

New England Association of Schools and Colleges



Commission on Public Secondary Schools

Report of the Visiting Committee for

Hanover High School

Hanover, Massachusetts

October 21-24, 2012

Robert Littlefield, CHAIR

James Pignataro, ASSISTANT CHAIR

Dr. Thomas Raab, PRINCIPAL

STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Statement on Limitations.....	1
Introduction.....	4
Overview of Findings.....	8
Quality of the Self-Study	
Discussion of Significant Findings regarding	
Teaching and Learning and the Support of	
Teaching and Learning	
School and Community Summary	11
School's Statement of Core Values and Beliefs for Student Learning	16
Teaching and Learning Standards.....	17
Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations.....	18
Curriculum	28
Instruction.....	38
Assessment of and for Student Learning	49
Support of Teaching and Learning Standards.....	58
School Culture and Leadership	59
School Resources for Learning	74
Community Resources for Learning.....	86
Follow-Up Responsibilities	95

APPENDICES

- A. Roster of Visiting Committee Members
- B. Commission Policy on Substantive Change
- C. List of Commendations and Recommendations

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 six Commissions: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE), the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS), the Commission on Public Secondary Schools (CPSS), the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), the Commission on Public Elementary and Middle Schools (CPEMS), and the Commission on American and International Schools Abroad (CAISA).

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public secondary school member institutions, CPSS requires visiting committees to assess the degree to which the evaluated schools meet the qualitative Standards for Accreditation of the Commission. 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 Commission'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 Commission 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 Evaluation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Hanover High School, an inclusive steering committee, working with the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included students, parents, central office personnel, and community members.

The self-study of Hanover High School extended over a period of 15 school months from March 2011 to June 2012. The visiting committee was pleased to note that a wide variety of stakeholders joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

Public schools evaluated by the Commission 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 Commission, Hanover High School also used questionnaires developed by The Research Center at Endicott College to reflect the concepts contained in the Standards for Accreditation. These materials provided discussion items for a comprehensive assessment of the school by the professional staff during the self-study.

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of 16 evaluators was assigned by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Hanover High School. The Committee members spent four days in Hanover, 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 Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public school teachers, principals, central office leaders, guidance counselors, and a library/media specialist, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Hanover High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 56 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day
- a total of 72 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 20 teachers on Sunday 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 on 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 Commission Standards.

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

Overview of Findings

Teaching and Learning Standards

Hanover High School is located on a modern, clean, bright, and beautiful campus that is filled with committed, enthusiastic students, teachers, and staff members. A partnership between the local community and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has resulted in a new building that was opened in September of 2011 and solved many of the ills that had plagued the school for decades. The new facility is a source of pride for the entire community and has created exciting learning opportunities for its students. However, an effective, 21st century secondary school requires more than just a physical plant. This report contains many commendations for structures and processes in place that help its students achieve the school's learning expectations. It also contains numerous suggestions to help the school reach its highest potential.

The school has adopted a set of core values and beliefs about learning as well as a set of 21st century learning expectations that were developed through a thoughtful, inclusive, and thorough process that was based on input from a variety of stakeholders and research into best practices.

The core values and beliefs are aimed at creating a learning environment that creates “opportunities for students to acquire the skills, knowledge, and work ethic to be responsible and productive members of a changing society.” Still left is the work to fully infuse the document into the fabric of the school by aligning curriculum, course assignments, rubrics, instructional practices, and school decisions with the stated beliefs. Once fully integrated, all efforts on the part of students, teachers, and staff will have focus and purpose.

The curriculum at Hanover High School offers a variety of rich learning experiences that address a plethora of interests. Recently, the adoption of curriculum writing software will, if properly utilized, give the school an opportunity to create curriculum documents written in a common

format and aligned with the school's learning expectations. Learning at Hanover High is not limited to the confines of the campus. Students have a wide variety of opportunities to expand their horizons through internships, school-to-work activities, and an individual capstone project called the senior humanities seminar. In the classroom, teachers challenge students with high expectations but continuity or consistency from teacher to teacher is sporadic. There is work to be done in order to establish common expectations, course goals, and benchmarks across the curriculum to ensure that all students have equal access to the school's learning opportunities.

Hanover High School is fortunate to have a faculty filled with enthusiastic, imaginative teachers dedicated to the well-being of its students. Teachers consistently display a willingness to go out of their way to help students achieve. The new campus offers state-of-the-art instructional technology in every classroom, opening up a wide realm of possibilities for teachers. In order to take full advantage of the technology, however, there is a need for training across the board in how to integrate the technology into instruction as a way to fully engage students.

Although the school has adopted 21st century learning expectations for its students, work remains to complete the development of school-wide analytic rubrics across the curriculum to be used as tools to measure both school and individual progress toward achieving those expectations. The work has begun, but there is much more to do. It is imperative that the rubrics are developed in order that teachers have common standards through which to assess student work in a consistent fashion aligned with their academic, civic, and social expectations. The senior humanities project is a positive development toward this end. Students engage in a multi-disciplinary, personalized learning experience that is assessed using a common rubric that could easily be linked to the school's learning expectations. This could be used as a model for future common assessments. Also, the use of inter-disciplinary teams of teacher engaged in data-based

discussions about student achievement is a start toward a comprehensive approach in looking at results in order to improve curriculum and instruction.

Support Standards

Hanover High School is marked by a school culture that is full of pride, enthusiasm, and respect. The values expressed in the HHS Core Values and Beliefs document are evident in all corners of the school. It is, indeed, a “positive climate that fosters school spirit and unity”. Students, teachers, staff, and families are understandably proud of their new facility. The school has taken some steps to ensure equitable access to the curriculum by eliminating some basic level courses in an effort to hold all students to high expectations. There is a nascent advisory program that meets infrequently and falls short of the required component of a school’s culture. Given all the challenges facing the school to raise student achievement, coordinate curriculum, create common assessments, and use data for school improvement, it is important for the school to create more formal, structured opportunities for teachers to meet and collaborate to improve student learning. Recently, the school experienced an organizational change with the elimination of traditional department chairs and the installment of two curriculum leaders. While the benefits of curriculum leaders are obvious for teaching and learning issues, it is essential that the school create structures that will fill the role that chairs played in communication between teachers and administration. In similar fashion, the interdisciplinary distribution of teachers throughout the building in so-called pod structures has caused consternation among teaching staff that must be addressed.

The school support staff comprised of the guidance department, nurse’s office, special educators, Student Intervention Team (SIT), and library/media specialist offer an effective range of services to support all students. The effective use of technology in the guidance department invites

families to become connected to life inside the school. The SIT is ever-vigilant for struggling learners and is quick to activate the appropriate resource to support student learning and advance the school's academic, civic, and social learning expectations. The library/media center is equipped with technology that allows students to conduct research as well as hosting the many students enrolled in on-line Virtual High School courses. The guidance staff, despite losing a valuable position to budget cuts, uses the Naviance software system as an important component in their comprehensive guidance curriculum. The school also employs a number of creative programs, such as Peace Builders, to promote respect and well-being.

There is a dichotomy in the community resources for learning at the school that poses both great benefits and great challenges for the Hanover High School community. The community has invested greatly in the physical plant including a new school building, all-weather track, artificial turf field, and multiple tennis courts. The school is well-equipped with technology, includes a modern theater, ample music rehearsal space, a gymnasium to meet the needs of all students, and an open commons space that gives the feel of a college campus. The plant is well-maintained, kept spotlessly clean, and meets all the physical needs of the school. However, a school is more than a building. It needs adequate teachers, staff, time to plan, and instructional materials. The operating budget for Hanover High School has made achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations an arduous task. Funds for professional development, curriculum work, educational materials, and additional staff are virtually non-existent. Cuts in staff, combined with an increase in student enrollment, have created class sizes that regularly exceed the number that were designed to fit into the school's new classrooms. Co-curricular activities have been eliminated and the user fees for participation in athletics have risen dramatically.

School and Community Profile

Hanover High School is located in the pastoral-suburban town of Hanover, Massachusetts. It is located about 26 miles southeast of Boston, the state capital. The town is mostly residential but has a diverse commercial base, allowing the convenience of a shopping mall amid smaller businesses and light industry.

The population of the town is approximately 14,300; the majority of the population comes from similar ethnic, religious, cultural, and racial backgrounds with less than 2% identified as minority. English is the primary language spoken at home among 99.6% of the student population. The median family income is approximately \$100,000. The average unemployment rate is 7.1%. As of 2009, 4.4% of the school population was designated as low-income. The percentage of families in the district living below the poverty level is 1.4%.

In the spring of 2011 the Hanover School District consisted of five schools enrolling 2,685 pupils: Cedar Elementary, Center Elementary, Sylvester Elementary, Hanover Middle, and Hanover High School. The elementary schools housed 480, 354, and 239 students, respectively, for a total of 1,073. Hanover Middle School serviced 913 pupils, while 699 students were at Hanover High School. Approximately 15 students have been placed out-of-district, while 62 students attend the South Shore Vocational Technical High School. The District spent \$10,561 (2010-2011) in per pupil expenditures, compared to the state average of \$13,055. For fiscal year 2010 and 2011, the Town of Hanover spent 53.9% of the town's budget on education.

For the year 2011-2012 Hanover High School includes students in grades 9-12 with an enrollment of 744, making the teacher/student ratio 1:13. The school population had remained relatively stable over the past several years but has increased with the opening of the new Hanover High School building. Approximately 3% of the school is identified as African American, Asian, Hispanic or Native American. In 2010, the average two-year drop-out rate was 2.7%.

There are 57 classroom teachers, with average class sizes between 22 and 25, although there are 28 classes with 30 or more students (school year 2011-2012). Students attend school for 180 days and exceed the 990 minimum required classroom hours. The average attendance rate is 96.24%. Students must take 35 credits each year and graduation requirements stipulate that a student must earn 127.5 credits. This entails passing four years of English, social studies, physical education, math and science, as well as two years of foreign language, and one year of wellness. The wellness requirement was cut for the 2011-2012 school year due to the elimination of the wellness course. The remainder of students' schedules is filled with electives in subjects such as art, music, engineering, or business technology. All students must also earn a competency determination through participation in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) testing in order to graduate. Most students also participate in after-school activities with athletics, student council, art and music being some of the more popular choices.

In the class of 2011, 95.6% of students graduated, with 90% of students going on to post-secondary education: 83% to four-year schools, 7% to two-year schools, 2% to technical schools,

and 1% going into military service. Graduates have many educational opportunities available as they choose from schools such as University of Massachusetts Amherst, Boston University, Babson College, Bentley University, Bridgewater State College, and Massasoit Community College.

Hanover High School, through the business department, has established partnerships with area businesses. Through these partnerships the department has established a Career Day each November. Career Day allows all juniors and seniors to explore their interests through seminars led by professionals who have been invited into the school. Often, these professionals are Hanover High graduates. The Hanover Chamber of Commerce is one of the community resources that the school draws upon to make this a successful event. Juniors and seniors have an opportunity to participate in an internship for graduation credit. Additionally, for the 2011-2012 school year, the senior humanities course requires students to complete a capstone project that requires students to work with a mentor, therefore creating partnerships with local businesses and professionals. The Hanover Lion's Club sponsors an annual speech contest during which students compete for scholarship funds.

The guidance department facilitates three annual college mini-fairs at which juniors and seniors can explore potential colleges, asking questions and accessing materials on a variety of topics such as majors and residence life. In-school counselors instruct students on the software program Naviance, which helps students to identify and analyze college and career interests.

Students at Hanover High School reach out to the community in a variety of ways, including blood drives, food drives and other community service activities as well as performances by music groups for elderly citizens.

Students are recognized for their accomplishments through a Student-of-the-Month award in each subject area. Each term students can earn a place on the Honor Roll for earning a B- or better in all classes. At the end of each school year, the principal recognizes underclassmen academic excellence at an award ceremony. Additionally, seniors have an awards ceremony at which various accolades are given, including the distribution of scholarships and departmental awards. The school committee also recognizes student achievement annually. At the end of each sports season, the Hanover High Athletic Boosters sponsors a dinner for the students and their families, acknowledging the teams' successes. Also, the Hanover Parents Music Club holds an annual awards banquet acknowledging the music accomplishments of Hanover High School students.

HANOVER HIGH SCHOOL

Hanover High School Core Values and Beliefs

The Hanover High School community provides a competitive and challenging curriculum specific to individual educational needs, empowering students to succeed in the academic, social, and civic arenas.

We believe that respect, compassion, and empathy promote a positive climate that fosters school spirit and unity.

Within a safe and secure environment, students develop academic and personal independence, self-motivation, artistic appreciation, creativity, social responsibility, and global awareness.

21st Century Learning Expectations

Academic

- The HHS graduate reads actively and critically.
- The HHS graduate writes effectively to construct and convey meaning.
- The HHS graduate speaks effectively.
- The HHS graduate is a responsible and proficient user of current technology and is receptive to emerging technology.
- The HHS graduate creatively applies concepts to interpret information, to solve problems, and to justify solutions.

Social

- The HHS graduate practices personal wellness.
- The HHS graduate acts responsibly and works ethically.

Civic

- The HHS graduate is an active citizen who demonstrates an understanding of civic responsibility and worldwide current events.

COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

TEACHING and LEARNING STANDARDS

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

CURRICULUM

INSTRUCTION

ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENT LEARNING

1

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

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

Conclusions

Hanover High School engaged in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process as a school community, informed by current research-based best practices, to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. Under the leadership of its principal, Hanover High School convened a core values and beliefs committee at the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year. The committee met once a month for four months to revise the existing school mission statement and to identify and commit to core values and beliefs that align to 21st century learning. The committee was comprised of school leaders including the superintendent, principal, and assistant principal, as well as faculty members, students, parents, and community representatives. As is evidenced by the committee meeting notes, all stakeholders attended and regularly participated in the committee sessions. The committee reviewed current research-based practices to help guide them in the process. For example, they reviewed the guideline book on developing core values, beliefs, and learning expectations that was published by the NEASC Commission on Public Secondary Schools in August 2009. In addition, the committee studied core values, beliefs, and learning expectations of sister cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth. They also reviewed the goals and aspirations of their school improvement plan and professional development plans. In an effort to obtain input from students, parents, and teachers, the committee administered an Endicott College survey in the fall of 2010. Using all of the information from their research and other documents, the committee completed a draft of the new core values and beliefs and presented it to the HHS faculty for approval on January 18, 2011. After receiving feedback from the entire faculty and making subsequent changes to the document, the draft was adopted as the core values and beliefs about learning document and the 21st century learning expectations for Hanover High School. The document is prominently and

creatively displayed at the entrance of the school on a large board. It is also evident throughout classrooms, on the school website, and in the student handbook. The faculty and staff members believe that all students are aware of the core values and beliefs; however, the document is not yet fully embedded in the culture of the school. Parents and students exhibit uneven and inconsistent awareness of the school's new core values and beliefs. Because Hanover High School has a plan in place to regularly review and revise its core values and beliefs, it is committed to creating an effective school culture in which the core values and beliefs will function as explicit foundational commitments to students and the community. (panel presentation, self-study, meeting notes, teacher interviews)

Hanover High School has a total of eight 21st century learning expectations broken down into three categories. There are five academic expectations, two social and one civic. The expectations are rigorous, yet appropriate. They are designed to prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century. There is one analytical rubric per learning expectation that can be used school-wide. Each rubric has four levels of achievement (beginning, developing, proficient, and exemplary) but the rubrics do not clearly indicate which level of achievement the school expects students to attain. However, students generally understand that the school intends for them to be proficient in the learning expectations. The 2012-2013 Hanover High School Improvement Plan indicates that review and continued calibration of the rubrics will take place to ensure consistent and uniform implementation. The learning expectations align with the school's core values and beliefs. Hanover High School has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations, which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted levels of achievement. When these

expectations are fully embedded in the culture of the school, HHS students will be better informed and will be able to focus their efforts toward becoming productive members of society for the remainder of the 21st century. (HHS 21st century learning expectations, student interviews, self-study)

Although the core values and beliefs documents are widely visible throughout the school, they are not yet fully embedded in the fabric of the school's educational plan. In many areas, the culture of the school reflects the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations. For example, HHS has an extensive and popular school-to-work program and an internship program, both of which give students an opportunity to be involved with local businesses. These programs directly relate to the civic learning expectations and allow the students to develop an understanding of professions that interest them before they move on to post-secondary pursuits. In an effort to promote global awareness, students are required to take two years of world language from course offerings in French, Spanish, and Intro to Modern Greek/Italian. The popular Virtual High School program gives students the opportunity to use 21st century technology to meet their educational needs independently by enrolling in courses such as pre-veterinary medicine and screenwriting. Because the VHS program requires students to act responsibly and work ethically, the program is a reflection of the social learning expectation. This program also aligns with the academic expectations, as students are required to read actively and critically, in addition to being responsible and proficient users of current technology. Recently, Hanover High implemented a Senior Humanities Seminar for senior students. This course prompts the study of journalism, career planning, college planning, psychology, sociology and literature along with the development of skills in essay writing,

resume building, and social manners, and culminates with a final project known at Hanover High School as the Capstone Project. The Project is well-received by staff, students, and parents and encompassing all of Hanover High School's core values and beliefs, as well as the 21st century learning expectations. However, the Project does not impact all Hanover students. The students will be well served in their pursuit of the expectations by increased support and focus on this valuable, comprehensive, and relevant program. Since HHS has adopted their new statement of core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations some changes have been made to curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices to align with the document. For example, the newly adopted anti-bullying program, called Peace Builders, aligns to the school's core values as reflected in the mission to provide a positive climate that fosters school spirit and unity, but this program is not yet fully implemented in the school or recognized by all students. In a concerted attempt to help students meet the 21st learning expectation of proficient and responsible use of technology, multiple types of equipment has been installed in each classroom, including Eno Boards, wireless Internet, and document cameras. However, there has been a slow integration of this technology into the curriculum due to a lack of available training for the staff. In response to the new 21st century learning expectations, newly devised rubrics have been established to assess student learning. These rubrics are not frequently utilized throughout the school; therefore, students are not consistently receiving feedback on assignments in relation to the expectations. According to the results of the Endicott survey, only 55.6 percent of staff understands the formal process, based on the use of the school-wide analytic rubrics, to assess school and individual student progress in achieving learning expectations and only 33.3 percent agrees that they use the school-wide analytic rubrics when assessing student work. However; HHS has a plan in place to facilitate its response to the recommendations made by the NEASC visiting committee. The

principal views the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations as living documents that will require an ongoing process of review with regular opportunities for revision. Many of the school's core values and beliefs about learning are reflected in the culture of the school. Students and staff members consistently display an attitude that reading, writing, and listening effectively are at the heart of all academic learning. Equally evident is the commitment to mutual respect between teacher and student. The teachers are dedicated to the students' academic development and encourage their personal independence, artistic appreciation, creativity, social responsibility, and global awareness. An overwhelming majority of the students and faculty express that they feel they are treated as integral members of the school community. In order for Hanover High School students to have a clear understanding of the 21st century learning expectations, however, a coordinated effort across the curriculum is needed to fully implement school-wide rubrics to aid them in understanding the school's expectations and to aid the school in gauging its progress. (principal interview, staff interviews, support personnel interviews, student interviews, program of studies, self-study materials, Endicott survey, and panel presentation)

Hanover High School has a plan to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. The school adopted its current core values, beliefs, and 21st century expectations in February 2011 after an inclusive, reflective, and dynamic process. After the NEASC October 2012 visit, a follow up committee will be formed to review and act on recommendations made by the visiting team. In the spring of 2013, Hanover High School plans to form a committee of teachers, parents, students, and administrators to review the current core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Any necessary revisions this team feels

need to be made will be submitted to the faculty for discussion and subsequent vote. The school leaders and faculty are able to cite readings and research ensuring that they are cognizant of 21st century learning skills. Two examples of the readings and research mentioned include *Curriculum 21*, as well as *The Framework for 21st Century Learning*. Hanover High currently does not have regular forums to share information about 21st century skills and learning, which would include solicitation of feedback from the local business community. To some degree, the school examines data about students' achievement of school-wide learning expectations, student performance on standardized tests, and student work as part of a review of targeted school-wide learning priorities. At this time, Hanover High only has one department meeting and one faculty meeting per month, which do not adequately provide the time necessary to complete the examination of this work. A lack of formal common planning time hampers the effort to examine student work and assess progress toward the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Early in the 2012-2013 school year, based on requests made by the principal, HHS instituted interdisciplinary data teams to study the disparity between the school's MCAS scores and PSAT, SAT, and ACT scores. The data teams meet once per cycle (every six days) to study the types of questions students are answering incorrectly and the teams are planning to use this information to change instruction in an effort to improve the results. Since this is the first year these data teams have been in place there has not been enough data collected to move forward with any change in instruction. The creation of data teams will allow the opportunity to evaluate data and make recommendations that will serve to adjust instructional practices. In addition to the data teams' regular meetings, the humanities program teachers meet on a daily basis for common planning. Other than those two groups, however, HHS faculty members do not meet regularly in group settings to monitor and discuss progress toward the school's learning expectations. The most

recent opportunities for collaboration have been dedicated to preparing for the NEASC visit, resulting in limited focus on data review. Members of the faculty report that they do not incorporate discussion of district and community priorities into their discussion of the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and learning expectations. Hanover High School's academic learning expectations do effectively align with the district's learning goals. The district's learning goals are defined in five points based on respectful relationships formed in a safe learning environment, which include a consistently rigorous, standards-based pre-K through 12 curriculum. Instruction is meant to be engaging, challenging, and effective using relevant and ongoing assessment data to make informed decisions. Professional staff members are expected to engage in collaboration to improve teaching and learning. These district goals are reflected in the school's expectations that students will read actively and critically, write and speak effectively, and interpret information to solve problems and justify solutions. Furthermore, the district and school's expectations both emphasize that this should take place in a safe learning environment. It is important that Hanover High School utilizes the process it has identified to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations by using current research, multiple data sources and district and community priorities in order to effectively provide a competitive and challenging curriculum specific to individual, educational needs. When the school community continues to improve the current programs and expand similar programming in order to align to their core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, students will have more opportunity to practice and achieve these expectations. (staff interviews, Hanover Public Schools' Mission Statement, self-study materials, Endicott survey, HHS core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations)

Commendations:

1. The dynamic, inclusive, and collaborative process used to identify and commit to a core values and beliefs statement
2. The research-based practices used to inform the development of the core values and beliefs
3. The school's measurable and challenging 21st century learning expectations
4. The programs available at the school to support the 21st century learning expectations including school-to-work, internships, the Humanities Project, and Virtual High School
5. The school's plan to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
6. The highly student-oriented teaching staff
7. The implementation of multidisciplinary data teams to analyze multiple sources of data in an effort to measure progress toward learning expectations
8. The concern for student achievement that is evident throughout the school

Recommendations:

1. Create a greater understanding and appreciation of the core values and learning expectations among school staff members, students, and parents
2. Regularly emphasize the relationship between individual course goals and the school's learning expectations
3. Ensure that the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school

4. Ensure that the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the curriculum, instruction and assessment within the school
5. Identify the targeted level of achievement for the school-wide rubrics

2

Curriculum

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

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

Conclusions:

Curriculum maps are purposefully designed for a large majority of courses at Hanover High School; however, specific articulation of the 21st century learning expectations is not present in the existing maps. The 21st century learning expectation matrix, found in the program of studies, indicates primary responsibilities for expectations by department, but secondary responsibilities have not been established. While departmental responsibility for the 21st century learning expectations is clear, it is not clear by grade level or course in which students specifically practice the expectations or are assessed in them. Faculty members clearly understand which 21st century learning expectations they are primarily responsible for teaching. Although teachers have informally discussed the appropriateness and relevance of the school-wide rubrics for the 21st century learning expectations in their courses, there has been no formal data collection regarding the school's learning expectations. Data obtained from the assessment of the 21st century learning expectations currently does not exist for use in making decisions concerning the addition or deletion of course offerings or units in the curriculum. The absence of the data regarding the 21st century learning expectations and lack of reference to the expectations in the written curriculum documents does not allow for informed curricular decisions, impacting the students' ability to achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (program of studies, curriculum maps, teachers, self-study)

A large majority of courses have a curriculum which is mapped in a common format and includes content, skills, assessment, learning activities, and resources. This template is used across all content areas. To date, 64 percent of elective courses and 87 percent of core courses have curriculum and diary maps. The template does not yet include clearly identified 21st century

learning expectations as they relate to the content areas. The incorporation of essential questions is inconsistent across content areas and in some cases, the essential questions are not true essential questions, but are actually guiding unit questions. Instructional practices are listed under learning activities. Assessments are listed in the maps; however, the use of rubrics, whether they be teacher-generated, course-specific, or school-wide are not mentioned in conjunction with assessments. When the curriculum is more closely aligned with the 21st century learning expectations, the curriculum will be more complete and will then clearly provide HHS students with sufficient opportunity to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, curriculum maps, teachers)

The curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge. Through examination and review of Project-Based Learning assignments (PBLs), higher-order thinking skills, inquiry, and problem-solving are evident in a number of assignments. The curriculum maps demonstrate that most courses provide opportunities for higher-order thinking skills, inquiry, and problem-solving. Under the present structure, Collaborative Collegial Discussion time (CCDs), comprised of teachers from different content areas, and led by an administrator, is provided twice per six-day cycle. One meeting in the cycle is devoted to data teams and the analysis of PSAT and SAT scores to modify and drive instruction. The second CCD meeting takes place the same setting as the data team discussions, with the purpose of stimulating collegiality, and provides the opportunity for team members to discuss topics like best practices and the use of technology. In addition, monthly program meetings are facilitated by the administrators, with the focus on evaluating and revising curriculum.

Although the organization of the building in interdisciplinary pods is designed to facilitate cross-disciplinary learning, the practice is limited and occurs more by chance rather than by plan.

Cross-disciplinary connections are evident in the humanities curriculum, but a formal cross-disciplinary plan is not in place in other areas of the curriculum. Hanover High School provides multiple authentic learning opportunities for students in and out of school, such as the Senior Humanities Project, the School-to-Work program, the Internship program, the Web Marketing course, Virtual High School, and trips to Europe. Information about ethical use of technology is published in the school's handbook; the 21st century learning expectation rubrics are published in the program of studies. Students can also access information about the ethical use of technology on the library Moodle page. In addition to these resources, students receive a formal introduction during mandatory freshman orientation, and receive a reinforcement of research and citation skills by the librarian whenever the library is utilized by a class. This includes using and citing online and print resources as well as ethically using images and video. Implementation of cross-disciplinary connections combined with the current authentic learning opportunities and the informed and ethical use of technology will further enhance students' ability to problem-solve and demonstrate higher-order thinking. (curriculum maps, student work, self-study, curriculum directors, librarian)

While the teachers at Hanover High School work hard at their craft and are dedicated to their students, without an increased level of collaboration, common formative and summative assessments, and commitment to consistency from teacher to teacher the students cannot be assured of equitable access to the curriculum. Some indications of connection between written and taught curriculum can be found in class observations conducted by administrators and

curriculum leaders and some common assessments. When there is a system in place to afford teachers regular opportunity to collaborate, examine curriculum documents, and reflect on what is being taught in classrooms across the curriculum, the students of Hanover High School will have an increased chance of equal access and exposure to the curriculum. (classroom observations, curriculum directors, self-study)

The district K through 12 curriculum guides exist in part, but communication between sending schools and HHS is in the very early stages of development. Currently, vertical articulation between the 8th grade and the high school is limited to the special education department. High school special education staff meets formally with 8th grade special education staff twice per year and periodically throughout the year. Establishment of the curriculum director positions has allowed for conversations with sending schools to begin. On November 6, 2012, all content areas will meet with teachers from the sending schools for open discussion concerning vertical articulation. There is no formal school curriculum review cycle. Coordinated collegial discussions are in place, but the focus is not the articulation of the curriculum. With the exception of the teachers in the Senior Humanities course, there is no deliberate common planning time scheduled. Monthly program meetings are facilitated by the curriculum directors for the purpose of evaluating and revising the curriculum. When sending schools and teachers of the same grade level and discipline collaborate to provide clear articulation, it will be easy to ensure that all students experience the same curriculum and level of rigor. (self-study, teachers, standard committee meeting)

Budget cuts have resulted in inconsistencies in staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center, which hinder the equitable implementation of the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. According to the self-study, the reduction in staff has resulted in either high enrollment in individual classes or inequity for students to receive personalized instruction, and inequity in experiencing the 21st century learning expectations. There were 28 classes with 30 or more students and 48 classes between 26 and 29 students in the SY2013 master schedule. In physical education classes when three classes are in the gym concurrently, there can be more than 90 students together at any given time. Large classes inhibit teacher and student physical movement within classrooms. There has been a decrease in expenditures for instructional materials, equipment, supplies, and library/media resources. Additionally, there has been an increase of 125 additional students since the opening of the new HHS facility two years ago. According to the self-study, for FY2010, the instructional materials and supplies budget was \$133,428.00, and in FY2011 the budget was \$120,086.00, a 10 percent decrease. In FY-2012, the submitted budget was \$83,429.00, a 30.5 percent decrease. The library budget for FY-2010 and 2011 was \$8,500, and in FY2012 it was reduced by 34 percent to \$5,570. Staff interviews indicate that there is an inequity in the distribution of available materials according to the content area.

The new HHS facility has technology in each classroom, including an ENO board, projector, document reader, two student computers, and one teacher computer. All staff members are supplied with laptops and the teacher centers in each pod have a copy machine, telephones with outside lines, and a scanner. However, not all teachers are part of a pod, so some teachers'

access to these forms of technology is limited. There is a computer lab in each pod, as well as two computer labs in the library with 50 total computers. The 21st century technology is widely available in the building, but the reduction of professional development funds limits training for faculty members in the use of available technology. Additionally, funding for professional conferences, summer curriculum writing, and in-house professional development opportunities has been eliminated.

As a result of continually diminished resources in the budget, courses such as Latin, sophomore Wellness, and Graphic Arts were eliminated from the curriculum. An attempt to institute a sophomore wellness course into the physical education program has begun this year, but complete implementation of the full wellness curriculum as previously delivered has not happened. Funding for many co-curricular programs has been eliminated, including the math team, student newspaper, tomorrow's teacher, art club, drama club, diversity club, peer facilitators, and the green team. Existing sports fees were increased to \$270 per sport, and \$350 for football, basketball, and hockey; however, the athletic director reports that athletic participation has not decreased due to increased user fees. The golf program is self-funded. Additionally, in order to participate in festivals and parades, the music students resort to fundraising. According to the self-study, the loss of a guidance staff member has resulted in longer wait times and the elimination of the peer facilitator program. Reduction in staffing levels, increase in class size, inequitable distribution of monies for materials, and the loss of some co-curricular activities hinder the learning opportunities of the students at HHS, preventing them from maximizing their achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, documents, teachers, students, master schedule, classroom observations)

While time was provided to write curriculum maps, resources are not currently in place to support continued development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum. Responsibilities for the district and school level curriculum coordination are clearly identified at an administrative level. There are two curriculum directors in the high school, one for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) and another for humanities. Their responsibilities include keeping current with and informing staff of recent research, innovations, and trends as they relate to curriculum, and overseeing and evaluating curriculum. Teachers who teach in subjects which do not fall under humanities or STEM report to the building principal or assistant principal. The two curriculum directors, along with the assistant principal, report to the building principal, who in turn reports to the superintendent. It is the responsibility of the curriculum directors to develop agendas and lead department meetings for all applicable content areas, including interdisciplinary meetings where appropriate. The focus of these meetings is on curriculum; however, currently there is no formal process or timeline for curriculum evaluation and revision. Curriculum mapping software was purchased and instituted in 2009-2010 for the development of curriculum maps. Half of the staff members received professional development in the use and implementation of the program. In partnership with an untrained staff member, they completed maps. In 2010-2011, a goal in the professional development plan was for staff to document individual diary maps in preparation for consensus-building. During CCD time, data teams analyze SAT and PSAT scores, but not assessments of the 21st century learning expectations, benchmarks, or common assessments. Previously, MCAS data analysis was used to drive instruction, but improvements in MCAS scores have shifted the focus to SAT and PSAT scores. In August of 2011, administrators attended a retreat focusing on the use of data to improve student learning. Some of the targeted outcomes included a shared understanding of data use,

understanding of using data model “roadmaps” for continuous improvement, understanding data driven dialogue and collaborative tools, and identifying steps for integrating the data model into the school. When the district provides the school’s professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, and with the analysis of assessment results and current research, purposeful evaluation and revision of curriculum will ultimately enhance the opportunity for students to achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (curriculum documents, self-study, teacher interviews, curriculum directors)

Commendations

1. The work done to create curriculum maps in most courses
2. The adoption of the curriculum mapping software to provide a common format for curriculum
3. The evidence of higher-order thinking skills, inquiry, and problem-solving in project-based learning within the curriculum
4. The authentic learning opportunities present in the curriculum through programs such as the School-to-Work program, Internship program, Humanities Capstone Project, and Web Marketing course

Recommendations

1. Align curriculum maps with the 21st century learning expectations

2. Examine Project-Based Learning Assessments and identify opportunities for cross-disciplinary connections
3. Develop and implement a consistent school-wide procedure to ensure written curriculum is being taught
4. Develop a plan to implement vertical articulation with sending schools
5. Provide adequate funding to provide equitable services across and amongst courses and to sufficiently implement the curriculum
6. Examine schedule options to provide more equitable class sizes

3

Instruction

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

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

Conclusions

The opportunities for Hanover High School teachers to examine instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are informal and inconsistent across the curriculum. In the last several years, a number of factors have decreased the opportunities for teachers to engage in this practice. The move to the new building, the turnover in administrators, preparation for the NEASC visit, and the implementation of the interdisciplinary pod model have all limited these opportunities. When professional development time devoted to instructional practice becomes a priority, teachers' ability to provide all students with an education consistent with the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations will be enhanced. (teacher interviews, teachers, self-study)

Teachers' instructional practices lend limited support to the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations through the personalization of instruction. Several programs provide students with opportunities to make personal choices in their educational plan at HHS. For example, the Senior Humanities Seminar, independent study, Virtual High School, the Internship program, and School-to-Work personalize instruction for many, but do not affect all students at Hanover High School. All science courses, on the other hand, have a laboratory component that requires active, inquiry-based instruction for all students. The combination of a decreased staff and an increased student body has resulted in larger class sizes, raising concerns about the ability of the faculty to effectively personalize instruction. Making differentiated instruction a cornerstone of teaching and learning promotes the opportunity for students to make choices based on content, product, and/or interest. Engaging students in self-reflection about

their work during class allows teachers and students to identify individual learning needs, and instructional strategies such as these promote and enhance the likelihood that the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations will become a living document.

The practice of engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning occurs in isolated situations. On occasion, teachers have the opportunity to share ideas for cross-curricular collaboration, but generally this occurs infrequently and randomly, depending on which teachers share a pod and an unstructured period during the day. A few examples of intentional collaboration include an earth science instructor working with a social studies teacher to develop lessons covering the United States' development of a space program and NASA, or a Spanish teacher and an English teacher producing a lesson on Mexican myths and legends. When asked to identify regular and school-wide practices that involve cross-curricular instruction, teachers indicated that it was not an established feature of instruction in the school. The institution of school-wide, cross-curricular teaching and learning practices such as the Senior Humanities Project will help students understand that the knowledge they gain in their various classes is not isolated pieces of information, but interconnected themes that highlight the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

In some classes, teachers engage students as active and self-directed learners. The school has made a significant commitment to project-based learning across the curriculum, thereby engaging students in more active, personalized learning activities. Students participate in hands-on, project-based learning and discovery lessons such as creating an interview in a world language, crafting a local weather forecast based on current meteorological data, or learning about the cultural backdrop and history behind a specific genre of music. Teacher coaching, independent research, and cooperative group work comprise this self-directed learning. HHS

students would be the beneficiaries if active and self-directed learning were the norm in the vast majority of the school's classrooms.

In some classes, teachers have students focus on key themes, concepts, and essential questions. They give students adequate advance notice and preparation time to allow students to understand and pursue concepts in depth. Teachers require students in these classes to analyze and synthesize concepts as well as to compare, contrast, and evaluate what they have learned. All students at HHS will benefit when all classes place a greater emphasis on higher-order thinking. Teachers in many classes regularly ask students to apply knowledge to other experiences or situations. Students in art and music regularly demonstrate their skills and display their classroom work to audiences outside the school. During the year, some students participate in job shadowing and school-to-work activities. The involvement of students in sharing what they have learned with other audiences both inside and outside of HHS is an excellent way for teachers to fully implement the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

Teachers at HHS attempt to engage students in self-assessment and reflection. Of eighty classes observed during the team visit, fewer than half showed evidence that self-reflection and reflection were components of the lesson. Some lessons involved students in thinking about how they learned the concepts or about how their thought process allowed them to learn the concepts. There are few opportunities in advisory activities or through the compilation of portfolios in which students are engaged in thinking about their role in the learning process. When teachers engage students in regular self-assessment and reflection, students have much better insight into what they are being asked to learn and why, therefore increasing their progress toward the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Some teachers use appropriate technology to enhance instruction. Teachers display websites, artwork, student work, and illustrations using document cameras to enhance instruction. Some teachers utilize the devices to have students engage in peer review of work. However, not all teachers use the technology to its full capacity. Providing ongoing professional development that gives teachers the tools to fully implement the state-of-the-art technology will afford teachers the ability to take full advantage of the tools in order to guide students. By aligning instructional practices across the curriculum to the indicators for NEASC accreditation, teachers will greatly increase student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interview, student shadowing, classroom visits)

Teachers frequently use formative assessment with students to track understanding during instruction. Students in many classes routinely receive positive feedback when they demonstrate they are understanding and learning concepts, and teachers provide alternative activities to give students further opportunities to fully grasp concepts. Students at HHS benefit from school-wide formative assessment practices tied to school-wide rubrics that provide feedback on student learning.

Some teachers at HHS differentiate instruction by using formative assessment and other information about students to inform their teaching practices. However, the practice is not prevalent throughout the school. Though in the past teachers attended a one-day workshop to help them learn how to differentiate instruction, the practice never took hold from lack of follow-up. Other initiatives became the focus of the teaching and learning practices, leaving differentiated instruction lower on the priority list. Though the practice is not currently a

priority, differentiating instruction for all students will deliver the school's curriculum in a way that more effectively meets the needs of all students.

Sometimes teachers purposefully group learning activities designed to engage students in in-depth learning. For example, music teachers encourage students to conduct group lessons to promote an understanding of the multiple cultural components contributing to a particular aspect of music history. However, not all teachers create opportunities for appropriate grouping practices. Greater use of small group strategies in the classroom will result in more student engagement and greater likelihood for achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. Teachers at Hanover High School are eager to go out of their way to support student learning in the classroom setting. All teachers at HHS are contractually required to provide extra help sessions from 2:06 to 2:36 PM after school, yet students report that teachers are flexible and generous with their time to help individual students. In a few classes, such as art, teachers strategically pair groups of students for maximum learning, but this is not common practice throughout the school. The provision of extra help for students is a way to improve student learning, and the use of alternative strategies in the classroom fosters an improved learning atmosphere for all students as they strive to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

On an individual basis, teachers improve instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, but their opportunities to do so collaboratively are virtually nonexistent due to the lack of common planning time, the institution of interdisciplinary teacher stations (pods), and the lack of shared students by teachers within a given pod. A positive development of late has been the institution of regular data team meetings

among teachers. Hanover High School will benefit from making the analysis of student data a regular practice to improve instruction.

Teachers have limited opportunities to examine student work to improve their instructional practices. Though the math, science, and English departments have implemented the use of benchmarks to evaluate student achievement, this initiative appears to have stalled in math and science. The benchmarks continue to provide information on student achievement in English, as teachers reflect on student learning and modify the benchmarks as needed. Individual, content-specific departments have been restructured into two larger units – the humanities and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). Though the intention of the restructuring was to increase the opportunities for various content areas to examine student work to improve instruction, the arrangement has reduced the ability of each content area to discuss and to make adjustments to instructional practices within specific content areas. It will certainly benefit the school to incorporate the core values, beliefs, and expectations promoted by HHS under the current structure by addressing the individual needs of the distinct content areas through common planning time or other similar opportunities to collaborate.

Teachers inconsistently use feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents to inform instruction. The availability of student work and the daily interaction between teacher and student provide teachers with ample evidence of student performance. This allows teachers to make necessary adjustments to their instructional practices. Teachers submitted numerous lessons showing how they have altered their instruction based on student input. For example, during class discussions, teachers often gauge student understanding through questioning, quick assessments, writing, and, on occasion, self-reflection. However, time and the current physical organization of the school restrict teachers' ability to tap into a rich

source of information from colleagues and supervisors. Supervisors may not be in touch with teachers on a daily basis, though they are available for teachers who need guidance and assistance. The role of parents is primarily to remain informed about their student's performance in class. In special circumstances, parents are involved in instructional decisions for their student if the student has an IEP or a 504. Teachers and parents communicate through e-mail, voice-mail, planned conferences, and informal conversations. When communication among all segments of the school community improves, the integration of the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations will be ensured.

HHS teachers infrequently examine current research to improve their instructional practices. In the 2010-2011 school year, four meetings (six hours) focused on project-based learning. The entire 2011-2012 professional development schedule was focused on the faculty's preparation for the NEASC visit in October of 2012. The 2012-2013 professional development calendar addresses implementation of the Common Core State Standards in reading and mathematics. By its very nature, this goal should involve examining current research as teachers change their instructional practices to integrate the Common Core. However, this work involves only two departments even though the Common Core addresses standards in other content areas. When teachers have increased opportunities to engage in the study of current research, their ability to incorporate the school's core values, beliefs, and to further the school's 21st century learning expectations will be enhanced. Until all stakeholders involved in educating students are fully invested in researched-based best instructional practices, the school will struggle to implement its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

HHS teachers occasionally engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Though 30 percent of the school's teachers reports that they belong to professional organizations,

not all of the organizations listed focus on professional literature that address topics and ideas that would be useful in the classroom. Coordinated Collegial Discussions (CCD) are an opportunity for teachers to gather in multi-disciplinary groups for conversations about instruction as well as for the analysis of student data. However, the discussions lack focus and direction and would benefit from increased structure. Twenty percent of teachers listed subscriptions to journals, magazines, and on-line organizations; some were of general interest such as Sports Illustrated, Newsweek, Time, and Atlantic Monthly. Due to lack of formal common planning time either inside or outside the school day, the opportunities for discourse on instructional strategies among teachers are limited. Regular discussions about instruction, both formal and informal, among faculty members will enhance the implementation of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

When teachers at Hanover High School individually and collectively embrace these strategies for improvement of their instructional practices, the opportunities for students across the curriculum to achieve the learning expectations will greatly increase. (self-study, students, classroom visits)

Teachers at HHS maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices on a very limited basis. Fewer than 20 percent of staff members responded to the survey asking them to indicate their currency in content areas. Many teachers listed magazines they read that are not pertinent to their teaching areas. Several teachers only listed the names of professional journals, giving no indication of how they reflect on their reading of current literature and best practices. Teachers are unhappy about the loss of departmental stations that used to allow them to reflect on content-specific issues alongside colleagues with whom they share a discipline. Opportunities to attend conferences and professional development programs

designed to improve their instructional practices are rare due to extremely limited resources. Students at HHS will benefit greatly when all of the school's teachers become fully involved in a regular practice of maintaining expertise in their content areas through reading professional literature, engaging in school-based literature exchanges, and attending conferences and meetings that specifically enhance their classroom instruction. (self-study, teacher interviews, teachers)

Commendations:

1. The positive relationship between teachers and students in the classroom and throughout the campus
2. The commitment to project-based learning activities that engage students actively
3. State-of-the-art instructional technology available in most every classroom
4. The use of effective formative assessment during instruction by individual teachers
5. Regular availability of teachers to support instruction outside of normal class time
6. Many varied opportunities for students to gain experience beyond the confines of the HHS campus
7. The institution of data teams to analyze data for the purpose of improving instruction

Recommendations:

1. Provide professional development to assist teachers in taking full advantage of the state-of-the-art technology available in the school
2. Establish instructional practices across the curriculum that are consistent with core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
3. Develop practices that promote personalized instruction in the classroom
4. Provide opportunities for professional development in differentiated instruction
5. Offer students more opportunities for self-reflection as a regular part of instruction
6. Examine the most efficient structure to promote cross-disciplinary instruction
7. Develop common formative assessments to improve the effectiveness of instruction
8. Provide greater structure to coordinated collegial discussions to ensure meaningful discourse on instructional practices
9. Ensure teachers have adequate opportunities to be reflective practitioners who maintain expertise in their content-specific instructional practices
10. Institute opportunities for common planning time for teachers for the purpose of sharing instructional practices
11. Examine the effect of increased class size on the ability to properly personalize instruction

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.

Conclusions:

Hanover High School does not yet have a fully-developed, formal process utilizing school-wide rubrics across the curriculum to monitor student achievement of its learning expectations. Certainly, the use of rubrics to inform students of teachers' expectations is a widespread practice. However, the rubrics are mostly generated by individual teachers for specific assessments. A significant number of teachers at Hanover High School use some school-wide rubrics in their courses to assess individual student 21st century learning expectations. The first rubrics to be piloted in the school include reading, writing, and technology rubrics. However, without an established protocol for use of school-wide rubrics across the curriculum by all teachers, the school cannot assess individual or school-wide achievement of its expectations. The rubrics were created over the last two years and are widely considered a work in progress, having been implemented in the 2011-2012 school year as a pilot program. Teachers were asked to use the rubrics one to three times per year. The goal is for teachers to implement these rubrics in order that students will be evaluated on achievement of the learning expectations several times before graduating. The writing rubric has been the most successfully implemented while the reading and speaking rubrics are not considered to be as accurate and will be undergoing considerable revision. The technology rubrics have been implemented when teachers give assignments that are considered technology-based. The rubric tied to the civic expectations has been utilized mainly by social studies teachers. The wellness rubric is used in the physical education department at the end of some units. There is evidence of the use of school-wide rubrics within

all subject areas; however, in many cases, assignments have teacher-specific rubrics. When a comprehensive set of school-wide, analytic rubrics and an established protocol for their use by all teachers is established and implemented, Hanover High School will be able to accurately and authentically measure its individual and school-wide progress toward its 21st century expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, existing rubrics)

There is little organized effort on the part of the school to communicate progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations at any time, either individually or school-wide. Students are informed of their progress in their course work eight times a year, via progress reports and end-of-quarter grades. Grades are available on X2 Aspen through the parent portal. Though there has been discussion of using the portal to communicate progress, parents are not informed in any way of their students' attainment of the targeted level of achievement based on use of the analytic rubrics. Thus, there is little communication with parents on either school or individual student progress toward the learning expectations. When more sustained and universal efforts are in place to communicate with parents on both school and individual student progress toward the achievement of the learning expectations, all stakeholders will be more invested in the goals of HHS. (assessment committee, teachers, self-study)

A majority (55.6 percent) of staff members, according to the Endicott survey, believes that they do not collect, disaggregate or analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement but there is clear effort in the district to improve the situation. Currently, there is no consistent review of student work by teachers after it has been assessed using school-wide analytic rubrics. The Hanover school district has created a position of district data manager to

coordinate the effort of collecting, analyzing, and reporting assessment results in all schools. The manager intends to facilitate the use of Aspen to collect data on individual and school-wide progress toward district learning goals. Data teams are being established at HHS in the current school year and have the potential of becoming an instrument for effective analysis of student data. However, the teams are at a nascent stage of development. When the teachers at Hanover High School adopt the practice of formally and regularly looking at student work through the use of the school-wide rubrics, they will be well positioned to help their students reach the 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, self-study, Endicott survey)

Given that the school has just recently adopted its 21st century learning expectations, teachers are not yet accustomed to communicating those school-wide expectations to students at the beginning of each unit of study. However, a large majority of students believes teachers regularly communicate unit-specific learning goals to students. Among the student body, seventy-five percent feels they understand in advance what will be assessed prior to each unit of study. When the teachers of Hanover High School align their unit specific goals with the 21st century learning expectations, there will be individual and school-wide measurable progress towards the goals. (self-study, teachers, assessment committee)

According to the Endicott survey, more than two-thirds of the teachers at Hanover High School use either school-wide or course-specific rubrics for some assignments. The majority of rubrics used are for specific projects or reports. The majority of the staff members do not feel well-trained in the use of rubrics and the samples provided show inconsistencies in the manner in which the rubrics have been implemented. Training and ongoing support in the use of the

school-wide rubrics is essential to benefit both the students and the teachers and to enable them to achieve the 21st century expectations. (assessment committee survey, student work, teachers)

An overwhelming majority of teachers reports using both summative and formative assessment strategies. There are no consistent assessment strategies among teachers of the same department or for the school as a whole, however. There is little to no alignment of the assessment strategies to the 21st century learning expectations. Rather, assessment is the work of individual teachers.

An example of a meaningful common assessment at Hanover High School is the capstone project known as the Senior Humanities Seminar course. In an effort to bolster student learning in the senior year and to create an assessment to measure multiple learning expectations, some teachers at Hanover High School planned an organic curriculum and designed the class to meet the needs of their senior students. The assessment process begins in November of the students' senior year, with eleven benchmark deadlines identified. At the beginning of this process, the students are required to identify their passion in life and what they want to learn more about. In the end of their 3rd quarter and the beginning of their 4th quarter, the students go to a related, off campus placement on a regular basis. The assessment rubric is the same for all students and expectations are clearly defined. The Humanities Project is an excellent beginning for creating 21st century learning and measuring student progress toward the school's learning expectations. When there is a school-wide program of assessment in place, based on school-wide rubrics, there will be a clear and consistent way to measure student progress toward achievement of the school's learning expectations. (students, teachers, assessment committee survey)

The majority of teachers at Hanover High School (63.5 percent) is not provided the time to collaborate regularly on the creation, analysis and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Collaborative collegial discussion time is available but the groups consist of teachers from mixed disciplines, making it difficult to collaborate on course-specific assessments. Due to the lack of common planning time, any discussion of assessments among teachers is conducted sporadically and informally. Dedicated, established time for all teachers to collaborate on assessment practices is needed for assessment to have an impact on achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, assessment committee, teachers)

Teachers at Hanover High assess schoolwork in a reasonable amount of time and provide specific, corrective feedback. Conversations with students indicate that major assessments are returned within one to two weeks. Students believe that teachers offer suggestions to help them improve their schoolwork. Conversations with students and examination of their work indicate that they receive useful feedback from teachers. The Endicott survey also shows that 52 percent of the students believes that their teachers' grading is fair and consistent. Continued timely, substantive feedback and provision of opportunity for revision by all teachers is needed in order to use assessments to improve learning. (Endicott survey, self-study, teachers, students)

Teachers use formative assessments on a regular basis in various forms as evidenced by review of homework, class participation, checks for understanding, and teachers' visual observation of student work. Teachers have little opportunity to collaborate regularly with their department colleagues about student performance or to share formative assessment techniques. Individual

teachers are using their own formative assessments during the class period. However, opportunities for collaboration would make common formative assessments even more powerful in the effort to measure progress toward the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, assessment committee, teachers)

The effort on the part of teachers and administrators to individually and collectively examine evidence of student learning needs to become more systematic and ingrained in the culture of the school. Currently, examination of evidence emphasizes MCAS-measured subjects and related benchmarks, as well as PSATs and SATs. In an effort to promote equity and create a common grade-level data source, the district has arranged for all sophomores and juniors to take the PSAT. There is little discussion surrounding common course or common grade-level assessments. With the formation of data teams as part of the 2012-2013 School Improvement Plan and with the cooperation of district leaders, the professional staff intends to study the data that results from the school's formative and summative assessments. The intent of the data team is to examine assessment results in order to improve instruction. Professional development is being offered to teachers for training in data team protocol and must be ongoing and sustained to have impact. If implemented properly, and with sustained support, data team discussions will lead Hanover High School to further progress in achieving 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, self-study, Endicott survey, SIP)

Grading and reporting practices are assumed to be fair and effective. In fact, there is no evidence that grade reporting practices are regularly reviewed or aligned with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Grade reporting has been updated using the X2 Aspen system using

electronic instead of printed progress reports and report cards. When alignment between grading/reporting practices and the core values and learning expectations is established, assessment will be meaningful and have an impactful presence on the achievement of 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, Endicott survey, assessment committee)

Commendations:

1. Creating the position of district data manager to coordinate the collection and analysis of assessment data
2. Initial implementation of interdisciplinary data teams to study assessment results
3. Use of benchmark assessments in English to measure student progress toward learning expectations
4. Creation of a few, selected school-wide analytic rubrics such as the common writing and technology rubrics
5. Use of the Senior Humanities Seminar course as a comprehensive assessment of the school's learning expectations
6. Individual use of formative assessment by teachers to improve instruction
7. Expanding the opportunity for all Hanover students to take the PSAT in an effort to gather achievement data and improve SAT scores

Recommendations:

1. Develop and fully implement school-wide rubrics aligned with the school's expectations for student learning
2. Develop a protocol for all professional staff in use of results of assessments particularly through the data teams
3. Align the system of reporting assessment results with core values and learning expectations on a more regular basis
4. Thoroughly examine grading practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning
5. Develop common assessments, aligned with the learning expectations, to be used by all teachers who teach the same course
6. Examine the prospect of expanding the Senior Humanities Seminar course to provide similar opportunities for all students to demonstrate achievement of the school's learning expectations

**COMMISSION ON
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

SUPPORT STANDARDS

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

5

School Culture and Leadership

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

1. The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.
2. The school is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course (English/language arts, social studies, math, science, or world languages).
3. There is a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
4. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff:
 - engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning
 - use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices
 - dedicate formal time to implement professional development
 - Apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
5. School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning.
6. The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.
7. Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students.
8. The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.
9. Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.
10. Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.

11. The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
12. The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

Conclusions

The vast majority of the Hanover High 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. The Hanover High School Handbook, which is re-examined annually, reflects high expectations that are required of all students. The handbook states that academic integrity “is the core of all education in the Hanover Schools.” Students at HHS “are expected to treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect.” Disciplinary procedures are stated in the handbook to address infractions against these expectations. The Conduct Actions log demonstrates the enforcement of these policies. The Hanover Handbook states, “Regular attendance and promptness are essential to a student’s academic career and social development.” According to the school and community summary the average attendance rate is 96.24 percent, demonstrating a strong adherence to the attendance policies in the handbook. Student and clerical staff interviews indicate that the policies are adhered to and enforced. Teachers are concerned, however, that chronically absent students still earn academic credit. The Student Intervention Team (SIT) is a support group made up of guidance counselors, the adjustment counselor, school psychologist, school nurse, special education coordinator, and assistant principal that meets regularly to track attendance and discipline of students. The team helps foster a caring and supportive school community. Data gathered from the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years show an increase in disciplinary actions. However, while disciplinary infractions have slightly increased, vandalism in the building has decreased. Building administrators claims that the vandalism has decreased because students and staff take pride in the new building. Hanover High School has a variety of clubs that are related to improving school culture, including the Diversity Club and Gay Straight

Alliance. Additionally, Hanover High School is in the process of implementing the Peace Builders program with the intent of reducing bullying. Several programs like science fair, the Internship program, and Humanities Capstone Project currently exist to demonstrate students' pride and ownership in their school and community. The student council recently won the school spirit award while competing against other schools in a state conference. Student fees for participation in extra-curricular activities are a concern for those wishing to encourage involvement in the life of the school. At one time there was a cap on athletic fees but this cap was recently removed and now students pay a \$270-per sport athletic fee for most sports, and \$350 for football, basketball, and hockey. Despite budget cuts, Hanover High School students take it upon themselves to initiate new clubs and organizations like book club and debate club. The majority of students at Hanover High School indicates that there are high expectations for learning, goal-setting, behavior, respect for others, and participation in school and community. As the Hanover High School community continues to foster a safe, positive, respectful and supportive environment where all voices are heard, school leaders, faculty members, and students join together in a unified effort to achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (Hanover handbook, self-study, teachers, students, school support staff, classroom observations, Endicott survey)

Hanover High School has made some efforts to heterogeneously group students in at least one core academic course throughout a student's high school career, though there is no guarantee that it will happen. An open enrollment policy for honors and AP courses is designed to encourage a wider range of students in the school's most challenging courses. Parents and students may override a teacher's recommendation for a course level, and this allows students to take different

classes than were initially recommended. All semester-long elective courses are heterogeneously grouped. One concrete effort made by the staff to address this concern is the addition of the Senior Humanities Seminar course. This is a heterogeneously grouped class required of seniors. However, twelfth grade students can opt out of the course by enrolling in an Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition. It should also be noted that six seniors chose to take both the Humanities Seminar and the AP English class. There is a significant difference in the degree of rigor between honors/AP classes and non-honors/AP classes with a tendency in the non-honors classes to spend time with assignments that demand rote memorization or student paraphrasing of material, whereas class activities of the honors and AP classes are more likely to demand that students analyze and interpret information, and draw their own conclusions. The implementation of project-based learning, a district priority, does not take place to the same degree in all classes at all levels. While the overwhelming majority of the student population is Caucasian, the small number of minority students was equally represented in classes at all levels. In order to create a school culture in which all students feel challenged, valued and included, it is important to continue to provide opportunities for all students to be able to interact and learn from each other in heterogeneously grouped classes. (self-study, master schedule, teachers, students)

Some efforts are made to pair each student with an adult, other than the guidance counselor, who will help to personalize the student's educational experience. The Peace Builders program was recently initiated and is committed to promoting unity, a positive school climate, and the prevention of bullying in the school. At this time, all students have not been assigned a mentor/advocate, other than their guidance counselor, who is able to assist the students in their

educational experience. There are a few formal programs that allow adults from the community to get to know and work with students at Hanover High School, including the popular internship program and the Senior Humanities Seminar. Currently, not all students are taking advantage of this opportunity. By implementing a formal program in which each student is assigned an adult member of the staff who can personalize the high school experience, Hanover High School will greatly enhance its chances for achieving its civic and social student learning expectations.

(teachers, self-study, program of studies)

An overwhelming majority of the faculty at Hanover High School feels that teachers are not offered appropriate professional development opportunities. The school has implemented a program called CCD, or collegial collaborative discussions, where teachers in various interdisciplinary pods have an opportunity to speak candidly about their concerns, and to discuss teaching and learning issues. These meetings occur twice per six-day cycle. One of the meetings is dedicated to the data team effort and another is for the sharing of best practices. The faculty members are in the process of implementing a topic of the week. Teachers take it upon themselves to share ideas informally. There is no formalized process to keep meeting notes or to forward reports of these meetings to the administration. The school administration spends a portion of its budget to hire outside consultants to train teachers on professional development days. There is no formal structure in place to share the best practices of current staff members, however. In the new building, teachers are physically organized in interdisciplinary pods and not in departments. As a result, teachers feel isolated from their disciplinary colleagues and less able to collaborate in a meaningful fashion. Some faculty members are currently using common assessments and instructional practices but the efforts are random and lack direction from

school-wide leadership. Much of the budget for professional development was cut in order to maintain staffing and programs. Professional development opportunities for teachers are not readily available, and those that are available focus on classroom management as opposed to instructional methods and practices. The majority of innovation in teaching and instructional practices comes from the efforts of individual teachers. When teachers are provided with appropriate professional development opportunities, as well as ample time and space for common planning and collaboration, they will be able to more consistently develop lessons and units rich in student engagement that challenge students at all levels with the appropriate rigor and higher-order thinking. (classroom observations, teachers, students, district professional development plan)

The school district uses a research-based evaluation and supervision process for professional staff that focuses on improved student learning. Currently, each teacher is evaluated at least once per year. Recently, the position of department chairperson was eliminated at the school and replaced with the positions of humanities director and STEM director. One of the reasons for the change was to have additional certified administrators available for teacher evaluations. The current evaluation and supervision system is implemented to be in compliance with the district collective bargaining agreement. Additionally, teachers fill out an individual professional development plan (IPDP) once every five years to fulfill license renewal requirements established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Teachers who have yet to achieve professional teacher status are to be given at least one interim evaluation and one summative evaluation each year for their first three years. In practice, those teachers often receive two more written evaluations in January and March of a given school year.

Teachers who have attained professional status are observed and evaluated in one of the five years comprising an IPDP cycle. During the remaining four years the teachers engage in professional development that includes collaboration, independent projects, and reflection. The Massachusetts regulations for teacher evaluation are changing and Hanover schools will follow suit. It is essential that, in order to improve student learning and mastery of a 21st century curriculum, that teachers have an evaluation process that is fair, equitable, individualized, and helpful as they continue to learn and perfect their craft. The lack of a comprehensive and implemented professional development and evaluation process inhibits student mastery of 21st century learning objectives. (teachers, teacher evaluation system, examination of student work)

The organization of time attempts to support research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. For example, early-release Tuesdays and professional development days permit faculty members time to complete district-wide initiatives such as curriculum mapping, co-teaching collaboration, data analysis, and project-based learning. However, there is no formal time for teachers to work collaboratively with fellow teachers on specific course curriculum. The new building design, complete with the pods, allows for informal interdisciplinary conversations. With this model, teachers do not have their own classrooms; rather, they move from room to room throughout the day. This movement hinders teachers' ability to fully utilize available technology. Because some teachers must teach in more than one classroom, teachers spend time setting up at the beginning of class, which in turn reduces time on learning. At the conclusion of last school year, the principal, members of the guidance department, and building union representatives met to review and revise the master schedule. The process resulted in a greater understanding of the scheduling process by members

of the professional staff. Despite this improvement in scheduling, large and uneven class sizes continue to be problems. Further improvements are necessary in order to make class sizes more equitable. The current class schedule is a six-day cycle that includes a mixture of “traditional” 50-minute classes, with two days of 90-minute blocks. Longer blocks are designed to assist teachers and students in project-based learning, to emphasize depth of understanding, and to facilitate science labs or technology-based mathematics classes. Aside from student bulletin boards outside of the art classrooms, there are little to no samples of student work placed in other classrooms. This is due, in large part, to the fact that teachers are assigned to a particular “pod” and not to an individual classroom. Classrooms are designed to be used by multiple teachers from multiple disciplines. It is essential that both the layout of the facility, and the organization and use of time and schedule be examined in order to maximize student learning and to fully reflect the core values of the school. (teachers, self-study, master schedule)

A significant increase in student enrollment and budget constraints, creating larger class sizes, hinders student mastery of 21st century learning objectives, as well as teachers’ ability to provide instruction while meeting individualized student needs. The school committee currently does not have an official recommendation for optimal class size, but the new building’s classrooms are designed for a maximum of 24 students. Class sizes vary between 8 and 31 students with many sections having over 27 students. Classrooms and learning spaces are designed in an unconventional manner, and there is a lack of clarity of how to best utilize the design given the number of classes with more than 24 students. Teachers in the Senior Humanities Seminar have student loads as large as 240 students, impacting their ability to effectively and efficiently plan and meaningfully assess work to help students to meet 21st century expectations. Among the rest

of the teaching staff, it is not unusual to find teachers with upwards of one hundred-fifty students. Optimal class sizes, particularly for students who require accommodations according to their IEP or 504 plans, are essential for teachers to provide quality differentiated instruction, provide appropriate individual attention, and give timely, detailed feedback so that all students can master 21st century learning objectives. (teachers, master schedule, self-study)

The building principal attempts to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The principal is visible, involved in every aspect of school life, and makes himself available for informal conversations or scheduled meetings.

The elimination of department chair positions and subsequent installation of curriculum director positions for the humanities and for STEM has had a significant impact on the channels of communication in the school. The director positions were instituted to facilitate curriculum development and effective teacher supervision and evaluation. Teachers saw department chair positions as vital cogs in the school's communication matrix. The Endicott survey indicates that an overwhelming majority of teachers feels that communication in the building is lacking.

Teachers note that faculty meetings are held after school once per month, but that the focus of the meetings seems to be more about logistics, rather than teaching and learning issues. It is essential that, in order to improve student mastery of 21st century learning objectives, the building leadership assists the professional staff members as they adapt to the new organizational structure and foster a culture of mutual understanding and focus on the school's core values and beliefs. (teachers, school leadership committee, Endicott survey)

Teachers, students, and parents are somewhat involved in decision-making but there are not many formal structures or practices that promote a sense of shared sense of responsibility and ownership. The shift from traditional department chairpersons to a leadership structure that includes two program leaders (humanities and STEM) has impacted the stream of communication within the school, leaving teachers feeling they have less of a voice in decision-making and less-informed about decisions being made for them. The building principal has made some efforts to allow the voices of all teachers and stakeholders to be heard with the re-introduction of a faculty senate, school council meetings, and participation in various parent and faculty department meetings. The process of building the school's master schedule has become more collaborative and transparent. An overwhelming majority of faculty members feels that decisions are usually made by the superintendent of schools, and, as a result, the building principal has difficulty providing effective instructional leadership. Due to the lack of formal opportunity to participate, faculty members feel that their voices are seldom heard or valued in any venue other than collective bargaining discussions involving union leadership. When the HHS community comes together and creates a decision-making culture that creates a shared sense of responsibility and ownership by all, all stakeholders will feel empowered and valued. (teachers, self-study, school leadership committee)

Teachers exercise limited initiative in leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. Faculty members feel that their efforts have produced little results, however. The district's professional development plan does not focus on teachers maintaining currency in their specific content and pedagogy. Focus is on implementing curriculum maps, preparing for the NEASC visit, and beginning to explore the project-based

learning model. There are few opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles within the building. Without teacher input and initiative, departments and individual teachers cannot grow or stay current in content and pedagogy, and, as a result, student mastery of 21st century learning objectives can be hindered. (teachers, school leadership committee, district professional development plan)

The school committee, superintendent, and principal are sometimes collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. This was most evident in the transition from the old Hanover High School building through the construction and to the occupancy of the new facility. The principal is often in attendance at the school committee meetings, reporting to and updating the committee and superintendent with developments at the high school. During these meetings effective listening and speaking skills are demonstrated among all three parties. The principal is able to convey updates, needs, and recommendations to the committee and superintendent through presentations at these meetings and the three parties are able to respectfully and constructively come to conclusions. There is dissatisfaction among the high school staff with the degree of open, two-way communication between those in the high school building and those in the central office. Whether the problem is real or merely perceived, the channels of communication should be examined in a reflective manner. When the school committee, superintendent, and principal all work collaboratively and constructively, the students at Hanover High will increase their opportunities to achieve 21st century learning expectations. (school committee agendas, self-study, teachers, administrators)

The Hanover school committee and superintendent do not provide the principal with a level of decision-making authority sufficient to lead the school toward achievement of its learning expectations. In the formal job description of the principal, it is clear that the principal reports directly to the superintendent and that the principal is responsible for providing effective instructional, organizational, managerial, and administrative leadership for the high school. Furthermore, the principal is responsible for the overall safety and welfare of all people in the building. With regard to teaching and learning, the principal is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the district's curriculum and recommending additions, deletions and modifications in instructional programs and courses to the superintendent. In emergency protocols the principal is the decision-making authority. The superintendent and the principal meet regularly to discuss school recommendations and needs but the final decision for most items often lies with the superintendent. Each year the principal presents to the school committee regarding budget, and while these recommendations are considered, the superintendent and school committee make the final decision. The Endicott survey results indicate that 87.3 percent of the faculty members does not feel that the school committee and superintendent provide the principal with enough authority to lead the school. When the school committee and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority then the principal will be able to foster the cooperation among the staff to lead the school toward its 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, Endicott survey, teachers)

Commendations:

1. A safe, positive, respectful, and supportive school culture
2. The degree of pride students display in their new school facility

3. A dedicated, enthusiastic teaching staff that is committed to the well-being of Hanover High School's students
4. Established co-curricular clubs that promote diversity and acceptance
5. Creation of the positions of curriculum leaders to enhance curriculum development and teacher evaluation
6. Implementation of regular discussions about data and student achievement at the data team level
7. Off-campus learning opportunities that foster positive relationships with adults beyond the walls of the school
8. Initiative and participation in planning some building-level projects such as the Humanities Project
9. The collaborative process of building the master schedule that resulted in greater understanding of the end results by the teaching staff
10. A culture where students feel a sense of community and generally love going to school at Hanover High School
11. A policy of open enrollment in honors courses to promote increased participation
12. A high attendance rate of 96.24 percent
13. Consistent enforcement of rules and policies resulting in an orderly and respectful learning environment

Recommendations:

1. Implement a formal program in which each student has an adult mentor other than his/her guidance counselor to personalize the high school experience

2. Ensure that students enroll in at least one heterogeneously-grouped, core class during their high school career
3. Ensure that class sizes are reasonable, equitable, and allow for individualized 21st century learning
4. Implement the new teacher evaluation regulations in a way that will best further the achievement of 21st century learning expectations
5. Ensure that the principal has enough decision-making authority at the building level to lead the faculty in the initiatives necessary for achieving the school's learning expectations
6. Create structures that will foster two-way communication between teachers and school leadership in the absence of department leaders
7. Create clarity for the purpose and relevance of all the current school reform initiatives being implemented by the district
8. Create more formal opportunities for teacher collaboration focused on the school's learning expectations
9. Examine the effect that increased user fees have on participation rates in extra-curricular activities



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

Conclusions

Hanover High School has some timely, coordinated and directive intervention strategies for students, including identified and at-risk students that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectation. The guidance department meets weekly as part of a Student Intervention Team (SIT) that includes all guidance and adjustment counselors, special education coordinator, the school nurse, the school psychologist and the assistant principal. The team is the first responder to teacher referrals and creates plans to provide appropriate services to students who are at risk either academically or personally. National Honor Society members volunteer as tutors after school in the library to assist other students. A new program, Peace Builders, is designed to engage the school community in addressing the challenges associated with bullying in school. The Friendship Connections program pairs regular education students with special education students to develop social skills. The special education department has a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) that sponsors events for parents and the community. The guidance department provides resources to students who are at risk. The staff members in the guidance, special education and nursing departments have an excellent working rapport and continue to reach out to students, families and community to seek the necessary services for students who are at risk. In 2010 the guidance staff was reduced by one counselor, and the position of assistant to the school nurse was eliminated several years prior to that. Special education has experienced an increase of eligible students in the current school year. The resulting increased workload has challenged the special education department with staffing inclusionary classrooms, as documented in master schedule. Despite the challenges of reduced staffing, guidance, adjustment, special education and the school nurse have worked collaboratively to address concerns with students. Staffing reduction forced the elimination of a

Peer Facilitators program, a mentor program that assisted students through the freshman transition to high school. In order for services to students to improve, the leadership of Hanover High School needs to address the staffing issues in guidance, special education and nursing to ensure that all students who are at risk are serviced in a manner that fosters their achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

(classroom observations, self-study, facility tour, small group meetings, evidence)

The school provides information to families, especially those most in need, about available student support services. The Student Intervention Team works with staff members to identify at-risk students. Communications with parents occur at the annual Open House, on the HHS website, especially the guidance site, and via Twitter, direct mail and Connect-Ed. The guidance website is dynamic and contains a variety of information regarding special services, notably contact information for members of the guidance department; the link to Naviance, a computer software program that helps students and families connect what students do in the classroom with their life goals, including finding colleges and careers based on their personal skills and areas of interests; and X2 Aspen, the student information management program that allows parents to follow their students' academic progress. Other links provide scholarship information and additional community resources. The link between support service providers and families is strengthened because the website is kept up-to-date, maintained by a technology staff member using information provided by the guidance department secretary, and because parents who do not have web access may contact the guidance department directly and use computers in the guidance office to access electronic resources. Because Hanover High School is committed to providing critical information about student support services, families are able to take advantage

of the services and increase student opportunities to achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interview, review of website, evidence, Endicott survey)

Support services staff uses technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Hanover High School transitioned to a brand new high school building to begin the 2011-2012 academic year. The new building includes state of the art technology for students, faculty and administration. Smart classrooms, a wireless school community, and laptops for faculty members are all signs of a school administration that is providing access to 21st century technology learning and skills. Guidance personnel use X2 Aspen to gather data to help in advising students. They use Naviance to assist all students with planning for life after high school. Guidance and special education staff members use E-Sped to help establish and distribute IEP and 504 plans for students who have unique individual educational needs. The library/media center provides excellent opportunities such as Virtual High School (VHS), an avenue for 25 students to take an on-line course in their respective areas of interest – courses not available in the program of studies or not possible due to scheduling conflicts. The library/media center also provides an extensive computer laboratory comprised of forty-eight stations for student use. Similar research computer laboratories are also available throughout the school building, in different sections or pods, for classroom and student use. The physical plant of Hanover High School and the commitment to technology are clear strengths of the school district and facilitate student achievement of the learning expectations. (classroom observations, self-study, facility tour, small group meetings, evidence)

School counseling services do not 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 to ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. In 2011, Hanover High School was forced to eliminate a guidance counselor position for budgetary reasons, thus increasing the student load for the remaining counselors. With a guidance staff composed of a director (0.4FTE), three counselors and one adjustment counselor, the department has not been adequately staffed during the last three years. Since the move to the new high school, the school experienced a population growth of over 125 students, increasing to over 750 students. The Massachusetts Model for School Counselors recommends a counselor/student ratio of 250/1. With the increase of students, each counselor now carries a caseload that surpasses established recommendations. The guidance department has established written curriculum and utilizes this curriculum at all grade levels. The staff employs technology to assist students with career and college planning using the Naviance software system. What is exciting for the guidance department is that a middle school module of Naviance was purchased, thus providing student input beginning three years prior to the students' high school experience. Outside of prescribed curriculum, the guidance staff remains accessible to all students and parents who are in need of assistance from the department during the school day. Special populations have challenged the staff due to time constraints such as the number of special education students, students with medical conditions who need accommodations, students at risk of dropping out of school, and the continued need to follow through with 504 students. The department reviews data such as

MCAS scores, PSAT, SAT, AP and ACT results as they pertain to course or college placement; however, it has identified that “achievement of the schools 21st century learning expectation does not have a clear system in place that uses ongoing, relevant assessment data”. The guidance department staff collaborates well and is collegial to one another but, unless the staff is increased, the counseling team will not be able to analyze data to support student progress in 21st century learning, nor to reinstate the Peer Facilitators program or increase outreach to groups of students as noted in the Massachusetts Model for School Counselors. (classroom observations, self-study, facility tour, small group meetings, evidence)

HHS has one certified/licensed school nurse who works collaboratively with athletic department staff members, HHS staff members, the Hanover Board of Health and the district physician to provide preventative health services and direct intervention services for students. She collaborates with parents to provide medical care assistance, conducts ongoing health programs required by state mandates, and serves on the school’s crisis and student intervention teams in coordination with the guidance department. At one time the medical staff included 1.5 FTE nurses and one receptionist/assistant. However, budget cuts over the last several years have necessitated the loss of the half-time nurse and the receptionist. The duties of the nurse include responding to emergencies, administering student medications, maintaining MIAA physical examination records, monitoring concussion regulations and students who have suffered concussions, ensuring that student immunizations are current, and attending special education team meetings. She uses assessment data aggregated via Healthmaster and town and state resources to identify needs to improve services. The nurse’s suite in the school building is large and provides discrete areas for specific functions. It was designed to have a receptionist at the

front door in an open space with ample waiting area, three rooms with cots for ill students, and an exam room where the nurse can see students and dispense medications. HHS has a highly skilled nurse and an up-to-date health suite, however students are not receiving optimum services because the nurse must perform all her duties at the front desk as there are no windows in any other spaces that would enable her to supervise students in the waiting area; she must spend much time on clerical tasks required by record keeping, rather than working directly with students and their families; and she does not have time to attend many guidance and special education meetings to support students. Despite the challenges presented by budget cuts, the school is able to provide students with adequate preventative and direct intervention health services. (self-study, facility tour, teacher interview, evidence box)

Library/media services are integrated into the curriculum, provide a collection of diverse materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum and are responsive to students' and faculty members' interests and needs. A budget of \$91,000.00 allocated to the library collection when the new school building opened in 2011 increased the collection and from 9,000 to over 12,000 print and electronic volumes; fewer than the 14,800 titles recommended by Massachusetts standards, but an updated base upon which to build. The annual material budget has decreased from \$8,700.00 in 2009-2010 to \$5,500.00 in 2011-2012, enabling the certified school library teacher (CSLT) to purchase only online database and periodical subscriptions, but no new books. The library is staffed by a CSLT who also taught a history class in the 2012-2013 school year. The CSLT maintains a Moodle site and the library website giving students and community members access to many resources both in the building and remotely from any location outside the building. She uses the core values and beliefs

document and works with faculty members and administrators to design lessons integrating 21st century information literacy skills across disciplines. Lack of common planning time hampers this effort. The CSLT administers the VHS and Advanced Placement programs and is the National Honor Society advisor. The library is open during the school day. It remains open on Monday through Thursday after school from 2:30 – 4:00 pm staffed by volunteers. Students visit the library regularly both as part of class groups and as individuals seeking a comfortable environment. HHS has a highly skilled librarian, a new library, an increased and updated collection and a library skills curriculum well-integrated into classroom lessons. However, the students are not receiving library services adequate to support their need to develop 21st century skills because the CLST is required to divide her time among so many diverse responsibilities. When the CLST is not required to divide her time among so many diverse responsibilities, students will receive library services to support their goals of developing 21st century skills. (classroom observations, self-study, facility tour, teacher interview, evidence)

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, are provided by certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff; provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The Student Intervention Team (SIT) works with teachers, administrators, guidance personnel, and the school nurse to identify, assess and document student needs. A Parent Advisory Council (PAC) comprised of parents of special education students meets monthly. A life-skills curriculum prepares students with special needs

to live on their own after graduation. Two programs, Partnership in Art, a course developed by an art teacher, and Friendship Connection, developed by a special education teacher, pair regular education students with special education students to develop art, social skills and life skills. The two vehicles for delivering services to learning disabled students are enrollment in an academic strategies class or in classes co-taught by regular and special education teachers. Staff size limits the number of co-taught classes; therefore special education co-teachers have been assigned first to ELA and math, second to biology to assist in preparation for MCAS, and third to history classes where much writing is required. There is no common planning time for the co-teachers. Special education teachers have observed that it is difficult for many of their students to keep up with subject area requirements and would prefer some dedicated remedial time. Co-taught class sizes are uneven with as few as fifteen and as many as twenty-eight in inclusion classes. The guidance director, the special education coordinator and the school nurse all note the need for a transitional program to provide service for students with short term physical or mental health needs who require accommodations as they return to school after extended absences. In FY12 the special education coordinator requested an additional 1.5 FTE staff increase and 0.4 FTE was added, leaving a 1.1 FTE deficit. Regular education staff has been reduced as well, resulting in problems with the master school schedule in creating equitable class sizes for all students. HHS has a dedicated special education staff that is hampered in providing services to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations by lack of sufficient staff in both special and regular education. (classroom observations, self-study, facility tour, small group meetings, evidence)

Commendations:

1. The Student Intervention Team that works collaboratively to assist students in need
2. The programs supporting students who are at risk, including Peace Builders, and the Parent Advisory Council
3. The influx of \$91,000 during the construction of the new school to update the collection in the library
4. The state of the art technology throughout the building
5. The Virtual High School and Moodle course options
6. The dedicated, supportive collegial guidance staff
7. The spacious and appropriate health suite
8. The up-to-date and informative guidance website
9. The participation of the nurse in all aspects of student physical and mental health activities
10. The use of electronic resources to provide information and to update parents about guidance programs
11. The CLST who administers the library and performs many other duties.
12. The new library that provides a variety of appropriate spaces for students and a well-developed collection of materials
13. The library website that provides students with access to resources outside the building
14. The CLST cooperative planning with faculty members to enable integration of 21st century skills across disciplines
15. The Partnership and Art and Friendship Connection programs for integrating special needs and regular education students as partners and collaborators

16. The dedicated special education staff

Recommendations:

1. Address the need for an appropriate number of guidance counselors
2. Institute a communications system to ensure that all families are receiving information in a timely manner
3. Ensure that the nurse's clinic is adequately staffed at all times
4. Provide adequate staff to allow the CSLT to return to full time work in the library
5. Address the need for adequate staff in the library to allow the CSLT to perform professional duties supporting the students' development of 21st century skills
6. Address the need for an appropriate number of special education teachers
7. Create common planning time for regular and special education co-teachers
8. Develop an evaluation system for guidance services

Support Standard



Community Resources for Learning

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

1. The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for:
 - a wide range of school programs and services
 - sufficient professional and support staff
 - ongoing professional development and curriculum revision
 - a full range of technology support
 - sufficient equipment
 - sufficient instructional materials and supplies.
2. The school develops, plans, and funds programs:
 - to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant
 - to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment
 - to keep the school clean on a daily basis.
3. The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses:
 - programs and services
 - enrollment changes and staffing needs
 - facility needs
 - technology
 - capital improvements.
4. Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.
5. The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services.
6. The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.
7. All professional staff actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.
8. The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

Conclusions

The town of Hanover has provided the funding for a new 21st century high school along with a full range of new technology and other equipment to allow students to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. However, the community has not been able to provide an adequate, dependable operating budget to support a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development or sufficient instructional materials and supplies. Since the 2008-2009 school year, Hanover High School has experienced an 18 percent increase in student population, while their instructional staff has decreased by 6 percent and funding for instructional supplies, textbooks, software and library books has decreased by 65 percent. The professional development funds for the district have been reduced by 50 percent and most of the remaining funds are used to reimburse faculty members for their individual tuition costs for graduate courses. As a result of these reductions, the graphic arts and Latin programs have been completely eliminated along with many extra-curricular activities. Bus transportation has been eliminated at the high school, requiring alternative sources of transportation for students. The former one-time fee for participation in the athletic program has been replaced by a fee structure requiring parents to pay \$350 per student for football, hockey and basketball, and \$270 for all other sports with no family cap. The drastic increase in athletic fees causes parents to make difficult economic choices with and for their children, and jeopardizes participation. Due to staff reductions, a large number of classes have more than 25 students enrolled. In spite of the large classes, however, all students express that teachers are available when students need extra help. Students who are unable to enroll in their initial course options because of lack of availability of sufficient course sections are provided with alternate elective choices. The building's professional development opportunities

have been significantly decreased, hampering the school's ability to progress toward its learning expectations. The library budget has been cut to \$5,800.00 per year, which does not sustain a current media collection, as the high school is required to pay for memberships to various research engines such as Ebsco and JSTOR. The serious concern of the teaching staff is that increased student loads of up to 130 students will compromise the ability to provide meaningful feedback on assessments. The lack of professional development support causes inconsistent implementation of the new technology and software such as X2 Aspen student information support, Curriculum Mapper, Moodle and interactive whiteboards. When there is increased support from the community for adequate staff, professional development, and instructional materials to complement the new school building, students' ability to achieve Hanover High School's academic, civic, and social learning expectations will dramatically increase. (self-study, parents, teachers, superintendent, principal, students)

Hanover High School develops, plans and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the school building, properly maintain, catalogue and replace equipment and keep the school clean on a daily basis. Hanover High School is a new, 21st century building that opened in September of 2011. It is well-maintained, repaired, and kept clean on a daily basis. Facilities maintenance personnel are employed by the Town of Hanover rather than by the Hanover School District. Maintenance Direct, a work-flow management software, streamlines the timeliness of all maintenance work and repairs. State-of-the-art computer systems (Delta Controls and Schneider Electrical Software) promote economically efficient energy use, maintenance and repair of the new high school. All major facilities equipment is maintained and replaced based on a formal repair/replacement plan being developed by the town engineer and funded through

the capital improvement budget. Hanover High School students are receiving their education in a clean, efficient 21st century facility. (self-study, facilities engineer, director of maintenance, staff members, observation)

The Town of Hanover has a long-range plan for facility needs and capital improvements, which is funded through the capital improvement budget. However, there is no written, long-range plan developed for programs and services, enrollment changes, staffing needs and technology. As funds become available, decisions are made based on priorities at the time. Hanover High School has developed a two- and five-year strategic plan that addresses concerns raised by the NEASC self-study. The plan sets goals but does not address how this strategy will be supported by the budgets for the upcoming years. The Hanover school committee has requested an educational needs budget, as well as a level-services and level-funded budget, for the FY2014 school year. Additionally, the Town of Hanover has budgeted \$40,000 to conduct an audit of the school department's operating budget. Progress towards an educational needs budget is required in order to implement strategic educational plans to support the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, principal, superintendent, parents, school committee)

At Hanover High School faculty members and building administrators are involved in the development and implementation of the budget at varied levels. The superintendent and building principals determine the priority needs within each building based upon available monies. The principal at Hanover High School, as part of the administrative team, explains the budgetary needs to the school committee in a public session. Prior to his presentation, the teachers are asked to provide requested needs to the building principal. The needs are prioritized for each department based on available funding. In lieu of department heads, the STEM Director and

Humanities Director work with the principal to coordinate the determination of how available funds will be spent within various disciplines. Although teachers had substantial input into the initial design of their instructional spaces in the new high school building, many teachers report that their suggestions are not evidenced in the final design. Due to the budgetary constraints over the past five years, there is a perception of disconnect between the town, school committee, administrators and faculty members over the authority for making budgetary decisions, resulting in an almost-universal perception among the faculty and staff that Hanover High School is not properly supported by the community. (principal, staff members, school committee)

Hanover High School's facility supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services. Built in 2011 through the support of the community and the Massachusetts School Building Authority, the building provides space and facilities to ensure full implementation of the educational program. Each science classroom provides 21st century scientific labs that support innovative project-based curriculum. The library/media center has been supplied with new books through the building project, local donations, and grants. The library/media center is appropriate in space and adequately equipped to support a 21st century curriculum as well as independent research and inquiry. The cafeteria/student dining services and the food preparation areas are sufficient in size and adequately equipped. The visual and performing arts, physical education, technology, television production, and special education facilities are more than adequate to deliver high quality school programs and services. The building provides a sufficient number of classrooms to deliver high quality, core academic programs and has additional classrooms available for future enrollment growth. The teachers are provided with multi-function work space within their pods. Each teacher is given his/her own work station, file

cabinets and closets. The administrative offices and conference rooms, guidance reception, offices and private conference rooms, and health suite all incorporate suitable space for confidentiality and student privacy. One exception is the location of the town engineer's office, which is located in close proximity to the area used to provide student support services. The normal business traffic of maintaining town facilities makes it difficult to provide confidential services to students. The outdoor space includes safe and secure parking for teachers, students and visitors. Athletic facilities include an artificial, lighted turf field surrounded by a synthetic track, multiple natural grass fields, and concession facilities. The community of Hanover has gone to great lengths to provide students and staff members with a new facility that supports the school's 21st century learning expectations. (observation, facilities engineer, director of maintenance, teachers)

Hanover High 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. All areas have adequate ventilation, temperature control, air quality and are handicap accessible, thus providing a healthy and safe learning environment for the students of Hanover High School. (observation, facilities engineer, director of maintenance)

At Hanover High School, professional staff members welcome parent and family input, but there is no procedure in place to reach out to families who, traditionally, are not engaged in their student's education. For example, teachers are expected to report back to parent-initiated contacts within forty-eight hours. Mid-term and final-term grades are accessible to parents through the parent portal on X2 Aspen. Many teachers post assignments online using Moodle.

All parents are invited to Back to School Night, Open House, the HHS science fair, music performances and many parents are directly involved with the Internship program for senior students. The district has an active PTO group, with liaisons for each building. Although the high school reaches out to the parents and community through the use of the website, there is no embedded, consistent practice to reach out to parents of students who are not engaged in their education. Parents of children who would most benefit from teacher initiated engagement to assist the students in achieving 21st century learning experience will be well-served by consistent embedded conferencing from all professional staff. (parents, teachers, Endicott survey)

Hanover High School develops productive parent, community, and business partnerships that support student learning, but has limited partnerships with higher education. During the current year, seventy students are in the Internship program that connects them with community businesses and agencies. An additional eleven students are in School-to-Work programs. Five local businesses partner with the Hanover High School life skills program for disabled students. All Advanced Placement English students write articles which are published in the Hanover Mariner, the local newspaper. Last year, 38 students and 3 faculty members participated in a two-week art exhibit at a local gallery and 32 community members were judges for the school science fair. There are no institutions of higher learning within easy commuting distance from Hanover High School, so there is little partnership with higher education. There is currently one student who studies at Bridgewater State University while still enrolled at Hanover High School. The school's commitment to outreach beyond the normal walls of the school allows students to have authentic learning experiences and develop social responsibility and global awareness. (self-study, students, faculty members)

Commendations

1. The support from the Town of Hanover that led to the building of the new Hanover High School
2. The Hanover High School facility, which is magnificently equipped, welcomes students, and supports 21st century learning expectations
3. The commitment of Hanover High School's administration to maintain diverse programs to meet a wide variety of interests
4. The use of software to promote economically responsible use, maintenance and repair of the facility
5. Up-to-date technology to support the school's learning expectations
6. The proposal of a budget that is based on educational need
7. The internship program involving community businesses and agencies
8. Faculty members' initiative to help students to be successful, in spite of large class sizes
9. The excellent maintenance and cleanliness of the facility
10. Active support from the Hanover parents association

Recommendations

1. Provide professional development to support the variety of new initiatives including technology, project-based learning, curriculum mapping, co-teaching and interdisciplinary approaches
2. Evaluate the effect of the increased athletic fees on student participation

3. Develop a financially sustainable long-term plan to support technology, program/services and staffing that aligns with the school's core values
4. Develop a plan to communicate the budget process so that all stakeholders understand both the financial constraints and the 21st century learning needs
5. Develop outreach strategies for families who are not typically involved in their children's education
6. Develop consistent processes and expectations for parent/student access to grades and student assignments through the portal
7. Bring staffing up to a reasonable level that allows all students adequate opportunities to achieve 21st century learning expectations
8. Ensure that student support services have the privacy needed to support student learning
9. Develop a strategy that will provide the resources necessary to restore the wellness curriculum

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Since it is in the best interest of the students that the citizens of the district become aware of the strengths and limitations of the school and suggested recommendations for improvement, the Commission requires that the evaluation report be made public in accordance with the Commission'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 Commission as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. To monitor the school's progress in the Follow-Up Program, the Commission requires that the principal of Hanover High School submit routine Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports documenting the current status of all evaluation report recommendations, with particular detail provided for any recommendation which may have been rejected or those items on which no action has been taken. In addition, responses must be detailed on all recommendations highlighted by the Commission in its notification letters to the school. School officials are expected to have completed or be in the final stages of completion of all valid visiting committee

recommendations by the time the Five-Year Progress Report is submitted. The Commission may request additional Special Progress Reports if one or more of the Standards are not being met in a satisfactory manner or if additional information is needed on matters relating to evaluation report recommendations or substantive changes in the school.

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Commission has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Commission within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Commission's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 91. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Commission office has current statistical data on the school.

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

The visiting committee was extremely appreciative of the hospitality afforded them by Hanover High School and the community of Hanover during the visit. Committee members were made to feel welcome, comfortable, and valued during their stay. They left with a complete understanding of the school's core values and beliefs and optimism for the school's future.

**Hanover High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
October 21-24, 2012**

Visiting Committee

Robert Littlefield, Chair
Portsmouth High School
Portsmouth, Rhode Island

Douglas Holley
Hingham High School
Hingham, Massachusetts

James Pignataro, Assistant Chair
Grafton High School
Grafton, Massachusetts

Richard Johnson
Milford High School
Milford, Massachusetts

Charles Bradshaw
Wahconah Regional High School
Dalton, Massachusetts

Janice Kovach
Triton Regional High School
Byfield, Massachusetts

Mary Braney
Westwood Public Schools
Westwood, Massachusetts

John Laflamme
Dedham High School
Dedham, Massachusetts

Nadine Ekstrom
Berlin-Boylston School District
Boylston, Massachusetts

John Marderosian
Southbridge High School
Southbridge, Massachusetts

David Ellis
Bartlett Jr/Sr High School
Webster, Massachusetts

Amy Messerlian
North Kingstown High School
North Kingstown, Rhode Island

Scott Gauthier
Narragansett Regional High School
Baldwinville, Massachusetts

Allison Nagle
Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School
Yarmouth, Massachusetts

Cathy Harp
Oliver Ames High School
North Easton, Massachusetts

Elizabeth Powers
Littleton High School
Littleton, Massachusetts

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

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

Commendations and Recommendations by Standard

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Commendations:

1. The dynamic, inclusive, and collaborative process used to identify and commit to a core values and beliefs statement
2. The research-based practices used to inform the development of the core values and beliefs
3. The school's measurable and challenging 21st century learning expectations
4. The programs available at the school to support the 21st century learning expectations including school-to-work, internships, the Humanities Project, and Virtual High School
5. The school's plan to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
6. The highly student-oriented teaching staff
7. The implementation of multidisciplinary data teams to analyze multiple sources of data in an effort to measure progress toward learning expectations
8. The concern for student achievement that is evident throughout the school

Recommendations:

1. Create a greater understanding and appreciation of the core values and learning expectations among school staff members, students, and parents
2. Regularly emphasize the relationship between individual course goals and the school's learning expectations
3. Ensure that the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school

4. Ensure that the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the curriculum, instruction and assessment within the school
5. Identify the targeted level of achievement for the school-wide rubrics

Curriculum

Commendations

5. The work done to create curriculum maps in most courses
6. The adoption of the curriculum mapping software to provide a common format for curriculum
7. The evidence of higher-order thinking skills, inquiry, and problem-solving in project-based learning within the curriculum
8. The authentic learning opportunities present in the curriculum through programs such as the School-to-Work program, Internship program, Humanities Capstone Project, and Web Marketing course

Recommendations

1. Align curriculum maps with the 21st century learning expectations
2. Identify and implement secondary responsibility for teaching and assessing 21st learning expectations (delete this one – not part of the standards)
3. Examine Project-Based Learning Assessments and identify opportunities for cross-disciplinary connections
4. Develop and implement a consistent school-wide procedure to ensure written curriculum is being taught

5. Develop a plan to implement vertical articulation with sending schools
6. Provide adequate funding to provide equitable services across and amongst courses and to sufficiently implement the curriculum
7. Examine schedule options to provide more equitable class sizes

Instruction

Commendations:

1. The positive relationship between teachers and students in the classroom and throughout the campus
2. The commitment to project-based learning activities that engage students actively
3. State-of-the-art instructional technology available in most every classroom
4. The use of effective formative assessment during instruction by individual teachers
5. Regular availability of teachers to support instruction outside of normal class time
6. Many varied opportunities for students to gain experience beyond the confines of the HHS campus
7. The institution of data teams to analyze data for the purpose of improving instruction

Recommendations:

1. Provide professional development to assist teachers in taking full advantage of the state-of-the-art technology available in the school
2. Establish instructional practices across the curriculum that are consistent with core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
3. Develop practices that promote personalized instruction in the classroom
4. Provide opportunities for professional development in differentiated instruction

5. Offer students more opportunities for self-reflection as a regular part of instruction
6. Examine the most efficient structure to promote cross-disciplinary instruction
7. Develop common formative assessments to improve the effectiveness of instruction
8. Provide greater structure to coordinated collegial discussions to ensure meaningful discourse on instructional practices
9. Ensure teachers have adequate opportunities to be reflective practitioners who maintain expertise in their content-specific instructional practices
10. Institute opportunities for common planning time for teachers for the purpose of sharing instructional practices
11. Examine the effect of increased class size on the ability to properly personalize instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Commendations:

1. Creating the position of district data manager to coordinate the collection and analysis of assessment data
2. Initial implementation of interdisciplinary data teams to study assessment results
3. Use of benchmark assessments in English to measure student progress toward learning expectations
4. The district-wide initiative to implement TestWiz as a tool to create some common assessments
5. Creation of a few, selected school-wide analytic rubrics such as the common writing rubric

6. Use of the Senior Humanities Seminar course as a comprehensive assessment of the school's learning expectations
7. Individual use of formative assessment by teachers to improve instruction
8. Expanding the opportunity for all Hanover students to take the PSAT in an effort to gather achievement data and improve SAT scores

Recommendations:

1. Develop and fully implement school-wide rubrics aligned with the school's expectations for student learning
2. Develop a protocol for all professional staff in use of results of assessments particularly through the data teams
3. Align the system of reporting assessment results with core values and learning expectations on a more regular basis
4. Thoroughly examine grading practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning
5. Develop common assessments, aligned with the learning expectations, to be used by all teachers who teach the same course
6. Examine the prospect of expanding the Senior Humanities Seminar course to provide similar opportunities for all students to demonstrate achievement of the school's learning expectations

School Culture and Leadership

Commendations:

1. A safe, positive, respectful, and supportive school culture
2. The degree of pride students display in their new school facility

3. A dedicated, enthusiastic teaching staff that is committed to the well-being of Hanover High School's students
4. Established co-curricular clubs that promote diversity and acceptance
5. Creation of the positions of curriculum leaders to enhance curriculum development and teacher evaluation
6. Implementation of regular discussions about data and student achievement at the data team level
7. Off-campus learning opportunities that foster positive relationships with adults beyond the walls of the school
8. Initiative and participation in planning some building-level projects such as the Senior Humanities Seminar
9. The collaborative process of building the master schedule that resulted in greater understanding of the end results by the teaching staff
10. A culture where students feel a sense of community and generally love going to school at Hanover High School
11. A policy of open enrollment in honors courses to promote increased participation
12. A high attendance rate of 96.24 percent
13. Consistent enforcement of rules and policies resulting in an orderly and respectful learning environment

Recommendations:

1. Implement a formal program in which each student has an adult mentor other than his/her guidance counselor to personalize the high school experience

2. Ensure that students enroll in at least one heterogeneously-grouped, core class during their high school career
3. Ensure that class sizes are reasonable, equitable, and allow for individualized 21st century learning
4. Implement the new teacher evaluation regulations in a way that will best further the achievement of 21st century learning expectations
5. Ensure that the principal has enough decision-making authority at the building level to lead the faculty in the initiatives necessary for achieving the school's learning expectations
6. Create structures that will foster two-way communication between teachers and school leadership in the absence of department leaders
7. Create clarity for the purpose and relevance of all the current school reform initiatives being implemented by the district
8. Create more formal opportunities for teacher collaboration focused on the school's learning expectations
9. Examine the effect that increased user fees have on participation rates in extra-curricular activities

School Resources for Learning

Commendations:

1. The Student Intervention Team that works collaboratively to assist students in need
2. The programs supporting students who are at risk, including Peace Builders and the Parent Advisory Committee
3. The state of the art technology throughout the building

4. The Virtual High School and Moodle course options
5. The dedicated, supportive collegial guidance staff
6. The spacious and appropriate health suite
7. The up-to-date and informative guidance website
8. The participation of the nurse in all aspects of student physical and mental health activities
9. The use of electronic resources to provide information and to update parents about guidance programs
10. The CLST who administers the library and performs many other duties.
11. The new library that provides a variety of appropriate spaces for students and a well-developed collection of materials
12. The library website that provides students with access to resources outside the building
13. The CLST cooperative planning with faculty members to enable integration of 21st century skills across disciplines
14. The Partnership and Art and Friendship Connection programs for integrating special needs and regular education students as partners and collaborators
15. The dedicated special education staff

Recommendations:

1. Address the need for an appropriate number of guidance counselors
2. Institute a communications system to ensure that all families are receiving information in a timely manner
3. Ensure that the nurse's clinic is adequately staffed at all times
4. Provide adequate staff to allow the CSLT to return to full time work in the library

5. Address the need for adequate staff in the library to allow the CSLT to perform professional duties supporting the students' development of 21st century skills
6. Address the need for an appropriate number of special education teachers
7. Create common planning time for regular and special education co-teachers
8. Develop an evaluation system for guidance services

Community Resources for Learning

Commendations

1. The support from the Town of Hanover that led to the building of the new Hanover High School
2. The Hanover High School facility, which is magnificently equipped, welcomes students, and supports 21st century learning expectations
3. The commitment of Hanover High School's administration to maintain diverse programs to meet a wide variety of interests
4. The use of software to promote economically responsible use, maintenance and repair of the facility
5. Up-to-date technology to support the school's learning expectations
6. The proposal of a budget that is based on educational need
7. The internship program involving community businesses and agencies
8. Faculty members' initiative to help students to be successful, in spite of large class sizes
9. The excellent maintenance and cleanliness of the facility
10. Active support from the Hanover parents association

Recommendations:

1. Provide professional development to support the variety of new initiatives including

technology, project-based learning, curriculum mapping, co-teaching and interdisciplinary approaches

2. Evaluate the effect of the increased athletic fees on student participation
3. Develop a financially sustainable long-term plan to support technology, program/services and staffing that aligns with the school's core values
4. Develop a plan to communicate the budget process so that all stakeholders understand both the financial constraints and the 21st century learning needs
5. Develop outreach strategies for families who are not typically involved in their children's education
6. Develop consistent processes and expectations for parent/student access to grades and student assignments through the portal
7. Bring staffing up to a level that allows all students adequate opportunities to achieve 21st century learning expectations
8. Ensure that student support services have the privacy needed to support student learning