

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

Commission on Public Schools



Committee on Public Secondary Schools

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

Wellesley, MA

March 31, 2019 - April 03, 2019

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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

Wellesley High School is located in Wellesley, MA 13 miles west of Boston, Massachusetts. Wellesley has a population of 29,215 according to the 2016 US Census report. Despite its close proximity to the centers of learning and commerce in the Boston area, Wellesley has its own educational, cultural, and natural resources which enrich the quality of life for all of its citizens. It is a community where academic excellence and traditions are highly valued. The average household income is \$171,719 with a town-wide poverty rate of 3.3 percent, as compared with Massachusetts at \$70,954 with a poverty rate of 10.4 percent.

As of 10/1/18, there were 4,978 students enrolled in Wellesley Public Schools. This number is comprised of 72.09 percent White, 14.54 percent Asian, 5.9 percent Multi-Racial, 4.6 percent Black, 3.48 percent Hispanic, .04 percent American Indian, .03 percent Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. In addition to Wellesley High School (1,534 students), Wellesley has one middle school (Grades 6-8 with 1169 students), seven elementary schools (Grades K-5 with a total of 2175 students), and one pre-school (100 students). Nineteen percent of students in the town attend private school. St. John's, Dana Hall and Tenacre Country Day School are all private schools within the town of Wellesley. There are 272 students who are classified as Economically Disadvantaged in the district. The FY17 per-pupil expenditure was \$18,635.99 with an in-district per-pupil expenditure of \$17,406.66. The state average per-pupil expenditure is \$15,544.92 and in-district is \$15,023.88. The FY17 Attrition Rate (Enrollment Stability) was 3.5 percent.

Wellesley recognizes and values the importance of diversity as a learning opportunity for all of our students. Wellesley has two programs that help expand the diversity of the student population: the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunities (METCO) and A Better Chance (ABC). METCO is a voluntary program intended to extend educational opportunities and reduce racial imbalance by inviting students in certain cities to attend public schools in other communities. ABC is a program that selects female students from the New York City boroughs and other urban areas to live in a house provided by Wellesley College while attending school at WHS. Currently, 46 students from Boston participate in the METCO program at the high school and 4 students are a part of ABC.

The town of Wellesley is very supportive of the public schools; 48.92 percent of the town budget goes to fund public education and 64.56 percent of local taxation is spent on the schools. The current high school building was built in 2012. The middle school has undergone renovations in past years and the seven elementary buildings are currently the subject of rebuild or refurbish discussions within the town.

At Wellesley High School in FY17, the student attendance rate was 93.8 percent while it was 95.4 percent in all of the Wellesley Public Schools and was 94.6 percent in Massachusetts as a whole. The attendance rate for teachers (excluding professional days) was 95.9 percent for the high school and for the district. The FY17 dropout rate for Wellesley High School was 0.3 percent while the graduation rate was 97.7 percent. Within the Class of 2017, 95 percent chose to attend a four-year college, 2 percent chose a two-year college and 2 percent chose specialized and post-graduate schools for a total of 99 percent who chose to continue their education immediately following their graduation from Wellesley High School.

There are numerous local educational opportunities available to the students in the broader community. These include but are not limited to courses available to students through Virtual High School (VHS), classes at Wellesley College (for juniors and seniors only), courses at Brandeis University and Mass Bay Community College where students have participated in a Dual-Enrollment Program. Additionally, WHS encourages students to be active participants in the wider world. Students may participate in an annual international art trip; international exchange trips to France and Germany; a bi-annual Social Studies Cultural Immersion Program to various locations studied in the World History curriculum; and World Challenge (an organization that takes trips to third world countries).

The Evolutions program, a project-based, interdisciplinary option available to juniors and seniors, continually works with outside community members and organizations. For colleges, they visit Olin College yearly to have students view their Fall Expo of student work. This helps students see the different types of inquiry and projects

that they could undertake as well as how to present them. When exhibitions align with their curriculum, they also take advantage of the Davis Museum at Wellesley College. Evolutions does not have a formal relationship with Babson College, but each year students have used the campus for different projects such as community mapping. Additionally, in the past, they have worked with Boston University, Wellesley College, Babson College, and Mass Art to explore the sociology of campuses and the culture that they create. As for working with the Wellesley community - each year Evolutions has partnered with town organizations as part of its Community Partnerships where teachers/students identify needs of the community, get hands-on experience with community organizations, and then create solutions/products for the public. In year one, a student group worked on creating a veterans memorial bench and database. In year two, student teams created installations for the WEF STEM Expo. In year three, they partnered with the Wellesley Unified Plan on public art pieces to communicate the plans for Wellesley's future. Aside from the Community Partnerships, they continually look to use organizations and experts to bring real-world, authentic content and skills to Wellesley students. They work with the Wellesley Historical Society for a mapping project along with the Natural Resources Commission. They have worked with representatives of the Bureau of Infectious Diseases about how they would identify and contain an outbreak. Finally, Evolutions tries to have public exhibitions of student work out in the community as much as possible, either at the Wellesley Library, town hall, or with local businesses. Throughout all of these, they actively look for ways to engage the community in helping inspire learning and as places to share what students have learned.

School/business partnerships include both internships and paid positions with the Municipal Light Plant for students in our Launch Program. Babson College offers an entrepreneur workshop for students. Junior Achievement provides consultants and books for Business Entrepreneur class. Parents from the fields of economics and finance come into Finance and Business Entrepreneurship classes to advise and consult. Computer Science classes and clubs have featured guest presenters. Bentley and Babson Colleges have sent WHS alumni to talk with current business students. The Women in Science Club has female professionals talk with students at lunch about careers in STEM. An annual Seminar Day invites presenters from many various disciplines to come and give one-hour seminars to any and all students who are interested. In addition, many local organizations sponsor senior projects.

WHS has relationships with several community organizations. The Wellesley Police Department has assigned a school resource officer to the high school full time. HRS (Human Relations Service) provides psychological consultation to both students and education professionals. The Resilience Project (out of Newton-Wellesley Hospital) provides outreach to local schools for student wellness.

WHS hosts in excess of a hundred college and university visits annually. The annual Step-Up Day enables each sophomore and junior to participate in Practice ACTs and Practice SATs during the school day. It also allows seniors to meet with college representatives and/or work with counselors or English teachers on their college applications.

Students at Wellesley High School are recognized for their work in numerous ways. These include, but are not limited to, being a Student of the Quarter (each department honors one student each quarter for reasons that are not purely academic), membership in the National Honor Society, membership in the Foreign Language Honor Society, Senior & Underclass Awards Nights, POPS Senior Profile in the Townsman, Athlete of Week, Artist of the Month, Honor Roll, Scholastic Art & Writing Competition (both statewide and national), Emerging Artist Awards (awarded to two juniors from Wellesley Parents Supporting Art Students, and the Wellesley Society of Artists Achievement Award.

Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations

Core Values

Academic Excellence
Commitment to Community
Respect for Human Differences
Cooperative & Caring Relationships

Wellesley Public Schools Vision of a Graduate

WPS aspires to be a school system that develops the heads, hearts, and hands of its students by inspiring them to:

Think Critically & Solve Problems

Create & Innovate

Engage Locally & Globally

Communicate & Collaborate

Respect Human Differences & Challenge Inequities

Attend to their Physical, Social & Emotional Health

Related Files

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Introduction

Introduction

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

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

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

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

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

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Wellesley High School, a committee of 5 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 Wellesley High School extended over a period of ten school months from January 2018 to December 2018.

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, Wellesley 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 Wellesley High School. The visiting team members spent four days in Wellesley, MA, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the members of the visiting team represented classroom teachers, guidance counselors, library/media specialists, school administrators, and central office administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Wellesley 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 hours shadowing 16 students for a half-day
- a total of 10 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 Wellesley High School

Standard 1 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values, beliefs about learning, and profile of a graduate. Beginning with work by a former superintendent and district administrators in 1996, the three core values of academic excellence, cooperative and caring relationships, and respect for human differences were promulgated. A few years later, a fourth value, commitment to community, was added by the school committee. The school's core values are readily available, both on the website and in visual displays across the school. The Wellesley Public Schools recently completed a comprehensive design process for a profile of a graduate with an outside consultant, Ed Leader 21. After a staff development meeting in November 2017 in which the faculty weighed in on the most important values and qualities any graduate should exhibit, invitations were extended by the district to teachers, parents, community members, students, and alumni to form a Profile of a Graduate Task Force, which convened and met between March and May 2018. The Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) Profile of a Graduate has six competencies which overlap with the core values in significant ways: Think Critically and Solve Problems; Create and Innovate; Engage Locally and Globally; Communicate and Collaborate; Respect Human Differences and Challenge Inequity; and Attend to their Physical, Social, and Emotional Health. Ed Leader 21 has provided district-wide rubrics in the areas of creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking. As the staff continues to work on developing an understanding of the WPS Profile of a Graduate, the rubrics will need to be adjusted and personalized in order to be utilized to assess student progress and performance. As a result of the dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process used to develop both the core values and the WPS Profile of a Graduate, the school has important foundational documents on which to base decisions and guide its work.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 1 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Wellesley High School has identified challenging and measurable competencies for all students and is in the process of working to personalize and make actionable district-wide rubrics associated with the competencies of the WPS Profile of a Graduate. The academic council spent additional time working with Ed Leader 21 from December 2017 through April 2018. At these meetings, they worked to outline details of the profile of a graduate process. They explored the rubrics in detail, and they considered best practices for implementation. The bulk of the work for this process has thus far been at the administrative level and this work will continue throughout the next few years. As the use of these rubrics becomes clearer, administrators will need to thoroughly explain expectations to teachers and teachers should have a voice in developing the assessment system for the graduate profile. When the school develops assessment tools to measure and to give feedback to students on the competencies in the newly developed profile of a graduate, students will know how well they are progressing in the development of these important skills.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 1 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The school's core values and beliefs are actively reflected in the culture of the school, influence curriculum, instruction, and assessment in most classrooms, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. The newly designed profile of a graduate is just at the beginning stages of influencing curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.

The core values of academic excellence, cooperative and caring relationships, respect for human differences, and commitment to community are actively reflected in the daily life of the school. Over the years, as the school's enrollment started to increase, a plan was deliberately put into place to make cooperative and caring relationships accessible on a smaller scale. The new building was separated into 3 separate houses for easier access to students. The advisory program was implemented to encourage students to make connections with an adult each day. The Enrichment and Recreation Program was implemented to encourage students that weren't participating in traditional team sports to explore different activities and create relationships with a variety of students across the school. The Journeys program, comprised of approximately 45 upper-class students, was developed to provide support and advice to students in grades 9 and 10 as part of the advisory program.

Across the school, adults and students generally show respect for each other. The administration has dealt with past exceptions to this, such as hurtful online behavior and graffiti in bathrooms. Through serious consequences for offending students and by giving school day time for all students to discuss the events with their advisories, these situations have become the exception. As a result of these incidents, students have been encouraged to take responsibility for their community and make a difference. Many students have risen to this challenge and have unified in groups to encourage better student behavior. The Journey's program, advisory, One Wellesley and Young Ethnic Scholars are places where the value of respect for human differences is made a priority and a guiding theme. Almost all recent programmatic initiatives in the school reflect the value of commitment to the community. Programs such as One Wellesley, advisory, Friday Morning Announcements, Challenge Success, Freshman Orientation, Journeys, and ERP were put in place to encourage relationships among community members.

Evidence of the impact of the core values and beliefs on curriculum, instruction, and assessment as well as policies and procedures can be seen throughout the school. The history curriculum is thematically arranged with the goal of promoting cultural appreciation and highlighting the cautions of what happens when other cultures are not appreciated. Special education staff and parents noted a strong culture of welcoming inclusivity, feeling that many students are kept in-house who would likely have an outside placement in other districts. Students in theatre programs are guided through empathy-building exercises to help them connect with their roles as actors, and productions are chosen for their ability to help both performers and audience address questions of race, disability, and oppression. The performing arts department is driven by a philosophical underpinning that there is a human responsibility to produce art for its community-generating capacity. Numerous individuals, both staff and students, expressed great admiration for the school community's ability to come together as a community and to make teachable moments of community events in which core values are violated.

As a result of the influence of the school's core values and beliefs on the culture of the school, as well as curriculum, instruction, and assessment in most classrooms, students and faculty have a shared set of values to guide their work. When the newly designed profile of a graduate is integrated into the culture of the school and influences curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices, students will have consistent opportunities to practice and develop these important competencies.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations

- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 1 Indicator 4

Conclusions

The school reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st-century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities.

The Wellesley High School self-study acknowledges that core values and beliefs have not been regularly reviewed since their development in 1996. However, there are multiple visual displays related to the school's core values and students and staff were able to discuss these tenets in general terms. A wide variety of programs that support the school's core values and learning expectations are evident in the academic classes and after-school programs.

In addition, over the past two years, there has been a district-wide effort to create a profile of a graduate, which has included input from a wide variety of stakeholders, as well as guidance from outside consultant Ed Leader 21. The school is currently working on aligning school initiatives with the existing core values and adapting rubrics provided by Ed Leader 21, in order to create consistent assessments related to the WPS Profile of a Graduate. Data sources that have been used include the CPSS Endicott survey and the Kingston Survey on Racial Climate. In implementing the Challenge Success program, the Stanford Survey of Adolescent Experiences has been used to guide decision-making. On a district level, the same sources, as well as parent, student and teacher feedback, were instrumental in the decision to create a position for a director of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

As a result of the district-wide work on developing a profile of a graduate using multiple data sources and school and district priorities, the district now has clearly identified targets for all students. Additional review and revision (if necessary) of the core values and beliefs of the school will ensure that these ideas still reflect the school community's fundamental values and beliefs about learning.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- students
- Endicott survey

Standard 1 Commendations

Commendation

The Journeys mentoring program, which promotes student relationships and encourages civic responsibility

Commendation

The positive staff/student relationships promoted by the advisory program and the house system which exemplify the school's core values

Commendation

The array of courses and extracurricular activities which create opportunities for students to engage in areas of interest and to address challenging contemporary issues

Commendation

The many visuals throughout the school promoting acceptance and constructive allyship

Commendation

The development of a district-wide profile of a graduate through a collaborative process including multiple stakeholders

Standard 1 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide rubrics, for the competencies in the profile of a graduate

Recommendation

Ensure the core values, beliefs, and profile of a graduate are actively reflected in the culture of the school, and drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom

Recommendation

Develop and implement a process to regularly review and revise core values, beliefs, and the profile of a graduate based on research, multiple data sources, and district and school community priorities

Standard 2 Indicator 1

Conclusions

Across the school, students have opportunities through the curriculum to practice and achieve the competencies detailed in the newly developed profile of a graduate; however, the curriculum is not yet purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of these competencies.

More than 50 percent of the staff and more than 80 percent of parents agree that the curriculum offers opportunities to achieve the school's learning expectations. Students have numerous opportunities, in each grade level and across several disciplines, to communicate and collaborate with peers while thinking critically to solve problems. Opportunities for students to think critically, solve problems, communicate and collaborate were consistently seen across multiple disciplines. In 10th grade American Literature, students work in small groups to find deeper meaning in key aspects of *The Great Gatsby* and utilize books, as well as peers, to answer inquiry-based questions and to develop clarifying questions. Students are also provided some opportunities to learn respect for human differences and challenge inequity, as well as to engage locally and globally and attend to their physical, social and emotional health in several courses. The English department offers a course entitled, *Diverse American Voices* and the social studies department offers a *Gender and Sexuality* class. Evidence of a commitment to these competencies can also be seen in other curricular areas. In a Bio-Technology class, students were discussing eugenics in the context of not only science but also of American immigration policies in the early 1900s and today. Students in 10th grade take a health education course which covers a variety of social and emotional health topics.

As the school fully implements the profile of a graduate and ensures that the curriculum is designed so that students have opportunities to practice and receive feedback on their progress toward proficiency in these competencies, then all students will have the opportunity to achieve these important goals.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- Endicott survey

Standard 2 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The curriculum is not yet written in a common format across the school. There is some curricular documentation in most departments, but there is no common template for curriculum; however, most units of study that are written include essential questions, concepts, content, and skills with limited formal instructional strategies and assessment practices.

While there is no common template, most departments have documented essential questions, learning goals, skills, and content for each course. Science offers a fully articulated curriculum across subject areas, identifying specific goals and strategies to achieve them. The biology curriculum provides a representative example of the structure, content, and approach of all the science department curriculum guides. Social studies has clearly identified skill development goals for writing and research for the 9th, 10th, and 11th grade courses. In addition, there is a shared scope and sequence of content for each core history course. The English department has clearly identified essential questions and core skills per grade level. In addition, there are grade level common assessments, such as a sophomore synthesis paper. Other departments establish the goals and expectations on a course-by-course basis, however, evidence of this documentation was not provided in all cases. Teachers in the classic and modern languages department expressed a desire for dedicated time to work on curriculum development and to establish some consistency among teachers, as they felt this was lacking for their department. While there is no consistency in school-wide rubrics or assessment of the school-wide expectations, most departments utilize and purposefully design rubrics that assess content and skills. In social studies, students are assessed with a common writing and collaboration rubric across several grade levels. Common rubrics are also used in the Product Development Project in business classes. Informal teacher collaboration is used to align instructional strategies and assessment practices, but there is limited formal written evidence of strategies and practices expected in each course.

When the school develops a curriculum written in a common format, students can be ensured of a consistent and viable curricular experience.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The curriculum extensively emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology, but there are limited formal examples of cross-curricular learning.

There is an initiative to implement project-based learning throughout the district and in the high school to purposefully ensure that the curriculum includes opportunities to exhibit inquiry and problem-solving, higher-order thinking, and authentic learning opportunities. Eighty-three percent of staff report that the curriculum in their department/content area emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge. The feedback from students and parents supports this claim, with the majority indicating that there is clear depth of understanding, application of knowledge, higher order thinking skills, and ethical use of technology. Formal cross-disciplinary curricular experiences for students are limited to the Evolutions program and the Humanities course. The Evolutions program deliberately incorporates inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology into their curriculum through project-based learning. Evolutions has a limited enrollment of 40-50 students, while the Humanities course has a smaller enrollment. Informal cross-disciplinary connections occur when courses align their curriculum as the schedule allows. Environmental Science and Astronomy instructors have worked with visual arts teachers to incorporate science and art showing higher-order thinking and authentic learning. Language exchanges in German and French allow students the opportunity to be immersed in authentic learning and application of knowledge in their respective languages. There are also several opportunities for authentic learning in school through extensive projects such as Independent Research Projects (IRP) in both science and English, as well as the Senior Project. Outside of school, learning opportunities include field trips, internships, job shadowing, and college courses. However, only 48.4 percent of students report that their teachers explain how to apply what they are learning in classes to learning experiences in other courses and in life outside of school.

As a result of the emphasis on depth of understanding and application of knowledge, through inquiry and problem-solving, higher-order thinking, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology, students have access to a curriculum that maximizes their success.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Indicator 4

Conclusions

There is clear alignment between the written curriculum documents that currently exist and the taught curriculum in the school. Teachers rely on learning goals, essential questions, core skills and rubrics to teach the curriculum. Seventy-two percent of teachers report that they agree that the written and taught curricula are aligned. Teachers from most departments meet in content and grade-level teams to plan lessons and common experiences based on internal curriculum documents and rubrics. Some teams of teachers use common assessments informed by the learning goals, essential questions, and core skills, to ensure a similar experience for all students in a course, regardless of the teacher. In the English department, all sophomores write a synthesis paper that spans several academic quarters. There are differences between departments with regard to the documentation and updating of the curriculum. The science department has a fully written curriculum that serves as a guide for what is taught. When there is written curriculum documentation for all courses in all departments, there will be even greater alignment between the written and taught curriculum and students will be assured common learning outcomes for each course.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Indicator 5

Conclusions

There is sufficient curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district. The district has a clearly delineated curriculum review plan. Administration, department heads, and teachers are able to articulate the timeline for the curriculum review process. A formal process for each discipline takes place every ten years, however, there is an active push to make that process more frequent, such as every three-to-five years. The process happens within individual buildings and in district-wide meetings that involve teachers K-12. In between review years, department heads and teachers are involved in informal curricular updates. Curricular areas are staggered to enable the review process. Changes in standards often force curriculum review prior to the scheduled time in an effort to align current and new requirements. The high school and sending school do not currently have formal meeting times unless the curricular area is undergoing a curricular review. Communication between sending schools and high school centers around 8th-grade transition and does not involve vertical alignment of curriculum. As a result of the curriculum review process implemented by the district, departments are able to provide a curriculum that is both coordinated and vertically aligned.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Indicator 6

Conclusions

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are more than sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.

Class sizes have an average of 19 students (a range of 2-30, with a median of 21). The majority of staff and parents are in total agreement the school facilities fully support the implementation of the curriculum, including co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities. However, they are at population maximum and some departments, classical and modern languages and science in particular, report being somewhat short on classroom space. The science department currently has 12 classrooms/labs and employs 22 teachers. The classroom/lab space in some cases is not adequate for accommodating larger AP classes. There is a lack of adequate workspace for science teachers given available classrooms and teacher support rooms; however, it is not impacting the ability of science teachers to deliver the science curriculum. Only 37.8 percent of staff strongly agree that the community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for professional and support staff. Some department heads mentioned a desire for more funding for professional development, as there is not a budget to provide professional development targeted to specific content areas. The library/media center has an extensive catalog of current text and electronic resources to complete critical research included in the curriculum; however, there is little collaboration between teachers and library staff in delivering the curriculum. There are a plethora of diverse clubs and after-school opportunities in all departments, as well as student-generated clubs that enhance the curriculum.

As a result of having sufficient staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center, as well as co-curricular activities, teachers are able to fully implement the curriculum.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Indicator 7

Conclusions

In some areas, the district provides the school's professional staff with personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research.

The assistant superintendent of teaching and learning directs training, evaluates curriculum needs, and supervises the practice of vertical articulation across grade levels through an academic counsel which includes all administrators and department heads. In recent years, a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) was implemented to incorporate elements of best practice into the curriculum to support multiple learning styles and to assist students in accessing the curriculum. The DCAP divides accommodations into four categories: presentation, setting, timing, and response. While these directives are implemented and outlined, 46.5 percent of staff does not believe teachers have sufficient time to be engaged in formal curriculum evaluation, review, and revision work. The science department has one dedicated hour per seven day cycle for PLC time because of their class schedule. The general goal of this time is to work on curriculum; however, the time is often needed to complete other objectives. Other departments have occasional formal opportunities or use their reserved department time and half-day time to meet with course partners to discuss curriculum, but this is not guaranteed. Most departments have been utilizing paid curriculum and instruction hours to create and collaborate on curriculum or major assessments tied to their grade level skills and curriculum, although starting last year, the district significantly reduced funding for these hours and at this point there has been no communication that previous funding levels will be restored. The classical and modern languages department holds afternoon and weekend professional development sessions to deepen and work on curriculum, but feel as if they need more time built into their schedule to complete this work.

When the district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient time and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research, then teachers will be able to maintain a collaborative curriculum aligned with current research and assessment results.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 2 Commendations

Commendation

The evidence of depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry, problem-solving, higher-order thinking, authentic learning opportunities, and informed and ethical use of technology in the taught curriculum

Commendation

The established process for curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools

Commendation

The provision of sufficient instructional materials, technology, equipment, and supplies needed to implement and deliver curriculum

Standard 2 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to ensure there are written curriculum documents for all courses in all departments that include units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; connections to the WPS Profile of a Graduate; instructional strategies; and assessment practices that include opportunities for students to receive feedback on the competencies in the graduate profile

Recommendation

Create opportunities for teachers to work together to develop formal cross-disciplinary activities, units or courses

Recommendation

Provide time for all departments to formally collaborate on development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research

Standard 3 Indicator 1

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices at Wellesley High School are implicitly linked with the school's core values and beliefs and are beginning to be aligned with the competencies in the new Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) Profile of a Graduate.

Most teachers are familiar with the four core values of Wellesley High School (commitment to community, respect for human differences, academic excellence, and cooperative and caring relationships). Teachers are not as familiar with the new WPS Profile of a Graduate. Administrators work collaboratively with teachers to foster the growth of responsible citizens who are empathetic, resilient, and adaptive through instructional practices. Administrators make students aware of the core values in disciplinary interactions by reminding them that their actions do not represent the values the school promotes and believes in.

Instructional practices that relate to the value of commitment to community are evident at Wellesley High School. One example includes the choral program that visits and sings for patients in nursing homes as the teacher emphasizes to students that their voices are gifts that can be shared with others. Another example is the school-wide Challenge Success initiative which nearly all teachers participate in. Instruction that takes place during the advisory period aims to foster a school environment that prepares students for the challenges of a changing world such as problem-solving, increasing social-emotional health, and motivation to succeed in the field of students' choosing. For the 2018-2019 school year, the WHS Challenge Success program is focused on aiding students in achieving balance, with a focus on the areas of workload, technology, and sleep. As a way to support this initiative, students are asked to complete a time tracker during their daily advisory to help them recognize and examine how they spend their time, identify where stressors may emerge in their schedules, and what healthy choices could be made.

Many teachers and department heads stated that the core value of respect for human differences permeates the fabric of daily instruction. While teachers acknowledge that how this value directly relates to instruction is not as explicit as it could be, there have been purposeful additions to curriculum and instruction at Wellesley High School to support this value. For example, the social studies department created and implemented a two-week unit devoted to race where daily instruction embeds respect for differences. In addition, an elective titled Gender and Identity has been added in the English department. In a health class, students watched a CBS video entitled Raising Ryland and were asked their opinions about transgender children. In a theater arts class, a unit titled Theater of the Oppressed puts students in another person's shoes to learn empathy as it relates to the reading of a play on the theme of oppression. In addition, the Evolutions program illustrates efforts to create relevant and meaningful learning experiences for a wide variety of students who can then apply their knowledge to solving real-world problems.

Wellesley High School prides itself on the value of academic excellence. This pride permeates classrooms and programs throughout the school. Courses offered at the AP, Honors, ACP, and CP levels ensure access to college-preparatory content and skills. The senior project, PBLs, and the many academic support systems in place for all students, such as the resource centers and learning centers, reflect Wellesley's belief in making sure instruction in the classroom paves the way to academic excellence.

Teachers' instruction reflects the core value of cooperative and caring relationships. In collaborative instructional activities, students are given many opportunities to practice how to foster relationships with their peers. In classical and modern language classes, teachers frequently ask students to engage in authentic dialogue. In history and English classes, instructional methods such as a Socratic seminar and literary circles call for cooperation among classmates. Teachers also demonstrate caring for their students in their demonstrated flexibility regarding test dates, which could be changed to alleviate work overload for a student who already has three tests scheduled on the same day.

Because teachers' instructional practices at Wellesley High School are implicitly linked with the school's core values and beliefs, teachers are modeling the values they want students to emulate.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teachers

Standard 3 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations through personalizing instruction; engaging students as active and self-directed learners; emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking; applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; engaging students in self-assessment and reflection; integrating technology; and to a lesser extent, engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning.

Across the school, teachers personalize instruction for students. Fifty-three percent of students say their teachers spent one-on-one time with them. Sixty-eight percent agree that teachers give them opportunities to choose topics for some assignments. In classroom instruction, teachers give students opportunities to make decisions that drive the learning process. In grade 11 English classes, students are assigned an independent research project for which they can choose the topic. In some language classes, students are allowed to choose how they will be assessed at the end of a unit, specifically if the assessment will be verbal or written in nature. In 10th grade ACP Chemistry, students are encouraged to work on a review activity of their own choosing that represents the content they struggle with. They have practice equations, two Canvas quizzes, or word problems to choose from and are encouraged to use their most recent test as a guide for what content they need more help with. In Woodshop, students work on self-designed projects. They create project designs independently and have to clearly lay out their building process. In the Evolutions program, students make the personal choice to embrace their curiosity and to take ownership of their learning in a non-traditional way.

Students at Wellesley High School are occasionally engaged in cross-disciplinary learning. Limited time and opportunity to collaborate across disciplines makes it difficult for teachers to effectively and purposefully engage students in cross-disciplinary learning. In the classical and modern languages department, units have been created which link health topics such as nutrition and stress into their curriculum by including them as units of study. The Evolutions program allows participating students the unique opportunity to learn across disciplines. Some teachers have started to implement cross-disciplinary, project-based learning. For example, the science and art departments worked collaboratively on PBL experiences.

A vast majority of teachers engage students as active and self-directed learners. In language classes, teachers engage students in authentic dialogue activities. The Evolutions program requires students to actively engage in student-selected topics and projects of interest. English and social studies classes use peer editing on papers. In music classes, students are active participants in singing and playing their instruments as a group. In classroom observations in multiple disciplines, students are active participants in small group discussions. Seniors can apply to complete a senior project, allowing them to spend the fourth term working on a substantial project of their own choice reflecting their personal interests. Self-directed learning occurs in some form or fashion in many classrooms at Wellesley High School.

Many teachers emphasize inquiry. Students in biology classes are asked to design, propose, and implement their own experiments as part of a bacteria unit. In a chemistry class, students are asked to calculate the PSI of footballs to see if the Ideal Gas Law played into the Deflategate scandal at all. In a physics class, students walk quickly around a circle and note their mass and speed to make inferences about centripetal and frictional force. In many English classes, students are asked to develop inquiry questions regarding a novel, and to then explore their questions using textual support in the form of a written analysis.

Students are frequently engaged in higher-order thinking. In social studies and English classes, many teachers conduct Socratic seminars. In language classes, students participate in conversations based on assigned real-world situations. In AP Psychology, students consider the question, "What contributes to the achievement gap between white students and students of color?" In English classes, students write an essay in which they compare a piece of literature to their own life experiences, citing examples from the text to demonstrate connections. In classroom observations, many teachers elicit higher-order thinking with questioning techniques that focus on the synthesis of prior and newly developed knowledge.

Most students engage in problem-solving. In science classes, students engage in labs where problems are posed and students are tasked with investigating to find answers. In geometry classes, students use knowledge of sine, cosine, and tangent to solve more complex word problems. In analytical math classes, students solve problems related to the pricing of goods to maximize profit. In a physics class, students are required to keep a notebook of daily entries with one requirement asking students to write descriptions of problems and explanations of how they corrected or handled them. In biology, students design, propose, and implement an activity of their choice for a unit on bacteria.

Students at Wellesley High School often apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. In classical and modern languages classes, students actively engage in conversations that relate to real-world situations. In English classes, students write poetry books dedicated to a loved one. In a 12th grade math class, students develop a game using the laws of probability. The follow-up activity, scheduled for later in the week, is to play the games to win "funny money." In a theater arts class, students work collaboratively to write a one-act play, conduct auditions for parts, cast actors, assign roles for staging, lighting, props, and costumes, and ultimately produce the play. In a choral class, students go into the community and perform for Alzheimer's patients, and in nursing homes. The implementation of PBL (project-based learning) also requires students to apply knowledge to authentic tasks. Two English teachers collaborated on a PBL unit pairing low-level, reluctant readers in grades 9 and 10. Ultimately, the students produced videos that advertised selected books that were then put on display in the local book store. In Spanish 3, students are asked to read an email written in Spanish and write a response back in Spanish. The topic of the email relates to the subject of the current unit, stress, so they are expected to give advice to Gregorio to tell him how to cope with his stress using the words and phrases taught in the unit thus far. In Woodshop, students are putting into practice authentic, real-world skills in building everyday items.

Students are often asked to self-assess and reflect upon their learning in their classes. In a Mandarin class, students use a rubric to self-reflect each week on their confidence in speaking Chinese and their habits of work. In a Spanish class, the teacher goes over the rubric for a speaking assignment with students. They then evaluate themselves following the speaking assignment based on how well they meet the different aspects of the rubric. In English, students are asked to reflect on formal essays before submitting by responding to the sentence starters such as, "One thing I am proud of . . . One thing I would have improved if I had more time..." Furthermore, students in English are allowed to review teacher feedback written on the paper, rethink their own writing in specified areas, and rewrite to show understanding of the feedback. In classical and modern languages classes, a mid-year check-in with all students includes five-minute interviews, proficiency reflection, and goal setting. In the Evolutions program, students are required to participate in a five-minute reflective conversation with their teacher to discuss challenges and takeaways from their completed project, and then write a reflection statement based on their conversation with the teacher.

Instructional technology is pervasively used across the school. Wellesley High School has implemented a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program to ensure all students come to school with access to technology. There is strong evidence that technology is integrated into classes school-wide. Most notably, all classrooms are equipped with SMARTBoards. Classroom observations reveal most teachers utilize this technology during instruction time in the form of slide presentations or videos as a means of sharing information. All teachers are expected to implement the Canvas learning management system and some teachers choose to incorporate Google Docs as well. The special education department utilizes technology as a means of providing accommodations to students, such as enlarging text or providing text to speech. In 9th grade CP English, students utilize an online vocabulary program called Membean. Students are assessed within the program and word lists for review are generated. Students in guidance seminar use Naviance to create a list of target, reach, and safety schools, based on their updated G.P.A., SAT and ACT test scores, and the school's acceptance rates nationally and for Wellesley High School graduates.

All students benefit when instructional practices consistently 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; and integrating technology.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 3 Indicator 3

Conclusions

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

Teachers often use formative assessment in their classes. In a grade 9, ACP English class, the teacher checks for understanding while students diagram a progression of increasingly difficult clauses by asking students to appropriately label the words and requiring them to explain why the label is correct. In an AP Psychology class, students watch a video about race in school. After the video, the teacher asks students to share three internal checks: a feelings check, a curiosity check, and a learning check. Students then process this aloud with peers. In a Spanish 3 class, students complete a short homework activity in their workbooks. Time is spent in class reviewing the answers, as well as reteaching a conjugation due to common mistakes. Teachers in English and social studies use teacher-student conferences to formatively assess student performance and to provide constructive feedback during writing assessments.

Group learning activities are organized to support student learning. In a Mandarin 5 class, students work together in groups to read a dialogue in Mandarin and the teacher times them to assess their fluency. In a Spanish 1 CP class, the teacher groups students to listen to an audio recording and to work as a group to write down the vocabulary they hear from different parts of speech (i.e., one group was assigned verbs, one group nouns). In an International Politics course, students look at nation-state models and work in groups to examine population demographics and apply the appropriate model while problem-solving how to best collaborate. Although group learning activities are happening, the most common method of instruction observed is teacher-directed instruction. Students express that they feel challenged when working with other students and hope for more opportunities to do so.

There are several ways that teachers provide additional support in the classroom. In a CP Spanish class, a student is given one-on-one assistance when struggling to apply lessons related to the target language. In the learning centers, teachers work one on one with students with a 1:2 teacher-to-student ratio. The learning center teacher works to support students on reading assignments they have been given in English class. In an ELA grade 9 ACP class, the teacher provides feedback and support for students by gradually increasing the difficulty of diagramming clauses. Students express that their teachers are supportive and adapt instruction as needed, but it is more often than not up to the student to initiate the conversation. Many teachers report that they make themselves available for after-school help, or during their prep period to provide additional support for struggling students. Students report that they value the support available to them through communicating with their teacher, with another department member, or by accessing the department's support lab when they need help.

Teachers adjust their instructional practices in some areas to meet the needs of each student by strategically differentiating. In ACP English, the students complete a brainstorming sheet on their ideas for creating Prompt Books and the teacher conferences with each student regarding how they want to proceed with their topic, allowing them to choose any scene from *Macbeth*. Students in a US History class had the option to choose which source to read, then met in groups to collaborate, prior to participation in a Socratic seminar. Teachers in some classes use FM transmitters to accommodate students with hearing difficulties. General education teachers differentiate instruction for students on IEPs. For example, to accommodate a blind student, teachers place the student close to the area of instruction, modify tests and assignments (enlarging text, for example), give extended time on tests and assignments, use dark-colored markers on whiteboards and write with large handwriting on the board. They also use technology to make enlargements of the text easier to read. Students are trained in assistive technology (Google Read and Write) in order to use the technology to access the content and in order to self-advocate. For the most part, differentiation happens by using different course levels or specifically for students on special education or health plans.

When all 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; and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom,

students will have more opportunities to meet the learning objectives for each course.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- students

Standard 3 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by frequently using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments; inconsistently examining student work; sometimes using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents; infrequently examining current research; and when possible, engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.

Teachers at Wellesley High School, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practice in diverse ways. On occasions, time is allotted for review of student assessment data throughout the school year in department meetings. Currently, only the science department meets in regularly scheduled PLCs where they meet and discuss data on labs, unit assessments, and end-of-the-year assessments. Other opportunities for examination of student work with the purpose of improving instruction include first-year teacher mentoring programs, IEP meetings, SST feedback forms, and educational evaluations of teachers. The extent and frequency of examining current research to improve instruction is highly dependent on individual teachers; it is not formalized. Teachers obtain research on how to improve instructional practices through professional development endeavors, articles/links shared by department heads and/or the principal with teachers, or professional journals. English and social studies teachers use conferences during writing assignments, such as the cultural collision essay and the independent research project, to individually assess student performance and provide opportunities for feedback and improvement.

When all teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments; examine student work; use feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors and parents; examine current research; and have designated time to engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, teachers and students will benefit from this focused look at instructional practices.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 3 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

Teachers at Wellesley High School have many avenues to pursue professional development opportunities. In the last three academic school years, 41 percent, 40 percent, and 33 percent of Wellesley High School staff, respectively, participated in professional development courses offered through the district. Department meetings are occasionally used for content-specific professional development. Teachers acknowledge that they engage in professional discourse with colleagues on their personal time. Eighty-eight percent of students and 93 percent of staff members agree with the statement, "My teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach." The school district has entered into partnerships with ACCEPT Educational Collaborative, Teachers as Scholars, IDEAS (Initiatives for Developing Equity and Achievement for Students), and Primary Source to provide professional development courses for staff at no cost or a reduced fee. Teachers can apply for tuition reimbursement for professional development courses taken outside the district. Thirty staff members participated in a three-day professional development summer seminar on project-based learning (PBL) and were provided time during the school year to plan the implementation of PBL units in their instruction. Wellesley High School has a mentoring program to provide professional development and support for new teachers.

Because all teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices, all students benefit from teachers who are up to date in their content areas.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- school website

Standard 3 Commendations

Commendation

The connections between the core values of the school and teachers' instructional practices

Commendation

The prevalence of instructional strategies to engage students such as emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking; applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; and engaging students in self-assessment and reflection

Commendation

The efforts of teachers to actively seek out colleagues on their personal time to meet and discuss student assessment as a means to explore ways to improve instruction

Commendation

The willingness of teachers to provide additional support to students in the classroom

Commendation

The use of formative assessment to adjust instructional practices when needed

Standard 3 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure all teachers have dedicated time for collaboration to improve their instructional practices by examining student work and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice

Recommendation

Differentiate instruction for students to provide opportunities for them to access the content at different levels

Recommendation

Provide additional opportunities for students to be active and self-directed learners by decreasing the amount of teacher-directed instruction

Standard 4 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The professional staff has yet to employ a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the competencies as stated in the district profile of a graduate.

The district has developed a profile of a graduate with six competencies, which include Think Critically & Solve Problems, Create & Innovate, Engage Locally & Globally, Communicate & Collaborate, Respect Human Differences & Challenge Inequities, and Attend to Physical, Social & Emotional Health. The faculty and staff are utilizing resources provided by EdLeader 21 such as the action plan, to continue to adopt their own version of the profile of a graduate. The school plans to develop school-wide and district-wide rubrics over the next two years, which will involve each department focusing on all six competencies in the profile. There are departmental rubrics, which echo the sentiments in the profile. Faculty members are adapting these ideas; however, they are not yet being labeled with the formal profile of a graduate title.

When the professional staff continuously strives to employ a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the competencies contained in the profile of a graduate, students will see the connection between what they are learning and these important skills.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 4 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school's professional staff indirectly communicates individual student progress in achieving some of the competencies in the profile of a graduate to students, their families, and to the school community, but there is no formal method in place for assessing and reporting students' achievement of these competencies.

Some of the departmental rubrics contain aspects of the profile of a graduate, specifically the English, history and classical and modern language departments. Teachers use a web reporting system, PowerSchool, to deliver grade report updates. Teachers are required to update students' grades on a monthly basis. Teachers also use a common platform called Canvas to deliver class content to students and families. Using a common platform can alleviate some of the stress around the technological piece for families. Some teachers indicated that they have standards uploaded into Canvas so that parents can see what targets are being met on assessments. Individual feedback to students around progress in the profile of a graduate competencies tends to occur around student performance on major projects, assessments, papers, and presentations. The English department has a plethora of projects centered around skills such as literary analysis, evidence-based writing practices, creativity, research practices, public speaking skills, in-class work habits, classroom citizenship, and group collaboration through rubrics associated with papers and projects such as the My American Dream Sounds Like project. Additionally, the modern languages department provides feedback to students around communication skills (e.g., speaking, listening, and interpersonal skills) through exercises and rubrics such as the Spanish ACP Interpersonal Task where Spanish classes are given class schedules written in Spanish and they speak with their peers regarding their schedule. The rubric is clearly laid out and includes a self-reflection piece. The badge system implemented in the history department provides regular and measurable feedback to students around skills such as research, creativity, and writing. In the math department, skills such as problem-solving, creativity, and real-world application of concepts are assessed through projects such as the Expected Value project which has students design a game and calculate the chances of winning the game.

When the school completes its implementation of the profile of a graduate, the school's professional staff will communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's profile of a graduate to students, their families, and the school community.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 4 Indicator 3

Conclusions

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

The supports currently in place are triggered as a result of MCAS results as well as by students who are identified as at risk for failing classes. MCAS results and other standardized assessments are reviewed by the high school leadership team to identify trends in performance across achievement gap areas, such as students with disabilities, students of color, economically disadvantaged students, and English language learners. Students who score NI and F on the 8th-grade math MCAS are provided an additional math support class sophomore year called Math Plus. Plans are being formulated for an additional class for students who fail the 9th-grade science MCAS: Biology Plus. At-risk students are recommended and identified for supplemental reading services quarterly, and a D, F and I grade list is printed and distributed to assistant principals, guidance counselors, and support staff. Administrators have been working to streamline this process through the student support team meetings to make it easier for teachers to bring up students who may need additional supports earlier rather than later. Teachers make it a point to informally meet for common planning and PLC time. Curriculum and instructional time is usually used to adapt new curriculum instead of reviewing student results.

Academic Lab times have been expanded to offer support before, during, and after school to students at all levels and abilities, such as the math lab and the language lab. Additionally, the school is piloting an Academic Resource Center to address inequities in student achievement for students who are not on Individualized Education Plans but still need additional support. Additionally, the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) is being implemented within four categories: presentation, setting, timing, and response. At the other end of the spectrum, the scheduling team additionally reviews the percentages of students enrolled in honors and Advanced Placement classes. A new course request process was implemented which should result in more students staying in their recommended course.

As a result of the consistent collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data, the school has implemented programs to address the needs of all students and continues to discuss further adaptations to address inequities in student achievement.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 4 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Prior to each unit of study, teachers indirectly communicate to students the school's applicable profile of a graduate competencies and directly communicate related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed.

The classical and modern languages department communicates unit objectives that highlight the profile of a graduate learning goals. In particular, the AP German outline for an assignment on how to overcome fear in one's life clearly requires students to use creativity. It also requires a presentation that necessitates communication to the entirety of a student's class. Students also receive a unit packet at the beginning of each unit. For example, at the start a Spanish unit, students received a unit packet, including a unit theme question, essential questions, and can-do statements, such as the student will be able to describe their school schedule, coordinate their shared schedule times, compare and remark on schedules, and explain how things support or do not support individual learning. Students used the packet to create questions and answers for a small group conversation.

The English department highlights the creativity and collaboration objectives. In particular, the body biography, in which students chose a character from *Romeo and Juliet*, requires collaboration by working within a group as well as creativity in how to portray the chosen character. The Canvas discussion rubric shows that students must respond to their peers in an online forum, which helps students with the objective of communication. One English teacher provided students with the learning expectations for a final essay assignment for *Lord of The Flies*. Students were expected to communicate in a meaningful way for a variety of purposes and audiences and demonstrate a sensitivity to the precision and nuances of the written medium through comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation. The teacher including an essay outline, requirements, exemplars, and a rubric that measured the learning objectives.

In the science department, students are required to research and present a celestial object, such as a planet, which shows the need for critical thinking and creativity in how to communicate their research of celestial objects to the students' classmates. Additionally, students must collaborate with one another to successfully accomplish this project's tasks. Students must critically think as well as creatively come up with a visual, and determine a way to communicate this visual's meaning to their classmates. Additionally, in the physics department, the electrostatic demonstration video project clearly highlights major concepts and learning objectives on the assignment sheet.

In math classes, learning objectives are clearly indicated before a unit of study. The math department does an excellent job highlighting critical thinking and communication. This is exemplified by the spreadsheet assessment in the Analysis class where students need to communicate what the spreadsheet shows, as well as to think through the process of formatting cells and equations in cells to produce the results. In ACP pre-calculus, the cumulative assessment review packet includes multiple "Students will be able to" statements to lead off the learning outcomes of the trigonometry unit.

In US History, students create a board game to communicate their understanding of the U.S. Constitution which incorporates the need for creativity and critical thinking. In TV and Production, while creating a PSA video, students self-evaluated their work by using a rubric before the teacher used the same rubric to evaluate the project. In Evolutions, students created a multi-faceted proposal for a project to be submitted for review before creating the actual project.

As a result of the consistent and direct communication of unit-specific learning objectives, students are aware of what they are expected to master in all units. When teachers directly connect unit expectations to the profile of a graduate related learning expectations, students will relate these important competencies to what they are learning in each unit.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 4 Indicator 5

Conclusions

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.

Departments have different ways of communicating criteria. Some departments provide clearly written goals for each unit along with formalized feedback on growth and achievement, while other departments disseminate year-long goals at the beginning of the year. The profile of a graduate skills folder shows a collection of documents from several departments that demonstrate students are being taught with respect to the objectives relating to the profile of a graduate based on the four C's (creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication). Additionally, in the classical and modern languages department, all teachers use similar rubrics consistently for assignments, formative assessments, and summative assessments, with a Glow and Grow Feedback model which includes student goal setting. The department also uses the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language rubrics and proficiency levels, including a range of ability from novice low to advanced low. The English department has also created common rubrics, and the science department has several common rubrics for long-term projects. Rubrics are also used in the TV Video class, business classes, and science classes. The mathematics department provides students with learning goals before assessments in all courses. Most departments provide students with a rubric and a model or exemplar at the beginning of a unit/assignment. With the 10th grade Cold War project, teachers showcase several high-quality examples of this project along with a comprehensive rubric. The performing arts department utilizes District, All-State, All-Eastern and MICCA rubrics, and orchestra students evaluate outside performances using the MICCA rubric. The AP Computer Science teacher uses rubrics generated from the College Board for all class projects so that students become familiar with a certain level of competency with the material. In biology, for an independent end-of-term research project, students create a mini-project before creating the final project to prepare them for the end result.

As a result of the students being provided specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define high levels of achievement, students know what is expected of them and can more effectively meet those expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 4 Indicator 6

Conclusions

In each unit of study, teachers pervasively and effectively employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments.

All teachers use formative and summative assessments throughout units. Formative assessments are used on a daily basis. The school has a homework reflection sheet that asks about students' level of effort and time spent on any specific assignment. Additionally, teachers use a range of different assessments in addition to summative assessments ranging from partner quizzes, open-note quizzes, projects and graded points along the way. Ninety-two percent of teachers agree that they use a wide range of formative and summative assessments. Spanish teachers use oral and written assessments. Social studies teachers have students engage in hands-on projects involving the Cold War and art. In the mathematics department, students have several formative assessments that lead to a summative assessment. A math teacher explained that if students perform better on their cumulative summative assessment than they did on the preceding formative assessments, then the cumulative summative assessment is weighted at 60 percent of the quarter grade, instead of 50 percent. In pre-calculus, if the formative assessments were weighted at 30 percent and the summative at 20 percent and if a student performed better on the summative, the percentage would shift to 20 percent and 30 percent, respectively. Additionally, in AP Psychology, students can complete a project pathway to make up for formative grades that they want to improve.

As a result of teachers employing a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments, students have a variety of means to prove mastery of content objectives.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 4 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Teachers informally collaborate regularly on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments.

Common assessments vary from subject to subject. In the physics department, teachers collect a pool of exam questions and formulate their own tests from the questions to aid test security. End-of-the-year final exams were replaced last year with departmental final projects. English teachers have created common unit assessments with pre-/post-assessments. Both the math and science departments report that there are examples of common assessments with slightly different values to maintain test integrity. In practice, teachers collaborate informally on common assessments but do not have the formally dedicated time to analyze the student work with the frequency intended. The school has limited time set aside to collaborate and revise assessments formally, but with some frequency, has department meeting time to meet and work on common assessments in common classes.

When teachers have increased access to time for more formal collaboration, creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, the use of common assessments will increase.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 4 Indicator 8

Conclusions

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

A Spanish teacher gives out a rubric before a speaking assessment and goes over different aspects of the rubric. Feedback on what students did well, what they need to improve, and how they can move up to the next level is provided following the speaking assessment. A student reports that he regularly receives feedback from his math teacher about his performance in class. PowerSchool allows for feedback comments on assignments. The math department has four assessments a term in which students reflect on best practices based on teacher feedback.

Additionally, teachers communicate with students and parents about what expectations are for improving their work in the future. They use different modalities, ranging from in-person communication, phone calls or emails. Some evidence of the email communication includes a teacher commending a student for improvement and another teacher informing a student of what he can do to be successful. Teachers review the results of summative assessments before they move on to start a new unit. Many teachers in the math department also have a cumulative assessment at the end of the term as a way of providing feedback to students about what they retained through the term and what they still need to continue working on.

As a result of specific, timely, and corrective feedback, students are better able to revise and improve their work.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 4 Indicator 9

Conclusions

Teachers regularly, albeit informally, use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.

Often, when working with common assessments, mathematics, science, and classical and modern languages departments reflect on the strength of questions on formative assessments. At times, the addendum is a revision in the curriculum, and sometimes questions are removed as they are seen to be too easy for the standard being targeted. Teachers use numerous types of formative assessments, including but not limited to, check-ins in a math and a history class, quizzes at the start of a culinary class, and use of the online platforms kahoot.it and quizizz.com.

The majority of teachers use formative assessment to adapt and inform their instructional practices. Much of this adaptation is not formally written down, and teachers may change some content from one class on their course load based on the results from their formative data. Teachers adapt pacing, instructional choices, and even content based on data from formative assessments which can result in changes from one course section to another. However, teachers only meet informally and often irregularly to discuss the use of formative assessments to inform and adapt instruction. There are some opportunities to meet in professional learning communities (PLCs) for ninth grade CP and Foundations teachers. These teachers are relieved of a duty to meet once a cycle to discuss how they feel their course is going, how their students are doing in the various courses in the ninth grade curriculum and what supports, if any, are necessary. Due to time constraints, teachers are not able to formally and intentionally meet and collaborate by department or even class as often as they would like to.

As a result of the use of formative assessments to inform and adapt instruction, student learning has improved and will continue to do so as more time is formally allocated. When the school allocates more collaborative time to inform and adapt instruction, more common instruction will result.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 4 Indicator 10

Conclusions

Teachers and administrators, often individually and departmentally, but inconsistently inter-departmentally, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice.

Teachers report that individual and departmental time has been allotted to assessing common course and grade-level assessments, standardized assessments, and progress in achieving the profile of a graduate. The school reports that the English department radically altered the author thesis project based on student and teacher feedback and the history project has several pieces of evidence demonstrating the revision process and outcomes, including a narrative in which the teacher describes specific changes in practices. However, the curricular focus of units rarely changes due to the examination of the evidence of student learning, despite the adaptation of specific assessments and assignments within units. The Evolutions program frequently uses evidence of student learning to revise course curriculum and instructional practices. Evolutions pre-/post-survey results determine revisions to curricular and instructional practices. Following reflective conferences with students and based on student input, teachers revise and adapt curriculum and instructional practices to meet the interests and needs of students, while meeting the required standards for each of the four content areas covered in the Evolution program.

Teachers inconsistently meet inter-departmentally to examine evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. Grade nine CP teachers report that they meet regularly with team members to examine student learning for the purpose of improving instructional practice through student work and standardized assessments. However, teachers report that collaborative time is regularly informal and at the teachers' discretion. Many teachers report that they do seek out team department members to discuss student learning on a regular basis, but common planning time is inconsistently set aside formally for teacher collaboration across departments.

The school reports that there is a lack of data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions survey data from alumni.

As a result of individual and departmental examination of student learning, curriculum and instructional practice are improved. When inter-departmental, school-wide, and district-wide examination of student learning starts to happen, school-wide instructional practice and curriculum will improve.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 4 Indicator 11

Conclusions

Grading and reporting practices are inconsistently reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

Teachers indicated that they have very limited formal time designated for the review of grading and reporting practices within departments and teams. The school reports that conversations are happening around changing final exams, the possibility of unweighted GPAs, and the grading descriptions in the student handbook. However, students report that there is limited consistency in grading practices across courses, levels, and departments. There is no time allotted to the inter-departmental review of grading and reporting practices. The school uses PowerSchool to regularly report grades, however, students attest that the feedback comments are used inconsistently by teachers. Parents report that the live, online reporting practices allow parents and students to stay updated on student progress. As reported by parents, students, and the school committee, the online system has had an impact on certain aspects of social and emotional health, including a marked increase in anxiety among students due to push notifications and the obsessive checking of the PowerSchool app. The school is working to address this issue through the Challenge Success program.

In 2011, the administrative team began to explore unweighting the GPA and drafted a proposal for the superintendent. The team views an A in one course to be the same as an A earned in any other course across the disciplines, regardless of level designation, therefore, they sought a system that recognizes this view. Once a grade point average is interpreted, recalculated and compared to other grade point averages externally, the meaning of that grade can change and thereby negatively impact students. A subcommittee collected evidence that a vast majority of colleges and scholarship committees use unweighted 4.0 GPAs. A 4.0 unweighted system is the most student-centered and accurate approach to reflecting student mastery and therefore embraces Wellesley's core values. There have been several obstacles to moving forward with this proposal. The school committee is presented with the data and takeaways each year and supports programs that address inequities in student achievement.

When grading and reporting practices are more consistently reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the profile of a graduate, students and parents will understand how students are progressing in the six competencies.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 4 Commendations

Commendation

The consistent collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data to respond to inequities in student achievement

Commendation

The communication of unit-specific learning objectives in individual courses

Commendation

The provision of specific and measurable criteria for success prior to summative assessments

Commendation

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

Commendation

The change from final exams to final projects that demonstrate student mastery of learning objectives

Commendation

The specific, timely, and corrective feedback provided to students to ensure they revise and improve their work

Commendation

The use of formative assessments to inform and adapt instructional practices

Commendation

The individual and departmental examination of student learning results for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice

Standard 4 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement a process to communicate individual and whole-school progress in achieving the aspects of the Wellesley Profile of a Graduate

Recommendation

Ensure that prior to units of study, teachers communicate directly the applicable profile of a graduate related learning expectations

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to ensure teachers have adequate time for collaboration on common assessments and for gathering and disaggregating data

Recommendation

Develop and implement time for the formal collaboration for the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments

Recommendation

Review and revise grading and reporting practices to ensure consistency within and among departments and alignment with the core values, beliefs, and profile of a graduate

Standard 5 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The school community is consciously and continuously working toward building a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, high expectations for all.

Stakeholders noted that they are very proud of the number of opportunities students have to find and develop their passions in the classroom, co-curricular clubs, and athletic teams, and they believe that there is a place for everyone. Seventy-nine percent of faculty are in agreement that the school's culture is safe, positive, and supportive. Over 71 percent of the faculty are also in agreement that the school's culture supports independent student learning. In addition, over 85 percent of the staff are in agreement that teachers support students in assuming responsibility for their learning. Over 80 percent of the parents are in agreement that the school provides a safe, positive, respectful and supportive school culture, and over 89 percent believe that the school encourages students to take responsibility for their learning. Over 71 percent of students say they have an opportunity to take courses in which students of varying levels of ability are enrolled. However, some students of color at Wellesley High School say this reporting does not match their own experiences at Wellesley High School. The teachers and school administrators are aware of this perception and are working with the Young Ethnic Scholars (YES) organization to make changes.

The Wellesley High School Student Handbook is a comprehensive document containing school policies, an honor code, and expectations for all members of the school community. The handbook has evolved over the last few years with input from all stakeholders through the school council and school committee approval process. Teachers report that some of the houses manage student conduct differently which has been a point of frustration recently. The principals report that they have heard these concerns by teachers and are working hard to improve consistency. Additionally, teachers report that their attempts to work and support students with individual needs sometimes require them to work outside of the handbook prescribed workflows. The teachers feel they are supported in these efforts but that it is frustrating when this is held against them by other students and parents. In recent years, special attention has been paid to developing new handbook policies, such as the limit on two exams a day per student, which support the school's social-emotional learning goals.

The principals reported they have begun to change their administrative team's approach to school-based discipline. Specifically, the school has partnered with the Norfolk County Diversion programs to create opportunities for students to complete educational course work about safe behavior and risk-taking. Further, the school has begun to utilize restorative justice practices for school-based discipline when traditional discipline practices would be ineffective and not in the best interest of the student.

The school has established emergency procedures for during and after the school day. These procedures have been developed with the local police and fire department and drills are held annually on campus. Because the school has an "open campus" where junior and senior students are allowed to leave the building if they have an open block in their schedules, there is no ability for staff to account for every student in an emergency. Students interviewed about emergency procedures were aware of what to do in an emergency while in the classroom. However, the students interviewed were unsure of what to do while in an open space rather than a classroom setting.

The principal utilizes a variety of methods to communicate with the students, parents, and the community-at-large depending on the situation. When serious incidents occur, information is often disseminated to the entire school community through email which reaches all parents, students, and staff together. When appropriate, the principal has also utilized the internal PA system, TV studio and advisory periods to address the school community.

Students, parents, and teachers all noted that the expectations for learning, goal-setting, behavior, respect for others, and participation in school and community are clearly stated. In conversations with parents, students, teachers, and building administrators, a consistent refrain is that the expectations students have for themselves may, in fact, be too high, especially those connected with the college/university admissions process. Stakeholders also report that these expectations negatively impacts the interpersonal relationships within the

WHS community, primarily among students, teachers, and parents. This year's school-wide theme of "Balance (Sleep, Technology, and Workload)" through the Challenge Success program is intended to target these concerns and to promote student health and well being.

As a result of working toward building a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, high expectations for all, students have the support they need to be successful at Wellesley High School.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Wellesley High School strives to be 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 profile of a graduate.

Four years ago, the high school community created the Evolutions program, a year-long school within a school program, to give students another avenue to have academic success other than the traditional Wellesley High School track. Students are taught by four teachers, one each from the English, social studies, science, and art departments and show their mastery through project-based learning in this exciting self-contained program. The program currently has 34 students and is anticipating at least 18 students for next year. This program, while given honors weight, is open to all students and truly the best example of heterogeneous grouping in the school.

Wellesley High School offers a variety of courses taught at three different levels: H (Honors), ACP (Advanced College Preparatory), and CP (College Preparatory). It is recommended that students take no more than four courses at the H level at a given time due to the demanding workload required for these courses. All Advanced Placement (AP) courses have the AP designation preceding the course title. A number of elective courses are either unlevleled or heterogeneously grouped as CP/ACP to allow all interested students.

Seventy-four percent of staff believe the school is equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences to all students and ensuring that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body. Seventy-one percent of the student body also feel this way. School leaders at the high school and district, educators, parents, and students were, in different ways and with different language, able to articulate that they are not satisfied with only 71 percent of students feeling this way. District and school leaders recognize the existence of achievement gaps within the student body and have begun taking steps to develop an in-house team of professionals who can identify, interpret, and analyze data to better understand where in the district the gap begins. Further, recent events have amplified underlying tensions among students specifically about diversity and how inclusive the Wellesley High School community is for minority student populations. Principals and teachers across the building are working hard to support impacted students as members of the student body have begun to organize around these issues. The solutions to the present issues are not simple, nor may they be clearly visible to all members of the school community at this time. However, the burgeoning spirit of determination, cooperation, and empathy within the student body, faculty, and administrators to take concrete steps to improve inclusivity at Wellesley High School for all students is a priority of the principals and staff.

Students with disabilities on IEPs have access to a learning center (LC) room and a special education support teacher along with a teaching assistant. The LCs support students with the academic work they are doing in their regular education classes and work with them on goals as determined by their IEPs. These students participate in regular education classes at all levels, although they are predominantly in College Prep (CP) and Advanced College Prep (ACP) classes. Almost every CP class has push-in support in the form of co-teaching or a teaching assistant who helps support both the classroom teacher and students with disabilities. In this way, students with disabilities have access to the same curriculum as all other students and support in meeting the high learning expectations of the high school.

Because the high school strives to be equitable and inclusive, students have access to challenging academic experiences, some courses at the high school are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, and the school is working toward fostering heterogeneity, and ensuring students achieve the profile of a graduate.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- students
- parents
- community members
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The school has a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in meeting the competencies in the profile of a graduate.

All students in the school participate in an advisory program that meets every school day for eight minutes and once a month for half an hour. The advisories are small, approximately ten students per advisory. Students remain in the same group with the same teacher for their four years at the high school. Wellesley High School is also divided into three houses. Each house has a dedicated assistant principal, guidance counselors, and psychologist. These professionals along with the school nurse, special education and guidance director meet once every seven days to discuss at-risk students. A ninth grade college prep level professional learning community meets once a cycle that includes both regular and special education teachers to help support students in those courses. The school has introduced initiatives such as Challenge Success to help combat some of the concerns around student stress and to align with the profile of a graduate.

Because the high school has a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in addressing the competencies in the profile of a graduate, all students in the school have an opportunity to form a non-academic relationship with an adult in the building to support their success.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 4

Conclusions

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

The ninth grade college prep regular education and special education teachers have formed a professional learning community to address common concerns and to better meet the needs of their shared students. The science department has weekly common planning time that fits into its schedule. However, much of the professional discourse, reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching is taking place by professional staff in informal settings such as the lunchroom or during common prep periods, not within an organized PLC or common collaboration time. Because not all professional staff has a consistent opportunity to engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and the analysis of teaching, some of them are missing out on this opportunity.

The high school uses extensive resources outside the school to maintain currency with best practices. Teachers have many opportunities to receive grants and funding to pursue professional development beyond the school day and the school year, and many of them take advantage of these opportunities. Professional development days that are built into the school schedule often bring in outside resources to provide instruction in current practices to educators. Because the high school uses extensive resources outside the school to maintain currency with best practices, teachers are able to keep up to date with the most effective educational practices.

The high school dedicates formal time to implement professional development. The high school has a half-day on Wednesday once a month dedicated to professional development. Topics for professional development are often related to the profile of a graduate (POG), project-based learning (PBL), and Challenge Success, among others. Topics for professional development are often selected at the district level or by school leadership. Teachers at the high school feel these topics have been relevant to their professional practice, however, there are some more pressing topics they would like to see addressed during professional development time. Because the high school dedicates formal time to implement professional development, all teachers have consistent access to professional development to improve student learning.

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and the professional staff in some areas apply skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The recent topics for professional development such as PBL and Challenge Success can be seen implemented in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment in some of the classrooms. A Spanish class did a lesson on how reading lowers stress levels by using a Spanish language video addressing the topic of stress reduction. This aligns with one of the goals of Challenge Success and the POG which addresses managing stress and being more mindful. Many classroom teachers have implemented PBL as part of their curriculum, and the whole high school has shifted away from traditional final exams to a project-based exam. Because the principal and the professional staff apply skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment, students receive learning opportunities that align with educational best practice.

As a result of using resources outside the school to maintain currency with best practices, dedicating formal time to implement professional development, and applying the skills, practices, and ideas gained through these efforts to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment, students are benefitting from teachers who are engaged and knowledgeable about their practice and subject areas. When the school provides scheduled time for teachers in all departments to engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching, teachers will benefit from their collective expertise.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 5

Conclusions

School leaders use a research-based evaluation and supervision process that focuses on improved student learning.

Wellesley High School has an effective supervision and evaluation system. The district began the process of developing a new supervision and evaluation system five years ago. They adopted a hybrid model, bringing together aspects of the Massachusetts Teacher Educator System with a more specific, local system developed by the Wellesley Teachers Union and through a specific working group that was created to develop and revise the new system. The effort was initially rolled out as a pilot program, and then officially adopted in 2014. The district uses TeachPoint software to collect data and evidence and all teachers and administrators have been trained in this system and are comfortable using it for supervision and evaluation.

At the high school, department heads evaluate their department members. The principal and assistant principals assist with the evaluation and supervision of new staff members, do occasional check-ins with professional status staff members, and evaluate the department heads. The principal and assistant principal may be called in if there is a dispute with an evaluation. Department heads use the mini-observation model and also engage in planned conferences where the teacher brings a collection of student work to share and discuss with the department head. Wellesley High School has a unique model in which teachers write up their own evaluation after their conversation and then the department head or person evaluating them adds their comments and confirms the content of the write-up.

Because school leaders use a research-based evaluation process that focuses on improved student learning, teachers receive constructive feedback to improve classroom instruction.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- department leaders
- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 6

Conclusions

The organization of time supports research-based instruction and the learning needs of all students, but only supports professional collaboration for some teachers in the school.

The high school's seven-day, rotating, color block schedule, provides opportunities for students to meet core academic courses five times in the seven-day cycle, and most elective or enrichment courses three times in the seven-day cycle. By design, this rotating schedule provides ample time for students to have a balanced, enriched schedule of both required and elective classes. Additionally, due to the two drop blocks per core subject over the seven-day cycle, students have access to academic labs for instructional help and special educational services.

Teachers at the high school report that opportunities for collaboration are inconsistent between and among departments; the science department, for example, has scheduled common planning time during the school day due to its lab schedule while other departments use the first block of the day. Several professional learning communities (PLCs) meet within the school day, but the vast majority of common planning time and collaboration between teachers occurs through informal meetings or during lunch, and before or after school. The schedule at the high school gives students many opportunities, but it does present challenges to teachers who are looking to collaborate either within their own departments or to do interdisciplinary collaboration. School staff frequently give up their two preparation periods to work with individual students, so collaboration with colleagues must happen at another time. During early release/professional development time, teachers and counselors participate in professional development focused on school and district-wide initiatives.

When the organization of time supports professional collaboration among teachers, the school schedule will more effectively support student learning.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 7

Conclusions

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

The class sizes at the high school are appropriate and manageable. College Prep (CP) level courses are typically capped at sixteen so students can receive more individualized attention. Classes at other (ACP/H/AP) levels were both observed and reported to have enrollments in the high teens to mid-twenties. All CP level classes also have a co-teacher or instructional assistant who supports the students and the classroom teacher. The learning center classrooms have a very small student-to-teacher ratio, which varies slightly depending on the period. Teachers reported that their class sizes and student loads are manageable.

As a result of the appropriate student load and class size, teachers are able to meet the learning needs of individual students.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 8

Conclusions

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is frequently rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and profile of the graduate.

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides effective instructional leadership for the school. The principal facilitates extensive reflective, collaborative, and constructive dialogue about research-based practices that support high expectations for the learning of all students. The principal always 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 for all. Across all school settings, the principal is a frequent, visible presence in the building, modeling the school's core values and beliefs in all aspects of his daily interactions at WHS.

Monthly faculty meetings provide an opportunity for the principal to provide instructional leadership to the staff. Department heads also provide instructional leadership within their departments either at regular department meetings or within some department professional learning communities (PLCs). Initiatives within the school such as Challenge Success, the Evolutions program, and project-based learning (PBL) align with aspects of the new Wellesley Public Schools Profile of a Graduate. The principal makes it clear to students and staff that his door is always open and they are welcome to come to him with any concerns or questions.

The principal meets once a week with assistant principals and the local community-based mental health agency (HRS) to review student cases of concern to ensure the support of all students and the WHS social-emotional continuum and school's core values. He engages in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning by using resources outside of school to assure the use of current best practices. The principal collaborates with the school's student support team (SST) to foster leadership and collectively to make decisions on how to inform teachers and students of critical information. He also encourages other building leaders by supporting their interest in chairing school initiatives such as One Wellesley, the advisory committee, Challenge Success, and the steering committee for NEASC.

The principal is an avid participant in once a cycle meetings as an administration team to discuss creative ways to make the school's core values and beliefs come alive in the school community as well as in the larger community to encourage participation to support students and families across the school setting. Notably, the principal also co-teaches a College Prep (CP) level English class. This experience provides him with a strong sense of what is happening in the classroom and the school's curriculum. During the accreditation visit, the principal managed a particularly challenging situation regarding a student walk-out with poise and empathy. Because of the principal's leadership, students felt heard and validated in their concerns.

Because the principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is frequently rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and profile of a graduate, teachers receive meaningful instructional leadership and the school has an overarching vision and direction that supports student growth and learning.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership

- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 9

Conclusions

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles as part of the decision-making at Wellesley High School which promotes responsibility and ownership.

Teachers at Wellesley High School are involved in reflecting, discussing, and providing feedback on the school as a whole through many different forums. Every month, teachers have faculty meetings where they are able to provide meaningful feedback on the school as a whole and their department. The faculty senate is a representative body made up of various faculty members chosen to represent their respective departments. The senate discusses issues relevant to faculty members and works collaboratively with the principals to address faculty concerns. The senate meets once a cycle during block one and participating teachers are not required to serve a duty. Although the Endicott survey results show that 53.1 percent of teachers feel that they have a defined and meaningful role in this process, the self-study noted that the school provides adequate opportunities for them to do so.

Students are frequently involved in the decisions at Wellesley High School. Over the last few years, Wellesley High School has had to face a number of serious issues. When these issues occur, the principal has engaged with students and staff directly and has encouraged the students to reach out to staff members with any ideas, concerns, or suggestions or for additional support. The principal has also made a deliberate effort to make sure that students know his door is always open to talk and there is evidence that this work has led to productive student relationships around these issues. For example, the One Wellesley initiative arose from students talking directly to the principal about their concerns within the school. Students, teachers, and parents stand behind these initiatives. The voices of students are also heard through the student congress. The student congress meets with the school council where they have open discussions school policy, school culture, curriculum and make recommendations on these matters and other issues brought to its attention. During school council meetings, faculty, parents, and other Wellesley residents also have opportunities to speak and raise concerns. According to the Endicott survey, 43.8 percent of students believe that they have input in important decisions made at Wellesley High School, and 28 percent are undecided. Wellesley High School frequently asks for feedback from students, but the mechanisms to let students know of involvement opportunities could be improved.

Parents are consistently afforded meaningful roles within the decision-making processes at Wellesley High School. According to the Endicott survey, more than half of parents surveyed (55.6 percent), feel they have the opportunities to be involved in important decisions made at the school, and 22 percent are undecided. Taking part in organizations such as the Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO), school council, and Parents of Performing Students (POPS) are encouraged and offer meaningful ways for parents to get involved. These organizations meet regularly and work with the principal, teachers, and administrators to support teaching and learning within the school. In addition to these organizations, Wellesley High School offers opportunities for parents to meet with the principal regularly and with their students' teachers at their annual back-to-school night event.

The principal hosts monthly coffee with the principal meetings. These meetings are open to all parents and provide updates on events at the high school as well as create an opportunity for an informal conversation about any issues or topics parents would like to discuss. In addition, Wellesley High School hosts a back-to-school night where parents are given the opportunity to meet with their sons'/daughters' teachers and are provided with an overview and expectations for each class.

Because teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles as part of the decision-making at Wellesley High School, the school community feels greater ownership in the success of the school.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- parents
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 10

Conclusions

Teachers at Wellesley High School are invested in the improvement of the school and the engagement of all students. They have also demonstrated that they are able to initiate and lead this work within their school to improve student engagement.

Teachers take initiative in the school in a number of ways. Teachers report that they have been supported in creating new courses which address social, racial and gender issues which are very relevant, specifically for students in twelfth grade. Further, teachers and curriculum supervisors report that they are given wide latitude in planning lessons, consistent with the state frameworks, that meet students' needs.

Teachers and school counselors created the United Scholars program which is an optional study group for struggling students. The group provides structured homework time, teacher assistance, and peer collaboration. The aim is to improve student academic performance through these efforts.

The Enrichment and Recreation Program (ERP) was created by teachers (initially funded by an outside grant and now part of the district's operating budget) to provide students with drop-in, low-commitment extracurricular activities. The vision was to provide recreation and enrichment opportunities to students who do not want to (or are unable to) commit to the demands of sports teams or school clubs. Offerings such as film screenings, martial arts, and video game competitions offer students a chance to explore a variety of interests in a relaxed environment. Each Enrichment and Recreation Program is teacher-sponsored and run.

In the 2018-2019 year, Wellesley High School created an Academic Resource Center (ARC). The ARC provides additional academic supports for students who are referred by the student support teams in each house. As a tier two intervention, the ARC program supports students who are not identified as requiring special education services but need additional assistance in meeting learning goals. Teachers, counselors, and administrators were uniformly positive about the impact of the ARC at Wellesley High School.

In an effort to better manage the administration of standardized testing, a group of teachers and guidance counselors created Step-Up Day. Step-Up Day is a day in October in which students in the sophomore class take the pre-ACT exam and students in the junior class take the PSAT exam. By consolidating all testing into a single day, teachers and guidance counselors found that they were more effective at administering the tests and providing accommodations to students who required them. Special programs were also created for freshmen and seniors who do not take standardized exams on this date. Freshmen attend a presentation dealing with issues of bias and cultural awareness. Seniors are able to attend a series of workshops designed to aid in the college admissions process.

As a result of teachers exercising initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school, students' engagement in learning is increased.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 5 Indicator 11

Conclusions

The school committee, superintendent, and principal work collaboratively with stakeholders throughout the Wellesley community to help students achieve the newly designed profile of a graduate (POG).

The school committee, superintendent, and principal work collaboratively with one another to create an exceptional learning environment for teachers and students. One example of this collaboration is the newly designed district-wide profile of a graduate. District leaders were deliberate in ensuring that all members of the community were represented in developing the profile. To that end, a survey was created and administered to the community to solicit input on the key competencies that the Wellesley Public Schools' community believes all graduates of WPS should hold. Input was received from a total of 891 respondents, including parents, students, and staff. Following input from the community on the key competencies, the district created a POG task force comprised of 56 members in various roles in the community. The task force was created with the aim of analyzing the data received from the survey and creating a draft POG which was presented to the school committee in December 2018.

The principal and superintendent have also collaborated on the district's diversity and equity leadership council. The council's work across the district has led to the creation of a district-wide director of diversity position for the upcoming school year. As outlined above, there are clear indicators that the district has been collaborative, reflective, and constructive in developing the profile of a graduate expectations and the next step will be to outline the process for students to practice and demonstrate achievement of these expectations.

Through the budgeting process, the principal and superintendent have worked to further develop community relationships with organizations like Human Relation Services for a .5 outreach director (social worker/adjustment counselor role) to work with non-special education students on a referral from student support teams (SST) for the 2019-2020 school year. The principal and superintendent also developed a two-year budgeting plan to fully staff the Academic Resource Center (ARC) as a standard tier two support for all students. Additionally, the principal and superintendent make sure that the school improvement plan supports the district's strategic plan annually.

Because of the collaboration between and among the school committee, superintendent, and principal, students and teachers benefit from a cohesive leadership team that is invested in student success.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- students
- school board
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Indicator 12

Conclusions

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

In interviews, both the school committee and superintendent stated that they trust the judgment of the principal and do not view their role as being involved in the day-to-day operations of the school. A few examples of initiatives started at Wellesley High School during the tenure of Dr. Chism include the multi-disciplinary Evolutions program, the Academic Resource Classroom (ARC program), and the restructuring of final exams. Dr. Chism attends and presents at approximately four school board meetings per year and he works collaboratively with the superintendent when interacting indirectly, and less frequently, with the school board. Additionally, data collected in the Endicott survey supports the deliberate manner in which the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. Fifty-five percent of faculty and 72 percent of parents agree that the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

Because the principal has sufficient decision-making authority, there is a greater sense of community within the building and he is able to act in the best interest of the school at all times.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 5 Commendations

Commendation

The promotion of high expectations for all students with an emphasis on each student's physical and emotional well being

Commendation

The implementation of programs such as Challenge Success to address concerns about student stress and mastery of the competencies in the POG

Commendation

The principal and the professional staff's use of resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices

Commendation

The high school's effective evaluation and supervision process

Commendation

The student load and class size that enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students

Commendation

The instructional leadership provided by the principal that aligns with the school's core values and beliefs

Commendation

The empowerment of the staff to be peer instructional leaders and to introduce new initiatives and instructional materials

Commendation

The use of restorative justice practices and diversion programs rather than traditional forms of discipline

Commendation

The opportunities for all students to voice concerns regarding school culture and the proactive work of school leaders and faculty to address these concerns

Standard 5 Recommendations

Recommendation

Improve the ability to account for students outside of the building during emergencies or during drills

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to ensure the organization of time supports professional collaboration among teachers

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to close identified achievement gaps within the student body, especially those within minority student populations

Recommendation

Continue to work with student leaders to address identified gaps in the equity of the student experience within the student body, particularly with regard to student diversity

Standard 6 Indicator 1

Conclusions

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

Parents, students, teachers, support staff, and administrators affirm that the school regularly supports students through a variety of strategies. Wellesley High School offers several levels of classes: College Preparatory, Honors, and AP. The school offers diverse academic classes and electives to support students' varying interests and levels of rigor. After school experiences support a wide variety of modalities such as art, metalworks, and music creation, and are open to all students. Virtual High School courses fill a need for higher-level courses when a student has a scheduling conflict or when a student is interested in a class not offered in the program of studies. Students attend the Academic Research Center (ARC) for academic support. These supports can include help with content, organization, or time management skills.

To identify at-risk students, the student support team accepts referrals from classroom teachers when students present as having difficulty attaining the curriculum. The team meets once in every seven-day cycle to come up with intervention strategies that are then implemented by classroom teachers. Interventions might include in-class strategies or a referral to the ARC. If these interventions fail to help the student to succeed, the support team will then make further recommendations that might include a referral for special education services. Faculty members also refer students to guidance and nursing personnel as needed when issues arise and students need timely assistance. Student supports are embedded throughout the school day and year with guidance seminars, bullying prevention, advisory, special education, and counseling intensive supports. Advisory is led by student questions and concerns that are discussed in a timely manner while the time is also used to support school-wide initiatives or issues.

Guidance seminars provide students with timely information regarding upcoming milestones, events, or current issues related to career, college, or academic success in high school. The SBIRT survey completed in grade 10 assists health services staff in identifying at-risk behaviors and following up with students as needed. Students have opportunities for academic support outside of the regular classroom setting. Students can access the writing lab and social studies lab, as well as peer tutoring. There are a number of programs that support students with specific needs. The Bridge program helps to transition at-risk students back into the regular school day. The Gateway program supports students with IEPs during the school day.

Parents, teachers, and administrators acknowledge the need to examine current practices in reaching all students, especially students of color and economically disadvantaged students. METCO staff orients students to the high school experience freshman year, focusing on basic study skills, time management skills, social-emotional issues, and communication with parents. The METCO director acts as a resource in the IEP process, for Guidance Seminar when applicable, and offering additional support as needed throughout the school year.

Wellesley High School regularly implements timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies in support of students, including those at risk, in their achievement of 21st-century learning expectations.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview

- teachers
- students
- parents
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

Standard 6 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Wellesley High School (WHS) consistently provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.

All of the school's supports are easily accessible in one place for families, students, and faculty. WHS has designed an easy to read and easy to find social and emotional supports guide designed in a wheel providing seventeen school and community student support resources. The support wheel, officially named "WHS Available Supports" is on the homepage of the Wellesley High School website. Links to resources for available community/school supports are Faculty Advisors Coaches, Advisory Program, Guidance Office, Human Relations Services, Bridge Program, METCO Program, Nursing Office, English Language Learners, Student Support Team, Academic Resource Center, Special Education, Gateways Program, Cornerstones, School Psychologists, Crisis Team, Wellesley Police Department, and Community Mental Health Resources.

Available support services are introduced to parents of freshmen and transfer students during their orientation meetings before the first day of school, then at new parent orientation, at house meetings, at the first 9th-grade parent coffee, and again four more times throughout the year. Parent coffees with the director of guidance meetings are held five times a year as well. The PTSO leaders invite the principal every month to touch upon timely school topics during their meetings. During a new parent orientation evening the executive director from the Human Relations Services in Wellesley, speaks to parents about the developmental changes within youth. At the event, guidance counselors, the METCO director, the nursing staff, pathways teachers, psychologists, assistant principals, special education teachers, and Bridge social workers are available. The library provides information to parents via the library website. Eighty-one percent of parents and 76.7 percent of students are aware of the Wellesley High School's available supports.

Wellesley High School consistently and effectively provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- parents
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Wellesley High School has extensive technological resources to support faculty, staff, and students and support staff use these resources to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.

Support services staff are provided with a personal laptop computer, and students all have computers through the Bring Your Own Device program. The school provides loaner laptops for daily use and provides students in need with laptops to use throughout the year. Almost all department offices have a SMARTBoard, a laser printer, and a color printer. Teachers have access to four photocopiers. Classrooms are equipped with SMARTBoards and SoundField systems. All students, teachers, and staff have access to the Google suite of online tools and the Canvas learning platform. Students and teachers use PowerSchool and PowerTeacher software through which students can check on their progress.

The special education department currently is using PowerSchool IEP to organize information on students and to monitor their progress. Each special education teacher has access to their caseload and can view IEPs and 504s via the program. The special education department utilizes a wide variety of websites including Google Read and Write, Grammarly, Bookshare, Learning Ally, Newsela, and Kurzweil. Some students on IEPs have specialized assistive technology. A legally blind student uses the JAWS screen reader for reading and a physically challenged student uses a gate bet to assist with ambulation. The district assistive technology instructor has introduced uPAR, a reading assessment program, and some students use the IPAD touch.

The library at Wellesley High School is equipped with extensive technological equipment and software including two SMARTBoards, nine desktop computers, three black and white printers, one color printer, one scanner, one copy machine, one projector, and three tablet computers. Additionally, students and staff can access a variety of software resources such as a catalog and circulation program, citation software, multiple online databases, research guides and how-to videos, Ebooks, and library websites.

The Wellesley High School nursing staff utilizes snaphealthcenter.com as a daily log for student visits. Nurses can also use PowerSchool to access information. The guidance department at Wellesley High School uses PowerSchool technology to effectively manage and maintain IEP and 504 documentation. The guidance department also uses Naviance as a post-high school tool for college planning and teacher recommendations. The program SCOIR is used as a resource for data and general information about colleges. All guidance department faculty utilize many web-based services for college planning, standardized testing, and general academics including College Board, Naviance, Common Application, ACT, Khan Academy, and NCAA. Adaptive technologies and equipment are integrated into the student's educational experience, including voice projection devices, and computer-equipped ADA compliant desks.

Because support services staff members have access to and use an abundance of technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student, students' needs are more effectively being met.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership

- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 4

Conclusions

School counseling services have adequate, 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 students; refer students to community and area and mental health agencies; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data to improve services.

The school counseling department is comprised of eight full-time, licensed school counselors, one full-time director of guidance (.6 director, .4 counselor), one full-time secretary to the director of guidance, .8 guidance secretary, and one full-time LCSW with the Bridge program. The average caseload for school counselors is 187 students. The school counselors implement a comprehensive and effective developmental guidance program, meeting with students once in a seven-day cycle for one semester in each of their four years. All four years of the program are appropriate to the grade level of the student focusing for all students on course selection and academic planning, and with freshmen addressing transition to high school, sophomores addressing academic, social and career exploration, and juniors and seniors addressing post-high school planning and transition, focusing primarily on college research and the college application process. Counselors teach approximately 8-9 seminars per seven-day cycle for one hour to a small group of students. The remaining periods per seven-day cycle are for individual student meetings, parent meetings, IEP, and 504 meetings. In addition, six blocks per cycle are standing meetings that meet every cycle, which include student support team meetings, case review, professional consultation, PLC meetings, department meetings, Gateways SST, and Evolutions SST. School counselors engage in individual and group meetings with all students.

In addition to guidance seminars, counselors meet with students individually. Personal counseling includes safety evaluations, referrals to community organizations, individual counseling, consultations with parents and communication with outside providers. Academic counseling includes academic scheduling, schedule changes, master schedule, level changes, transfer student registration, and academic planning. Career/college counseling includes post-high school planning, interest inventories, career inventories, processing all applications to colleges/universities, GAP year programs, PG programs, and volunteer opportunities. Each counselor writes upwards of 50 letters of recommendation each year for senior students. A community outreach worker, employed by Human Relation Services (HRS), works in the high school to provide direct student support as well as counseling consultation weekly to department members. This outreach worker provides full-time social/emotional support to students not receiving special education services. A school adjustment counselor position has been added for the 2019-2020 school year.

Counselors participate in SST once per cycle to discuss students of concern with the administration, school psychologist, school nurse, outreach worker, Bridge member, director of guidance, and special education chairperson. Counselors regularly participate in IEP meetings and also oversee the 504 accommodation processes. Regular consultation with the special education department occurs as well. Counselors also oversee the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) and Academic Resource Center (ARC) referral processes.

Counselors regularly attend professional development conferences, workshops, and presentations. All members of the school counseling department deliver collaborative outreach and referrals to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. The department collaborates with an impressive list of local and state-wide resources to support students. Representative examples of the types of collaborative outreach and referrals made by counselors include, but not limited to, mental health issues, high-risk behaviors, gaming addiction, family/personal conflict, depression, anxiety, executive functioning difficulties, emergency psychiatric evaluations, grief, and safety evaluations.

Assessment data from the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, pre- and post-surveys with students in seminars, and SBIRT (screening and referral for students at risk for developing a substance abuse disorder) data is used to improve services and ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st-century learning expectations. Changes to improve counseling services have been made based on the data and feedback received. Counselors use PLC time during the school year to continually improve and update the guidance curriculum including the Making Caring Common Project through Harvard Graduate School of Education, a

project that develops a curriculum for promoting kindness in children and a commitment to the greater good while employing empathy strategies. Wellesley High School has also improved the use of the website to communicate monthly events/reminders.

Wellesley High School consistently and extensively provides school counseling services that have a sufficient number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental program and meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Indicator 5

Conclusions

The school's health services have an appropriate number of certified/licensed personnel who provide preventative health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; and use ongoing relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to ensure each student is able to achieve the school's profile of a graduate.

Due in part to the adequate staffing of health services, the department is able to be responsive and proactive. There are two full-time nurses and one part-time nurse on the health services staff. The health services office receives approximately 80 student visits per day. These visits are often for an extended amount of time. Staff is able to place students in separate areas of the office based on the levels of privacy needed. Students are referred to the health clinic by teachers, through parents/guardians, by friends, or by themselves. Eighty-nine percent of students return to the classroom after their visits. The nursing staff assesses student health initially and places them appropriately, followed up by a more in-depth process through which other issues might be revealed. After the nursing staff identifies and addresses issues, students either remain for further treatment, are sent home for respite, or return to class. Emergency services are sometimes called.

The staff communicates regularly with parents through attending PTO meetings, through the website, or through school-based meetings. The staff is prepared and responsive to concussion events by coordinating a plan to respond to concussion diagnoses. Vision, hearing, BMI and postural screenings are conducted. The Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey helps staff by identifying trends related to social-emotional or substance abuse issues. The health services website disseminates information to parents, school staff, and the community. The site is used to support teachers with health issues that arise in the classroom, and to inform the community about issues such as mental health services, region-specific diseases, and substance abuse. The health services staff communicates with the social-emotional learning center regularly regarding student psychiatric and medical issues and how to best support them in their learning. Health services staff also supports students in the Gateway program for students with diagnoses of depression and/or anxiety. The health services staff uses student surveys to assess risks and form interventions. Health services has yet to regularly use formal feedback from the school community to inform practice. The health suite layout offers two private patient rooms, two offices for private treatment, and three beds with privacy curtains surrounding them. Cabinet space for supplies and access to supplies is adequate. The nurses communicates directly with students' medical doctors or providers at the start of the school year and as needed throughout the school year when changes apply or new plans are developed. Parents are responsive and proactive in communicating with health services staff. Health services staff is accessible and available to students throughout the school day.

Because the school's health services have an appropriate number of certified/licensed personnel who provide preventative health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; and use ongoing relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, each student gets the support they need to be successful.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school support staff

- Endicott survey
- school website

Standard 6 Indicator 6

Conclusions

Library/media services are often 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; and conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's profile of a graduate.

One full-time certified library media specialist, one part-time library media specialist, and two full-time library assistants staff the library media center. Assistants stagger their hours so the library can stay open earlier and later in the day. The library is open and available to students from 7:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 7:15 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Friday. Library staff curates the print collection, connects displays to current school and regional events, provides staff with curated resources based on classroom needs, troubleshoots technology issues, posts relevant information using social media, and updates the website to offer subject-related resources as well as for general communication with the school community. Because freshmen and sophomores have a directed research period, these students frequent the library. Students utilize the library in part for occasional group work, to work on individual assignments, to touch base with friends or classmates, to do homework, to borrow materials, or to read.

The library staff occasionally connects with classroom teachers to collaborate on lessons or units. Two teachers of grades 12 and 9 respectively, collaborated in utilizing the library to expose students to fiction, and to foster peer support. Students perused books, then explored those texts critically in the classroom with their partners for multiple class periods. The library collaborates with the social studies department in teaching research skills. Library staff meets with social studies teachers to plan lessons, then the library staff travels to classrooms to deliver lessons in the research process and how to best navigate resources. In another library lesson, students "speed-dated" books to gain exposure to a variety of titles. Fashion design titles were curated in collaboration with the Fashion Design teacher for use in class. The library budget is adequate, allowing staff to purchase desired titles, honor student and teacher requests, and offer a variety of online resources and tools. Students completed surveys to inform purchases. With the budget, 150 print titles are added per year.

Library staff evaluates data regarding database access, hourly headcounts, student visits, and borrowing trends. Between September and April of this year, 181 classes utilized the library space or formally requested staffing resources and over 66,000 students have visited the library. Daily, 600-700 students visit the library on average. Eighty percent of staff believe the librarians are actively engaged in the development and implementation of the school's curriculum, however, only 29.8 percent of students respond that they use the library during classes. The atmosphere in the library is conducive to study and research, with many areas for students. For quiet study, there are two 6-seat study rooms and one larger "1938" room. A 100 seat area exists for large presentations and after school meeting space. According to the Endicott survey, 78.9 percent of students agree, "The library has the resources I need," and 83.5 percent say, "The library staff is willing to help me find the information I need or want." The library sent surveys to the science department to assess needs and plans to utilize feedback from staff on a broader scale in the future.

Because the library's certified/licensed personnel provides a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum; ensures 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 conducts ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's profile of a graduate, the library is often used to support student learning in the school.

Sources of Evidence

- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website

Standard 6 Indicator 7

Conclusions

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; and perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's profile of a graduate.

Wellesley High School consistently implements services and resources to engage all learners, including special education, Section 504, and English language learners (ELL). The special education and guidance departments and the ELL teacher collaborate with general education teachers to support students in the three academic levels offered to students. The school has sufficient certified/licensed personnel and support staff that effectively provide academic services and counseling to students. Teachers in the special education and guidance departments and the ELL teacher hold state certification in their respective disciplines. The high school offers a range of academic classes as well as electives which allow students to engage in inclusive classroom environments. Eighty-four percent of the faculty think that Wellesley High School has adequate, certified support services personnel for identified students, including special education, 504 and English language learners, with 5.2 percent in disagreement and 11.1 percent who are undecided. Seventy percent of parents are in agreement that there is an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff, 9.0 percent are in disagreement, and 20.9 percent are undecided.

The special education department consists of one special education department head, one special education team chair, one special education secretary, seventeen special education teachers, two speech and language pathologists, four school psychologists, three school psychology interns, one assistive technology specialist, one teacher of the hearing impaired, two board-certified behavioral analysts (BCBA), plus one BCBA who is also a certified special education teacher, two physical therapists and one occupational therapist. There is one .6 ELL teacher. There are also 41.6 teaching assistants and two para-nurses who support students.

The special education department provides services to students who have been identified and found eligible under state and federal special education regulations. The staff implement services across all academic areas allowing students to be educated in an inclusive learning environment. Eighty-seven percent of staff are in agreement that teachers, counselors, and support staff collaborate with one another, while 4.6 percent of staff are in disagreement and 8.5 percent are undecided. The academic and support staff collaborate with school personnel as well as outside community resources to address the academic and social/emotional needs of students. Each academic department, including the special education and guidance departments, take part in regular department meetings allowing each department to meet, discuss and collaborate in order to help each student achieve their academic and social/emotional goals. School counselors serve as liaisons for students on 504 Plans, attending the 504 meetings and consulting with classroom teachers regarding the implementation of accommodations for students on 504 Plans.

The special education staff regularly meet to plan and discuss student performance. Once in the seven-day cycle, the language team, Gateways team, skills team, and Cornerstones team meet to review student progress and concerns. They problem-solve and discuss strategies to address students' academic or social/emotional needs. Three student support teams (SST) meet once in the seven-day cycle to discuss students within each of their houses. This group includes an assistant principal, school psychologist, guidance counselors, teachers and either the department head or team chair of special education. Implementation of online tools to address executive functioning, organization, and independent learning skills, including Canvas, Google Docs, and Grammarly, help enhance learning and engage all students. The members of the special education department take part in monthly staff meetings in which larger school topics are discussed, initiatives are explored, and plans are made to ensure that the staff are working toward educating students which inclusively engages all learning styles and increases awareness about academic and social/emotional topics including the integration of project-based learning and Challenge Success. Also, training occurs in small groups on half days when faculty members educate one another on their areas of expertise allowing faculty the opportunity to learn from others, expand their understanding of different teaching and learning models as well as technological tools that benefit all learners.

All families new to the Wellesley Public Schools register at the central office and all are given the Home Language Assessment. Based on the results of the assessment, a student may be referred to the WHS ELL teacher for additional assessments including the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) to determine eligibility for ELL services. When a student qualifies for ELL, a meeting is held with all of the student's teachers, school counselor, sometimes the director of guidance and the ELL teacher to discuss test score results, strategies and best practices for supporting the student in classes. The ELL teacher serves as the student's liaison and consults throughout the school year with the student's teacher to continue to discuss teaching strategies and accommodations. Translation and interpretation services are provided at parent meetings when necessary. English language learners are all at level 3 on the WIDA scale. They attend one ESL class per day based on their WIDA level. All other classes are regular education classes, with core classes staffed by an SEI-endorsed teacher. Freshman ELL students attend an English class with their ELL peers and non-ELL peers. Progress in this model is a success as determined by data from MCAS, SAT, ACT, and ACCESS scores. The school was given an A+ score from the state for their ELL services. It is not unusual for students to advance two proficiency levels in one year. If a staff member needs translation services for students or parents, they can submit a request online. There is also a Translation Club comprised of ELL student that translates informal announcements for the school such as social event posters. Parents are also involved by assisting in the translations to their home languages.

Inclusive learning opportunities are available for all students and students are provided individual and small group support within the school as well as supported by outside community resources. Learning centers support students working on specific goals and objectives on IEPs. The material is presented in a manner that focuses on the understanding of breaking down large tasks into smaller segments, applying learned skills and working through the material at a pace that meets all learning styles. Independent work that is assigned is structured in a manner to allow the students to expand on the knowledge that they gained within the classroom while practicing the skills on a more independent level. Some of the college-prep courses are co-taught with a special education teacher and general education teacher working together and some classes have teaching assistants in the class to support students on IEPs. There are three levels of academic support based on assessment scores and student performance. In addition to inclusive opportunities within the academic setting, Wellesley High School offers supports across extracurricular areas including sports and clubs for all students. Students take part in clubs and a club fair is offered all three lunch waves at the beginning of each school year. Students take part in advisory which meets daily for eight minutes and for an extended time during half days. Advisory focuses on student well-being, developing connections among a different group of peers and provides students another staff member who can provide support to them. This inclusive model ensures that students on IEPs are being educated in the least restrictive environment. Special education staff members work with outside providers to improve group and individual supports for identified students. During the evaluation process, a release of information is obtained to gather additional data from community service providers. With family support, information is obtained to assist in making informed decisions in planning and implementing supports for each student. The district works closely with a number of local hospitals and agencies to support students and staff members including, but not limited to, The Wellesley Health Department, Newton Wellesley Hospital, Riverside Community Care- Youth Mobile Crisis Intervention, Human Relation Services (HRS), Psychiatric Emergency Services (Division of Advocates), McLean Hospital, Wayside Youth and Family Services, Department of Mental Health (DMH), Ely Center, ASPIRE, Perkins, Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and Massachusetts

Rehabilitation Commission.

Wellesley High School consistently and effectively implements services and resources to engage all learners, including special education, Section 504, and English language learners (ELL) across the school environment.

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 6 Commendations

Commendation

The timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, delivered through a coordinated approach

Commendation

The wide variety of programs offered to cover a range of needs and to target specific needs with specific intervention strategies

Commendation

The student support team that effectively identifies students at risk and matches them to appropriate resources

Commendation

The development of a Wheel of Supports that provides links to all WHS supports for students and parents

Commendation

The productive and positive environment in the library that supports student learning and provides resources necessary for student success

Commendation

The personalized, caring relationships between school counselors and their students and the comprehensive four-year developmental guidance program

Commendation

The effective organization of the health services suite which includes the space, resources, and schedule to maximize the effectiveness of the program while serving 80 students per day

Commendation

The timely and coordinated communication among guidance, administration, and the health staff to meet student needs

Commendation

The variety of support services for identified students that meet their specific needs

Standard 6 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to further integrate library/media resources into school curriculum initiatives

Standard 7 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies.

The community and district's governing body provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services. This is evidenced by the budget structure of the town as 50 percent of the town budget is dedicated to school funding. Teachers stated that they believe budgetary allocations support the school programming and services. Recently, a three and a half percent increase to the school budget was approved at town meeting allowing for the school to continue to support a wide range of school programs and services and to add additional support in the form of an adjustment counselor and director of diversity. Extensive community partnerships, such as the Wellesley Education Foundation, also provide significant financial support to help with professional development and the purchase of classroom supplies and equipment.

The community and district's governing body provide dependable funding for sufficient professional and support staff. This is evidenced by the teacher-to-student ratio in the freshman courses which are purposefully limited to a smaller number (1:12 ratio on average) to promote a personal approach to learning and support. There are also 41.6 teaching assistants who support both teachers and students. A teaching assistant can be found in each College Prep course. Programs such as Evolutions and Bridges show a commitment to sufficient staffing ratios to support the stated goals of each program.

The district provides adequate funding for ongoing professional development and curriculum revision. In addition to the professional development that occurs on early release days, the district allocates approximately \$90,000 in grants, equivalent to 244 release days across the district, for curriculum and instruction time. Teachers may apply for these grants to be used for the creation of curriculum units and to attend conferences. It is important to note that the current PBL initiative has used a large portion of the allocated time in the last several years. Administrators stated that when necessary, they reach out to parent and community groups to help fund professional development endeavors for individual teachers.

The district has a five-year technology plan that details the needs and projection of needs for technology. Approximately \$800,000 has been earmarked for technology in the FY19 budget, with a projection of \$1.3 million in needs for FY23, a year that shows a significant increase in monies budgeted to replace aging technology. A technology suite is located in the high school building that supports all students and faculty. The suite is staffed by two full-time support staff members and one half-time support person who is shared with the middle school facility. The district's systems administrator is also housed within the technology suite.

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, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies resulting in a rich teaching and learning experience for faculty and students.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview

- school website
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, to properly maintain, catalog, and replace equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis.

To keep the school site and plant running smoothly, the school district partners with the Town of Wellesley Facilities Maintenance Department. The department has extensive documents pertaining to the schedule for preventative maintenance that occurs throughout the facility, with most preventative measures occurring at least twice a school year. There is an ecological and environmentally responsible and respectful ideology in the maintenance and design of facilities. The school is partially operated by geothermal heating and cooling systems. The school uses a rainwater collection system to recycle water in and out of the natural environment. All systems are automated and to a degree are self-regulated by a management software program available on the main computer located in the physical plant. The facilities supervisor has the ability to adjust and monitor many aspects of the physical plant including, but not limited to, the building temperatures and lighting.

The school received a Green Cleaning Award in recognition of the commitment to sustainable energy sources that have a minimal environmental impact. All equipment is appropriately certified and repair records are easily accessible to maintenance staff and administration. Air filters are replaced on a continuous basis to promote positive air quality.

The school has three and a half daytime custodians and nine night custodians who are responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of the school facilities. The school building not only reflects a high standard of cleanliness in all areas, it also prides itself on its green initiatives. Throughout the building, there are numerous water fountains that allow for the opportunity to refill usable water bottles to reduce/limit the use of single-use plastic bottles. In the cafeteria, a recycling station allows students to recycle plastic, aluminum, and paper which help decrease the amount of potential trash. Sixty percent of students and 71 percent of faculty agree that the school is clean and well maintained.

As a result of the development, planning, and funding to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant and the processes in place to properly maintain, catalog, and replace equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis, staff and students have a learning environment that fully supports the learning process.

Sources of Evidence

- facility tour
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

Standard 7 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements.

The school budget includes a two-year enrollment projection that informs staffing needs. The Town of Wellesley Facilities Management Department develops a plan that outlines the responsibilities and maintenance schedule to address long-range facility needs. The director of educational technology develops the budget to support technology needs. There is a five-year district technology plan that is approved by the school committee. The plan outlines the staffing, infrastructure, capital budget, and operating budget for the district related to technology. The school district also has a capital plan that outlines the capital needs for the school district divided by furniture, fixtures, and equipment and technology providing a detailed analysis of the allocation of funds over a four-year period to meet their needs.

The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services. The school council is responsible for having discussions and recommending matters of policy, culture, curriculum, and other concerns garnered from the Students Congress, Faculty Senate, PTSO, residents, and the principal. PTSO and WEF grants are sources of funding provided by the community. These groups provide field trips and other enrichment opportunities that are not funded by the school budget.

As a result of community funds and school implementation of a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements the ensures a plan to meet future needs.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- central office personnel
- school leadership

Standard 7 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.

The budget development process begins in late September for the following fiscal year with a general meeting of all curriculum directors, department heads, coordinators, principals, and central office administrators. At that time, the central office administration presents and discusses the budget guidelines, timelines, submission documents and deadlines with the academic leaders in the district. The process is iterative between late September and mid-December when budget recommendations are presented to the school committee. At the building level, after department heads have discussed funding needs and wants with their departments, the school leadership team as a whole sits down and reviews requests that have been made allowing for total transparency of the process. At these meetings, the team makes critical decisions on budget lines items, allowing for each department to state its needs through a collaborative process, and pares down the requests to fit within the guidelines and budget set forth by central office administration. The majority of the budget is level-funded for current services, with the next largest portion used to address the specific needs of the strategic plan, and finally a portion that is classified to fund areas of critical need. The final stages of the budget process include the superintendent presenting a proposed budget to the school committee for approval. The school committee then submits its budget to the board of selectman as a piece of the overall town budget. The final budget proposal is reviewed, discussed, and voted on at town meeting.

As a result of faculty and building administrators being actively involved in the development of the budgetary process, decisions are being made that in in the best interest of the school community as a whole.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school website

Standard 7 Indicator 5

Conclusions

The school site and plant effectively support the delivery of high-quality school programs and services.

Wellesley High School is a new facility that opened in February 2012 and was purposely designed and equipped to deliver a 21st-century curriculum. The school plant was thoughtfully designed to support educational programs and environmental initiatives. Noteworthy ideas include a strong integration of green technology in the form of geothermal heating, water recycling, a rainwater collection system, and sedums utilized on the roof of the building that provide a complex drainage system and insulation. These green initiatives provide for unique and real-world learning experiences for students in AP Environmental Science and other courses. In addition, the school plant is primarily self-managed. Equipment such as the water filtration and heating and cooling systems have the ability to monitor their own mechanical needs and alert maintenance staff through a computer application of any potential issues before they negatively impact the school building.

The building administration is distributed throughout the building in the form of four houses. The main office houses the principal, the guidance department head, support staff, and conference space. There is one house office on each floor with an assistant principal, guidance counselors, and other support services. Teachers, parents, and students expressed that this system fosters a student-centered and personalized approach in a large school community.

The school has an adequate number of classrooms to deliver high-quality core academic programs and there are various facilities beyond the core facilities that are adequate to deliver high-quality school programs and services. There is a choral room, a band room, and an orchestra room. Each of those rooms provides students with practice space to work both in large groups and independently. The school also has a theatre that allows for common activities and class space for a theatre arts program. Directly behind the theatre, a theatre arts shop hosts a theatre design course. The physical education program has a full gym, a fitness center, and a separate space for yoga and dance classes. The cafeteria/student dining services and the food preparation area are sufficient in size and adequately equipped to service the school population. The organization of the food preparation services allows staff to prepare and keep pace with student and staff demand.

There are appropriate spaces for library services and health services. The library media center has appropriate space with areas for active learning, technology use, research, study, and a smaller quiet study room called the 1938 room that preserves the character and look of the old high school building in its fixtures and flooring. The library media center is equipped to support the school's curriculum as well as to conduct independent research and inquiry. The health suite has a suitable workspace for confidentiality and student privacy.

Although the building is well equipped to support a 21st-century learning environment, there are a few deficiencies that are impacting teachers' ability to meet students' needs. Most teachers share classroom space and are assigned a collaborative pod workspace to conduct work during preparation and planning periods. Teachers shared concerns that the collaborative pod space impacts their ability to conduct phone calls that are private and sensitive in nature. In addition, since the pods are designed for teacher use only, teachers express concern in the lack of an area to meet students one-on-one during their prep periods. Teachers were observed meeting with individual students in locations marked as storage closets.

The science labs are currently sufficient in number and size, but teachers identified a need for more space to accommodate hands-on learning opportunities. There is a concern that most science labs are scheduled every period of the day, so teachers do not have access to classrooms to properly set up laboratory work in a timely fashion.

The special education suite is not adequate to deliver high-quality school programs and services. Teachers commented that space is not well structured to support services for students. There is a large conference room with smaller offices located directly off the large conference room. If there is a meeting in the large conference space, the smaller offices become inaccessible. The staff utilizes available spaces, such as offices or classrooms to offer support services to students. This displaces staff and does not maintain confidentiality. During teacher

meetings, the need for a private workspace to grade, plan, and work with students was consistently expressed.

Lastly, teachers expressed that parking is a constant issue and a source of anxiety. Spaces are not assigned and there are not enough spaces for both staff and students. Further, staff commented that depending on their arrival time on campus, parking may not be available and are forced to park illegally resulting in the possibility of being ticketed.

The school site and plant effectively support the delivery of high-quality school programs and services. When issues such as space to meet with individual students and hold confidential meetings, science lab usage and teacher parking are addressed, the building and grounds will even more effectively meet students' and teachers' needs.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- school support staff

Standard 7 Indicator 6

Conclusions

The school maintains extensive 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.

Extensive documentation was provided by the school and the supervisor of the facilities management department that shows the school meets applicable federal and state laws. The documentation provided included proper maintenance and testing of fire alarms, sprinklers, fire extinguishers, boilers, gymnasium equipment, chemical filtration, and water distribution systems, elevators, kitchen temperature logs, lighting and rigging in the auditorium, and chemical storage and disposal. The school is subject to several town and state inspections to ensure the physical plant and facilities meet all safety guidelines. The fire department inspects extinguishers, sprinklers, boilers, and initiates fire drill procedures to ensure safety. Wellesley police conduct routine security checks of the building when not occupied, as well as carry out active shooter drills throughout the year. Twice a year the board of health inspects the kitchen pertaining to proper food handling, storing, and cooking of food. The Commonwealth performs yearly inspections of elevators, while OSHA inspects chemical storage and disposal.

The school has adequate ventilation, temperature control, and air quality, which all are automatically controlled by the various systems, providing a relatively comfortable physical environment throughout the school year. If an issue does arise with these systems, an alert is sent to the supervisor of facilities, allowing for immediate recognition of a problem and a fast fix. There is a formal process for faculty to request repairs and maintenance, which are completed in a timely manner.

As a result of the school 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 students, faculty, students, and staff have a comfortable and safe learning environment.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- school support staff

Standard 7 Indicator 7

Conclusions

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.

Wellesley High School (WHS) engages students and their families as partners in each student's education and encourages their participation in school programs and parent support groups. WHS provides many opportunities for parents to engage in the scholastic lives of their children. In addition to back-to-school night, which is held each school year at the beginning of October, parents and teachers may also communicate and/or schedule a conference whenever necessary during the year through email and or phone calls. Parents have daily access to students' grades, and teachers are required to upload grades regularly. At the close of the term, parents can go online and can see the grades for the term.

Parents are key team members during 504, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) entry, and disciplinary meetings when students need more academic or emotional support. The Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunities (METCO) program coordinator works with parents living in Boston to keep them informed about school events and students' progress. Support programs at the school, such as Gateways, Cornerstone and Bridge programs, communicate with parents on a weekly basis about their children's progress. Other support services are available through the guidance department, school psychologists and the outreach counselor. The counseling staff consults regularly with the director of the Human Relations Service (HRS), Wellesley's community mental health agency.

The director of guidance organizes coffee meetings with parents four times a year and the WHS Parent Guidance Advisory meets monthly with the director of guidance to discuss ways in which the guidance and counseling department can promote a positive school culture. The guidance department also engages parents several times throughout the school year. The department holds evenings informational sessions for parents including freshman, junior, and senior parents' nights, a Standardized Testing night, an evening to Navigate the College Process with Students w/LD and an evening for selective colleges. Guidance information is available to parents and students through the guidance website.

The Wellesley High School Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) meets regularly. The principal hosts a coffee for parents once every month, and every year the PTSO meets in Boston with Boston and Wellesley parents. The group sends out a weekly email blast and maintains a PTSO website with helpful information. School council helps to engage students and their families in the partnerships that WHS has cultivated. The Wellesley Educational Foundation (WEF), whose members include parents of current and former students as well as interested citizens, provides financial support for faculty initiatives that benefit students in curricular and co-curricular activities, and the Wellesley Scholarship Foundation funds and endows scholarships.

Social workers, clinicians, and the student resource officer work to provide family outreach, educating parents on possible support services the school could provide. The student success team works to identify students of need, to align resources to design an appropriate support plan and to continuously monitor student progress and adjust programming.

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, parents play an important role in each student's education.

Sources of Evidence

- parents

- school leadership
- school support staff

Standard 7 Indicator 8

Conclusions

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

The school has support from numerous parent support groups such as the Parent Teacher School Organization (PTSO), Parents of Performing Students (POPS), Parents Supporting Art Students (PSAS), and Friends of Wellesley METCO. Teachers commented frequently that when they request classroom items or learning opportunities such as field trips, the parent groups are able to provide resources to support the need. Multiple community partnerships support students' and teachers' needs. The Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF) provides numerous grants to teachers, which includes a recent grant for \$20,000 to purchase radiation detectors. WEF organized the Wellesley STEM EXPO which provides a hands-on STEM exposition that includes a speaker series, hands-on exhibits, workshops, and a showcase of student work, transforming the school into an interactive science center for the day. The Evolutions program works directly with community partners on identifying needs within the community, such as working with the National Resource Commissions and Sustainable Wellesley, developing an initiative to eliminate single-use plastic water bottles, as well as with Historical Society in developing a mobile storytelling unit.

The school has numerous partnerships with businesses that include the TJX companies, Caffe Nero, and Natick Organic Farm. After the ban of single-use plastic bags in the town, the school partnered with Roche Brothers to design the logo displayed on the reusable canvas bags that would be available in their stores. The school also has a partnership with the Wellesley Municipal Light Plant that allows students in the special education program to access a hands-on training center where students practice skills and workforce readiness. Students have stated that guidance counselors would provide support in finding internships in their fields of interest if asked.

The school has strong connections with higher education opportunities that include partnerships with Babson College, Mass Bay, Olin College, and Wellesley College. Students have the ability to take courses at local colleges. Faculty from these higher education institutions have been accessed as classroom speakers as well as professional development leaders.

As a result of the school's development of productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning, students are given multiple opportunities to enrich their learning and feel connected to the larger school community.

Sources of Evidence

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

Standard 7 Commendations

Commendation

The dependable funding provided by the community and district's governing body for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development, technology, and sufficient instructional equipment, supplies, and materials

Commendation

The development of plans and programs to ensure maintenance, repair, and cleanliness of the building and school plant

Commendation

The process in place to ensure 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 school site and plant that exceptionally support the delivery of high quality school programs and services

Commendation

The budgeting process that allows faculty and building administrators to work together to identify and prioritize learning needs and to inform allocation of resources

Commendation

The physical distribution of support and administrative staff throughout the building which fosters a student-centered and personalized approach in a large school community

Commendation

The commitment to green technology systems throughout the school building

Commendation

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

Commendation

The old high school that is honored in the new building design

Standard 7 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to provide private spaces for teachers to meet individually with students and for confidential meetings

Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to ensure the availability of legal and safe parking for staff, students, and faculty

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: Alyson Geary - New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.

Team Members

Craig Beaulieu - Stoughton High School

Tara Blake - Hingham High School

Linda Ciliberti - Wilton High School

Pamela Comeau - Weymouth High School

James Donovan - Duxbury High School

Frances Frederick - Belchertown High School

Lisa Herzl - Triton High School

Kerri Langlais-Emilian - Revere High School

Roger Lenfest - Methuen High School

Jessica Linehan - Wareham High School

Stephanie Lowe - Beverly High School

Jennifer Norman - H. H. Ellis Technical High School

Aimee Oteri - North Andover High School

Kelsey Wilbur - Plymouth North High School