NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

Bristol Central High School

Bristol, Connecticut

March 15 – March 18, 2015

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

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INTRODUCTION

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

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees which supervises the work of four Commissions: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE), the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS), the Commission on Public Schools which is comprised of the Committee on Public Secondary Schools (CPSS), the Committee on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), 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 committees to assess the degree to which the evaluated schools meet the qualitative Standards for Accreditation of the Committee. Those Standards are:

> Teaching and Learning Standards
>> Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations
>> Curriculum
>> Instruction
>> Assessment of and for Student Learning
>
> Support of Teaching and Learning Standards
>> School Culture and Leadership
>> School Resources for Learning
>> Community Resources for Learning.

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

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit – The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Bristol Central High School, a committee of 16 members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included. The BCHS Steering Committee consisted of 9 representatives from the faculty (the 7 standard committee chairs, and the two co-chairs of the steering committee).

The self-study of Bristol Central High School extended over a period of 24 school months from January, 2013 to January 2015. The visiting committee was pleased to note thatstudents Andrew Damon-Smith, Annie Rivera, Roberto Luis-Fuentes, Maria Soto, Kailey Davis, Tamir Hornseby, Ravan Rodriguez, Kaltrina Bushi, Samantha and Damita Grajales. Parents, Superintendent Solek and Assistant Superintendent Moreau, along with board members, joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

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

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of 16 evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluateBristol Central High School. The Committee members spent four days in Bristol, visiting Bristol Central High School, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school meets the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools; urban, magnet, suburban and rural, central office administrators, principals, curriculum coordinators, teachers, and vocational/technical institutions with diverse points of view that brought to bear on the evaluation of Bristol Central High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials

- 32 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day

- a total of 60 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)

- numerous informal observations in and around the school

- tours of the facility

- individual meetings with 32 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning

- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

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

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

School and Community Summary

Bristol Central High School is one of two public high schools serving the community of Bristol, CT. Bristol is an urban community located in the southwestern corner of Hartford County.

The population of Bristol is approximately 60,500 according to the 2013 census estimate. It has become an economically and racially diverse city which has seen a significant increase in minority populations over the past decade. According to the last census, the population of Bristol is 86% white, 9% Hispanic and 3.7% black. The population of Bristol Central is significantly more diverse than that of the city as a whole. The school community is 67% white, 20% Hispanic and 9% black. Approximately 3% of the student population is non-English speaking. Bristol's median income of $58,814 ranks well below the state average of $69,591. In the 2014-15 school year, 43% of the student population qualified for free or reduced lunch. This number has more than doubled since the last NEASC accreditation in 2004 and has had a significant impact on programs and services in the school.

Bristol's largest taxpayer and employer is ESPN which accounts for 5.8% of the city's grand list. The city's other large employers include the city of Bristol, Lake Compounce (seasonal) and Bristol Hospital. Long a city with a strong manufacturing base, Bristol's workforce has transitioned to service and retail over the past two decades although a number of small spring manufacturers still have a strong presence in the

community. The unemployment rate of 8.1% was slightly above the state average of 7.8% in 2013. The poverty rate of 9% is below the state average of 10%.

Enrollment at Central is currently 1,163. An additional 128 students attached to the school are enrolled in alternative, magnet or out-placement facilities. In addition to Bristol Central, the Bristol School District includes Bristol Eastern High School with an enrollment of 1,254, two middle schools, and two K-8 schools are the primary feeder schools for Bristol Central. All three also serve Bristol Eastern. The total public school enrollment in the Bristol School District is 8,692. St. Paul Regional Catholic School also serves the Bristol high school's population and there are four K-8 parochial schools in the community.

The per pupil cost in the Bristol Public Schools in school year 2013-2014 was $13,220. State and federal funding comprised of $56,806,689.75 of the Bristol Public Schools total budget of $104,285,960.00 leaving 45.5% of the budget to be paid by local taxpayers. Funding for education comes primarily from local and state resources with federal supplements. The per-pupil expenditure is below the state average and has been for a few years. Bristol is classified by the Connecticut State Department of Education in District Reference Group (DRG) G which is the third lowest group in the state.

There are 97 teachers at Bristol Central High School creating a student-to-teacher ratio of 12:1. Teachers teach six classes, three each day, in an alternating day block schedule and carry a class load of approximately 100 students with an average class size of 16.5.

All students at BCHS have the opportunity to enroll in any of three academic areas: Academic, Accelerated, or Advanced Placement. Students are eligible for college credit in AP courses as well as through career-oriented college partnerships. The school has partnerships with Tunxis Community College, University of CT, and University of New Haven which allow students to earn college credit while in high school. In 2014 184 Advanced Placement exams were offered to 46% of the seniors in 15 different subject areas. Seventy-one percent of the scores were at a "3" or higher. Approximately 19.7% of students receive special education services. All BCHS students are in an advisory group of approximately 12 students which meets biweekly with an adult mentor. Students remain in the same advisory group with the same staff person through their four years of high school.

BCHS students are required to take 25.25 credits to graduate. Students are required to take 4 credits in English, 3 in mathematics, 3 in social studies, 2 in science, 2 in physical education, .25 in health, and 1 in vocational/fine arts, leaving 10 credits for electives.

The school offers academic and extracurricular programs designed to meet students' unique learning and transitional needs, as well as future college and career interests. BCHS has a variety of programs to provide students with 21st century skills through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses. Other college and career readiness partnerships include Tunxis and UCONN through family and consumer science and business programs. Furthermore, students can elect to take courses in the visual and performing arts to enrich their learning experience at BCHS.

All freshmen are placed in freshman teams to provide transitional support and accountability during their first year in high school to help ensure the highest degree of success possible. The school also offers an AVID program designed to assist traditionally underrepresented groups transition into a four-year university setting.

Extracurricular activities engage 55% of students in a variety of sports and enrichment or school community-based groups. There are 28 enrichment or community-based groups including performing arts, academic enrichment, career, and student engagement groups. These groups are facilitated by one, or in some cases, multiple dedicated BCHS staff members. There are 21 different varsity athletic programs offered with many sports supported by both staff and volunteer coaches.

For the Bristol Central class of 2014, 50% of the 295 students attended a four year college, 12% a two year college, 10% a vocational technical school, and 2% military. Graduates of BCHS were accepted to competitive schools in 2014 including the U.S. Military Academy, Harvard, University of Pennsylvania, Amherst, Boston College, Carnegie Mellon and Dartmouth. A large population chose to enroll in the Connecticut University System. The school's average SAT scores were 513 in Critical Reading, 518 in Math and 499 in Writing in 2014. In addition, Bristol offers continuing adult education and students may enroll in the Bristol Technical Education Center which offers courses in culinary, HVAC, auto tech, manufacturing technology, welding and metal fabrication and electronics technology either during their last two years of high school or as post graduates.

Students are recognized for their accomplishments through a variety of programs including the Ram Strong program which recognizes students for their adherence to the school motto,"Be Creative, Be Committed, Be Collaborative, and Be Conscientious." Both staff and students are able to nominate students to earn one of these awards. In the first half of the 2014-2015 school year, approximately 200 students earned a Ram Strong Award. Students are recognized for academic achievement through the honor roll and principal's commendation breakfasts. The Maroon and White Scholarships, funded by staff contributions, are awarded to students in a variety of areas each spring. The *Signatures* publication recognizes outstanding student writing annually. There are numerous opportunities throughout the year for students to be recognized for achievement in athletics, performing and visual arts.

BRISTOL PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

To maintain a safe and secure learning environment that provides all students with the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully complete college, other post high school education or training.

STATEMEMT OF CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS (MISSION STATEMENT):

BCHS promotes an environment wherein all members of its community employ 21st century skills to become creative thinkers, conscientious problem-solvers, collaborative learners and committed citizens in a global society.

BCHS LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

- *Global Awareness and Civic Responsibility*
  - o Students will demonstrate an understanding of civic, environmental, and financial responsibility by employing skills necessary to be active and productive citizens.

- *Critical Thinking and Problem Solving*
  - o Students will solve problems through research, analysis, application, evaluation and creativity.

- *Communication*
  - o Students will use a variety of methods to communicate facts and ideas effectively in a clear and well-reasoned manner.

- *Collaboration*
  - o Students will be conscientious and respectful while working together in a variety of settings to achieve a common goal.

- *Media and Information Literacy*
  - o Students will use technology to access, evaluate, and apply appropriate information while participating in authentic learning experiences.

- *Life and Career Skills:*
  - o Students will take initiative and personal responsibility for setting life and career goals and following through in an ethical and responsible manner.

SCHOOL MOTTO:

Be Creative, Be Conscientious, Be Collaborative, Be Committed

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

CURRICULUM

INSTRUCTION

ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Teaching and Learning Standard

1 Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

1. The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.

2. The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement.

3. The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.

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

Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations

Conclusions

The Bristol Central High School community engages in a collaborative and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.

A panel comprised of students, staff, administrators, and parents developed the mission statement and learning expectations beginning in June 2010. They posed the question of what skills students need to know and be able to do to be successful when they graduate from BCHS to parents, students, and faculty. Their responses were used to draft the initial versions of the mission statement, goals, and learning expectations. It was in this way that parents, students, and faculty were integral in the creation of the statement according to the self-study.

There is evidence of additional research used when planning the creation of their core values and beliefs. The self-study and panel presentation cited the study of *Hess's Depth of Knowledge, Partnership for the 21st Century*, and the models of other schools as sources of research. The self-study indicates that the Core Values Creation Committee did not specifically examine student data such as CAPT, CMT, DRP scores, CFA data, PSAT and SAT scores to inform their decisions. However, there is aninformal practice of data analysis at BCHS by the faculty and administration who shared their close examinations with the committee to inform the process of drafting the initial version of this document.

The panel brought drafts to the full staff for further discussion, revision and approval prior to submitting them to the board of education (BOE) for approval on March 7, 2012. The board was not a part of the development of the core values, beliefs and expectations; however the subcommittees of the BOE were involved in the process of reviewing the final statement for approval.

The core values, beliefs and learning expectations were developed with ongoing discussion of effectiveness, relevance, and implementation and were approved by the board of education in 2012.

The Endicott survey supports the statement that the process was inclusive. 81.7 percent of students are familiar with core values, and beliefs; 88 percent of parents are familiar with core values and beliefs and 75 percent of parents are familiar with the 21st century learning expectations, and 85 percent of parents believe the statement represents what the community values about student learning. When interviewed, students were able to identify the core values and beliefs about learning and how this learning is preparing them for the future. Students were also able to describe how the values and beliefs were evident in the lessons they learned, and in their school culture. Core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are easily accessible on the school's website.

As a result, the BCHS community engaged in a collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.

 (Self-study, panel presentation, Endicott survey)

Bristol Central High School has worked to develop challenging and measureable 21st century learning expectations for students which address academic, civic, and social competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. Approximately sixty-three percent of students surveyed agree the 21st century learning expectations are challenging and measurable. The school has adopted six learning expectations that require students to think critically and solve problems, use varied methods to communicate facts and ideas, collaborate,use technology to participate in authentic learning experiences, demonstrate global awareness and civic responsibilities and take initiative and personal responsibility for setting life and career goals.

In June 2010, the Core Values Creation Committee comprised of parents, administrators, teachers and students began the revision process of the mission and learning expectations. The committee sites the framework for 21st century learning, Hess' cognitive rigor matrix and observations of other school's as sources of references used to provide the foundation for the development of their core values, beliefs and learning expectations. The core values, beliefs and learning expectations underwent several revisions by the faculty until agreement was reached. In March of 2012 the board of education approved the current statement.

Teachers met within their collaborative data teams to develop and align rubrics to the revised statement. The building data team edited the final drafts of the rubrics and during the 2013-2014 school year the rubrics were distributed to the teachers for implementation.

All six of the rubrics use the same terminology (exceeds the standard, meets the standard, progressing toward the standard, and below the standard) to avoid student confusion about different levels of achievement. The rubrics provide students with guidelines as to what is expected of them in meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations however, full and consistent implementation of the school-wide rubrics by all teachers in all departments has not been initiated.

There is inconsistent evidence of students using rubrics to self-assess their work. Samples of student work do not demonstrate the integration of the school-wide rubrics into the assessment of student performance or learning. There is not a clear alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment with school-wide rubrics to assess the students' 21st century learning skills. There is limited evidence of samples of student work that align with the core values, beliefs and learning expectations. The development and use of consistent school-wide rubrics will provide a more effective measurement of individual and school-wide achievement of the school's six learning expectations.(Teacher interviews, students, classroom observations, teachers, Building administrators, Endicott survey)

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21stcentury expectations are reflected in the culture of the school but at this time do not drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom. A significant challenge for BCHS is that they share curriculum with their sister school, Bristol Eastern High School. Although each school has their own individual learning expectations and core values, they are inhibited by a shared curriculum that both schools must agree upon. The core values, beliefs and 21stcentury

learning expectations of BCHS are a guiding force in the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.

The school's curriculum documents do not reference the 21st century learning expectations, individual departments assume ownership and responsibility for certain expectations. While the program of studies includes a statement of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, currently, they receive limited focus within classroom instruction. At this time, the school's analytic rubrics to assess student mastery of the learning expectations are not formally used by all faculty. There is no evidence of a plan under development for implementation of the rubrics within the various departments. The school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are aligned with the district mission statement which is currently under review to incorporate post-secondary life and career expectations.

There is extensive evidence of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations reflected in the school culture. The expectations are on prominent display throughout the building in the main entrance, hallways, classrooms, cafeteria, auditorium, and gymnasium. The essential core values and beliefs are taught during the freshman orientation and reinforced with students through daily announcements and interactions among staff, students and administration. Additional examples referenced are the RAM Strong program, Unified Theater and Unified Sports, integration of technology through the usage of Chrome-books and SMART Boards, city-wide Google accounts, Festivus, and Tastes of the World culture night.

Ninety-two percent of the staff agree the school's core values and beliefs are actively reflected in the school's culture and approximately 80 percent of parents agree the core values, beliefs and learning expectations are referenced at parent meetings, conferences and other social and academic interactions so that it is a living document throughout the school community.

Approximately 82 percent of the staff agrees the core values, beliefs and learning expectations guide decisions related to policies, procedures, and the allocation of resources.

Although there is widespread, school-wide awareness of the core values and beliefs, there is limited implementation of the expectations within the classroom setting. There is limited evidence of a purposeful alignment of resources allocation with the core values, beliefs and learning expectations.

There is an inclusive environment throughout the school community as evidenced with interviews of parents, staff, students and support staff (custodial, food services and security). Support staff report they are treated with respect by the staff, students, and administrators and are integral members of the school community.

There is limited evidence to support the claim that students have a level of attainment of specific expectations aligned with the school wide learning as measured by the rubrics. Completely embedding the school's learning expectations and core values and beliefs will help to make them the driving force of all curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices and will provide the foundation to guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions and resource allocations.(student shadowing, student work,

teacher interviews, self-study, central office personnel,school support staff, students, classroom observations, Endicott survey)

The school does not have a process to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities.

There is limited evidence of a formalized plan to analyze data to inform policy and program revision at the school. The evidence submitted is a two-year timeline of action items which vaguely describes how BCHS intends to make changes to better implement and support the use of school-wide rubrics to report on the achievement of 21st century skills by the students. It is BCHS's expectation that, in addition to the fall School Climate Survey, the full implementation of school-wide rubrics into the curriculum and integration of them into PowerSchool will generate data that can be used when reviewing and revising the core values, beliefs and learning expectations. The plan is not thorough in regards to timeline, specific action plan steps, and staff assignment.

There is some evidence to support that the school leaders and faculty can cite readings/research to ensure they are cognizant of 21st century learning expectations. There is also some evidence that teachers can explain how their lessons and assessments implicitly foster the development of 21st century skills and some of the student work reflects the use of these skills. There is no explicit school-wide reporting of student achievement of the school's learning expectations, therefore the evidence that the expectations are being addressed or achieved is mostly anecdotal and corollary. Examination of student performance on standardized tests, common assessments, and

student work are the main source of data that inform judgments about learning priorities and determining achievement gaps to recommend changes.

Some changes that were made as a result of discussion of the school's core values include: ongoing implementation of the Common Core State Standards into some of the curriculum, use of quarterly common assessments designed to target literacy instruction, creation of school-wide rubrics for the assessment of 21st century learning expectations, and the continued development data teams. The data teams are tasked with creating common units in their respective subject areas and grade levels that better reflect the CCSS and the new learning expectations.

There is some evidence that the faculty considered district and community priorities and needs into its discussion of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. In the self-study, the committee members cite initiatives that prove they are meeting learning expectations as a response to the needs of the community such as: the Maroon and White Scholarship fund, AVID program, the RAM Locker, and providing facilities for students whose needs are not being met at home.

The creation of a researched-based formalized plan, aligned with district initiatives to analyze data to inform decisions will help BCHS to review and revise its core values, beliefs and learning expectations to fully implement its vision and goals and alignment of the core values and 21stcentury learning expectations. (District Leadership Team, School Leadership Team, Steering Committee, Endicott Survey, Self-Study)

Commendations:

1. The core values, beliefs and learning expectations that reflect the priorities of the community

2. The pervasive acceptance and commitment to the ideals of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations by students, staff and parents

3. The variety of opportunities to reinforce and re-teach the core values, beliefs and learning expectations through various school initiatives

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a formal plan to ensure the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations drive curriculum, instruction and assessment in every classroom

2. Develop and implement a formal plan for regular review of BCHS's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities

3. Develop a deliberate system to ensure the learning expectations are implemented with fidelity in all classrooms settings

4. Develop a process whereby BCHS can focus on their own respective core values, beliefs about learning and 21st century learning skills and not be impeded by the shared curriculum and decisions that are made concerning BEHS

2 Curriculum

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

1. The curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

2. The curriculum is written in a common format that includes:

    -   units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills
    -   the school's 21st century learning expectations
    -   instructional strategies
    -   assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics.

3. The curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through:
    -   inquiry and problemsolving
    -   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.

<u>Curriculum</u>

Conclusions

BCHS shares all pieces of curriculum with their sister school, Bristol Eastern High

School. This has posed significant challenges for BCHS. For example, if BCHS wants to

introduce a course for their students, this course would need to be approved by the

curriculum planning council and undergo further revisions to meet the needs of both

schools. As a result, there is confusion regarding the core values and learning

expectations inherent in the curriculum, and how each school promotes those

individual concerns in a shared document. The school has identified 21st century

learning expectations, however as reported by teachers, curriculum writers, and central

office, these were not used to design curriculum. Although teachers can verbally list

21st century learning expectations that are taught in their specific courses and

coursework, there is no evidence that each department is specifically held responsible

for learning expectations in the curriculum. Adopted in 2011-2012, the school has listed

21st century skills: 1) global awareness and civic responsibility, 2) critical thinking and

problem solving, 3) communication, 4) collaboration, 5) media and information literacy,

and 6) life and career skills. These expectations are prominent in the school's program

of studies, in the hallways, on the website and referenced in several meetings and

conversations. The school has written curriculum documents in a variety of places

(intranet links, O drive, Google Docs) that have been updated over the last few years.

The written curriculum documents, found on the Curriculum Depot district intranet do

not have any reference to any of these 21st century learning expectations. Rubrics were developed for these six expectations that have been used to assess a limited amount of student work.

As a result of this implicit, rather than explicit alignment, the school does not consistently ensure that all students practice and achieve these six learning expectations (Self-study, Endicott Survey, Student interviews, teacher interviews).

The school's curriculum and course of studies is currently designed to ensure students achieve learning goals; however there is some evidence to indicate that the school is having an increasingly difficult time in making sure the curriculum is appropriately reaching all students.

The school requires 25.5 credits to graduate (a decrease from previous years), matching the current state requirements in core courses for English (4), math (3), social studies (3) and science (2). The graduation requirement changed as a result of the loss of full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers which resulted in limited options for students. In addition, students are being placed in study halls due to the decrease of options. In essence, the graduation requirements were lowered due to staffing decreases. The school has a wide offering of AP courses, "accelerated" level courses, academic/college level courses, "level 3" courses in some departments (English/math/ELL), and several levels of special education subject courses. There are also multiple electives available beyond the core courses, in business, arts, music, engineering and technology, PE/health, and family & consumer science, including access to courses at Bristol Technical Education Center. However, district and school staff indicates that elective offerings, especially in

technology and arts, have decreased in the last several years. Staff has been decreased and there is concern about adequate opportunities for all students. Board of education members are also aware of the need to expand course offerings for more vocationally minded students. Certain elective courses are comprised of nearly half special education students.

As a result, not all students' needs and future goals are met by these course offerings and curriculum.(program of studies, self-study documents, teachers,parents, board of education, students, district website/Intranet, class observations)

Curriculum documents are written in varying formats that contain some common elements but lack 21st century learning expectations. Most core subjects have subject appropriate instructional strategies, and assessment practices and do not always include school and course-specific rubrics.

The curriculum is not consistently written in a common format across all subjects and levels. Curriculum documents found on the official district Curriculum Depot intranet link vary depending on the year they were adopted. These documents are the official curriculum guides adopted through the collaborative process between central office subject supervisors and representatives from each of the two high schools, then reviewed by the board of education. More recent documents created in 2013 and later have the following included in the format: the overall department philosophy and goals followed by relevant identified standards from Common Core, CSDE standards, College Career Readiness Standards, or state standards such as social studies

Frameworks in the draft form. Not all the previous curricular documents include all of these important elements, and are in various formats and lengths.

In the most up-to-date curricular format, each unit of study then identifies essential questions, big ideas, unwrapped standards, identified key concepts, content, and skills. These are used to delineate appropriate learning activities in the units, with lists of instructional strategies. However these strategies are at a variety of levels of development depending on the course and subject from very highly developed and described, which identify key skills and strategies, while others are a list of only traditional strategies (i.e., notes, organizer, essay, and discussion). Courses and subjects have developed standardized analytic rubrics (i.e., art, English) but are not clearly accessible in the curriculum guides. Some also identify opportunities for interdisciplinary instruction, but they do not appear to be developed.

English, social studies and world language have curriculum documents that have been updated as recently as 2013 and 2014. However, science documents for core classes (i.e., physical science, biology, chemistry) have not been updated since 2005 or 2006, and do not include complete appropriate instructional strategies. In general, it appears as if the officially adopted curriculum documents found on the intranet Curriculum Depot link are supplemented by implementation (pacing guides) or detailed unit planning guides, as well as common formative assessments. These materials are sometimes located in a link on the intranet (i.e., common planning guides, power standards), or in department folders on the Bristol Central High "O" drive, or in a Google Doc drive shared between the two high schools, such as the math department.

When all of the school's curriculum is written in a consistent format that defines essential questions, concepts, content, and skills, the school's 21stcentury learning expectations, instructional strategies, and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics then the curriculum will be aligned and focused for student learning. **(**curriculum documents, teachers, department chairs, administrators, Curriculum Standard Subcommittee members)

The written curriculum in most subjects emphasizes clear depth of understanding and application of knowledge through higher order thinking, problem solving, essential questions and big ideas, authentic learning experiences, depth of knowledge activities, and appropriate use of technology. There are limited explicit cross-disciplinary connections in the curriculum.

The written curriculum documents (curriculum, implementation guides, pacing, standards, and assessments) are found in various places: intranet Curriculum Depot links, "O" drive, Google drives, and have been updated at different times. The most recently updated official documents, especially in language arts, social studies, and math, have essential questions clearly stated and big ideas that will lead students to higher order thinking skills and have depth of knowledge embedded in the curriculum. Just looking at the list of skills required in some of the key core courses show this emphasis: "analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and develop questions." Problem solving is not limited to mathematics or science courses, but curricula offers opportunities for students to solve issues and problems, including authentic experiences. The offering of Advanced Placement courses, with some recently revised College Board standards, also

emphasizes higher order thinking over rote memory. Real-world learning experiences are evident in the curricula of history classes, as well as in other core and elective subjects. There are elective courses, such as Biotechnical Engineering, and Project Lead the Way courses that require hands-on authentic projects as well. Most parents and students report students are challenged with a variety of projects and learning activities embedded in the curriculum.

There are limited explicit cross-disciplinary connections in the curriculum, except in common skills and requirements. There is not a consistent requirement to include these connections in curricular documents (except to list Common Core Language Arts Standards as appropriate). English and social studies curriculum shows some evidence of collaboration in topics such as research papers and presentations. Students in elective courses are sometimes given the opportunity to make interdisciplinary connections, such as in art classes illustrating creative writing samples, as evidenced by the self-study and teacher interviews.

As a result of the attention to depth of knowledge and higher order thinking with authentic inquiry in the most recent written curriculum, students should have the opportunity for important learning experiences that will serve them well in their future. (self-study, Endicott teacher survey, intranet Curriculum Depot, program of studies, teachersinterviews, Curriculum Standard Subcommittee members, parents,students)

There is some evidence that the taught curriculum is in alignment with the written curriculum, but there is inconsistent monitoring to ensure that this is always the case.

Most teachers post lesson objectives and essential questions, as required by district mandate, and classroom observations indicate that the topics and skills addressed appeared to align with current curriculum. Implementation guides exist for some courses that are current in the district intranet Curriculum Depot link, and in other intranet links, some of which are not aligned with current documents. Some other subjects (math, ELA) have implementation guides currently being developed on Google docs to be shared across the schools, and other similar guides or course syllabi exist in some folders on the school shared "O" drive. Teachers report that the common meetings (data teams) are a way to peer monitor curriculum alignment, and 89 percent report curriculum alignment in the survey. Central office staff report a great deal of trust in teachers' curricular fidelity. There is no formal process to monitor taught curriculum by central office curriculum supervisors or by building administrators. Formal classroom observations by school administrators include oversight of lessons. School department leaders also take a role in some classroom walk-throughs and give informal feedback. Results from common formative assessments are produced, discussed, and shared with administrators in central office and in the school. There is inconsistent use of the school's 21st century learning expectations and rubrics in analyzing student work, as reported, although subjects such as English and mathematics consistently use Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced Type rubrics in this work, and share results. Some subject supervisors report meeting with key department staff, especially in the curricular revision process with counterparts from Bristol Eastern, and there is strong evidence that most staff are aware

of the curricular revisions and documents available for their subjects. Teachers' use of common assessments and pacing guides provide evidence of general alignment between classroom practice and the curricular goals and objectives. In shared courses, teachers report informal peer consultation helps to ensure this alignment as well. In several cases, they do report that the common aligned pacing guides limit curricular flexibility. Students and parents interviewed report that courses and instruction met their expectations of topics, skills, and difficulty they expected from course descriptions in the program of studies.

There is defined curriculum coordination among the academic areas within Bristol Central and its partner high school, Bristol Eastern High School through a formal curriculum revision and adoption process, although there is inconsistent articulation across discipline areas. There is limited vertical articulation in some academic departments, especially with sending schools in the district.

Although there is no formal written document available on the district Intranet, O drive, or website describing the formal curriculum revision cycle and process, it is clear from the available documentation, interviews with board of education, central office staff, and teachers and staff, that a standard process is followed. District curriculum coordinators under the Bristol office of teaching and learning meet with department heads and staff representatives from both high schools to write and revise curriculum. The process includes subject teachers, but rarely includes special education teachers or others such as English language learner teachers. This curriculum guide is then presented and formally adopted by the board of education. The Connecticut Core

Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics were a recent impetus to revise and rewrite much of the core academic subject curriculum. For example, all math courses, most English courses, and Grade 9 World History and Civics courses have been updated as of 2013. Tenth grade US History was updated in2014, but it has a separate implementation guide. Science has not been updated. There is a similar curriculum format to most documents produced after 2013, although not all follow the same format as evidenced by a review of documents on the Curriculum Depot on the intranet. Science documents have not been updated to include instructional strategies in some cases, although staff reports waiting for new state standards to be adopted. There are no references to the schools' 21st century learning expectations or rubrics, since Bristol Central has adopted different sets of learning expectations than Bristol Eastern, both adopted with little guidance from the office of teaching and learning. Curriculum guides exist for the lower grades in the district, guided by the central office staff, and there is some evidence of collaborative teacher work to vertically align across the levels. Evidence from teacher meetings, and documents show that teachers meet regularly in subject/course-specific data teams to coordinate common assessments and instructional units. Teachers have opportunity to revise instructional strategies in the curricula based on these assessments. Because of the requirement to keep identical curricula between the two high schools, few of these meetings result in changes to district curricula. In some departments, subject department meetings are used to vertically align across grade levels, including curricular alignment to subject-specific rubrics, such as SBAC writing rubrics or math claims.

There is little formal curriculum articulation across subject departments (other than the recent integration of cross curricular Common Core Language Arts Standards). Freshman teachers at Bristol Central have the opportunity to discuss interdisciplinary instructional opportunities, but show limited implementation.

Continued collaboration among department members and all departments, and increased district vertical articulation will allow for the further development of more effective curriculum coordination.(program of studies, self-study, Endicott survey, board of education, central office personnel, department heads, department meeting minutes, Curriculum Standard Subcommittee members, teachers, curriculum documents, intranet, "O" drive, program of studies, classroom observations, student work)

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are not sufficient in most areas to adequately implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. There are a number of areas in need, including in technology.

All core curricular areas report classrooms of adequate size and an ample supply of desks and chairs. There are some shared classrooms, including between science labs and other subjects, which impacts ability of science teachers' to prep lab activities. There is a need for additional seating, SMART boards, and computers in those areas. The current robotics classroom was previously a garage and is not currently appropriate for its instructional use, due to lack of sufficient ventilation, heat and soundproofing. The full use of the video production lab is hampered by lack of soundproofing.

Access to technology has improved in world languages and social studies as each department has access to 30 Chromebooks. However, all departments report that there is an inadequate amount of technology support personnel to "troubleshoot or repair broken equipment" such as SMART boards, copiers, or computers. There is no technology for early childhood education program. There is inadequate access to computer technology in math in order to provide adequate opportunities to students to meet the curriculum and instructional needs.

There has been a decrease over last three years in expenditure for the school's overall budget for instructional materials from $185,273 (2011-12) to $125,986 (2013-14). Network and wireless access is inconsistent in the building as reported by the school community and directly observed by the committee. Software programs in the career and technical education programs are out of date and it is reported that the district process for approval and acquisition of new software applications is very difficult. The science department, among others, reports a decrease in funding (~$6000 for the department or $6/science student) in instructional supplies. There are also insufficient funds and a lack of resources for foods program. ($13.45 per student for 45 class sessions). Students do not cook in some sections of curriculum due to lack of funds for groceries. There are insufficient funds to replace aging equipment in foods laboratory and video classes.

The library media specialist makes himself available to meet with teachers to support their teaching initiatives, but does not meet regularly with teams. The library media specialist provides instructional support in particular to freshmen in research and

citation application as well as reviews evaluation of sources. Some core curriculum areas have a "research experience" built into the curriculum that is supported by library media. The computers in the library and additional workrooms are available for student use.

Although the core courses are appropriately staffed there is difficulty in providing the large array of electives such as art, technology education and business due to reported staffing reductions. The engineering and technology education department has sufficient space for delivery of curriculum based on current level of staffing, but this is an area where reduction in staff has resulted in the reduction of the availability of elective academic level courses. This can also be seen in family and consumer science, art and business and finance classes. Teachers and department heads report not enough staff to run all the classes in the program of studies. Additionally, departments have been told that if they wish to add new courses others would have to be cut.

There are wide ranges of opportunities for co-curricular experiences including athletics, clubs, drama, and literary magazine. Students and teachers report that if there is interest, students and teachers find a way to make it happen. Stipends are provided to class advisors and a number of other clubs and coaches. Students and parents note that teachers are generous with time and resources for these types of extra-curricular activities. An example of this is the multi-cultural club that was created by students and teachers as a way to celebrate and bring together the diverse communities in the school. Students are empowered to develop creative ways to improve the school with the creation of the "Think Tank" and the "Rambassador" program, which was developed to

provide opportunities for upperclassmen to be leaders and mentors to incoming

freshmen, as a way to improve student transition from middle school to high school.

As a result of this inconsistent funding and support for instructional materials, some

curricula are not always fully implemented. This has led to frustration on the part of

teachers, many of whom use their personal funds, with looming cuts and unpredictable

availability of funds.(budget documents, self-study, teacher and department surveys,

classroom observations, facility tour, teacher interviews, department heads, students,

Curriculum Standard Subcommittee membersand parents).

The district provides the school's professional staff with adequate time and sufficient

amount of personnel and resources for ongoing and collaborative development,

evaluation and revision of the curriculum. The process is based on current research and

standards and assessment results, although this process is not always reactive to all

student and teacher needs.

Staff reports that the curriculum revision process includes limited amount of release

time, as well as some summer work, during which Bristol Central High staff meet with

central office and counterparts at Bristol Eastern (usually two staff from each school) to

write and revise course curriculum. There is ample documentation provided in the self-

studyto indicate that this process is focused using research (i.e., Marzano's instructional

strategies), educational best practice (i.e., Depth of Knowledge rubrics), and state

standards in the content subject area. There is no evidence that shows that either of the

two schools' 21st century learning expectations are currently used as part of this process.

There are limited opportunities for staff to advance professional learning by attending

conferences during the school day, since substitute pay and release time is limited. However, most teachers surveyed and interviewed feel that the curricular revision process is generally inclusive and provides opportunities to be involved. Special education and English language learner teachers are not always explicitly included in the process, according to those staff members. The subject data teams, in which teachers collaborate on common formative assessments and discuss results, provide opportunity for teachers to adjust and revise their instruction. However, because curriculum, pacing, and units are required to be aligned with Bristol Eastern and approved through the formal board of education, teachers do not always have the opportunity to adjust curriculum based on the needs unique to BCHS.

As a result of the curricular review process, as overseen by the Bristol office of teaching and learning, teachers are satisfied with the resources devoted to the process, but the limited time and defined structure may not be responsive enough to allow adjustment for student needs. In addition, because of flat funding and budget cuts, it has been difficult to implement the written curriculum.

(program of studies, self-study, Endicott survey, board of education, central office personnel, department heads, Curriculum Standard Subcommittee members, teachers, curriculum documents, Intranet, "O" drive, program of studies, classroom observations, student work)

Commendations:

1. The hard work and dedication of teachers to implement the curricula and co-curricular activities with the available provided supplies, funds, resources, materials, and technology

2. The school's comprehensive and varied course of studies and curricula, including courses at different levels, implemented with care by dedicated educators, purposefully designed to give current students a comprehensive education

3. The most current curriculum model that integrates current standards, provides substantive lists of instructional strategies and assessments and the written curriculum that uses essential questions and big ideas and emphasizes higher order thinking

4. The clear curricular coordination at the course level with their partner high school and across staff, and a defined process for curriculum revision, review and adoption

5. The regular collaboration of staff, especially in data teams and in the use of common assessments that shows the staff is clearly committed to implementing the district curriculum

Recommendations:

1. Ensure that all curricular areas receive sufficient financial resources, including technology, equipment materials and staffing needed to implement the curriculum and meet the learning needs of all students

2. Implement a plan to identify and integrate the school's adopted 21st century learning expectations explicitly in curriculum documents to ensure all students have the opportunity to learn these skills, and include explicit cross-disciplinary learning experiences in the written curriculum

3. Clearly identify the curricular review timeline and expectations and formalize plans to increase curricular alignment across grade levels, subjects and schools, including sending schools.

4. Update all curriculum documents, particularly science, to the curriculum format model approved in 2013-14

5. Implement a plan for more formal monitoring of curriculum implementation to ensure the written curriculum is the taught curriculum

3 | Instruction

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

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

2. Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by:

    - personalizing instruction
    - engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning
    - engaging students as active and self-directed learners
    - emphasizing inquiry, problemsolving, 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.

Instruction

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices are not continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.Although teachers indicate that there is ongoing informal dialogue regarding instructional strategies in the weekly data team meetings, they report needing time to assess the effectiveness of their instruction, and to discuss whether or not instruction is consistent with the school's core values and beliefs. A set of six student performance rubrics for each of the six "Expectations for Student Learning" have been written and adopted, but teachers and administrators indicate that these rubrics have not been implemented regularly or consistently into daily instruction and assessment. The self-study reports that, due to the undertaking of several other major initiatives, these rubrics have not been incorporated into teachers' lesson plans. Student interviews reveal that many students, while familiar with BCHS's core values and beliefs and the six expectations for student learning, are generally not aware of how these competencies are assessed on a daily basis. As a result, only some teachers utilize a formal comprehensive evaluation process to ensure that instructional practices are consistent with 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, students, administrators, student work**)**

Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students as active and self-directed learners; applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; emphasizing

inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking; engaging students in self-assessment and reflection; and integrating technology; however there is inconsistent evidence of cross-disciplinary learning. Classroom observations, students, and teachers indicate that students at BCHS are often engaged in authentic, inquiry-based lessons which allow for students to collaborate and investigate. Ninety-four percent of teachers indicate that they provide personalized instruction for their students, and more than half of students feel that teachers personalize their instruction by allowing them to choose their own topics for some assignments, contribute to the direction of assignments and recommending specific topics of research based on teacher's connection and relationship with the students. Student and parent interviews further indicate that the majority of students are appropriately challenged in their classrooms, and are often asked to respond to higher-order thinking prompts. Classroom observations provide evidence that students are frequently self-assessing and reflecting on instruction. Teachers indicate that they use the results of student self-assessment and reflection to inform their instruction. Many teachers allow students to retake assessments, often only after steps have been taken by those students to relearn the appropriate content. Most teachers at BCHS regularly employ SMART Board and other relevant technologies to enhance instruction. Incorporating cross-disciplinary learning to the instructional practices of personalizing instruction; engaging students as active and self-directed learners; applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking; engaging students in self-assessment and reflection; and integrating technology into lessons, will thoroughly

support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, classroom observations, student work, teacher interviews, students, parents)

Many teachers at BCHS adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessments during instructional time, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Some of those teachers also strategically differentiate.Teachers report working with colleagues teaching common courses to create common formative assessments (CFA's) during weekly data team meetings. Teachers provided student work examples of some of these assessments, as well as examples of their formative assessments. Eighty-four percent of students and 90 percent of teachers report collaborative work within their classes. In interviews, students expressed a high number of group/partner activities that they feel leads them to feeling more prepared for real-world activities. Student work samples often illustrated this collaborative work. Teachers regularly offer individual and small group help before and after school for students. All students can access support from the many derivations of assistance available. Almost all students report in interviews and the majority of students on the Endicott survey indicate that they feel supported both in and out of the classroom. This was evident in classroom observations as well. The Endicott survey states that 91 percent of teachers feel they differentiate instruction within their classrooms; however in interviews many teachers felt that they are not adequately differentiating within their classrooms, as they do not have enough professional development in this area. A few teachers provided work samples that

show very good differentiation within their classrooms, but many expressed serious challenges with this aspect. While teachers attempt to meet the needs of all students in their classes, many indicate they need more professional development in order to make sure that they are reaching all students. As a result of the efforts by teachers during their lessons to adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessments, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies, most students at BCHS feel academically supported and challenged. (self-study, Endicott survey, student work, teacher interviews, classroom observations, students)

Teachers at BCHS individually and collaboratively improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, examining student work, and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Bi-monthly data teams are the structure through which teachers are able to develop formative and summative assessments and to analyze the data these assessments provide. Teachers indicate on the Endicott survey that 95 percent of them use achievement data to drive their instruction, both current and future. Within these data teams, which are typically members of the same department or teachers of the same subject, teachers have multiple opportunities to analyze data, and to discuss individual student achievements, but according to the self-study there is no time for teachers to share instructional best practices interdepartmentally. Teachers do report that though there is a system in place (teacher-to-teacher initiative) for teachers to observe other teachers; most do not take advantage of it, due to the formality

of the system. Teachers state they are comfortable going in to departmental colleagues'

classrooms, but they would not be comfortable going outside of their department, nor

are they comfortable giving feedback. Teachers indicated that the feedback they receive

from supervisors is limited due to time constraints on both supervisors and teachers.

Time, as well, is a constraint on the teachers' ability to examine current instructional

research. In interviews with teachers, they stated that they need more time to

investigate professional development that supports content-based instruction. Teachers

are committed to creating assessments and using data to improve instruction and

student learning. With more professional development time and opportunities,

teachers will be able to gain instructional insight.As a result of teachers using student

achievement data, examining student work, and engaging in professional discourse,

teachers are able to inform and improve their instruction.(self-study, Endicott survey,

teacher interviews, students, student work)

Teachers at BCHS maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific

instructional practices. Survey results show that 85 percent of students believe that

their teachers are knowledgeable about their content area. 94 percent of staff and 88

percent of parents believe that teachers maintain expertise in their content area.

Limited funds are provided by the district each year for professional development

opportunities, so most teachers that desire content-specific professional development

do so on an individual basis. Many teachers belong to professional organizations,

subscribe to content-based professional journals, and attend content-specific

conferences. The administration is generally supportive of teacher requests to attend

professional development, seminars, and conferences, though the cost implications are sometimes a deterrent. As a result of these professional development practices, teachers at BCHS maintain expertise in their content areas and content-specific instructional practices. (self-study, teacher interviews, central office administrators)

Commendations:

1. The preponderance of teachers that frequently personalize instruction, engage students as active and self-directed learners, and emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking

2. The active use of student self-assessment and reflection to inform instruction

3. The willingness and commitment of the staff to utilize technology in order to enhance instruction

4. The use of data teams to develop common formative assessments and analyze data

5. The effective use of data team time by many teachers to discuss student performance in order to inform instruction

6. The continual informal collaboration among teachers in order to improve instructional practices

7. The collaborative work opportunities for students in all content area lessons

8. The teachers at BCHS who are highly motivated to maintain a high level of expertise in their content areas

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a plan to provide formal opportunities for teachers to regularly examine their instructional practices in order to ensure consistency with BCHS's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

2. Develop and implement a plan to ensure increased opportunities for cross-disciplinary lessons and activities

3. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers focusing on differentiating instruction

4. Develop a plan to ensure sufficient financial and logistical support for content-based professional development

4 Assessment of and for Student Learning

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

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

2. The school's professional staff communicates:

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

3. Professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.

4. Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed.

5. Prior to summative assessments, teachers provide students with the corresponding rubrics.

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

7. Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments.

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

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

10. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following:

- student work
- common course and common grade-level assessments
- individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
- standardized assessments
- data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
- survey data from current students and alumni.

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

<center>**Assessment**</center>

Conclusions

Bristol Central High School has yet to employ a formal process based on the school-wide rubrics to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Although BCHS has developed school-wide analytic rubrics, they are not being used with any degree of consistency. According to the Endicott survey, only 37.9 percent of faculty currently uses the school-wide analytic rubrics when assessing student work.The core values are prevalent in hallways, posted inclassrooms, the website, and the community at large can identify, recognize, and recite these values and beliefs of BCHS. However, the 21st century learning expectations have not been implemented to the same degree as the core values. When the school implements a formal process , based on school-wide rubrics, to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations then the school will generate the data to judge their effectiveness in meeting the school's learning expectations.(Endicott survey, self-study, principal, teacher interviews) Bristol Central High School's professional staff has limited ability to communicate individual student progress in meeting school-wide academic expectations to students and their families and to the school community.Even though 77.5 percent of the parents are in agreement that BCHS provides them with a formal academic progress report, there are currently no plans in place to establish a formal process to report student progress on achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. BCHS mails

<center>51</center>

formal progress reports and report cards eight times throughout the year. However, due to the reported technical issues involving PowerSchool and district coordination issues, the ability to specifically report or assess student success using the school-wide analytical rubrics is not currently in practice.

Bristol Central High School has had discussions amongst the faculty and the administration about the application of the 21st century rubrics, and currently there are no processes in place to monitor and report student progress to the school board about many other testing parameters and specific reports do not contain information pertaining to the specific rubrics and student progress. When the faculty, administration, and the technology department come to a solution to the issues they face they can begin the process of reporting individual student and school-wide progress toward meeting the learning expectations and improve student learning. (self-study, teacher interviews, principal).

Bristol Central High School professional staff consistently and in a formal, unified process collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.This is quite evident within BCHS as the faculty meets on a regular basis in department level as well as grade level data teams to collect and review student scores on formative assessments (as well as summative assessments) and analyze instruction practices to make modifications as needed to assist the students in their learning. Additionally, 85.1 percent of the professional staff is in agreement that this process is in place according to the results from the Endicott survey. In several instances the faculty referred to the data team meetings as not just a chance to look at

the data but as an opportunity to implement Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) and to modify instruction to improve student performance. Additionally, there is a building data team (BDT) made up of department coordinators and administrators that meets monthly to review the work done by the data teams as well as to review state and national testing data as applicable.

Currently, there is not a process in place for the faculty to review student work as it pertains to the rubrics since these have not been fully implemented within the curriculum. However, with the full implementation of common formative assessments (CFAs), which are given at least four times throughout the year, this data is reviewed and changes are made to current instructional practice as well as modifications to future practices. (Endicott survey, self-study, teacher interviews).

Prior to each unit of study, most teachers communicate to students the specific learning goals to be assessed in the unit and some teachers additionally indicate the 21st century learning expectations.Currently, approximately 70 percent of the student body and 76.5 percent of the parents are in agreement that the faculty clearly communicates the goals of the units at the beginning of the unit. The faculty indicates that only 63 percent of them disseminate the learning and/or 21st century goals that are going to be assessed in the unit. To that extent there is indication based on the statistics that the faculty may not be communicating the 21st century learning skills to the same level that they are communicating the general curriculum goals. It is possible that the percentage of non-faculty who state that they are getting this information are not understanding the difference between general curriculum goals and the school's 21st century learning

expectations. According to some of the faculty they are still in the process of reviewing their curriculum, which will allow them the time to embed the 21st century skills so that they can then be given, assessed, and then communicated.

There is evidence that the 21st century learning skills are posted in the building and inclassrooms. These 21st century expectations, and the associated rubrics, can also be seen on the school's website. Some of the teachers do explicitly discuss and use these in their classes.

When the school develops more clarity as to how they are going to measure and report student progress on the 21st century standard, they should be able to use these to drive changes in curriculum and instruction. (classroom visits, students, curriculum documents, self-study, Endicott survey)

Prior to summative assessment, some teachers are providing students with corresponding rubrics. Eighty-two percent of the students agree that they know what they have to do to meet the requirements set forth by their teachers. At the same time, the students also responded that 72.4 percent receive rubrics for summative assessments. This indicates that the faculty is communicating expectations to the students, however, not all summative assessments are rubric-based or rubrics are not provided. Additionally, there is some data that indicates that the students have difficulty with understanding how the rubrics work and/or how grades are calculated using them. The Endicott survey reveals that only 74 percent of the students understand the rubrics that the teachers use. This same idea is also reflected in the parents' response with only 64 percent of them understanding the rubrics. Additionally, there is some

discrepancy with this information. When students have a clearer understanding about the differences among assignment-level, course-level, and school-wide analytical rubrics, they will have a deeper awareness of teachers' expectations.(Endicott, self-study, student work, students).

In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments.According to the Endicott survey, an overwhelming majority (94 percent) of the faculty utilize multiple forms of assessment including formative and summative. At this time the faculty clearly uses CFAs and other common assessments. Additionally, according to the self-study, 81 percent of students and 80 percent of parents agree that the faculty uses a diversity of assessment tools.

There is evidence that throughout the year with each unit, teachers effectively employ a wide variety of assessments. The teachers are employing these assessments on a daily basis. There was evidence of teachers working with the students to allow the students to review and rework material to better demonstrate their understanding of material. This was especially evident within the world languages department. There is limited evidence as to the level of technology implementation for assessment that is currently being used at BCHS. When teachers use a variety of assessment strategies, their instruction can be adjusted based on the feedback and review of date. (Faculty interview, self-study, student work).

Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessment. It is evident

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from the Endicott survey that 87.4 percent of the faculty agrees that they are currently

collaborating regarding student work. For the faculty that is not collaborating on

student work, this can be attributed to not having others to collaborate with as they are

the only teachers of the course.   According to faculty interviews, there is currently more

of a push to work collaboratively on reading and writing across the disciplines.

Additionally, according to the self-study, the freshman team teachers are able to

collaborate across curricular areas on the creation, analysis, and revision of summative,

formative, and common assessments. The provision of regular, formal opportunities for

teachers to collaborate in the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and

summative assessments will improve consistency in common courses and will help

students achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, Endicott

survey, teacher interviews)

Teachers generally provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students

revise and improve their work**.** A review of student work revealed that there is a wide

range of levels of feedback by teachers. According to the Endicott survey, a fairly equal

percentage of students think that their teachers grade in a fair, and timely fashion with

a range of 69-74 percent of the students in agreement. Based on student feedback, 69

percent agree it is timely. Feedback is given on the formative assessments, which helps

students' understanding and performance prior to the summative test.

(Endicott survey, teacher interviews, self-study, parents, student and parent handbook)

Teachers at Bristol Central High School regularly use a variety of formative assessments

that allow for monitoring of student learning and for making appropriate adjustments

in instruction. Teachers at BCHS give daily assessments in the form of entrance and exit slips, SMART Board activities, practice/warm-up problems, and other similar measures of student mastery of the curriculum. Teachers give weekly quizzes, tests, and short writing prompts; long-term assignments such as essays, media projects, and research papers are dictated by departments based on curricula. BCHS has created some new curricula that are based on Common Core State Standards literacy skills. Most of the monitoring of student learning and making adjustments is done by the classroom teacher based on the teacher's own assessments. Common formative assessments are developed, and they are scheduled about four times throughout the school year. Data from the results of these CFAs are discussed departmentally and is used to drive instruction. As a result of the regular use of CFAs, teachers are able to inform and adapt their instruction for the purposeof improving student learning. (curriculum documents, classroom visits, Assessment Standard Subcommittee members)

The professional staff of Bristol Central High School consistently examines a range of evidence of student learning both individually and collaboratively for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice.The professional staff meets on a regular basis and reviews the CFAs. However, teachers indicated that the majority of the time in those meetings focuses on revising at the CFAs. Instruction is impacted when discrepancies exist in student outcomes. Looking at the information gathered from both the student and parent responses of the Endicott survey, the faculty does utilize multiple resources to review students' progress. Additionally, the faculty did indicate through interviews that the data teams meet, gather good data, and reflect on

it. However, data driving curricular changes have not been demonstrated through this process because of the challenge of making adjustments with a shared curriculum with another school. Currently, a formal process is not in place that allows for the faculty to report out student success or progress on the 21st century skills. Additionally, it is also important to note that due to this it is not possible for the data to be used directly to drive curriculum changes at this time. (teacher interviews, classroom observations, Endicott survey)

Bristol Central High School's grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised, but they do not align with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. BCHS' grading and reporting practices are reviewed annually in conjunction with Bristol East High School. The Endicott survey reveals that 71.3 percent of the staff of BCHS believes that the grading and reporting practices are reviewed and revised annually. Accordingly, 83.3 percent of the parents believe that teachers' grading practices are aligned with the school's beliefs about learning. The school-wide rubrics are aligned with BCHS' beliefs about learning as evidenced by hard copies of the rubrics; and the grading practices are in alignment among the faculty as a whole. Additionally, since only 71 percent of the faculty agrees with how the grading practices are reviewed and revised this would indicate time is needed to allow collaboration among the faculty to look at the current policies and practices.A purposeful process to align grades across courses and disciplines will result in a consistency of grade reporting and will ensure alignment between reported grades, and with the school's core values and beliefs about student learning.

Commendations:

1. The BCHS faculty's utilization of a wide array of assessments, both formative and summative

2. The common formative assessments that are implemented and used on a regular basis

3. The faculty's commitment to meet on a regular and formal basis to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student data

4. The faculty's work to modify instruction based on the outcomes of the data-team meetings to better meet students' needs

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a process to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations using school-wide analytic rubrics

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

3. Develop a plan to communicate the applicable 21st century learning expectations to students prior to each unit of study

4. Develop a plan to provide timely corrective feedback to all students to revise and improve their work

SUPPORT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

5 School Culture and Leadership

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

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

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

3. There is a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

4. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff:

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

5. School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning.

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

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

8. The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.

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

10. Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.

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

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

School Culture and Leadership

Conclusions

The BCHS 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. This is evidenced by the number of student-centered programs and student-led extra-curricular activities such as RAM STRONG, The Giving Society, The Future Business Leader Academy, the BCHS Think Tank, and the Service Learning Experience. These avenues provide multiple opportunities for students to bring their concerns to these forums for discussion, and to make decisions that impact the entire student body. Students report that the school environment is one where adults and students engage in dialogue that is positive, respectful, and nurturing. Most students know what is expected of them by teachers and other adults within the building; students report that they are supportive of each other and describe peer-to-peer relationships that are strong. They state that there is always an adult or adults available to assist them as needed. Student, parent, and faculty handbooks house district and school policies and expectations of all stakeholders. Parents report that prior to 2014-2015 academic year, the parent/student handbook was delivered in the mail; this year the handbook was uploaded to the school's website. Continued emphasis on building a supportive culture and environment, have allowed for the development of multiple avenues for students to connect with at least one adult, and has resulted in a decrease in disciplinary

infractionsover the last two years. PowerSchool data, and interviews with students, and teachers, provide evidence of this decrease. The principal is the leader at BCHS and staff and students alike share the belief that they are supported by the school's leadership and describes the principal as one who "goes to bat" for the faculty and students as needed. In the Endicott survey 76 percent of students report feeling safe at school, and 98 percent of staff reports that the school's culture is safe positive and supportive. BCHS is a community of learners who pride themselves on their connectedness, to each other, and to the wider community. The culture of the building is one that is supportive respectful and conducive to learning. Staff and students are committed to ensuring that they work and learn in an environment that is safe and positive. Student leadership is encouraged and celebrated resulting in a feeling of shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.   Because the school consciously and continuously builds a safe, respectful and supportive climate student learning is supported and cultivated. (classroom visits, students, building tours, Endicott survey)

BCHS is an equitable, inclusive, learning community that fosters heterogeneity, where every student over the course of his or her high school experience is likely to enroll in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core subject course. All students at BCHS are required to enroll in Civics which is identified in the self-study as being a heterogeneously grouped course and is a graduation requirement. The program of studies provides some information on courses that are heterogeneously grouped and a highlighted course selection sheet details a number of elective courses that meet that criteria. Seventy-seven percent of students indicate on the Endicott survey that they

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have opportunities to enroll in courses with peers of varying levels and abilities, and 82

percent of staff agrees that the school requires every student to enroll in a minimum of

one heterogeneously grouped core course. In the self-study the faculty report that all

students have access to enroll in honors or AP classes. In an effort to ensure an inclusive

and tolerant climate, BCHS sponsored a school-wide presentation focused on accepting

differences and respect of others. Based on evidence provided, students have multiple

opportunities to enroll in heterogeneously grouped classes, however, there is only one

core course offering that is heterogeneously grouped that students can enroll in.

(Endicott survey, classroom visits, self-study)

BCHS 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. The school has

a school-wide advisory program that meets every two weeks. Beginning in the 9thgrade,

students are randomly paired with an advisory teacher and remain with their advisor

for the duration of the high school career. The goal of the advisory program is to ensure

that students have an opportunity to bond with a least one adult in the school

community with whom they can share goals, discuss concerns, and find support during

their high school experience. The advisory schedule for the 2014-2015 academic year is

focused on the themes of transitioning, goal setting, post-secondary planning, and

community/global citizenship centered onthe central concept of "respect". Each

advisory session has a "respect" goal that threads through the central theme. The

school's 21st century learning expectations which speak to creativity, collaboration,

commitment and being conscientious are met in this setting as evidenced by students

who report loving advisory, and being able to connect and build a relationship with at least one teacher. Seventy-six percent of students acknowledge on the Endicott survey, that BCHS has an advisory program that allows them to meet regularly with an adult who knows them well. BCHS school leadership team reports that advisory has helped to ensure that every student is well-known by at least one adult. BCHS faculty and students have worked collaboratively to develop a formal ongoing program through which each student has an adult at BCHS in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well. **(**classroom visits, advisory visits,Endicott survey)

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; and

- apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

The BCHS self-study reports that there are formal and informal processes that serve to promote professional dialogue among staff members and there is evidence to support that this dialogue is being used to improve instruction. Formal sessions include professional development which occur during the first three days of school and "sets the tone for the year". Students have early dismissal every Wednesday, with 100 minutes allotted for teachers to collaborate with each other and to engage in

professional dialogue centered on student learning outcomes. Teachers report that they use online journals, webinars and resources outside of school to "maintain currency" with best practices. The school district has built in a two-day allowance, which includes $200 for reimbursement for registration and fees, mileage, etc. for teachers to register and attend professional development offerings of their choice. However in teacher interviews, teachers report that they often cannot find substitutes to cover their classes so they are unable to take advantage of the opportunity. The large volume of professional development request forms that were submitted as evidence suggest that the BCHS faculty are vested in improving their practice to better serve the academic, behavioral and social emotional needs of their students. The principal and professional staff at BCHS engage in professional discourse that allows for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning, and 69 percent of the staff feels that the school's professional development programs allow them to acquire and use skills to improve their instruction and assessment. Minutes exist that detail the range of activities that teachers engage in during the weekly Wednesday early release days. When professional development consistently engages in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry and analysis of teaching and learning, then improved instruction and student learning will be ensured. (teacher interviews, standard committee meetings, Endicott survey)

The BCHS school leadership regularly uses research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning and instruction.BCHS has implemented Connecticut's System for Education Evaluation and Development (SEED) and is aligned with district initiatives. The administrative team is current in strategies

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that are in line with improving student learning and student instruction. All BCHS teachers are on a three-year evaluation cycle that includes three formal observations in year one, and three informal observations in subsequent years. Currently, the requirements of the Teacher Evaluation Plan combine a student outcome portion along with a teacher practice and professional activities. Teachers have received professional development training to address the new evaluation model and are given school-wide and departmental opportunities to collaborate on the development of Performance and Practice Observations (PPO's) and on the development of Student Learning Objectives (SLO's). Teachers take advantage of webinars and out-of-district training opportunities to improve student learning and teacher instruction and practice. As a team, the principal and two assistant principals are in charge of teacher evaluation and are directed to drive the teaching and learning that takes place in the building. It is clear that the principal has and knows the pulse of the building because he and the other administrators are very visible throughout the entire day. Because of the district administration's commitment to research-based evaluation and instruction, teachers are supported in the teaching and learning process. (principal, teachers, Teacher Summative Evaluation Plan, self-study)

Time organization supports research-based instruction, professional development and collaboration among teachers, and supports the learning needs of all students. The master schedule configured in A/B blocks, supports the school's core values and beliefs about student learning. The school's daily schedule follows an alternating block, each period has 84 minutes. The administrators and faculty members believe the schedule

promotes student engagement, opportunity for in-depth exploration of topics, and

project-based learning. The schedule allows for the implementation of inquiry-based

learning as well as time for personalized instruction and differentiated assignments. In

addition to the academic advantages that the schedule provides within individual

classrooms, the schedule also supports student-learning needs by providing block time

for foundations courses in math and English and other SRBI tiered interventions.

Because of the block schedule, freshman teachers are provided 42 minutes every other

day to meet in their interdisciplinary teams. The master schedule also provides ample

time for an advisory program to meet twice a month and allows for professional

collaboration during weekly Wednesday meetings when the entire school is released at

1:35p.m. Within the current schedule, however, there is no consistent time set aside for

cross-discipline and cross-district collaboration with Bristol Eastern High School. It

should be noted that both Bristol Central and Bristol Eastern have to share common

curriculum and assessments. As a result, the organization of time provides a variety of

curricular opportunities for many students and frequent opportunity for professional

collaboration among teachers within the school building to review curriculum, analyze

data, create common assessments and engage in thoughtful reflection.(self-study,

teachers, students, classroom observations)

Student load and class size are inconsistent in enabling teachers to meet the learning

needs of individual students.According to the Endicott survey, 80 percent of students

believe that class sizes are reasonable. However, only 49 percent of the teachers believe

that student load and class size enable them to meet the learning needs of their

individual students. Maximum class size varies by department with a cap of 24

students set for science and 25 students for English, world languages, social studies,

and math classes and a class average of 15.5 students. Many elective classes are totally

full to capacity, with some elective classes having been cancelled due to faculty

decreases.   As a result, more students are assigned to study halls. Teachers have

expressed some concern about personalized learning and individual attention because

large class sizes can place limits on the teachers' ability to deliver 21st century learning

experiences. (self-study, PowerSchool, teacher interviews, students, student schedules

and classroom observations)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership

that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. BCHS has a

principal and two assistant principals. The principal is a consistent visual presence in

the building and has taken an active role in supporting the school's core beliefs.

Frequent communication occurs with the principal, board of education, students, and

parents through scheduled meetings, conferences, social media, The BC Link

Newsletter and the automated phone messaging system. The administration divides

supervisory responsibilities equitably with the one assistant principal supervising

initiatives such as the advisory program and the 8th grade transition and the other

assistant principal supervising programs such as SRBI, Power School and scheduling.

The principal and his leadership team have supported and facilitated the initiation and

implementation of programs such as data teams in which teachers create assessments

and review data in regards to curriculum and instruction, and the interdisciplinary

freshman teams through which a team of content area teachers, a guidance counselor, and a special education teacher conference every other day in order to help maximize student achievement. In line with the school's vision, the Endicott survey states that 89.6 percent of students believe that the principal is clear about what he wants the school to accomplish for all of the students, and 94.3 percent of the staff believes that the principal and other school-based administrators provide instructional leadership that is consistent with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. Because of the principal's strong leadership and ongoing commitment to the BCHS community, students and teachers are provided with support that is aligned with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations**.** (principal, assistant principals, teachers) Teachers, students and parents have ample opportunity and are encouraged to be involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Bristol Central High School, under the guidance of the principal and assistant principals, is continually working to create new avenues for the school community to play active roles in the decision-making process. According to the Endicott Survey, 62.1 percent of teachers feel that teachers, students, and parents are meaningfully involved in decision-making to promote an atmosphere of responsibility and ownership. Teachers participate in monthly faculty, department and data team meetings as well as two formal yearly opportunities for parent/teacher conferences. Teachers also have the opportunities to play a vital role in decision-making by serving as members of the Governance Committee, Crisis Management Team, SRBI team. According to the Endicott survey, 52.8 percent of students believe that they have input

in important decisions made at BCHS. Students can serve as members of the Governance Committee, Student Council and the Athletic Leadership Committee. The principal's Think Tank, which was implemented in the spring of 2014, was also created to encourage students who have shown little involvement in school activities, to share their ideas and become involved in the decision-making process. This Think Tank has proven to be successful in identifying common issues among the student population and has successfully implemented change for the student body.   The Ram Strong Award, given to students who exemplify the core values at BCHS, also recognizes students who take pride and ownership of their school. The Endicott survey also suggests that 52.8 percent of parents feel that they have opportunities to be involved in important decisions made at the high school. BCHS makes every effort to engage parents through the use of the automated phone system, the principal's Twitter account, the school's webpage and use of the BC Link. Parents are encouraged to join the Governance Council, attend parent/teacher conferences and join the Booster Club. In addition to the formal opportunities provided by the school, teachers often schedule time to meet and or talk with parents about their children's performance in the classroom throughout the school year. Despite the efforts made to increase parental involvement at BCHS this area continues to be a challenge. As a result of this involvement, the sense of ownership and pride creates a positive school culture and initiatives are constantly being created to increase opportunities for the entire school community (teacher interviews, student shadowing and students, parents, assistant principal, self-study).

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.Teachers at Bristol Central High School display passion and commitment to improving the school environment and work consistently to engage students in the learning process. Teachers are actively involved and invested in the process of reviewing and revising curriculum through professional development opportunities and through the use of GoogleDocs for inter-district curricular communication. Teachers also collaborate on assessment strategies and instructional practices in department meetings and in freshman team meetings. In order to support the continued growth of BCHS, the district offers teachers funding and release time to attend professional development opportunities outside of school. One obstacle impeding on these opportunities is the availability of substitute teacher coverage within the district. Teachers have taken initiative to improve the school environment through filing grant applications, advising clubs, coaching sports, serving on committees such as the Crisis Management Team, SRBI and PBIS teams and attending the Governance Council meetings. Teachers are accessible before and after school for extra help encouraging students to be proactive in the learning process. The work that students produce in the classroom can be seen proudly displayed on the walls of classrooms and in the halls of BCHS. It is evident that teachers take great pride in Bristol Central High School and strive to model good behavior and best practice in hopes that it will translate to their students inside and outside of the classroom. Because the teachers are invested in the creation of curriculum and the learning needs of their students, their students are engaged and invested in the learning process and

are striving to meet learning expectations and core values. Teachers are constantly looking for new and innovative ways to better the school environment, through initiatives such as Ram Strong or Think Tank and through the examination of needs through data in their Data Team meetings. As a result of teacher initiative and leadership, the students of BCHS are engaged in learning intellectually, emotionally, and socially. (teacher interviews, students, facility tour, panel presentation, classroom observations)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective and constructive and their efforts will continue to support the process of achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Working as a team of educational leaders, the district and school leadership teams organize the administrative meetings in several layers to ensure adequate time for discussion and planning of district-wide initiatives. They view their role as supportive in nature in order to guide the school's 21st century learning expectations. The first level is called the Principal and Administrative Council which includes the principal, assistant principals, central office administrators and the superintendent. This time is used to plan, align, and create benchmarks to be used in both district high schools. The High School Council is made up of the administrators from both schools in order to align the Bristol district's curriculum and initiatives. The office of teaching and learning is included in the High School Council to assist the administrators with implementation of initiatives. The administrators communicate information to the individual school's staff through department coordinators and other staff members. The department

coordinators then deliver specific information to teachers and other support personnel. Therefore the well-defined roles and responsibilities of these leaders enables the school is to implement initiatives, identify and direct professional development, and create uniformity throughout the Bristol School District. The Endicott survey reports that the majority of teachers agree that the school board, superintendent, and principal collaborate to benefit the overall needs of a defined educational program**.** As a result of the school board's, superintendent's and principal's collaboration, BCHS is continually working to improve student-learning, through implementation of 21st century learning expectations (teachers, parents, building administrators).

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.The formal job description of the Bristol Central High School principal gives the principal the authority to provide instructional leadership to the staff including curriculum and professional development as well as to give the principal the authority over the building administration and the responsibility for the safety and welfare of students and staff. In addition, the Superintendent gives the principal decision-making autonomy in leading the school, with the exception of curriculum, assessment, and "due process" situations. An example that illustrates the authority awarded to the principal is the recent change in the school's Accountability Plan (a board of education plan) in which the principal has decided to narrow the school's focus to one specific literacy goal instead of multiple goals. This change was approved by the superintendent based upon the principal's educated and informed examination of the needs of Bristol Central High School. The structure and purpose of

the data teams within the building are solely the principal's creation. The Endicott survey indicates that 78.2 percent of the staff and 82.2 percent of the district's parents believe that the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school and 90 percent of the student responses agree that the principal is clear about what he wants the school to accomplish for all students. Meetings with the leadership team, staff, and student body endorse the fact that the school board and superintendent value the principal's input and vision and provide him ample authority to make decisions and lead Bristol Central High School (Superintendent interview, Central Office staff interview, board of education members interview, principal interview, school leadership meetingand self-study).

Commendations:

1. The safe and respectful atmosphere and positive school culture developed and spear-headed by the principal

2. The use of block scheduling for in-depth learning and professional collaboration and the school's commitment to collaboration through scheduled release time every Wednesday afternoon

3. The passion and commitment to improving the school environment and to work consistently to engage students in the learning process

4. The strong presence and leadership of the building administrators that sets the tone during the school day, during passing times, and at school events

5. The respect and responsibility that is afforded to students

6. The BCHS atmosphere that is inclusive and equitable

7. The school-wide formal process that provides students with regular contact with at least one adult member of the school community and remains with that adult member throughout their entire stay at BCHS

Recommendations:

1. Develop a focused clear professional development plan that is aligned with the school's focus and vision

2. Define specific goals and objectives for the advisory program and design a model for teachers to implement across the school community

3. Commit resources to enable BCHS to offer increase variety and number of elective opportunities for students which will decrease the number of students having to be assigned study hall due to lack of options

4. Create additional opportunities to improve upon the strong, positive, and collaborative culture that exists, in order to encourage more parental involvement in the decision-making processes of the school community

6 School Resources for Learning

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

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

2. The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.

3. Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.

4. School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
   • deliver a written, developmental program
   • meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling
   • engage in individual and group meetings with all students
   • deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers
   • use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

5. The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
   • provide preventative health services and direct intervention services
   • use an appropriate referral process
   • conduct ongoing student health assessments
   • use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

6. Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
   • are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum
   • provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum
   • ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school
   • are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
   • conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

7. Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:

- collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
- provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students
- perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

School Resources for Learning

Conclusions

Bristol Central has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including those identified or at-risk. These strategies support student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school has six guidance counselors, one school psychologist, and a career counselor who coordinate programs for the school population. BCHS has a full-time School Resource Officer who is a Bristol Police Officer. In addition, there is one Outreach Worker who works with students with significant disciplinary concerns. Bristol Central coordinates with the middle school for assistance in freshman transitions. This includes the guidance department and the freshman team. This coordinated team generates a watch list of students to further assist the transition from middle to high school. (Self-study, student shadowing, panel presentation, students, parents, school support staff, Endicott survey)

Presently, Bristol Central High School and staff are actively maintaining communication with all stakeholders.BCHS is actively engaging students and families about support services and vital information on a regular basis. Particular attention is given to students that are at risk. Support services have a plethora of mailings to families including guidance materials, special education, 504 invitations and goal updates. Students and families discuss the openness of the school particularly the guidance office and special service programs. Students can be referred for additional supports by the SRBI program or the PBIS program if the student is found to be in need of services

either in the school or the community. Communication home is often done by mailings, email and phone calls. Translation services are provided through arrangements with the board of education or community members that are fluent in the language.TheEndicott survey of shows that 76.2 percent of students know who to receive help from for a personal issue, and 85 percent of parents agree that the school provides information about support services. Students and teachers agree that guidance, health services and special education meet the needs of students and parents in the school community. Presently, BCHS staff members are actively seeking ways to engage parents of at-risk/in-need students and to communicate support services that are available.Access to all staff and administration promotes trust and confidence from the student body. As a result of the open door policy of the guidance department and the school as a whole, BCHS students and parents receive timely and informative information on services provided in the school and community. (student shadowing, school support staff, teacher interviews, community members, Endicott survey)

Bristol Central High School support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Bristol Central students use Naviance beginning in 9th grade to establish SMART goals and gather evidence for online portfolios. Students also take online interest surveys to inform their course selection and career planning. Teachers and guidance counselors access student accounts to create letters of recommendation and to check college application progress. Student access to these tools is facilitated by the Chromebook carts. Teachers and special services use IEP Direct to coordinate meetings, evaluate criteria, and accommodations. Many staff

members (nurse, school counselors, administrators) use PowerSchool record keeping

modules such as grades, guidance contacts, and health alerts. The school librarian uses

a number of technology platforms to connect students with their content or interests.

Support services staff uses technology effectively to deliver a variety of coordinated

services for each student. As the BCHS faculty becomes more proficient with the tools

of PowerSchool and Naviance, students will be increasingly prepared to meet the 21st

century learning expectations set by BCHS.(self-study, school website, school support

staff, panel presentation)

Bristol Central High School counseling services has an adequate numberof

certified/licensed personnel and support staff**.**Counseling staff provide a

comprehensive curriculum delivered via class meeting, classroom meetings and

advisory which include post- secondary education and career planning. Student and

parent feedback on the Endicott Survey showed, depending on grade level and amount

of personal need, that students utilized their guidance counselors. The majority of

students are comfortable going to their guidance counselors and many agree that

counselors provide career/educational transition planning. Counseling services will

refer students and parents to in- school and/or community resources based on need.

BCHS school counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed

personnel and support staff. (self-study, school support staff, students, Endicott survey)

BCHS health services provide a multitude of preventative and intensive health services

to the student body. The staff is registered and licensed and work in conjunction with

guidance and administration to ensure the health and safety of the student body at

BCHS.Health care services at BCHS have adequate personnel with one licensed nurse and one healthcare aid. They provide a multitude of preventative and intensive health services, from physicals to all relevant grade level screenings to the student body. Health services make the appropriate referrals to guidance, parents or 211 (Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services) when needed. According the Endicott survey, 76 percent are comfortable going to the nurse, 87.4 percent of staff and 74.8 percent of parents indicate there is sufficient staff. Staff (65 percent) and parents (75 percent) indicate healthcare services provide quality preventative care.(self-study, Endicott survey, teacher interviews, students, panel presentation)

Bristol Central High School library/media services are integrated into several curricular areas and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel, and support staff. The library is open before school and after school; library staff staggers their lunches to allow uninterrupted access during the school day; 85.9 percent of students are aware of the extended library hours. Patrons have access to state library resources via iCONN. The school purchases additional SIRS databases and a subscription to NoodleTools for research projects. Students, staff, and parents agree (79.5 percent, 79.3 percent, and 86.5 percent respectively) that the library media center provides a wide range of materials. Surveys indicate that the staff has a positive view of the materials and facilities. They see the library media specialist as a resource and have attended professional development workshops he presented. The library media specialist has the opportunity to become an integral part of the school curriculum and facilitates creation and implementation of cross-curricular, project-based learning.

Library/media services are integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices and support teachers' instructional activities.(classroom observations, self-study, panel presentation, facility tour, student work, teacher interviews, students, Endicott survey) Support services for identified students including special education, Section 504 and ELL have an adequate number of certified /licensed and support staff.All BCHS certified and licensed support services staff collaborate with other school staff on a regular basis to ensure inclusive opportunities for all students in need. Most staff and students demonstrate the efforts that support services provide in the ongoing success of students in inclusive settings. Special Education and ELL have utilized the assessments such as Connecticut's ELL Tier III monitoring report (April 28, 2014), ELL parent survey (2013), special education parent survey (November 2013). These were given to students, staff and parents to guide the programs for success for all students. BCHS has a host of supports to help at-risk students. There are foundation courses for students in English and mathematics. The AVID (Advancement Vis Individual Determination) is a college readiness program for all students with special focus on students traditionally underrepresented in college. The Alternate Education Program at Westwoods Academy is an option for Bristol students as a drop-out prevention intervention. Students can continue with progress toward their BCHS diploma. In addition there are summer school and make-up opportunities for students in need of credit as well as on-line courses available.

The 2012/2013 High School Accountability Report on student achievement generated a report that covers many different areas of the school. Staff also has access to a shared

drive to access a watch list of students with needs/accommodations. Teachers receive a

hard copy for any students who are in their classrooms.The consistency of the

collaboration among all staff at BCHS is evident in the success and multitude of

programs offered that provide students with needs an opportunity to succeed at school.

(students, teacher interviews, school support staff, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The interpersonal relationships with all students that foster a sense of
   community

2. The extraordinary efforts of BCHS to support at-risk students

3. The support offered to students via the ninth grade team

4. The proactive commitment to survey the community to inform programming
   decisions

5. The diversity of support services available for identified students including
   special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learner

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a process for guidance, health services, library media,
   and special education services to use relevant data, including solicited feedback
   from students and parents, in order to improve services

2. Develop appropriate referral services are in place in guidance and health services to
   meet the mental health and social support needs of students, particularly those at

risk

3. Commit appropriate resources to library/media services to provide a wide range of materials and technology to support the schools implementation of curriculum, and is responsive to student's interests, needs, and independent learning

7 Community Resources for Learning

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

7. All professional staff actively engages parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less Connect-Ed with the school.

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

Conclusions

Although community and district's governing body attempts to provide dependable funding for the wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development, curriculum revision, technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies; it is limited in meeting some critical needs conducive to 21st century learning for all students.Students and staff are feeling the repercussions of a very limited budget. Staff feels their creative efforts in finding funding opportunities translate into less funding from the district and governing body. Therefore, the expectation that they will find and generate their own funding continues to add stress to their daily responsibilities. One example; the Footlights Drama Club is attempting to raise money via a "Go Fund Me" page, as they receive no funds from the district level. Teachers make the best of their current situations, however, the lack of properly running copiers and lack of technology support hinders effectiveness in the classroom. Student feedback indicates when copiers are down and teachers are unable to provide materials, students must copy from the board what could have been given in advance. With one full-time technology support specialist overseeing four buildings, and one certified teacher receiving a stipend, teachers at times have to wait a week in order to resume their use of technology. There is inadequate funding for professional and support staff. Due to the lack of certified staff support in classes with students with needs, classrooms that were previously co-taught by certified teachers are not, and therefore lack appropriate modifications to

reading, notes, quizzes, and tests. Further, the school requires students to complete a

minimum of ten electives as a graduation requirement, yet with a reduction in

instructional staff, students are placed in more unstructured study halls preventing

access to needed electives. Students are denied opportunities to take classes of interest

because they cannot schedule them during their normal schedule as a direct result of

staff reductions. Teachers are expressing the need for more technology-based

professional development so as to give access to students in such programs as Google

and SMART Notebook. Due to flat level funding, the budgeted allocations are used for

mandated spending and preserving core teaching positions, leaving short supply to

maintain the basic needs of 21st century student learning. It is reported that in some of

the larger departments, teachers have to share one Chromebook cart amongst a possible

thirteen teachers and a combined enrollment of hundred and fifty students. In addition,

the entire community has recognized the changing demographics at BCHS where the

free and reduced lunch population has more than doubled over the last ten years,

reaching forty-three percent. Additionally between June and September 2014, there was

an approximate increase of thirty-seven student in English language learners (ELL).

There has been an increase in the number of special education referrals. Overall, it has

been repeatedly stated that there is inadequate funding to meet the professional

development and community resource needs to ensure student learning. As a result of

flat lined funding over the past several years, losing certified teachers due to retirement

and few replacements of those positions, there has been a significant strain on staff to

implement 21st century learning expectations into daily instruction**.** (student

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shadowing, School Leadership Subcommittee members, self-study, classroom observations, teachers, school board)

BCHS develops, plans and funds programs to ensure maintenance and repair of the building and plant; properly maintain, catalogue and replace equipment; and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. BCHS has a well-maintained and extensive maintenance and repair plan for the building. The custodial staff is made up of eleven custodians who have outlined duties and functions to secure a well-managed and safe environment. There are regular repair cycles for building maintenance and scheduled inspections to make sure the building is up to code. The school community, including parents feels satisfied with the efforts made to keep the building clean and safe. There are contracted vendors that are utilized as needed to ensure that all repairs are documented and up to code. As a result of the evident professionalism and commitment to BCHS, the maintenance personnel creates a safe and clean facility supporting the learning environment. (facility tour, teachers, students, parents, maintenance staff)

Currently, there is no documentation for long-range plans that address programs and services; enrollment changes and staffing needs; facility needs; technology; and capital improvements. Although there are no long-range plans documented to address the technological needs of the building, however, all computers are updated on three-year cycle as reported by teachers. There is awareness about the increase in "at-risk" students and some programs are already in place, however, there is no clear direction as to how to continue to implement and address these growing needs. The AVID

(Advancement Via Individual Determination) program is an exemplary program focused on underrepresented student population that services about fifty students. Lack of funding puts this program at risk in the future.While there are many ideas to support the long-range plans at BCHS, there is no documented trajectory that give these ideas a clear direction with regard to funding and implementation. (facility tour, school board, school leadership team meeting, teachers)

The faculty and building administrators have active involvement in the development of the budget, but faculty has limited involvement in the final allocations of those funds. As reported in the self-study, the school uses a building-based decision-making model and the building principal distributes a budgetary allocation to each department allowing departments to request their needs. Although teachers feel heard about their needs, there are reservations in the feeling of those needs being met. Every level of professional staff feels that the technology training and service budget is inadequate to support the level of technology in the classrooms and throughout the school. As a result, while teachers feel that they may have input in the budget process and are able to request necessary funding, the budget rarely meets the needs to drive a 21st century learning environment. (self-study, teachers, facility tour)

Overall, the school site generally supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services. There are some concerns; for example, the science department reported some concerns due to class sizes being large for the labs and the school counselingdepartment expressed a need for a confidential space to hold meetings or provide responsive services in the building. The high level of video production, as

displayed in the reception video, is often hindered by the band playing directly above the production studio and can pollute the video quality and ultimately student work. The sports' fields have drainage problems that have resulted in various teams being displaced during the season even to the point of playing home games at away fields. However, generally speaking, the physical plant remains well maintained despite the age of the building. For example, the cafeteria is clean and students are able to eat comfortably during their lunches and the building is clean due to the efforts of both students and staff. There appears to be a high level of respect for the building amongst the entire school community, in the support and delivery of high quality school programs and services. BCHS is a well maintained facility which generally supports the high quality delivery of supports and services.(teacher interviews, self-study, teachers, facility tour, guidance)

An evaluation of the BCHS site and plant indicate a high level of compliance with state and federal workplace codes and statutes in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations. The school district's plant and facilities manager is responsible for maintaining all documentation and for scheduling all required inspections from local, state, and federal agencies. The documents are either available for view if requested from the facilities manager as well as hung near the essential equipment in the boiler room. Since the last NEASC visit, BCHS has installed a plan/procedure for a lockdown in response to imminent threats. BCHS has also increased the number of security cameras and has a fulltime school resource officer. The continued efforts of the

maintenance and custodial staff has resulted in a high standard for the quality of their work and the appearance and safety of their school. (self-study, facility tour, self-study) There is demonstration of all professional staff actively attempting to engage parents and families as partners in each student's education, yet there are challenges engaging families who have been less connected with the school. These methods include the school's website, teachers' websites, quarterly report cards, quarterly progress reports, bi-annual parent-teacher conferences, individual parent-teacher meetings, e-mails, and Parent-Connect phone calls. Some parents and families are actively involved in their children's educational activities, including those that take place in the classroom as well as in extra-curricular activities. The school has made efforts to contact parents through local media, telephone, and Internet-based sources. The school maintains an informational website that is accessible to parents and students. However, according to teacher interviews, there is general lack of parent response and involvement despite these efforts. There are numerous programs developed by BCHS to support and engage students that are underserved or disadvantaged in the community. The school sponsored a bus to transport parents to and from evening events that was planned and promoted through community organizations. No parents accessed the provided bus. The Interact Club raises thousands of dollars every year and donates the money directly to providing families with Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas needs. This year, BCHS has created the Ram Locker to provide underprivileged students and families with clothing and other school based needs through a donation program from other students, lost and found, and faculty donations. As a result of this tireless effort, BCHS

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is learning the best ways to work with the community to disseminate information and involve families in the learning process but still needs to develop strategies that produce greater involvement. (teacher interviews, self-study, teachers, board of education meeting)

The school demonstrates a deliberate effort to develop productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.The school counseling department has recently started to employ community resources for job shadowing opportunities, informal interviews, internships, and independent work-studies. The addition of a full-time career counselor has greatly increased student awareness and has set into motion initiatives related to post-secondary opportunities. Parents report that there is access to teachers and effective partnerships, however, there seems to be difficulty in engaging all parents. Parental attendance to school conferences and school-based events are low and students report their parents do not recognize the impact of their involvement. According to an interview with board of education members, approximately 50 percent of staff live in town and consistently demonstrate high levels of engagement and loyalty through attendance of evening activities and participation in school festivities. Although there is active discussion as to community partnerships and parental involvement there is a lack of evidence of consistent parental engagement that enhances authentic student learning. (Endicott survey, teacher interviews, self-study, teachers, board of education meeting, guidance staff)

Commendations:

1. The positive school culture and meaningful relationships between students and staff

2. The organization and professionalism of the maintenance staff maintaining the physical plant and facilities

3. The staff's creativity and dedication in attempting to build meaningful connections with outside stakeholders

4. The creativity of teachers to find funding for extra-curricular activities

Recommendations:

1. Engage the community and the district's governing body in a process to ensure dependable funding for a sufficient professional and support staff, a full range of technology and support, and sufficient instructional materials, supplies, and equipment

2. Implement a plan to fund and support technology infrastructure and training needed to drive 21st century learning for students

3. Develop long range plans to address programs and services, facility needs, enrollment and staffing, technology, and capital improvements

4. Develop a plan to increase the provision of the elective courses that have been eliminated due to staffing decreases to reduce the number of students assigned to study halls

5. Create ways to improve community and school partnerships with local businesses and higher education institutions

6. Develop a comprehensive documented plan to create meaningful partnerships and engagement with families

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Committee has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Committee within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts on the school's adherence to the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Committee's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 98. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Committee office has current statistical data on the school.

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

On behalf of the visiting committee I want to express sincere gratitude for the hospitality and

congeniality we experienced during our visit to Bristol Central High School. We found the

community of students, faculty and community stakeholders to be honest and transparent in

their assessment of the school according to the standards. In addition, the leadership of Peter

Wininger and his cooperation along Bristol Central High School's concierge, Tom Bruni and the

co- chairs, Dave and Lea, provided constant access and assistance all throughout the process;

pre-visit, accreditation process and their tireless patience awaiting this report. I trust the

committee's report will assist you as you continue with your school improvement efforts. You

have a wonderful school community with acceptance and support for all and thank you for the

experience.

Bristol Central High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
March15-18, 2015
Visiting Committee

E. Michael Regan, Chair Marine Science Magnet High School Groton, CT 06340	Meghan Zingle Glastonbury High School Glastonbury, CT 06033
Donald Wilson, Assistant Chair 149 Spencer Plain Road, Westbrook, CT 06498	James Hunter Wilton High School Wilton, CT 06897
Jade Gopie Crosby High School Waterbury, CT 06705	Bruce Harrison Torrington High School Torrington, CT 06790
Amanda Halsdorff Auburn High School Auburn, MA 01501	Carmen McPherson Warren Harding High School Bridgeport, CT 06610
Richard Therrien New Haven Public Schools New Haven, CT 06510	Jessica Staley Joel Barlow High School Redding, CT 06896
Marylou Kuegler Watertown High School Watertown, CT 06795	Kathy Malatesta Brookfield High School Brookfield, CT 06804
David Hunter Cheshire High School Cheshire, CT 06410	Cheryl Pecha Torrington High School Torrington, CT 06790
Jessica Slater Newington High School Newington, CT 06111	Andrew Bakulski Simsbury High School Simsbury, CT06070

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Committee on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

- elimination of fine arts, practical arts and student activities

- diminished upkeep and maintenance of facilities

- significantly decreased funding

- cuts in the level of administrative and supervisory staffing

- cuts in the number of teachers and/or guidance counselors

- grade level responsibilities of the principal

- cuts in the number of support staff

- decreases in student services

- cuts in the educational media staffing

- increases in student enrollment that cannot be accommodated

- takeover by the state

- inordinate user fees

- changes in the student population that warrant program or staffing modification(s) that cannot be accommodated, *e*.g., , the number of special needs students or vocational students or students with limited English proficiency

Bristol Central High School

Commendations

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

1. The core values, beliefs and learning expectations that reflect the priorities of the community

2. The pervasive acceptance and commitment to the ideals of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations by students, staff and parents

3. The variety of opportunities to reinforce and re-teach the core values, beliefs and learning expectations through various school initiatives

Curriculum

1. The hard work and dedication of teachers to implement the curricula and co-curricular activities with the available provided supplies, funds, resources, materials, and technology

2. The school's comprehensive and varied course of studies and curricula, including courses at different levels, implemented with care by dedicated educators, purposefully designed to give current students a comprehensive education

3. The most current curriculum model that integrates current standards, provides substantive lists of instructional strategies and assessments and the written curriculum that uses essential questions and big ideas and emphasizes higher order thinking

4. The clear curricular coordination at the course level with their partner high school and across staff, and a defined process for curriculum revision, review and adoption

5. The regular collaboration of staff, especially in data teams and in the use of common assessments that shows the staff is clearly committed to implementing the district curriculum

Instruction

1. The preponderance of teachers that frequently personalize instruction, engage students as active and self-directed learners, and emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking

2. The active use of student self-assessment and reflection to inform instruction

3. The willingness and commitment of the staff to utilize technology in order to enhance instruction

4. The use of data teams to develop common formative assessments and analyze data

5. The effective use of data team time by many teachers to discuss student performance in order to inform instruction

6. The continual informal collaboration among teachers in order to improve instructional practices

7. The collaborative work opportunities for students in all content area lesson

8. The teachers at BCHS who are highly motivated to maintain a high level of expertise in their content areas

Assessment of and for Student Learning

1. The BCHS faculty's utilization of a wide array of assessments, both formative and summative

2. The common formative assessments that are implemented and used on a regular basis

3. The faculty's commitmentto meet on a regular and formal basis to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student data

4. The faculty's work to modify instruction based on the outcomes of the data-team meetings to better meet students' needs

School Culture and Leadership

1. The safe and respectful atmosphere and positive school culture developed and spear-headed by the principal

2. The use of block scheduling for in-depth learning and professional collaboration and the school's commitment to collaboration through scheduled release time every Wednesday afternoon

3. The passion and commitment to improving the school environment and to work consistently to engage students in the learning process

4. The strong presence and leadership of the building administrators that sets the tone during the school day, during passing times, and at school events

5. The respect and responsibility that is afforded to students

6. The BCHS atmosphere that is inclusive and equitable

7. The school-wide formal process that provides students with regular contact with at least one adult member of the school community and remains with that adult member throughout their entire stay at BCHS

School Resources for Learning

1. The interpersonal relationships with all students that foster a sense of community

2. The extraordinary efforts of BCHS to support at-risk students

3. The support offered to students via the ninth grade team

4. The proactive commitment to survey the community to inform programming decisions

5. The diversity of support services available for identified students including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners

Community Resources for Learning

1. The positive school culture and meaningful relationships between students and staff

2. The organization and professionalism of the maintenance staff maintaining the physical plant and facilities

3. The staff's creativity and dedication in attempting to build meaningful connections with outside stakeholders

4. The creativity of teachers to find funding for extra-curricular activities

Recommendations

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

1. Develop and implement a formal plan to ensure the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations drive curriculum, instruction and assessment in every classroom

2. Develop and implement a formal plan for regular review of BCHS's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities

3. Develop a deliberate system to ensure the learning expectations are implemented with fidelity in all classrooms settings

4. Develop a process whereby BCHS can focus on their own respective core values, beliefs about learning and 21st century learning skills and not be impeded by the shared curriculum and decisions that are made concerning BEHS

Curriculum

1. Ensure that all curricular areas receive sufficient financial resources, including technology, equipment materials and staffing needed to implement the curriculum and meet the learning needs of all students

2. Implement a plan to identify and integrate the school's adopted 21st century learning expectations explicitly in curriculum documents to ensure all students have the

opportunity to learn these skills, and include explicit cross-disciplinary learning experiences in the written curriculum

3. Clearly identify the curricular review timeline and expectations and formalize plans to increase curricular alignment across grade levels, subjects and schools, including sending schools.

4. Update all curriculum documents, particularly science, to the curriculum format model approved in 2013-14

5. Implement a plan for more formal monitoring of curriculum implementation to ensure the written curriculum is the taught curriculum

Instruction

1. Develop and implement a plan to provide formal opportunities for teachers to regularly examine their instructional practices in order to ensure consistency with BCHS's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

2. Develop and implement a plan to ensure increased opportunities for cross-disciplinary lessons and activities

3. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers focusing on differentiating instruction

4. Develop a plan to ensure sufficient financial and logistical support for content-based professional development

5. Implement a plan to ensure there are differentiated instructional strategies and methods in all courses for acceleration, remediation and specific needs of populations such as English language learners (beyond specific ELL courses), special education students, and free/reduced lunch students

Assessment of and for Student Learning

1. Develop and implement a process to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations using school-wide analytic rubrics

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

3. Ensure the applicable 21st century learning expectations are communicated to students prior to each unit of study

4. Ensure timely corrective feedback is provided to all students to revise and improve their work

School Culture and Leadership

1. Develop a focused clear professional development plan that is aligned with the school's focus and vision

2. Define specific goals and objectives for the advisory program and design a model for teachers to implement across the school community

3. Review the scheduling protocol and implement scheduling practices that balances class size across all disciplines and all levels

4. Create additional opportunities to improve upon the strong, positive, and collaborative culture that exists, in order to encourage more parental involvement in the decision-making processes of the school community

School Resources for Learning

1. Develop and implement a process for guidance, health services, library media, and special education services to use relevant data, including solicited feedback from students and parents, in order to improve services

2. Develop appropriate referral services are in place in guidance and health services to meet the mental health and social support needs of students, particularly those at risk

3. Commit appropriate library/media services provide a wide range of materials and technology to support the schools implementation of curriculum, and is responsive to student's interests, needs, and independent learning

Community Resources for Learning

1. Engage the community and the district's governing body in a process to ensure dependable funding for a sufficient professional and support staff, a full range of technology and support, and sufficient instructional materials, supplied, and equipment

2. Implement a plan to fund and support technology infrastructure and training needed to drive 21st century learning for students

3. Develop long range plans to address programs and services, facility needs, enrollment and staffing, technology, and capital improvements

4. Develop a plan to increase the provision of the elective courses that have been eliminated due to staffing decreases to reduce the number of students assigned to study halls

5. Create ways to improve community and school partnerships with local businesses and higher education institutions

6. Develop a comprehensive documented plan to create meaningful partnerships and engagement with families