83 minutes every four days afforded to teachers and department chairs to collaborate on the alignment of the taught curriculum with the written curriculum

Commendation

The increased funding for curriculum development and professional development and the strong, vocal commitment of the superintendent and board of education to make this funding a priority

Standard 2 Recommendations

Recommendation

Complete curriculum development for all courses using a common format

Recommendation

Ensure that all curriculum documents integrate and clearly refer to the specific learning expectations that will be addressed in each unit of study

Recommendation

Include opportunities for depth of understanding through inquiry, problem-solving, higher order thinking skills, cross-disciplinary and authentic learning, and informed and ethical use of technology throughout the curriculum

Recommendation

Ensure that there are effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district

Standard 3 Indicator 1

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices are rarely examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

Most teachers are familiar with the school's identified beliefs about learning, which are visible throughout the building. Among those beliefs are core academic expectations which focus on the ability to solve authentic problems by conducting proper research, thinking critically and communicating their research, opinions, decisions or solutions in a variety of formats to a variety of audiences. There is no deliberate formal practice or procedure currently in place that provides direction or directives for teachers in the examination of instructional practices to ensure consistency with the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The school has set aside an 83-minute block of time every four days for teachers of like courses to work together, but there is little structure to the CLTs, and there are many competing demands for the use of that time. Activities range from designing common formative and summative assessments, examining performance data, working on SLOs, and developing curriculum. While observations, interviews, and review of student work samples indicate those academic expectations are commonly assessed through the use of school-wide and department rubrics in most areas, a process to ensure that classroom instruction aligns to those academic expectations is not in place.

When all teachers continuously examine instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, students will benefit from coordinated instruction and ongoing opportunities to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 3 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Most teachers' instructional practices support the 21st century learning expectations by frequently integrating technology and engaging students in self-assessment and reflection. Teachers regularly engage students as active and self-directed learners and emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking. Teachers personalize instruction with limited approaches and apply cross-disciplinary learning occasionally, however, there is limited application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks to support the 21st century learning expectations.

The school has incorporated a one-to-one computer policy, through which each student is provided with a device but has an option to bring their own. The Endicott survey shows that 90 percent of students agree that teachers ask them to use technology in the classroom. Teachers regularly use CommonLit, Newsela, Pear Deck, Kahoot, Conjuguemos, Khan Academy, Google Classroom, Schoology, and Gizmos as instructional tools in the classroom. Students use digital resources to learn, access information, and demonstrate their learning through writing submissions and presentations in Spanish, French, academic support, social studies, and English classes. Students enroll in the course, Digital Student, which teaches students about the ethical use of technology and how to be critical consumers of digital information. The most commonly used technology in classes includes Notability, Google Drive, and Classroom, and Schoology.

Teachers in some departments engage students in self-assessment and reflection. The Endicott survey indicates that 67 percent of students recognize that they are given opportunities to assess their own work. About one-third of student work samples showed evidence of student self-assessment, but students indicated that they are asked to reflect on and/or assess their work "almost every day." For example, social studies students were led through a three-step self-assessment of their areas of strength and weakness and the development of a personalized learning plan to prepare for a summative assessment. Student self-assessment is done through post-assessment reflective discussions, checklists in Schoology, and written responses to guiding questions after essays. Students are able to check their own progress in physical education through a fitness monitoring app called JEFIT.

Instruction is personalized primarily through opportunities for student choice, according to students and teachers, but that personalization is limited. Teachers provide choices for students in the selection of topics, resources, or the method of presentation. In a statistics class, students create scatterplots of distances and time between various locations by selecting places of interest to them for their charts. In a physical education class, students design their own warm-ups that they present to the class. In French class, students use the Question-Formulation Technique (QFT) about a topic to narrow down the focus of their research. The QFT was also used in a social studies class to identify compelling and supporting questions around the French Revolution and then choose an event for the focus of their inquiry. In a pre-calculus class, students use functions to create a picture using Desmos and are able to choose their topic for the task. In an ecosystems research project, students interested in biodiversity formed a group to study a local pond. Occasionally, teachers provide personalized instruction based on assessment or anecdotal information. For example, a ninth grade English honors lesson adds personalization by offering students different source materials based on the teacher's knowledge of the students, i.e., students who are already exhibiting potential to pursue English AP classes in coming years are provided a highly complex text to critically analyze; a second group receives a text that is less complex but still challenging for the honors level; yet a third group works to develop analysis skills read a text that they can access. Although 85 percent of teachers reported through the Endicott survey that they deliver personalized instruction, only 26 percent of students feel they receive personalized instruction. The discrepancy is overwhelmingly affirmed by students. Few teachers personalize learning beyond student choice and the differentiation of resources. Opportunities to learn skills and content in personalized tasks and demonstrate proficiency of standards or competencies at students' own pace is rare, as observed in student work products and interviews.

There are limited examples of cross-disciplinary instruction. Teachers plan instruction independently because there is no formal process or shared collaborative time to co-plan. No interdisciplinary units have been planned. Nevertheless, students feel their individual teachers attempt to make connections between content areas during their instruction, especially between the English and social studies classes. For example, English classes learn how to analyze text using a historical source. The culinary arts and the Spanish V classes team up to explore

Spanish culture and holiday traditions through the lens of food. A Spanish teacher incorporates geography and art in a lesson on Nazca Lines in Peru.

Teachers sometimes emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking in their instructional practices. A review of student work found inquiry in 18 percent of tasks, and problem-solving and higher order thinking in 38 percent of samples. Inquiry was observed in a science classroom as students worked collaboratively to design an experiment to determine why oxygen levels decrease in the Mississippi River during two months out of the year. Another science activity required students to analyze larval tick data in groups with each group analyzing a different subset of data, such as host quality, species-specific effects on human exposure risk, modeling removal of host species on exposure risk, effect of habitat patch size on mouse density, and effect of forest fragmentation on Lyme disease risk. Students then completed a jigsaw where they communicated their findings to other groups in the class. A social studies and a French teacher had students generate ideas using the Question Formulation Technique (QFT) protocol to develop inquiries on the French Revolution and a French research project.

There is limited evidence of application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks to support the 21st century learning expectations. According to the Endicott survey, 41 percent of students believe they have an opportunity to apply what they are learning outside of the classroom. Examples of authentic tasks include an experiment to determine the cause of declining oxygen levels in a body of water over time and an AP Environmental Science project where a student identify an environmental problem and work on a solution. Parents and students have conflicting opinions as to whether or not students are able to apply what they were learning outside of the classroom.

By frequently integrating technology and engaging students in self-assessment and reflection, the teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. When all teachers across the school consistently and appropriately personalize instruction, engage students in cross-disciplinary learning, engage students in application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, engage students as active and self-directed learners, and emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking, instruction will support students in the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 3 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Teachers occasionally adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by frequently using formative assessment, especially during instructional time; by inconsistently and occasionally strategically differentiating within the classroom; by frequently organizing group learning activities; and by sometimes providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.

Formative assessment occurs regularly during instructional time. Teachers use exit tickets and provide specific feedback on drafts of writing assignments and employ a variety of methods to monitor learning, including digital applications such as Kahoot, exit slips, and peer and self-assessments. Physical education teachers monitor both individual and groups of students and provide immediate feedback daily.

Teachers use formative data to differentiate their instruction occasionally. Eighty-four percent of teachers report that they use differentiated instructional practices to meet the learning needs of all students, according to the Endicott survey. Differentiation occurs commonly during lesson planning. For instance, teachers provide a variety of leveled texts, create groups based on reading benchmarks, and provide options for topics. However, student work shows evidence of differentiation in only 10 percent of samples. Differentiation and tier one interventions designed to address specific learning deficiencies during the course of a unit of study are rarely used, and, at this time, teachers are not knowledgeable and practiced in employing classroom tier one interventions.

Most teachers organize group learning activities to meet the needs of students; however, the grouping of students is not always purposeful. Teachers have been trained in the gradual release of responsibility framework so that collaborative learning opportunities are provided regularly. According to the Endicott survey, 94 percent of teachers report that they organize group learning activities, and 90 percent of students agree that they experience group learning activities in their classes. There are multiple examples of purposefully organized group learning activities: In an honors biology class, students work in groups to collaboratively research and create a lab to investigate the lack of oxygen in waters where the Mississippi meets the Gulf of Mexico. In another science classroom, students work in groups to analyze data around larval ticks and then share their information with other groups. There is a prevalence of group work throughout the school, and desks are arranged in pods in most classes. Group work varies between discussing assignments students individually complete and collaborative problem-solving projects. Most classrooms have desks pre-set in group formations, but often students are engaged in individual seat work with opportunities to consult students in their proximity. Students work both individually and sometimes in a problem-based project.

According to the Endicott survey, 89 percent of parents and 62 percent of students recognize that teachers use a variety of teaching strategies that provide additional support and alternative strategies within classrooms. Teachers provide individual support during class time when students encounter a difficult concept or task in math, science, English, and social studies. Additionally, some teachers emphasize the availability of the writing/math center as an alternative support when additional instruction is required beyond the class period.

When all teachers adjust their instructional practices by using formative assessment, especially during instructional time, systematically consider data to strategically differentiate, purposefully organize collaborative group learning activities, and provide additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom, the percentage of students meeting learning goals and proficiency in the standards will increase.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work

- teacher interview
- teachers
- students

Standard 3 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Many teachers at Brookfield High School, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of summative assessments, examining current research, and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Teachers in some departments also use student achievement data from a variety of formative assessments, examine student work, and use feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents.

According to the Endicott survey, 90 percent of teachers report that they improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, and 74 percent feel they have formal opportunities to examine student work to improve their instructional practices.

The primary vehicle for teachers to examine their teaching practices is collaborative learning time (CLT) which occurs 21 times per semester. The analysis of achievement data during CLT was a directive when CLT was originally instituted; however, a variety of competing initiatives such as curriculum development, alignment of instruction to curriculum, and development of common formative and summative assessments, have encroached on the CLT. Teachers use this time to engage in professional discourse and have developed targeted instruction based on the analysis of student performance data. For example, the physical education department uses the eighth grade fitness assessment to set individual goals for freshmen. World history teachers developed instructional practices to improve learning outcomes based on the data from a common assessment. Teachers in several departments pre-assess students at the start of a unit to drive instructional decisions. Special education teachers use their students' benchmark scores to monitor student learning and to teach with appropriate instructional strategies. Teachers also identify and monitor an area of student growth and adjust their practice to improve student performance during the course of the year as part of goal-setting.

Teachers engage in the examination of current research in instruction and discipline-specific strategies because of a well-supported effort by the district to provide resources and professional learning. The assistant superintendent disseminates research-based information about instruction on a regular basis to the entire staff, and the principal reaches out to the faculty on a weekly basis with Staff Notes which often directs faculty to articles from professional journals on instructional practices. Staff was engaged in a book study during monthly department meetings, giving them the opportunity for professional learning and collegial dialogue on the gradual release of responsibility framework. The district also provides professional learning on research-based strategies. For example, the heads of the English and world languages departments presented a workshop entitled "Argumentation Across Disciplines," and David Pook presented a workshop on close reading strategies. Also, reading and English language teachers attended a course on effective reading instruction called, "Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling."

Teachers are occasionally involved in professional discourse on instructional practices. The CLT affords teachers time to engage in collaborative reflection and professional discourse on instruction, particularly if teachers build an agenda to consider problems of practice in instruction on a regular basis. Science teachers have been using this block to consider instructional practices to roll out the Next Generation Science Standards. Some discourse occurs at department meetings and during teacher evaluation meetings.

In some cases, the purpose of examining student work collaboratively has been mainly to ensure that scoring practices are consistent and calibrated. For example, the teachers use CLT for rubric scoring calibration on an English common formative assessment (CFA), but no decisions about differentiating instructional groupings or applying targeted strategies to improve student learning are specifically noted. Other examples include the collaborative development of a U.S. history CFA and scoring calibration, and, in science, the creation of a spreadsheet to record student scores. In English class the teacher decided to provide students additional time to revise their essays after their scored submissions indicated students had yet to meet proficiency in aspects of their written responses.

The use of various sources of feedback in improving instruction is limited. According to the Endicott survey, only 36 percent of students believe that teachers ask for ideas/opinions in order to improve instruction. Some teachers

survey students at the end of unit of study or course. A few faculty members, such as reading specialists, school counselors, and a Spanish teacher, also solicit feedback from parents through surveys and questionnaires, and most teachers cite correspondence with individual parents as having an impact on their instruction. Teachers also consider feedback from planning and placement team (PPT) conversations, collegial discussions during CLT, and recommendations from school counselors and special education case managers to ensure they are attending to the learning needs of their students. Meetings between a teacher and the teacher's evaluator at the beginning, middle, and end of the year are also sources of feedback for improvement of the delivery of instruction. Teachers, however, describe the supervision and evaluation practices falling short of providing support for teacher growth and instructional improvement. Some teachers cite supervision practices as inequitable with inconsistent expectations among departments. Teachers emphasize that collegial dialogue and conversations during CLT have been the most effective means of improving instruction, student engagement, and achievement.

As a result of the individual and collaborative efforts of teachers to improve their instructional practices by using a variety of formative and summative assessments, examining current research, and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, teachers are able to increase student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. When all teachers consistently and purposefully examine student work and use feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents, instruction will improve, enabling increased student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school board

Standard 3 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Most teachers as adult learners maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

Teachers at Brookfield High School have multiple opportunities to engage in professional learning. The district has committed five full professional development days in the academic calendar as well as four early dismissal days to provide professional learning for faculty. A log of approved professional development for the 2016-2017 school year indicates that 75 percent of the faculty attended activities beyond those provided by the district. Teachers maintain their expertise by attending annual conferences in their subject area (fine arts, world languages, English), maintain membership in professional organizations (fine arts, English), and receive periodicals in their discipline (fine arts and English). Examples of discipline-specific training or workshops included topics such as math SAT data interpretation, scientific concepts, Connecticut's Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program, EL supports for students, NGSS, reflective practice, and reading instruction in special education.

Professional development is sometimes designed in response to teacher-initiated discussions. For example, upcoming training on annotation and other reading strategies was the result of teacher-identified needs. Teachers regularly engage in discussions around content-area problems of practice during CLT and/or the early release time devoted to professional learning communities. Endicott survey results indicate that 88 percent of teachers maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices; 83 percent of students agree that their teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach; and 62 percent of parents agree that teachers maintain expertise in their subject areas, while 18 percent said they did not know.

Because BHS teachers, as reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices, students have opportunities to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students

Standard 3 Commendations

Commendation

The culture of collaboration between and among teachers to examine instructional practice

Commendation

The variety of instructional strategies that allows students choice and engages students in self-assessment and reflection

Commendation

The integration of technology in instruction across the school

Commendation

The school's emphasis on the use of purposefully organized group learning activities

Commendation

The provision of time and commitment of teachers to engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice

Commendation

The commitment of teachers to maintain their expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices

Standard 3 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure that instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency across the school with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

Recommendation

Ensure that all students have the opportunities to engage in purposeful cross-disciplinary learning

Recommendation

Increase opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks

Recommendation

Develop a shared understanding of strategic differentiation and increase its use across all disciplines

Recommendation

Increase the personalization of instruction beyond the current practice of offering opportunities for student choice

Standard 4 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The professional staff regularly employs a process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's academic 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, but there is no formal process in place to assess the social and civic 21st century learning expectations.

Most teachers use one of the three academic school-wide rubrics each quarter to assess individual student progress in achieving one of the academic expectations for learning. Across the school, all three academic school-wide rubrics are being used as reported by teachers. Teachers enter data into PowerSchool as an unpublished assignment. Some teachers use collaborative learning time (CLT) to discuss the scoring of assignments using the rubrics; however, there has not been a school-wide conversation about calibration of scoring. Teachers are allowed to modify the rubrics as they see fit for the assignment they are giving. Although Brookfield High School currently has a process to assess academic expectations, it does not yet have a formal process for assessing the social and civic expectations.

Because BHS has developed a process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the academic expectations for learning, they have the capacity to monitor individual and whole-school progress in achieving the academic expectations for learning. When the professional staff also employs a formal process based on specific and measurable criteria for success for social and civic expectations, the school will have the data necessary to monitor the whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- students
- school leadership

Standard 4 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The professional staff does not yet communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families, nor do they communicate the whole school's progress in achieving them to the school community.

Some teachers are initiating conversation surrounding the meaning of the academic expectations as reported by teachers and students. This includes discussion of the language of the school-wide rubrics on academic 21st century learning expectations. In specific courses, teachers discuss with their students the results of their assessment based on the school-wide rubric. Teachers enter results from school-wide rubric data into PowerSchool as unpublished assignments that are not visible to students or families. The school recognizes the need to move forward with this goal and has included in its Two-Year Targeted Plan the goal of creating and implementing a formal process for collecting and reporting individual student progress in meeting 21st century learning expectations to both students and parents.

When individual and whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations are communicated to students, parents, and the community, then all stakeholders can better support students in achieving the core values and beliefs about learning.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- students
- parents
- school leadership

Standard 4 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The professional staff in many areas regularly collects, disaggregates and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.

When Brookfield High School was identified as a focus school due to inequities in student achievement based on the results of the 2014-2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA), it was given a school improvement grant from the Connecticut State Department of Education in the amount of \$685,265 to be spread over five years. School leaders began to address the inequities in student achievement on the SBA by using the grant to improve literacy instruction for English language learners (ELL) in conjunction with hiring new reading and literacy support staff. Students are given the STAR assessment in reading and math at least three times each year, and the data is collected and analyzed. Special education teachers intentionally group students based on the STAR assessment results. Additionally, students are given the Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) in their world language classes. The science department regularly collects data on student progress toward the claim-evidence-reasoning (CER) process. The STAR, AAPPL, and CER data are used by some teachers in setting their student learning objectives (SLOs) for the faculty evaluation process. Some teachers use CLT to discuss and analyze data from common course assessments. The scientific research-based intervention (SRBI) recommendation process uses qualitative and quantitative data on individual student achievement such as historical grades, attendance data, behavior data, STAR assessment results, teacher reports, and current academic progress. The intended outcome of SRBI is to provide teachers with suggestions for intervention to support student success.

Because professional staff in many areas collect data on student achievement, they have the opportunity to disaggregate and analyze the data in order to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. When all professional staff pervasively collect, disaggregate, and analyze data, they will be able to identify and respond to student inequities in achievement across all content areas.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- school leadership

Standard 4 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Prior to each unit of study, some teachers communicate to students the academic 21st century learning expectations that are applicable, while most teachers communicate related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed.

The vast majority of teachers incorporate a learning target into their daily lessons and write the learning target on the board to discuss with students. Many learning targets are standards-aligned and written in language that is accessible to students. Students report that many teachers discuss the learning target with their students at the start of the class with emphasis on how students can demonstrate progress toward and mastery of the target. In the Global Themes course, teachers not only post and discuss the daily learning target but also how students can demonstrate that skill. Teachers are beginning to align curriculum with the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to communicate standards and academic expectations to students more consistently. All teachers provide their students with a course syllabus at the start of the school year, which includes specific performance expectations for the entire course. However, during the course of the school year, teachers inconsistently address the school's 21st century learning expectations at the start of each unit. While some teachers communicate the academic expectations prior to an assessment, the social and civic expectations are not explicitly embedded or communicated to the students.

Because most teachers communicate content-area, unit-specific learning goals to be assessed to students at the beginning of the unit, students have the ability to understand what they need to know and demonstrate on unit assessments aligned to content knowledge. When all teachers communicate the 21st century learning expectations to students, then students will better understand and demonstrate the academic, social, and civic expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- students

Standard 4 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Prior to most summative assessments, teachers provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.

Most teachers provide students with corresponding rubrics for summative assessments. These include the school-wide rubrics for academic 21st century learning expectations, department-specific rubrics, study guides, and/or scoring guides for the assignments. Prior to most assessments students know the criteria for success and the content knowledge and skills that will be assessed. Grade 10 English teachers embed Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) within their common formative assessments (CFAs) prior to the summative assessment. Some teachers provide student- or teacher-created exemplars to students prior to the assessment, such as in the Human Geography course on the country profile project. Teachers provide students with study guides prior to most summative assessments. Additionally, some departments have begun to use self-assessment learning plans to help students become more reflective and aware of their strengths and weaknesses in order to attain higher levels of achievement. Some social studies teachers are presently immersed in this work.

Because the majority of teachers provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success prior to most summative assessments, students have a greater understanding of expectations and are able to better prepare for the assessments, resulting in increased student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- teacher interview
- students

Standard 4 Indicator 6

Conclusions

The vast majority of teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including some formative and many summative assessments, in each unit of study.

Teachers at Brookfield High School employ formative assessment strategies. These strategies include online Kahoot! competitions, exit tickets, Do Now exercises, thumbs up/down signals, and circulating the classroom. In mathematics, teachers use Plickers, Socrative, and other immediate feedback tools to formatively assess student learning. In grade nine social studies classrooms where curriculum is in the process of being aligned to the standards, teachers formatively assess student progress toward identified learning targets prior to and during each unit of instruction. Students receive individual feedback on their progress toward achieving the learning target. In addition to quizzes and tests, teachers use a range of summative assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. In world languages, teachers assess the quality of student communication through the AAPPL assessment. In science classrooms, teachers use a variety of methods to summatively assess student progress toward mastery of claim-evidence-reasoning (CER). This is seen through lab reports, in-class writing prompts, and class discussions. Performance tasks, projects, and in-school authentic experiences are evident across multiple content areas.

Because most teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, teachers have data available that reflects student achievement. When all teachers use a range of formative assessment strategies, teachers will have a greater understanding of the strengths and needs of their students and can tailor their instruction to their students.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 4 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Teachers collaborate frequently in formal and informal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including some common assessments.

The CLT and PLC time built into the school schedule allows formal time for teachers to create, analyze, and revise formative and summative assessments. CLT groups meet every four days for an 83-minute block, and PLCs meet four times per year on early release days. The Endicott survey reveals that nearly 92 percent of teachers agree that they meet formally to discuss and improve both formative and summative assessments strategies. During these meetings, many teachers take time to design, discuss, and plan future assessments that are aligned to standards and/or grade level expectations. This is found in multiple departments at Brookfield High School. Biology teachers use their CLT to reflect upon and revise assessments as needed, based on student performance and learning goals. Grade 10 English teachers collaborate to create common formative assessments (CFAs) for information writing with identified criteria for evaluation of student work. When possible, special education teachers assist their colleagues in modifying assessments for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Even though formal structures are in place for collaboration, in some instances, not all teachers are assigned to the same CLT with their colleagues teaching the same course which includes special education co-teachers. As a result, some teachers collaborate informally both in-person and digitally, using such tools as Google Documents or email.

Because teachers collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of common formative and summative assessments, student learning is usually assessed in common formats across the same courses. When all teachers analyze and discuss the results of student performance on common formative and summative assessments through a formal process, teachers will be able to revise assessments in a more pervasive and purposeful manner.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 8

Conclusions

Teachers often provide specific, corrective, and timely feedback to students to ensure students revise and improve their work.

In many classrooms, teachers circulate amongst students, asking probing questions and providing verbal feedback to students as they work on assigned tasks. Written feedback was given on 31 percent of the reviewed student work samples. Some feedback was given through rubrics and written comments, such as in science on the CER rubric. Comments on quizzes such as see me for extra help were noted as well as suggestions for improvement on written and oral presentations. According to the Endicott survey, 48 percent of parents and 66 percent of students report that feedback is timely and suggestions are offered to improve work.

There is inconsistent use of PowerSchool amongst teachers to inform students and parents about student achievement. Many teachers will take more than two weeks to input grades, and, therefore, parents are not updated until later in the quarter when it may be too late for students to have the opportunity to show growth in their understanding. Additionally, teachers use varied mechanisms, if any, for allowing students to revise and improve their work. Students are allowed opportunities for self- and peer-assessment, but this often occurs immediately before the teacher gives feedback and therefore students are not given a reflect and revise opportunity before receiving a final grade from their teacher.

When all teachers consistently provide specific and corrective feedback as a means for students to revise and improve their work, students will have the ability to articulate the areas for improvement in their demonstration of understanding. Additionally, when this feedback becomes more timely, then opportunities for revision and improvement can be given to students before a final grade is determined.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- students
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 9

Conclusions

The majority of teachers regularly employ a variety of formative assessment techniques throughout all content areas to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.

Teachers use homework review, questioning and discussion, 'do nows,' informal observations, verbal polls, electronic response forms, and guided practice to assess student progress toward daily goals. While the self-study indicates that these formative assessments are used to modify instruction mid-block, classroom observations show that many formative assessment practices are instead used to adjust future lessons and are focused on individual students, small groups, or the entire class.

Because teachers employ a variety of formative assessment techniques, they have the information necessary to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. When all teachers use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instruction within the 83-minute teaching block, students will have timely instruction that addresses misconceptions and results in improved learning for all.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey

Standard 4 Indicator 10

Conclusions

Brookfield High School teachers and administrators, individual and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. Examination of standardized assessments is practiced consistently, and there is some examination of student work, survey data from students, and common course and common grade-level assessments. The school does not yet examine data on individual or school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, data from alumni, sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions.

Most student work is analyzed during CLT or on an individual teacher basis. If a student is referred to the SRBI committee, then that student's individual evidence of learning is used to suggest tier two and tier three interventions to improve instruction for that student. Additionally, portfolios are created for ELL students so that teachers have adequate information to individualize instruction. A multitude of standardized assessments are given, including STAR, PSAT, SAT, and AAPPL, but the results are used to varying degrees in order to revise curriculum and improve instruction.

Most departments, specifically English, science, social studies, and math, develop common assessments and use the results to discuss curriculum revisions. Other departments are in the process of developing common assessments in order to examine evidence of student learning. Students are surveyed and met with in order for school leaders to gain input on student learning; however, there is no mechanism in place to share these data with teachers in order to revise curriculum and improve instructional practice.

Data from alumni, sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions are rarely collected or examined. While the school is currently in the beginning stages of implementing the use of the school's academic 21st century learning expectations across all content areas, there is not yet a plan to examine the results of these school-wide rubrics for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practices. Additionally, the civic and social 21st century learning expectations do not have defined and measurable criteria on which to collect and examine data.

Because teachers are beginning to individually and collaboratively examine evidence of student learning, they can begin to make informed decisions about curriculum revision and instructional improvements in their classrooms. When all professional staff examines a range of evidence of student learning, then deliberate and consistent school-wide curriculum revisions and instructional improvements can occur.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- students
- school leadership

Standard 4 Indicator 11

Conclusions

Grading and reporting practices are beginning to be reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, but this work is in its infancy.

School-wide rubrics for the academic 21st century learning expectations were piloted at the end of the 2017-2018 school year with some teachers, and, as of 2018-2019, all teachers are required to use at least one of the rubrics with students in each quarter. CLT is used to align assessments with standards in order to ensure that grading and reporting are standards-based. As teachers continue to discuss alignment of instruction with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, grading and reporting practices will also be examined.

Because the structure of CLT is in place, teachers have the opportunity to review and revise their grading and reporting practices. When all common course teachers can collaborate to review and revise grading and reporting practices, then those practices will have a closer alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- department leaders

Standard 4 Commendations

Commendation

The commitment of the professional staff to use the school-wide rubrics to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century academic expectations for learning

Commendation

The collection of a variety of internal and external assessment data on student achievement

Commendation

The common practice of teachers providing students with criteria for success prior to most summative assessments

Commendation

The range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments, used by teachers in each unit of study

Commendation

The provision of collaborative learning time (CLT) every four days for teachers to create, analyze, and revise formative and summative assessments, including common assessments

Standard 4 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's civic and social learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success

Recommendation

Develop and implement a process to communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families and to communicate the school's progress in achieving the school's learning expectations to the school community

Recommendation

Increase the use of formative assessment to inform and adapt instruction mid-block for the purpose of improving student learning

Recommendation

Increase opportunities for students to use specific, corrective feedback to revise and improve their work

Recommendation

Use data from sending schools, post-secondary institutions, and survey data from current students and alumni for purposes of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice

Recommendation

Ensure that grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the core values and beliefs about learning

Standard 5 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The school community consistently, consciously, and continually 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.

The shared ownership and pride in the safe and positive school culture and environment in the classrooms is visible in the hallways, the cafeteria, and in interactions between the students and teachers. Students and teachers greet each other warmly when passing in the hallways and common areas. The genuine sense of caring and respect for students was evident during meetings with the board of education, parents, administrators, and teachers. Students feel their school is a safe place to learn. The student/parent and teacher handbooks reflect high expectations for all students and communicate high expectations for all. The Brookfield High School (BHS) mission statement, To inspire, challenge, and prepare all students to live meaningful and productive lives, is a written representation of Brookfield's ideals and has been and continues to be a part of the school culture.

The school has many clubs, programs, and organizations that support a positive school climate. Examples such as Unified Sports Program, Youth Alive, Diversity Club, Kids as Self-Advocates (KASA), and Best Buddies Club, all promote understanding and camaraderie among students. Seventy-nine percent of seniors participate in athletics, and 68 percent participate in school clubs. Students demonstrate school spirit through pep rallies, spirit week, and the homecoming carnival. The athletic program is one which is highly successful, and there is significant support from students, families, and friends. A student fan section, called the Brookfield Bomb Squad, is visible at sporting events and encourages positive fan support for both teams. Eighth graders are allowed the opportunity embrace the transition to the high school where they participate in activities facilitated by peer counselors and school counselors.

BHS promotes high expectations for all students. The school adopted new graduation requirements for the Class of 2021 which require that all students complete two credits of world languages, a personal finance course, a senior demonstration project, and fifty hours of community service. Students have opportunities to challenge themselves by enrolling in honors and Advanced Placement courses and engaging in formal independent studies.

Because the school community has consciously and continuously built a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning through many ways to demonstrate the opportunity to create your tomorrow, the result is shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school makes a conscious and consistent effort to ensure all students have equitable and inclusive 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.

BHS offers heterogeneously grouped courses/classes in a variety of areas. These include all career and technical education (CTE) courses, visual and performing arts courses, Zoology, Creative Writing, Journalism, Economics, Contemporary Issues, Sociology, Algebra I, as well as French and Spanish introductory courses. Some classes are co-taught and combine special education and general education students, while others utilize the assistance of one-to-one aides. The school also offers unified physical education classes and athletics. Students across the spectrum can enroll in these particular classes.

Students are afforded the opportunity to enroll in a wide variety of classes that are both rigorous and challenging depending on the students developmental level. These include academic (college prep), honors level courses, Advanced Placement (AP) level courses, and courses eligible for college credit through both UConn and Western Connecticut State University. With student-specific accommodations, special education students receive academic support for success in mainstream courses. The school offers open enrollment in its AP courses, enabling even those students who do not have teacher recommendation the opportunity to enroll following a meeting with the student, recommending teacher, and parents.

Because BHS ensures that all students have equitable and inclusive access to challenging academic experiences and makes certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, the school fosters heterogeneity and supports the needs of all students, enabling them to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 3

Conclusions

There is currently no formal, on-going program(s) or process(es) through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, despite purposefully provided time in the school schedule and several attempts at programming.

The BHS block schedule includes a 24-minute period on A days for this purpose; however, the efforts to fully implement a formally structured advisory program have not been successful. When the schedule was first implemented, team building and icebreaker activities were planned by teachers along with activities presented by the school counseling department. However, the effectiveness of this period varied with some teachers regularly engaging with students and building relationships while others did not have success. Another attempt was made with the Positive Discipline Program, but the implementation did not meet the needs of BHS students. Finally, an initiative called Choose Love was rolled out in five freshman advisory classes last year, but the pilot was discontinued.

When the school develops and implements a consistent, formal, on-going program(s) or process(es) through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well, students will have an adult to help them to successfully reach the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview

Standard 5 Indicator 4

Conclusions

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff frequently engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning and use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices. However, the principal and professional staff occasionally dedicate formal time to implement professional development and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

As part of the teachers' contract, \$20,000 per year is allotted for individual professional development. A committee composed of one teacher per building and three administrators review and award professional development grants of up to \$750 per teacher per year on a first come, first served basis. In addition, the principal engages teachers in book studies and presentations by faculty members on a regular basis in order to meet faculty-identified professional learning needs.

Teachers participate in collaborative learning time (CLT) every four days for 83 minutes during which teachers score formative assessments, review content standards, and develop curricula. In addition to this regular professional development, there are 33 designated Wednesday after-school meetings divided up for faculty, department, individual teacher-directed, and administrator-directed meetings. There are also opportunities for teachers to work in professional learning communities. BHS has partnered with an outside consultant to deliver professional development with 14 teachers to facilitate the development of curriculum over a two-year time period. Some math teachers have attended a College Board training and AP scoring to gain additional deeper understanding of these processes. However, there is little time given to the implementation of new learning to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Teachers report that with so many initiatives happening at once, the content, ideas, and tools are not consistently integrated. While there is time offered for curriculum work, the resources are limited with little opportunity for vertical alignment. Furthermore, professional development within each department varies with regard to planning, agendas, and curriculum work.

Because the principal and professional staff frequently engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning and use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices, teachers are building the capacity to ensure all students are able to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. When the principal and professional staff dedicate equitable, formal time to implement professional development and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment, student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations will be enhanced.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 5 Indicator 5

Conclusions

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning, but not all teachers understand the focus of their evaluations, and many teachers find that the evaluative process is inconsistent across the school.

Although BHS developed a comprehensive evaluation plan called, The Brookfield Evaluation Plan 2017-2018, teachers report misunderstanding around the standards and expectations on which they are being evaluated. The evaluation process was developed by a committee called the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC). The committee comprises teachers and administrators from all district schools, but this committee has not met yet for the 2018-2019 school year. The move to a standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment model has added to this confusion.

Teachers have not been afforded the opportunity to fully understand how they are being evaluated. Although there is frequent and repeated evaluation, many teachers report they are not coached to the extent they need in order to be successful. Additionally, teachers feel that there are significant inconsistencies in the implementation and scoring within the evaluation model. According to the Endicott survey, 54 percent of teachers find that input from supervisors who are responsible for evaluating their teaching plays an important role in improving their instructional practices, while 29.4 percent do not feel that the input they receive from supervisors impacts their instructional practices. These data correspond with anecdotal feedback from faculty that there are inconsistencies in how the plan is implemented among evaluators.

Because school leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes designed to focus on improving student learning, Brookfield High School leaders have the tools to work collaboratively with teachers in the improvement of student learning. When all teachers fully understand the expectations of standards-based learning and teaching, and when the evaluation process is implemented with consistency and fidelity across all evaluators, school leaders will be better equipped with the research-based tools and strategies needed to improve instruction and meet 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 6

Conclusions

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.

The school has developed an A/B block schedule with 83-minute classes that allow for in-depth work and limited passing times throughout the school day. The impact of this schedule on student learning include opportunities for a variety of instructional strategies in the classroom, increased time for authentic assessments, and increased instructional hours. The individual learning needs of students are met by a variety of academic supports with teachers from ELL, special education, and paraprofessionals in English, social studies, math, and science departments. These teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to support students as needed.

Teachers have the opportunity to meet during collaborative learning time (CLT) in a dedicated space in the library learning commons. The CLT groups are formed by department/course/grade level, but there is little opportunity for collaboration with co-teachers or with teachers across disciplines. Support services are available for students in the writing/math center as well as with National Honor Society tutors. Additionally, students have the opportunity to seek extra help from teachers during their Flex B time slot every other day. There is also an extended school year program and a summer transition program with the aim to foster high school readiness.

Because the organization of time fully supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students, they are enabled to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 5 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Student load and class size generally enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students.

According to the Endicott survey, 86 percent of students, 60 percent of teachers, and nearly 70 percent of parents believe that student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. In 2016-2017, median class size was 19 and the average student load for a teacher was 95 students. Course enrollment counts for 2017-2018 show average class size in core academic classes ranging from 19 in world languages to 22 in social studies. Most observed classes fell into the average range, but there were a few classes with between 25 and 30 students.

The board of education has set a goal of 19-21 students per class with a target of 20 students for core academic classes. Examples of class size discrepancies include an academic English class with 30 students, while there is also an academic French class with only 7 students. One area of concern is special education caseloads which are higher than the state average. For example, an academic support class is populated with 20 students from all grades with one teacher and no paraprofessional support. The bulk of IEP goals and objectives are to be addressed during this class, and, with such a high number of students, it is difficult to appropriately address the learning needs of all students.

Because of generally favorable student load and class size, most teachers are enabled to meet the learning needs of individual students.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teachers

Standard 5 Indicator 8

Conclusions

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides substantial instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, but some teachers are unclear about the expected leadership to be provided by department chairs.

The BHS leadership team is made up of the principal, two assistant principals, five department chairs, and several team leaders. The leadership team meets bi-weekly with a focus on instruction, assessment, and evaluation. The shared agenda provides a plan for meetings and, when time allows, leaders have the opportunity to bring other agenda items to the table. To align evaluation practices, leaders observe classes in pairs to calibrate ratings, and a recent initiative is designed to measure student engagement. In the administrative CLT, the principal seeks input from instructional leaders and works with them to interpret and implement district initiatives such as data, walk-through protocols, and the evaluation process. Key building leaders are involved in decisions around scheduling parent conferences, revisions to the program of studies, changes to course offerings, curriculum alignment with standards, and budget. However, some teachers report that they are unsure of the roles of department chairs and their interaction with staff. When asked what the role of department chair entails, few teachers could provide clear details beyond "they evaluate us."

Recently, the district began the move to a standards-based curriculum. To better understand this process, the principal attended professional development to lead the school through this process and brought in an outside consultant to provide training to department chairs. Based on teacher interviews, there is a disconnection in how the information/training is passed down to teachers. The school has developed a school-wide assessment process for which rubrics were created based on the anticipated move to standards-based learning. There have been committees created to address scheduling, community service, and the senior demonstration project, and all committees include a representation of administrators and teachers. This practice helps guide the new requirements for the Class of 2021 that include 50 hours of community service and a senior capstone project.

Because the principal works with other building leaders to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, many faculty and staff share a vision of school expectations. When all teachers fully understand the roles of department chairs and the expectations of the entire leadership team, the faculty and staff will be better equipped to enable each student to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 5 Indicator 9

Conclusions

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.

Students have many opportunities to participate in the decision-making process at BHS. These include, but are not limited to, their contributions to committees such as climate, PTSO, senior demonstration, community service, and scheduling. Additionally, there is one student from the school that serves as the student representative to the board of education meetings and is responsible for keeping the board abreast of the latest news and happenings at the school. The principal is also open to feedback and discussions with the students and always seeks input, suggestions, and feedback from the student body. One example was the revision of the tardy policy at their request.

Additionally, students coordinate and organize day-to-day functioning of one-on-one peer tutoring through the National Honor Society, Flex B tutoring, and the BHS writing/math center. Another example is a student-owned and run business, the Everything Etched Easy (EEE) program, in which students perform all aspects of running a business, including product creation, promotion, pricing, sales, and accounting. Other groups include the DECA school store and the Bobcat Caf^e. Furthermore, all clubs at BHS afford students the autonomy to pioneer, lead, and participate in a wide variety of clubs and organizations in which they drive the direction with the support of an advisor.

Parent roles at BHS are also meaningful. Their participation in groups such as PTSO, Special Education Parent Teacher Association (SEPTA), climate, senior demonstration, community service, scheduling, and the athletic booster club is a vital part of the school.

Teacher leadership roles include their work with the NEASC self-study committees, professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC), school climate committee, senior demonstration project, community service, and scheduling. The principal is open to feedback from teachers when making decisions. One example occurred when teachers voiced concerns about the positive discipline initiative, resulting in the suspension of the program mid-year in accordance with their suggestion. Furthermore, the principal routinely collects feedback from staff by including Google Forms (surveys) in his weekly staff notes.

Because teachers, students, and parents are engaged in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making, there is a culture and climate of responsibility, ownership, and pride that fosters the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 10

Conclusions

Teachers frequently exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and assist in increasing students' engagement in learning.

Teachers in the humanities department were instrumental in establishing the school's writing center (which has been expanded to include other subjects) by seeking a grant from the Brookfield Education Foundation. Students are trained in the University of Connecticut peer tutoring model and spend their study hall time assisting peers under the supervision of a teacher. Similarly, a group of CTE teachers sought a BEF grant to develop and implement a course on how to start your own business. Physical education teachers proposed changes to course offerings by offering a variety of electives such as Personal Fitness, Fit for Life, Team Sports & Leadership, Outdoor Education, PE by Design, and Competitive Sports. Freshman forum, a new addition to the health curriculum, is designed to educate students and parents about substance abuse through an evening forum.

Teachers have assisted students in their engagement and roles at the school by creating and facilitating clubs such as Green Team, FIRST Robotics, Unified Sports, athletic advisory, Future Business Leaders of America, and art club. Peer counselor advisors have assisted their understudies and promoted midterm and final exam prep for the National Honor Society students. Some teachers have exercised initiative by helping to review and revise curriculum, assessment strategies, instructional strategies, and school climate, much of which occurs through informal channels or through CLT meetings. In addition, discourse about instructional and assessment strategies occurs as a byproduct of the informal evaluations. The faculty, as a whole, is very supportive of each other and are sincere in their desire to grow as professionals and to provide multiple learning opportunities for their students.

Because teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning, they serve as role models and mentors for students as they strive to meet 21st century learning objectives.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 5 Indicator 11

Conclusions

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

The principal meets monthly with the superintendent, assistant superintendent, business manager, special education director, other building principals, and the director of instruction. He also meets in a second monthly meeting that includes secondary principals. Both meetings include collaborative agendas that focus on professional development, school improvement, supervision, evaluation, instruction, and assessment.

The principal meets regularly with the curriculum assessment and program evaluation (CAPE) subcommittee of the board of education. Topics for this subcommittee include the presentation of newly proposed courses, annual approval of the program of studies, and a year-long capstone conversation. These conversations led to disbanding of the capstone program because it was not meeting the social, academic, and civic core value expectations. In another example of collaborative, reflective, and constructive processes, CAPE had proposed adding a third world language to the course offerings at BHS. The principal proposed first adding a state-of-the-art world languages lab as an initial step in improving world languages instruction, and, as a result, he garnered board support for the lab.

The BOE, superintendent, and principals collaborate on budget roundtables with the community and board of finance. Recently, department chairs at BHS were re-organized to include STEM, humanities, and English language/world languages. This change has assisted in the alignment of instructional goals and academic outcomes. Because the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive, the school is able to garner support for the professional development, materials, supplies, and improvements needed to support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 5 Indicator 12

Conclusions

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

Brookfield Public Schools developed a communications plan that delineates the process for conversations with stakeholders and gives decision-making authority to the principal on building related issues. The principal regularly presents to the subcommittee of the BOE related to curriculum, assessment, and evaluation. The BOE and superintendent are supportive of the principal's decision-making process in some areas. The principal is given the authority to make decisions about programs and staffing as well as being given the latitude to create committees for the development of building topics around scheduling, senior demonstration project, and community service. However, despite the authority given in many areas, the hiring process does not ultimately include the principal's input in the final selection, beyond his conducting initial interviews to identify two candidates. These candidates are then interviewed by the superintendent and assistant superintendent at the central office level, and the final decision is made by these administrators. According to the Endicott survey, only 54 percent of teachers agree that the school board and superintendent provide sufficient making authority to lead the school.

When the school board and superintendent consistently provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority, then the school will be able to ensure instruction aligned with the 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Commendations

Commendation

The safe, positive, respectful, and supportive school culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all

Commendation

The efforts of faculty and staff to build positive relationships with students

Commendation

The willingness and desire of teachers to increase and apply knowledge gained through professional learning

Commendation

The school's commitment to providing teachers with collaborative learning time and professional learning communities built into the schedule to build professional collaboration and discourse

Commendation

The meaningful and defined roles for students and parents in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership

Commendation

The organization of the schedule to ensure in-depth student engagement and limited passing time

Commendation

The extensive parent participation which plays a vital role in the school's growth, vitality, and identity

Commendation

The instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations provided by the principal, who works to encourage and support other building leaders as they develop and extend their leadership skills

Standard 5 Recommendations

Recommendation

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

Recommendation

Ensure that student load and class size, particularly in the area of special education, enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students

Recommendation

Ensure that the supervision and evaluation process is implemented in a consistent, effective, and equitable manner that encourages and supports the growth of teachers to improve instructional practice

Recommendation

Clarify the roles of department chairs and ensure that all teachers understand those roles

Standard 6 Indicator 1

Conclusions

Brookfield High School has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that adequately support each student's achievement of 21st century learning expectations.

The school schedule is designed for teachers to make personal connections outside of an academic relationship during both a Flex A and Flex B periods. The intent of Flex A is to allow for an advisory model. Several ideas have been tried to address the advisory needs of students, including piloting the Choose Love program in some grade nine advisories. While there was positive feedback regarding Choose Love, it was disbanded because of the limited time of school counselors and limited time for teacher training.

Academic interventions for all students are in place at Brookfield High School. Teachers may refer struggling students who need extra support to one of the two available tutoring centers. Students have access to meeting with teachers for extra support before school, during Flex B, and after school. All students have access to a peer tutoring program offered by the National Honor Society (NHS) during Flex B. There is a writing/math center available to students during the second and third blocks. During the first and last blocks, writing support is offered in the library learning commons. Two full-time reading specialists work with students below grade level reading benchmarks as well as with EL students who are emerging English readers. They also provide professional learning support for classroom teachers.

There is a formal scientific research-based intervention (SRBI) process in place for students who are not eligible for special education. There is a Tier 1 form for teachers to complete when concerned about struggling students. Teachers make referrals through the student's school counselor. Upon receipt, counselors conduct a student file review and complete an SRBI form. The SRBI team, comprising two assistant principals, STEM department chair, humanities department chair, school counselors, social worker, school psychologist, reading specialist, school nurse, and invited teacher(s), meets every Monday morning. The level of Tier 2 academic intervention varies across academic areas; while there are two reading specialists on staff, there is no math interventionist. Services and interventions are provided by the reading specialist in a small group setting; while math does not offer a similar intervention option. Progress monitoring is overseen by the school counselor, and students are reviewed every four to six weeks. SRBI data for 2017-2018 shows that a total of 34 students were serviced through SRBI. Twelve of those students were referred to special education, five were referred to 504, and ten were exited from SRBI.

In order to align district services, the school counseling department meets weekly, and a district clinical team, which includes high school clinical staff comprising counselors, social workers, psychologists, and the department chair of special services, meets monthly to review case studies and best practices of meeting the social-emotional and academic needs of students. Updates are shared regarding community resources such as therapists and counseling groups. In addition, the counseling department holds graduation status meetings for at-risk seniors. These meetings may include students, parents, counselors, administrators, and, sometimes, teachers.

There is a crisis intervention team that includes administrators, school counselors, school nurses, and support staff. The team meets as the need arises. At times, there is a need for collaboration and support for students whose social and emotional challenges are significant. Interventions have included teacher discussions, parent-teacher meetings, contacting emergency mobile psychiatric services (EMPS), home visits, referral to SRBI, contacting outside agencies such as Center for Child and Adolescent Treatment Services (CCATS) or Intensive In-Home Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services (IICAPS), conferring with private therapists, and contacting local youth agencies. Additional interventions include modifying student schedules and placement in an alternative program either in-house or in Danbury, Connecticut.

The department chair for special services chairs all new referral and transitioning 8th grade PPTs. Additionally, the department chair ensures that federal timelines and guidelines are met. Section 504 students are managed by school counselors and annual meetings are held for review. Eligibility for 504 status and accommodations are

reviewed. PowerSchool is also used as a communication tool for staff regarding 504 and special education status. The school nurse is a resource to the school counselors when students have a medical plan. She communicates with the student, parents, and teachers to ensure that individualized medical needs are met.

For those students who require a smaller environment, BHS offers an alternative program within the school building. Historically, the program serviced both non-special education and special education students. Currently, the program serves only special education students and is staffed by a special education teacher and two paraprofessionals. The program includes both a vocational and therapeutic component.

Because Brookfield High School has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, students are supported in the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school regularly provides information to the vast majority of families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.

Brookfield High School (BHS) has a variety of methods to keep families informed of services and programs available in the school. The district uses the SchoolMessenger system that allows calls to be made to all families in the district or families in a specific school or population within the school, e.g., special education students or students in the Class of 2019, to inform them of upcoming events or deadlines. According to the Endicott survey, over 77 percent of parents agree that the school provides information about available student support services, i.e., guidance, library/media, health, and special education, to all families. BHS maintains a strong social media presence and website that contains information for students and parents about academics, policies, events, and the library learning commons, nurse, guidance, and special education. Each of these service areas maintains a web presence to inform students and their families of resources and services that are available.

BHS uses PowerSchool to keep families up-to-date on student progress and is also used by the principal to send out a biweekly newsletter to parents. In addition, the principal has a Facebook page and offers periodic coffee time informal meetings where parents are able to ask questions and bring up concerns. Incoming freshmen and their parents are required to attend a mandatory transition night where they are informed of programs and services available to them.

Student services has made a goal of maintaining regular communication with the families of the children they serve as deemed necessary. For example, the teacher who runs the alternative education program meets with parents once per month. ELL students and families receive communication in a variety of ways. There is a targeted effort for staff to make personal phone calls to parents of ELL students. Twice per year, BHS hosts a morning or evening gathering for ELL parents where information is provided and their voices can be heard. BHS invites the local cultural centers from the area to present information and to offer the opportunity for families to connect to the school community. A contracted phone translation service is used to support communication in the home language for the student, the parent, and the school.

Because the school systematically and consistently communicates with families, especially those most in need, students and parents are able to avail themselves of the support services needed to allow students to access the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- school support staff
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Support services staff consistently use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services through iPads, PowerSchool, and the Google platform.

All faculty and staff use email to communicate regularly with each other and parents. The special education department uses Frontline, an electronic program designed to communicate individualized education plans (IEPs) and 504 plans to parents, teachers, and necessary school personnel. For students who require assistive technology to access their program, an assistive technology evaluation is conducted and recommendations are made. Google Docs are used to inform individualized instruction in the classroom.

Technology is used as an organizational device among staff at BHS. Google Calendar is used by both the school counselors and by the special education case managers to manage meetings. Special education case managers use Google Docs to maintain student assessment, IEP, and progress data. Co-teaching partnerships use Google Docs to record notes that are shared out with counselors and administrators to update student IEPs. School counselors can view PowerSchool for behavioral and disciplinary events documented by the assistant principals. In the library learning commons, students use LibraryTrac to register and track their attendance as visitors in the facility.

The school nurses' office uses PowerSchool to communicate information to faculty about students with serious health concerns. The health office uses SNAP, a comprehensive medical documentation and tracking software platform, to manage student health-related data, including student medical records and to inform health procedures and protocol.

All students have been issued a Chromebook or iPad to guarantee regular communication and information updates. The 1:1 technology program provides access to teaching and learning for individual students and the coordination of services. For example, students can access the school's program of studies and Naviance inventories to help them make informed decisions during course selection. The library learning commons website includes links to the online catalog, databases, curriculum related links, and citation resources, such as Noodletools. The library learning commons staff works collaboratively to provide a variety of technologies to support students in accessing curricula and information.

Because support services staff use technology effectively, they are able to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 4

Conclusions

School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental program; meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling; systematically 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 for targeted students; and, in some areas, 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.

Brookfield High School has four school counselors, one college/career counselor, one school psychologist, and two social workers. The caseload of the school counselors falls within the guidelines set by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). The counselors currently use a curriculum developed in 2008 by the State of Connecticut in collaboration with the Connecticut School Counseling Association and the Connecticut Association for Counselor Education and Supervision that aligned with the ASCA standards at that time. The counselors hope to update that curriculum with the 2018 ASCA standards that address mindsets and behaviors for student success.

Counselors have regular meetings scheduled with students individually at least once per year, and students are able to initiate meetings as needed for academic, social, and/or emotional purposes. Counselors also deliver small and large group instruction and information sessions for students in each grade throughout the year. Some of these sessions include a transition to high school meeting for ninth grade students, during which they meet with their counselors in small groups in the fall to discuss their adjustment to the high school and to encourage them to get involved in clubs and activities. They conduct a three-part lesson for sophomore students, who review the information contained in a transcript, develop a starting resume, complete a career interest inventory in Naviance, review PSAT scores, and learn how to use Khan Academy to improve test scores during the flex period. Counselors also have evening programs for families, including the PSAT score review night, during which students and parents are given detailed feedback about the students' PSAT scores, what they mean, and how the students can improve.

The SRBI process is used to support struggling students, including those with social or behavioral challenges. In addition to planned meetings, crisis intervention for students in need of immediate services is available through the counselors, psychologist, and social worker, and, for issues outside the scope of the counseling office, referrals to medical or mental health agencies are made as appropriate. Some of the outside agencies that work with students through the BHS counseling services include the Town of Brookfield Social Services, Department of Children and Family Services, Intensive In-Home Child and Psychiatric Service (IICAPS), and Brookfield CARES, a local community organization promoting social and emotional wellness. Additionally, the counselors maintain a list of individual therapists for students in need of those services.

Counselors have some data, including surveys from outgoing seniors, PSAT results, and post-surveys following some developmental lessons and all family meetings for freshman and junior advisement that they use to review and improve their services and programs. Counselors do not currently survey alumni on how well those students were prepared for the post-secondary experience.

Because the school counseling department has 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; and deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers, students receive the assistance and support they need to access the school's 21st century learning expectations. When counseling services consistently use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services, they will be able to ensure that each student has the full support they need to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- students
- parents
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 5

Conclusions

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel who regularly provide preventative health services and direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, and conduct ongoing student health assessments. The school's health services sometimes 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.

Brookfield High School's health services office is staffed by two full-time registered nurses. According to the Endicott survey, the majority of parents and staff agree that the health services personnel provide preventive health and direct intervention services. Students feel comfortable going to the nurse with health concerns according to both the Endicott survey and student interviews. School nurses provide teacher professional development, maintain health and vaccination records, and distribute information about health issues to students. PowerSchool is used to indicate students with serious medical concerns, such as seizures and allergies. Care plans for students with other medical issues are communicated directly to the students' classroom teachers. Students who present with needs outside the scope of the health office services are referred as appropriate to the physician employed by the school district, the school's athletic trainer in the case of sports injuries, specialist physicians, or outside agencies. Some of those agencies include Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services, the Western Connecticut Medical Center, and the Department of Children and Family Services.

Parents of students who are frequently absent or have been absent for an extended period of time are contacted by one of the nurses to determine if services or assistance for the student are appropriate. Records are maintained in the SNAP health portal to track student visits to the clinic, accident reports, and physical examinations. The nurses also serve as a resource in developing IEPs and 504 Plans for students with physical and mental health issues.

The nurses at BHS use data from the SNAP health portal to identify common issues to provide information or programs to the school community on topics such as flu prevention, vaping, and drug and alcohol awareness. There is no vehicle to gather health office data from the school community.

Because the BHS health office is adequately staffed and has systems in place to provide preventative health services and direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, and conduct ongoing student health assessments, the school is able to meet the health needs of students so that they are able to access the school's 21st century learning expectations. When the health office staff consistently use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, they will maximize their ability to support all students in meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 6

Conclusions

Library/media services are integrated into most 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; and occasionally 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.

BHS employs two full-time certified library/media specialists and one full-time clerk. For the first half of the year, only one library/media specialist is present in the library learning commons, while the other one teaches a class to ninth grade students. During the second half of the year, both library/media specialists are available to assist staff and students. The library/media specialists are involved in curriculum development and implementation during collaborative learning time (CLT) which takes place in the library learning commons. In many cases, a library/media specialist is invited to take part in the CLT as a team of teachers works to create a particular unit of study. At other times, a library/media specialist will observe teachers planning a resource-based unit of instruction and offer assistance as appropriate. Additionally, the library/media specialists attend monthly leadership team meetings with administrators and department chairs.

On some professional development days, the library/media specialists from all four schools in the district are given time to meet to vertically align their instruction. The library learning commons support a collection of over 18,000 holdings, both print and digital, and students have access to 38 computers running Windows 10 and equipped with the Microsoft Office Suite. Eight computers are repurposed Macintosh machines and are generally used by students visiting the library learning commons for a short time. The rest of the computers are in a new lab area and are used primarily by classes. The library learning commons also has two projectors with screens for multimedia presentations and two photocopiers, including one that prints in color, for student and staff use. BHS is also a 1:1 device school, and students are able to use their own devices to access library learning commons resources. The library/media specialists provide a range of information services, including access to Noodletools for correct citation of sources, research guides, the library catalog available on the library learning commons website, and individual and group instruction on library and Internet resources. The library learning commons also subscribes to a number of research databases that give students access to authoritative sources at any time of day. The library/media specialists teach a quarter-long course to all ninth grade students called Digital Student by which they teach students ethical use of technology, some basic research skills, and introduce the Brookfield Public Library. Any ninth grade student who does not yet have a public library card is able to apply for and receive one in this class.

The library learning commons is open and staffed before school starting at 7:00 a.m. and is open after school until 3:00 p.m. During the school day, students may access the library learning commons from an academic class, study hall, or flex period. Because of the number of study halls in some blocks, there is a limit of five students per study hall that are able to go to the library learning commons, and some students have expressed frustration with that limit. In addition, many teachers will schedule a whole class to use the library learning commons so that a library/media specialist can co-teach a lesson that requires research as well as content skills.

The library/media specialists have a brown bag book club that meets monthly for students to discuss recreational reading choices and solicits student input in the development of the collection. Within the past two years, the fiction collection was reorganized by genre, which made it easier for students to find reading that matched their interests. The library learning commons also hosts the NHS tutoring and the writing center during some blocks, which allows students to request additional assistance from the library/media specialists as needed.

The library/media specialists analyze collection data annually to identify gaps to meet curriculum and student learning needs. They also have conversations with faculty, staff, and students from which they are able to receive comments and criticism on their collection and services, but no formal survey or assessment tool is used. Despite the informal nature of the feedback, because of student and staff complaints about the age and function of the

computers in the library learning commons, 30 new computers were purchased based upon that student and staff input. There is no vehicle to gather feedback on the library learning commons from the school community.

Because library/media services are regularly 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; and are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning, students have the support they need to access the school's 21st century learning expectations. When library/media services conduct formal ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services, they will be more able to ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teachers
- students
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an inadequate 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; and 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.

Brookfield High School provides inclusive learning opportunities for all students, performs ongoing assessments, and uses feedback from the school community to review current practice and services for each individual student to ensure the student can achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. According to the Endicott survey, 70 percent of teachers agree that support services personnel collaborate well with other staff members; however, only 36 percent believe that the support service staff is large enough to meet the needs of the BHS student population.

The high school has a part-time EL tutor. In addition the district employs one teacher of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL)-certified teacher who teaches a class every other day at the high school, splitting the rest of her time between the other three schools in the district. The K-12 world language and EL coordinator has an office in the high school but does not teach any classes. Additional services at the high school include a speech and language pathologist, a part-time occupational therapist, a part-time physical therapist, a special services secretary, two full-time school social workers, a full-time school psychologist, and a college and career counselor. BHS provides 504 services through the school counseling department. There are four school counselors who coordinate these services to students.

The support staff works diligently to offer inclusive opportunities for all students. There is a deliberate collaboration with all teachers, counselors, and targeted services to meet the needs of students. Annual reviews occur for special education students and 504 students. There is a monthly meeting between parents of students with special needs and their case manager. A total of 132 students are identified as being eligible for special education. There are currently seven special education teachers in the building. Five teachers work in the mainstream setting, one teacher works in the life skills program, and one teacher works in the alternative program. BHS has eight paraprofessionals working in the building. Two are assigned to the alternative program servicing ten students, one is working in the life skills program servicing eight students, and the remaining five support students in the mainstream setting. One academic support class has an enrollment of 20 students with one special education teacher and no additional support. Teachers have difficulty in being able to meet the learning needs of students because of the high student-to-teacher ratio in the academic support class. BHS offers co-taught classes in Algebra I, Geometry, and English I, II, and III. Although co-taught classes are available, they are not offered across grade levels and core content areas. There are specialized programs and courses for special education students, including self-contained courses in English, math, social studies, unified physical education, academic support, life skills, and an on-site alternative program. Teachers also have difficulty meeting the needs of all learners in grades 11 and 12 math courses, science courses, and required social studies classes and electives because there are no special education co-teachers or consistent paraprofessional support.

A total of 15 ELL students are serviced by the TESOL teacher one block every other day. An ELL tutor has been recently hired and will push into classes to provide support to students and teachers. In addition, two reading specialists offer classes that include ELL students.

The staff uses assessment data to make determinations about programming for identified students. Special services personnel conduct necessary and appropriate assessments to obtain relevant data. STAR testing is administered at least three times per year for both mathematics and reading and can be used as a placement tool for future courses. There are assessments used for programming and progress monitoring through the special education department. The assessments used are Words Their Way Upper-Level Spelling Inventory, San Diego Quick Assessment, and the Aimsweb Writing Sample. Additionally, support services conduct triennial testing to determine continual eligibility based on students learning and needs and programming decisions.

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an inadequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who regularly collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. When the school's 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, provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students, perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services, and adequate support is offered to all classes across the core academic areas, BHS will continue to improve services for all students so they can achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- parents
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Commendations

Commendation

The variety of timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies, such as peer tutoring programs, teacher availability before and after school, and the provision of time during school (Flex B), that are available to all students in support of their achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations

Commendation

The systematic and consistent communication to students and families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services

Commendation

The strong commitment to and support for technology use by students and staff that enables support services staff to use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student

Commendation

The positive relationships that the guidance counselors foster with staff, students, and parents

Commendation

The availability of high-quality library learning commons resources before, during, and after school hours

Commendation

The active engagement of the library/media staff in the development and implementation of the school's curriculum

Standard 6 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure that there are sufficient licensed/certified personnel to provide support services for identified special education students

Recommendation

Ensure that school counseling services, health services, and library media services conduct formal ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and to ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations

Standard 7 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body generally provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies, however, some services do not have sufficient staffing, and some professional development in the area of curriculum revision is not distributed evenly amongst staff.

Brookfield High School has many honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses from which to choose across multiple disciplines: two English, three fine and performance arts, four math, five science, five social studies, and two world languages. There are University of Connecticut early college experiences (ECE) courses, including Literature and Composition, Music Appreciation II, Statistics, Discrete Math, Biology, European History, and U.S. History. There is also an Honors Calculus II course for college credit offered through Western Connecticut State University. The school offers a wide variety of elective courses to choose from as well, such as Culinary, Pottery, CAD, Robotics, Metal Shop, Wood Shop, Video Production, and a host of other art and music classes. The school also serves students in need of an alternative route to graduation through its alternative education program. This year, the school social worker was assigned to the school full time in order to provide adequate support for that program.

Technology needs are well funded. Each student is provided with an individual device, teachers are provided with district laptops and iPads, science labs are adequately equipped, as are the classrooms with flat panel monitors that perform many of the same functions as a SmartBoard.

In addition, to support literacy at the school, the district employs two full-time reading specialists at the high school, and has purchased curricular materials to support literacy and reading instruction, including STAR Reading (STAR Math also purchased), Souday System, and Language Live. To address the needs of their growing population of English language learners, the school recently hired a part-time EL tutor. The district TESOL-certified teacher teaches a class every other day, splitting the rest of her time with the other three schools in the district. The school has also established a world languages lab and purchased Edge Program and Rosetta Stone software.

Furthermore, Teachers have the necessary supplies and materials to provide instruction. To support the district initiative to develop standards-aligned curriculum instruction, assessment, grading, and reporting systems, funds have been allotted for professional development in this area, with some members of the school team working with an outside consultant. As a result, students have a significant amount of choice regarding course selection and learning, and students are both challenged and supported in their learning of skills and acquisition of the curriculum.

In recent years the district has significantly increased funding for professional development and curriculum revision. Teachers may apply for professional development grants of up to \$750 per year. A fund of \$20,000 per year is set aside for these grants, and a committee, comprising one teacher per building and three administrators, reviews applications and awards the grants on a first-come-first-served basis.

A majority of the teachers engage in individualized professional learning. Fourteen teachers are currently participating in ongoing learning and curriculum development work with an outside consultant in a "train-the-trainer" model of professional learning. This learning emphasizes four phases of curriculum development: identifying the standards, documenting a clear curriculum, developing assessments, and moving the process into the future. However, the knowledge and skills developed by these 14 teachers have not yet been passed on to other teachers in the building, and their colleagues are concerned that some departments had greater representation than others and are anxious to begin the process and develop their own skills in the area of curriculum development.

Some services are also understaffed, particularly special education; according to the Endicott survey, only 36

percent of teachers believe that support service staff is large enough to meet the needs of the school's student population. Currently, the special education teachers have caseloads of approximately 25 students, which has increased from approximately 10 in the past six years. This represents a 150 percent increase in caseload numbers. There has been a significant increase in the district's special education population. Furthermore, there are neither co-taught courses across a continuum, nor are they offered for every core subject. For example, there are co-taught classes for Algebra I and Geometry, but not for the other two courses needed to fulfill the four credit math requirement for graduation, and there are not any co-taught sections for science and social studies. The resource and applied classes that are provided for special education students are large, with approximately 16 to 20 students in a class.

Because the community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional supplies, most teachers and students have the materials they need to access the school's 21st century learning expectations. When full funding is realized for sufficient professional and support staff, students receiving special education services will have appropriate programming in accordance with their IEPs and best practice, and when the school's "train-the-trainer" professional development model of curriculum development is fully in place, teachers will have the capacity to develop curriculum that will ensure that all students have ample opportunity to practice and achieve the learning expectations at Brookfield High School.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school develops, plans, and funds programs to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment, but is inconsistent in its development, planning, and funding of programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant and to keep the school clean on a daily basis.

The school district has developed a ten-year capital improvement plan that lists anticipated repairs and replacements of items that are considered high priority. As part of this ten-year plan, there is a recommendation to replace the current low-pressure steam boilers with updated and more efficient boilers to assist with the heating issues in the building. Currently, there is no one control system that monitors heat throughout the building. As a result, there are classrooms that continuously have issues with the temperature of the room during the school day as the heating system does not provide adequate warm air to provide a comfortable learning environment. The air conditioning unit that services the auditorium is currently in the process of being replaced due to complete equipment failure. The auditorium was recently upgraded with new lighting and sound systems. The shop classrooms and art rooms are maintained, new equipment has been added for the robotics program, and an etching machine was acquired for the small student-run business enterprise called Everything Etched Easy.

Future planned capital improvements include replacing the buried 10,000-gallon fuel storage tank as well as replacing the emergency generator that enables the use of the high school as a community shelter in weather emergencies. There are plans to complete paving projects in the school's parking lots and to repair the crumbling sidewalks that are around the school. Many of the classrooms are not hooked up to the school's air conditioning system and therefore are using window units. There are plans to add air conditioning to the science wing as it was not included when that wing of the current building was added in 2007. The boys locker room is in serious need of renovation. Some lockers are aging and in disrepair, bathroom stalls are falling apart, and the doors do not lock. The shower areas are currently being used as storage for both the physical education and athletic departments. The district has appointed a planning committee to develop a renovation plan to create a new boys locker room. While these items make their way onto the ten-year capital plan, they have frequently been postponed due to a lack of funding commitment.

According to the Endicott survey, 80 percent of students feel the science labs are in good working condition, and 55 percent believe the furniture and equipment in the classes are in good condition. Furniture and classroom equipment are replaced on an as-needed basis. Needs and repair requests are sent through the building custodial staff and forwarded to the director of facilities. Technology replacement is supported in the school budget on a yearly basis. The high school is a 1:1 technology school. Students are allowed to provide their own device; however, the district provides a Chromebook to each student who needs a device or chooses not to provide their own. The school is staffed by six custodians, two during the day and four at night. There are currently 1.5 full time equivalent custodial positions vacant at the high school. The classrooms, stairwells, and other common areas are not fully cleaned on a daily basis. While the trash is taken out daily, classrooms are not swept or vacuumed each day.

Because the school develops, plans, and funds programs to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment, students have the equipment they need to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. When the community consistently funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant and to keep the school clean on a daily basis, students will have an environment conducive to learning, enabling them to better achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study

- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teachers
- students
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

Standard 7 Indicator 3

Conclusions

While there is no formal long-range plan to fund programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements (beyond the district's ten-year-capital improvement plan), the community funds and the school implements short-term plans that address programs and services as well as technology throughout the school. However, planning for and implementing enrollment changes and resulting staffing needs has been limited. Furthermore, implementation of plans for facility needs and capital improvements has been limited, aside from the cafeteria kitchen, which is adequately equipped, budgeted for long-range, and provides students with healthy and nutritious meals. Other facility needs, such as the replacement generator and replacement of the HVAC system for the auditorium, often are postponed until the need reaches a crisis stage.

To address the needs of the growing population of English language learners, an administrator to oversee ELL district-wide has been hired, and the school recently hired an ELL tutor. A world languages lab was created, and the programs, The Edge and Rosetta Stone, were acquired. The literacy needs for students are currently being monitored through the use of the STAR Reading, Sonday, and Live for Reading programs. In addition, the school employs two reading specialists, with training in Orton Gillingham. The reading specialists are working with students receiving ELL services as well as other students with significant reading deficits. Technology is well-funded; each student is issued a 1:1 device, and each teacher has been issued a laptop and iPad. The classrooms are equipped with flat-panel monitors that serve very similar functions to a Smartboard. The technology budget is adequate, and the funds are sufficient to cover maintenance and infrastructure costs. While the school does not have a long-range plan that addresses technology needs, the district is actively taking steps to ensure that appropriate funds are allotted for technology in the annual budget. The two-year plan includes provisions for revising the counseling curriculum and to consistently allocate time and budgeted funds to support the development of a standards-based curriculum across all courses. As a result, those students receiving ELL services have adequate supports, the students have ready and regular access to the online resources and programs necessary for learning, and the teachers have the technology necessary to teach to the standards and keep students engaged.

The school's five-year plan advocates for additional certified and non-certified staff to support the diverse needs of BHS learners and align with the board of education class size guidelines. Currently, some class sizes exceed the recommended level of 21 students. Previous cuts to staff have also resulted in fewer sections in science and some elective courses. Furthermore, a long-range plan for providing math services to those in need of intervention has not been developed, and a math interventionist has not been hired. There has been a significant increase in the population of students requiring special education services, yet there has been no increase in staff. Special education teacher caseloads have increased by approximately 150 percent, and the resource classes are extremely large, with approximately 16-20 students. According to the proposed ten-year capital plan, the district has planned for and will seek funding for improvements to the facility such as an updated heating and air conditioning system (HVAC), design and reconstruction of the boys' locker room, kitchen appliances, and updates and repairs to two bathrooms per year.

Because the community funds and the school implements informal plans to address some programs and services as well as technology, many students have the tools they need to practice and achieve the school's learning expectations. When more comprehensive long-range plans are developed, the district and school will be better able to plan and acquire funding for changing needs in the area of programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, and technology.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study

- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school support staff

Standard 7 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Most of the faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development of the budget, but have limited input into the budget process beyond the initial submission to the superintendent.

The process begins with department chairpersons and team leaders meeting with and requesting budgetary needs from the teachers in their respective departments. This includes classroom supplies, as well as curriculum materials and requests for professional development. Department leaders gather these requests at their individual department meetings to present to the principal. The principal meets individually with the department leaders to gather input the budgetary requests. The principal uses the information gleaned from these meetings to create a budget for the school and submits it to the superintendent by the end of October. The superintendent reviews the budgets from all four schools and may make revisions before submitting the district budget to the board of education; once the board of education approves the proposed budget, it is submitted to the Brookfield Board of Selectmen; once the board of selectmen approves the budget, it is submitted to the board of finance before going to a town referendum. At any of these levels, cuts can be made to the budget. If the budget does not pass the town referendum, it is sent back to the board of education for further cuts. Once the budget is submitted to the superintendent, the principal and faculty have little involvement in further cuts. As a result, many teachers do not feel involved in the implementation of the budget, because no further communication is afforded to or solicited from them after their initial input at the very beginning to the annual budget process.

When greater communication exists between central office staff and building administrators, and administrators and faculty, to ensure that faculty and building administrators are actively and fully involved in the development and implementation of the budget, there will be increased ownership in decisions impacting the students' ability to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 5

Conclusions

The school site and plant generally support the delivery of a wide range of high-quality school programs and services.

According to the Endicott survey, 83 percent of parents, 73 percent of teachers, and 51 percent of students believe that the school's physical plant and site support the delivery of high-quality programs and services. Overall, the majority of classrooms are able to accommodate the instructional needs of the students, although there are broken blinds and missing or damaged ceiling tiles in some classrooms. All of the counselors have private offices, and the school nurses have adequate space. Furthermore, recent improvements were made to the auditorium with new lighting and sound systems installed. The science labs were renovated in 2007 and meet the instructional needs of the teachers and students.

However, heating and air conditioning is uneven across the school. Currently, the building is not on one system, which causes a host of problems, and the main system is outdated and inadequate. The school cannot regulate the temperature in the building, which results in a significant variance in temperature and is neither conducive to learning nor cost-effective. The main heating system is difficult to maintain and expensive to run. Furthermore, students have needed to leave classes to see the nurse because they did not feel well as a result of the excessive heat. In the warmer months, the gym floor, which is wood, forms a layer of condensation and becomes slippery and unsafe to use. Throughout the year, the supply closet located in the gym cannot be used because it is so hot that condensation develops and deteriorates the equipment. The boys locker room is another area of significant need, particularly since the building is used as a shelter by the community during an emergency. The showers are completely inoperable and are currently used for storage. Furthermore, there are holes and many patches in the ceiling, storage is outdated, and some lockers are in need of repair.

The bathrooms throughout the building are in disrepair, and students have reported discomfort in using them. For example, only one stall in the third-floor girls bathroom locks and has a working toilet; furthermore, no one wants to use it because there is a very wide gap in the door. Additionally, most students are willing to walk out of their way to get to one of the two well-maintained water fountains in the building because they find the other water fountains unsanitary.

When the facility has been repaired, renovated, and updated, teachers will be able to provide high-quality education, and the students will be better able to focus upon their learning and feel comfortable in their learning environment.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 6

Conclusions

The school consistently 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 facilities manager maintains documentation that the physical plant and all school facilities meet applicable federal and state laws. Some of these documents are housed at the town/school offices. There is documentation on display in both of the school elevators, indicating the annual inspections of compliance. There is also documentation on display in the boiler room area. There are emergency wash stations installed in science classrooms as well as the shop and art areas. The fire alarm system is inspected once per year in the summer by Johnson Controls who approves the alarm system and equipment, such as alarm boxes and strobe lights. Fire evacuation drills are performed eight to ten times per school year. A copy of the report is on file with the head custodian as well as the facilities manager at town/school offices. The fire extinguishers are inspected by Fire Control Service with an approval certificate attached to each individual extinguisher. The kitchen is inspected by the health department twice per year with the latest report on file in the cafeteria office. Cleaning supplies used by kitchen staff are locked in a closet in the cafeteria. Custodial supplies, including chemicals, are stored in a locked closet or in the lower level where only custodians have access.

As a result of the school consistently maintaining 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, members of the school community can experience a certifiably safe environment.

Sources of Evidence

- facility tour
- central office personnel
- school support staff

Standard 7 Indicator 7

Conclusions

The majority of 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.

According to the Endicott survey, 60 percent of parents agree that the school effectively provides information to them. The school holds an open house in September to which families are invited via email, Facebook, and SchoolMessenger. The open house as well as other events are posted on the school website and Twitter. A mandatory freshman forum is held for incoming freshmen. Parent-teacher conferences are held three times per year, and parents are able to sign up for ten-minute appointments with a given teacher. The teachers also have two weeks to reach out to parents whom they wish to see for a conference. Administrators recommend that teachers respond to parental emails within 48 hours. When needed, staff reach out to parents via phone call or home visit. Parents participate on the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSO), the Special Education Parent and Teacher Association (SEPTA), and on the overarching booster club, with representation by a parent from each team. Parents also actively participate in the BHS Grad Party process, where they develop a theme and transform the school for the seniors to celebrate graduation in a safe and supervised location. BHS conducts team meetings for students who are struggling, and the district has partnered with Brookfield Cares, which provides support to parents regarding mental health concerns and drug addiction.

To specifically address the needs of the growing population of students requiring ELL services, parents are contacted more frequently by phone using a contracted service called VOIANCE, a translation service accessible by phone. The school has also partnered with local culture centers which host both evening and morning events to provide further support and outreach to families.

Other ways in which the staff communicate with families include a weekly principal's newsletter, weekly counseling newsletter, monthly coffee and conversation with the principal, school and teacher websites, Facebook, and Twitter. In addition, the students and their parents can readily access their grades and the teacher grade book via PowerSchool, and the administrators recommend that the teachers update their grades every two weeks.

Parents view the principal as being very visible both within the school and at school events, and they find him to be approachable. They feel that they can email, call, or make an appointment to meet in the principal's office to address questions or concerns and that their concerns are followed up upon in a timely manner. They stated that the administration as a whole consistently follows up with parents.

Because the 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, the majority of parents and families feel involved in their children's education and have increased ability to support them as they work to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- parents
- Endicott survey

Standard 7 Indicator 8

Conclusions

The school actively develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

Student volunteers participate in the Brookfield Rake and Bake event in the fall. This provides students the opportunity to rake leaves for members of the local community who may need assistance. Hundreds of students volunteer to participate in this event yearly. Parents and students volunteer during the grad party held for the graduating class. The school is open all night on the night of graduation. The community is invited to be a part of this event, and local businesses get involved by donating goods that are needed such as decorations, food, and door prizes. Many of the student-athletes at the high school volunteer their time at various youth sports, working as coaches or officials. The local Chick-Fil-A restaurant supports the athletic department by advertising as well as donating food which is sold from the school's concession stand.

Students in the alternative program can participate in a vocational program through which they go out into the community and work for local businesses or the park and recreation department. Special education students in the life skills program also go out to work in local businesses for educational experiences. The school hired a college and career counselor to assist students with career internships and college experiences. One hundred and thirty students take part in the early college experience (ECE) program associated with the University of Connecticut (UCONN) and/or courses offered in partnership with Western Connecticut State University. Each year the music department partners with Bok and Blu, a local performance band led by a husband and wife team, who bring the professional musicians together (at their own expense) to perform with student musicians from all four schools. One hundred percent of the proceeds are used to support the district's music program.

Because the school actively develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning, the students are afforded opportunities to have learning experiences beyond the classroom.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- parents
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Commendations

Commendation

The commitment to funding for technology in general, as well as the school's 1:1 technology program

Commendation

The complete and readily available 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

Commendation

The ongoing efforts of all professional staff to 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

Commendation

The productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning

Standard 7 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements

Recommendation

Resolve the HVAC issues throughout the building

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to resolve the issues with the boys locker room and showers, bathrooms, water fountains throughout the school, the condensation issues with the gym floor and supply closet, holes and patches in ceilings, outdated storage, and broken lockers throughout the school.

Recommendation

Increase communication throughout the district's development and implementation of the budget, and ensure that faculty and administrators are involved in all phases of the budget process

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to ensure consistent funds to maintain and repair the building and school plant and to keep the school clean on a daily basis.

Recommendation

Ensure that professional and support staff are sufficient to meet the needs of students receiving special education services in accordance with their IEPs and best practice

Recommendation

Ensure that the "train-the-trainer" professional development model for curriculum development is effective and enables teachers to develop a high quality standards-based curriculum

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

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

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

Roster of Team Members

Chair(s)

Chair: Dr. Linda Van Wagenen - New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.

Assistant Chair: Mr. Brian McCann - Joseph Case High School

Team Members

Luz Antonio - Newington High School

Deborah Bottaro - Cheshire High School

Bruce Hastings - Belchertown High School

Laura Lanza - Farmington High School

Ms. Alison Lucas - Stratford High School

Michael Magas - Woodland Regional High School

Amy Maldonado - Middletown High School

Kristin Mancini - Daniel Hand High School

Danny Martins - Ridgefield High School

Diana Nasser - Marine Science Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut

Kate O'Keefe - Weston High School

Amy Perras - Nonnewaug High School

Ari Rothman - New Canaan High School

Patricia Vivari - Lincoln High School