



2020 - A VISION FOR LEARNING

# SELF-REFLECTION

## Guide for Accreditation

for Public Elementary, Middle and High Schools seeking Accreditation

Revised Fall 2021

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES  
Commission on Public Schools

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# The School's Self-Reflection

In year one of the Accreditation cycle, the school reflects on its alignment to the NEASC Standards. The purpose of the Self-Reflection is to gather and examine sufficient evidence to evaluate the school's alignment to the Standards. The Self-Reflection phase and related data collection informs the school's plan for growth. It should be viewed as a research and reflection step to help the school sharpen its vision and action steps for continuous improvement. Overall, the time required to complete the Self-Reflection will be approximately two to six months.

## Self-Reflection Committee

The school will develop a committee to conduct the Self-Reflection and write the Self-Reflection report.

- The Self-Reflection committee determines the extent to which the school is aligned to the Standards for Accreditation through a reflective process based on evidence.
- One Self-Reflection committee, made up of various members of the school community, reviews all the Standards or, alternately, several smaller sub-committees can be formed to assist in completing the Self-Reflection.
- The committee(s) is representative of multiple stakeholders in the school community, such as administrators, teachers, other professional staff, support staff, parents, students, community members, etc.
- The committee engages school faculty in the Self-Reflection phase through involvement in the collection of evidence, providing input and feedback, and through regular progress updates.

The Self-Reflection Committee is primarily responsible for completing the Self-Reflection report. However, the committee should find ways to include and draw information from faculty, administration, students, families, and other stakeholders as it completes the Self-Reflection.

The Self-Reflection committee should start its work by completing Parts 1 and 2 of the Self-Reflection report. The committee should enlist additional help from faculty and administration in sections where evidence or background knowledge is needed. The committee should have a thorough discussion about information in all parts of the report and ensure that all committee members are in consensus that the report reflects the school accurately.

## Survey and Evidence Collection

Prior to beginning the Self-Reflection, the school will conduct a survey of students, parents, and faculty members. The survey provides external perspective to help assess the school's alignment to the Standards for Accreditation. The survey tool will be provided to schools from NEASC at no cost. This external survey data is used as evidence during the Self-Reflection phase.

In addition to the survey data, the school will collect other existing evidence to help determine its alignment with the Standards. The purpose of collecting evidence for the Self-Reflection is to assess the school's alignment with the Standards and to provide documentation for the Self-Reflection report. Evidence should include, but is not limited to, student achievement data, student work, curricular documents, classroom observations, minutes and notes from professional collaboration, external survey data, and other input from stakeholder groups. As evidence is gathered and discussed, the Self-Reflection committee may change, evolve, alter, or refine its conclusions.

# Self-Reflection Report

## Part 1 – Look Back

In Part 1, provide a brief look back at recent milestones, improvements, and existing priorities for the school. Consider the following questions in the response:

- What goals has the school prioritized over the past 3–5 years?
- From a whole-school perspective, what is the faculty/school most proud of? What are they most concerned about?
- What has changed or improved related to the Standards for Accreditation since the last Decennial Accreditation Visit?
- What was recommended by the last visiting team that is still a priority?

## Part 2 – Current Conditions

In Part 2, assess and review the school’s current alignment to each Principle of Effective Practice in the Standards. As part of this review of current conditions, determine the school’s strengths and areas for growth in each Standard. Please use the following process to complete this section of the report.

### A. Unpack the Standards, Principles, and Elements

Start by reviewing the five Standards for Accreditation. Read the descriptions of each Standard and then read and discuss the Principles within each Standard, reviewing the descriptors that serve as guidance for each Principle. Look at individual elements within the Principles and ensure that all members of the committee have a clear understanding of what they mean.

In reviewing the elements, take notice of the Foundational Elements within each Standard. These are the Elements that schools must be aligned to in order to be accredited. Review the Foundational Elements Rubric (See Appendix C) to gain an initial understanding about how the school is meeting the Foundational Elements.

Next, review the Principle Rubric (See Appendix D) and the descriptions for each phase of implementation: Not Yet Evident, Initiating, Developing, Implementing, or Transforming. Begin to think about how the school aligns with each Principle.

### B. Collect evidence

Before drawing conclusions about the school’s alignment to the Foundational Elements and the Principles, the Self-Reflection committee needs to gather evidence. Evidence can be in many forms. For example, faculty discussions, external survey data, student work, student achievement data, school documents, curricular documents, minutes and notes from professional collaboration, meetings with students, families, and other stakeholders, observations of teaching practice, and photographic, audio, and video artifacts can all be used as evidence. Emphasis should be placed on gathering existing evidence in the school, not on creating evidence for the purpose of the Self-Reflection. (See Appendixes A and B for examples of evidence to consider)

As evidence is collected, it can be uploaded directly and saved in the NEASC Accreditation Portal. The Self-Reflection committee uses the evidence to determine whether the school meets each of the Foundational Elements and at what level the school is aligned with each Principle.

### C. Analyze the evidence and make a determination based on the rubric for each Foundational Element and each Principle of Effective Practice

As evidence is collected, engage the Self-Reflection committee in a thorough discussion about what this evidence says about the school’s alignment to the Foundational Elements and the Principles of Effective Practice. Based on the evidence collected and the section on questions to consider for the Foundational Elements and the Principles (see Appendixes A and B), the committee will make a determination as to whether the school meets each of the Foundational Elements, and at what level the school is aligned to each Principle of Effective Practice in accordance with the Principle Rubric.

Use the Foundational Elements Rubric to determine if the school “Meets” or “Does Not Meet” each Foundational Element. Next, use the Principle Rubric to evaluate at what level the school is aligned with each Principle of Effective Practice based on the phases of implementation defined in the Principle Rubric: *Not Yet Evident*, *Initiating*, *Developing*, *Implementing*, or *Transforming*. To use the rubric, start on the left side with “Not Yet Evident” and continue moving across the rubric to the right to determine the description that best describes the school’s alignment with each Principle. Record the committee’s determination for each Foundational Element and each Principle in the NEASC Accreditation Portal.

#### **D. Write a Narrative for each Foundational Element and Principle and upload supporting evidence**

Write a narrative in the NEASC online portal explaining the committee’s rating for each Foundational Element (Meets or Does Not Meet) based on the rubric. Upload the narrative and representative evidence used to make the determination to the NEASC online portal. Narratives for the Foundational Elements can be brief because additional information for each Element will be included in the narratives for the corresponding Principle. Narratives and evidence for the Foundational Elements can be used again with corresponding Principles.

After completing the narratives for each Foundational Element, write a narrative for each Principle in the NEASC online portal, explaining how the committee made the determination about alignment based on the rubric (*Not Yet Evident*, *Initiating*, *Developing*, *Implementing*, or *Transforming*). Describe elements of the Principle with which school is aligned and which elements still need additional work to ensure alignment. Explain what the school needs to do in order to fully implement that Principle in the school. Use the descriptors for each Principle as guidance. Feel free to include these descriptors as topic sentences for paragraphs or questions to answer in the narrative. The length of each narrative description will vary based on the school’s level of alignment to the Principle and the elements encompassed by each Principle. After the narrative is written, upload the representative evidence for each Principle to the NEASC Accreditation Portal to support the committee’s conclusions.

#### **E. Identify strengths and areas for growth in each Standard**

After the narrative has been completed for each Principle, the committee determines overall strengths and areas for growth within each Standard. Strengths are areas where the school is well aligned with the Principles and areas for growth indicate where the school needs additional work to align with a particular Principle.

#### **F. Faculty review and approval**

When Part 2 of the Self-Reflection is finished, the full faculty must review and vote to approve it. It is recommended that the faculty review, discuss, and vote on the Self-Reflection committee’s determination and documentation for each Standard individually, rather than voting on the whole report at one time. A 2/3 majority vote by the faculty is required to approve Part 2 of the Self-Reflection report; however, a 4/5 or 80 percent majority vote is preferred.

### **Part 3 – The School as a Learning Organization**

In Part 3, evaluate the school as a learning organization. A learning organization is committed to constant growth, consistently facilitates the learning of its members, and continuously evolves. Schools whose cultures, structures, and processes facilitate ongoing student, adult, and organizational learning are learning organizations.

#### **Conceptual Understanding**

Is there a shared understanding of effective learning for students, educators, and the organization?

##### Writing Prompts

- Describe the school’s beliefs about learning, based on documentation or implicit agreements on what the school values and prioritizes as effective learning
- Describe the school’s understanding of the key concepts within its definition of effective learning
- What are the strengths within the school’s Conceptual understanding? What needs attention? In what ways? What are the logical next steps to ensure the Conceptual understanding fully supports the school’s development as a learning organization?

## **Commitment**

To what extent are members of the school community committed to the school's understanding of effective learning for students, educators, and the organization?

### Writing Prompts

- Explain the extent to which the school's understanding of effective learning has been endorsed by stakeholders, including educators, students, families, and the school board/committee
- Describe the extent to which the school's understanding of effective learning influences practice
- To what extent are members of the school community committed to a growth mindset for students as demonstrated through documents, policies, or informal practices? For educators? For the school?
- To what extent is the school community committed to ongoing school improvement?
- What are the strengths within the school's Commitment? What needs attention? In what ways? What are the logical next steps to ensure Commitment fully supports the school's development as a learning organization?

## **Competency**

To what extent do educators have the skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary to implement effective learning for students, educators, and the organization?

### Writing Prompts

- Describe the practices in place that reveal educators' competence for supporting effective learning
- Describe the extent to which educators have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for professional collaboration
- What professional learning has the school initiated or planned to support implementation of the school's understanding of effective learning?
- What are the strengths within the school's Competency? What needs attention? In what ways? What are the logical next steps to ensure Competency fully supports the school's development as a learning organization?

## **Capacity**

Does the school have the time, resources, and support needed to implement effective learning of students, educators, and the organization?

### Writing Prompts

- Describe the time available for educators to collaborate
- Describe the extent to which professional learning for educators is sufficient
- Describe the extent to which educators have the necessary resources
- Assess whether the collaborative time, professional learning, and other resources are aligned with the school's definition of effective learning
- What are the strengths within the school's Capacity? What needs attention? In what ways? What are the logical next steps to ensure Capacity fully supports the school's development as a learning organization?

## Part 4 – Goals and Vision for the Future

In Part 4, based on the school’s core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate, describe what learning will look like when the school fully implements that vision. Consider the following questions in the response:

- Does the school have a vision for its graduates?
- What will student learning look like in the school in order to achieve this vision?
- What will be the role of educators in achieving that vision?
- What resources does the school have to build towards that vision?
- What are the most significant barriers to success in achieving the vision?
- What is a realistic timeframe for full implementation?
- How will the school know when it has reached full implementation?

## Part 5 – Priority Areas for NEASC School Growth Plan

To identify Priority Areas for the NEASC School Growth Plan, the Self-Reflection committee first solicits input from the faculty. The faculty should have the chance to prioritize which areas for growth identified for each Standard in Part 2 are the most needed in the school.

The Self-Reflection committee should use the information from the faculty’s vote to inform their recommendations for Priority Areas for Growth to the school principal. The principal then makes the final determination for the school’s Priority Areas for Growth and documents them in the NEASC Accreditation Portal. It is recommended that the school identify three to five priority areas within the Standards on which to focus its growth and improvement efforts with an emphasis on student learning. The final agreed-upon Priority Areas for Growth are used to develop the NEASC School Growth Plan.

Consider the following questions when determining the school’s priority areas:

- What areas within the NEASC Standards does the school need to strengthen or better align to improve learning, achievement, and/or ensure the well-being of students?
- What are the areas related to existing school and/or district priorities that the school is working on and wants to further focus attention?

For each priority area:

- Write a goal statement in terms of a measurable outcome.

Describe:

- What student need do you hope to address with this goal?
- How will this goal address the student need?
- How is this goal aligned to the NEASC Standards for Accreditation? Name the Principle(s)
- Describe how this goal is aligned with other district priorities (if applicable).
- How will you measure success?

## Final Submission

When all parts of the Self-Reflection Report are complete, written, and uploaded to the NEASC Accreditation Portal, the school submits the report by pressing the green SUBMIT button on the Report Home Page. Once the report is submitted, it will be reviewed by the NEASC professional staff liaison and sent to the Collaborative Conference visiting team.

## Using a DEI Lens through the Self-Reflection Process

To support schools through the Self-Reflection process, we have developed the following recommendations and tools for building equity in your school. There are many examples of explicit language in the Standards that support your efforts to build an equitable and inclusive school. In addition, there are ways by which you can assess progress on any Principle in the Standards for Accreditation using a DEI lens. Here are some suggestions:

### **Definitions**

Does the school have agreed upon definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusion? Are there definitions of any additional key concepts from the Standards and/or from the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate? What are these definitions, and how widely are they understood or used in decision-making? Where are these published? How are they shared, taught, and reviewed?

### **Decision-making**

To what extent does the school reach out to and include students, families, or community members from historically marginalized communities in decision-making? What processes are used to ensure that these voices are elevated and honored?

### **Disaggregate Data**

The NEASC CPS Opinion Survey includes demographic questions for students and parents which can be used to disaggregate responses. Schools receive an aggregate report as well as the raw data. Consider which sub-groups might have experiences in school that would be masked in the aggregate data, and which would provide meaningful insight. School-generated data can also be disaggregated to look for patterns.

### **Focus Groups**

When designing focus groups, use affinity groups that represent historically underrepresented populations. For example, use focus groups of students by grade level, and then focus groups of students of color, LGBTQ+ students, etc. The same can be done for parents. Also, consider an advisory panel throughout the process, ensuring representation.

### **Access**

How does the school ensure access for English learners and students and families who have a home language other than English? How does the school ensure access for historically marginalized communities? How does the school ensure full participation of low-income students and families? Consider access to information, opportunities, and decision-making.

How does the school honor the experiences and cultures of historically marginalized students and families in the school community? How does the school honor the experiences and cultures of communities not represented in the school community? Consider curriculum and instruction, school culture and events, and communication strategies.

## **Sample questions by Principle of Effective Practice**

These are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

1.1 How does the school define “inclusive culture,” “ensures equity,” and “honors diversity in identity and thought”?

1.2 Do the school’s core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate include explicit commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion? Are the terms in these commitments defined and understood? Are these commitments used to inform practice and decision-making?

1.3 How do the school’s efforts to know, value, and connect to each student take into account the experiences and culture of students, especially those from historically marginalized communities?

1.4 Do the school’s professional culture and commitment to continuous improvement include explicit work to build the cultural competency of all educators?

1.6 To what extent does the school reach out to and include students, families, and community members from historically marginalized communities in decision-making. What processes are used to ensure that these voices are elevated and honored?

1.7 How are “civic engagement” and “social and personal responsibility” defined? Do these definitions, as well as the school’s culture and practices, honor the experiences and culture of historically marginalized communities?

2.2 Does the curriculum review process include an audit of cultural bias?

2.4 Are instructional practices informed by best practices of cultural responsiveness?

3.3 Do educators routinely disaggregate data to identify patterns of achievement?

3.5 Is data for course enrollment, co-curricular participation, and other data disaggregated to identify patterns?

3.6 Do educators reach out to students, families, and members of the community who have historically been marginalized?

Similar questions can be developed for any Principle of Effective Practice.



# Appendix A

## Foundational Elements

### Questions to Consider

For each Foundational Element within the Standards for Accreditation, consider the questions below when writing the Self-Reflection report narrative to help the school determine whether it “Meets” or “Does Not Meet” each Element.

#### FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT

##### 1.1a The school community provides a safe environment.

###### Potential questions to consider

- Do students and adults feel safe to learn in the school?
- How does the school community build and maintain a safe environment for learners and adults?
- What policies and practices are in place to ensure learners and adults feel safe?

###### Possible evidence to consider

- survey data
- student/parent handbook
- anti-discrimination policies or other policies that ensure individuals feel safe
- comparative annual data on disciplinary actions, incidences of vandalism, etc.
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school meets the Element

#### FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT

##### 1.2a The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.

###### Potential questions to consider

- Does the school community have a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate?

###### Possible evidence to consider

- the school’s vision of the graduate, core values, and beliefs about learning
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school meets the Element

## FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT

2.2a There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments.

### Potential questions to consider

- Is there a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments which includes:
  - units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills
  - instructional strategies
  - assessment practices.

### Possible evidence to consider

- written curriculum documents for all courses and departments
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school meets the Element

## FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT

3.1a The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.

### Potential questions to consider

- Does the school have a school improvement/growth plan that includes school-specific goals?
- Does the school improvement/growth plan inform decision-making in the school based on the school's priorities?

### Possible evidence to consider

- the school's growth/improvement plan
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school meets the Element

## FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT

### 4.1a The school has intervention strategies designed to support students.

#### Potential questions to consider

- Does the school provide a range of intervention strategies for students? If so, briefly describe these strategies.
- Does the school have a process to identify and refer students who need additional assistance? If so, briefly describe this process.

#### Possible evidence to consider

- the range of intervention strategies available for students
- the process to identify and refer students who need additional assistance
- student/parent handbook
- publications related to interventions in the school
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school meets the Element

## FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT

### 5.1a The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.

#### Potential questions to consider

- Do the school buildings and facilities ensure a safe, secure, and healthy environment for both students and adults?
- Are school buildings and facilities clean and well-maintained?
- Do the school buildings and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are they in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations?

#### Possible evidence to consider

- maintenance and cleaning schedules for the school
- documents regarding the school's compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and with local fire, health, and safety regulations
- any negative impacts of the facility on teaching and learning or the delivery of services
- capital, short- and long-term plans for upgrades/repairs to the buildings and facilities
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school meets the Element

# Appendix B

## Principles of Effective Practice

### Questions to Consider

For each Principle of Effective Practice within the Standards for Accreditation, consider the questions below when writing the Self-Reflection Report narrative and to help the school determine at what level the school is aligned with each Principle based on the phases of implementation defined in the Principle Rubric: *Not Yet Evident, Initiating, Developing, Implementing, or Transforming*.

## Standard 1: Learning Culture

**Principle 1.1 The school community provides a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought.**

### Potential questions to consider

- How does the school community provide a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe environment for learners and adults?
- How does the school community demonstrate a culture of learning focused on the strengths of both students and adults?
- What are some examples of policies and protocols that have been created to define and support respectful treatment of all members of the school community?
- How does the school ensure all learners are known and valued and have equitable access to a full range of school programs and services?
- What systems are in place to identify learning gaps and social disparities and has the school developed programs and initiatives to address these gaps?
- How does the school community ensure individuality among all community members and positive opportunities for extended learning and growth?
- What efforts has the school made to actively emphasize and strengthen understanding of, and commitment to, equity and diversity?
- How does the school community support a diversity of opinion and personal experience?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

### Possible evidence to consider

- student/parent handbook
- anti-discrimination policies or other policies that ensure individual safety
- comparative annual data on disciplinary actions, incidences of vandalism, etc.
- committees or programs that ensure an emotionally and intellectually safe environment
- agendas from professional development activities to educate staff on diversity and sensitivity to individual differences
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 1.2 The school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- Describe the manner in which the school engaged in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research and best practices to identify, commit to, and regularly review and revise its core values and beliefs about learning.
- How did the school develop its vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success?
- How does the school ensure that its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are known and understood by all members of the school community?
- Describe how the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are actively reflected in the school culture and drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom.
- How does the school community ensure the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate promote a commitment to continuous improvement and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- the school's vision of the graduate, core values, and beliefs about learning
- research consulted as the school was developing its core values and beliefs
- agendas, notes, or minutes from meetings where the core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate were discussed
- the dates that the document was approved by the school board/board of education, the faculty, and/or any other group
- examples of how the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are actively reflected in the culture of the school and drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- examples of how the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are connected to school improvement and guide policies, procedures, and resource allocations
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 1.3 The school community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student and can demonstrate how each student is known, valued, and connected to the school community.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How does the school community maintain and support high expectations for all students?
- How is the school community focused on providing a balance of academic/intellectual, physical, social, and civic opportunities to meet the needs of diverse learners?

- What strategies are used to help students to develop the skills necessary to achieve a positive school/life balance?
- Does the school have plans, programs, and services in place to identify and support the social and emotional needs of students?
- How does the school ensure that each student is known by an adult mentor in the school, or through some other formal process, to assist him or her in achieving the school's vision of the graduate?
- How does the school community demonstrate a broad and collective commitment to all areas of learning?
- How does the school community acknowledge the importance of and assist in building each student's readiness to learn?
- In what ways does the school community demonstrate the value it has for all learners in planning its instructional and assessment practices?
- How does the school ensure that all staff, including classroom teachers and support staff, share responsibility for all students, especially struggling learners?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

#### **Possible evidence to consider**

- examples of how high expectations for students are communicated
- details regarding the formal program or process that ensures each student is known by an adult mentor in the school
- interventions or programs designed to promote the social and emotional well-being of students
- examples of the ways students are known, valued, and connected to the school community
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 1.4 The school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection.**

#### **Potential questions to consider**

- In what ways does the school community's professional culture embody a spirit of continuous improvement; promote the use of innovative methods to achieve common goals; and demonstrate a commitment to research-based instruction and reflective practice?
- In what ways is there ongoing and authentic formal and informal collaboration?
- How does the school community demonstrate a growth mindset?
- What strategies or processes create the conditions and trust necessary for the full and active participation of all educators in collaboration and reflection?
- How does the school culture support educators in maintaining expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practice?
- How are educators valued as collaborative problem solvers, curriculum creators, and co-learners?
- How does the school culture emphasize the use of evidence-based research, reflective practice, data, and feedback to improve learners' educational experiences?

- How does the school community use ongoing, relevant, assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve school programs and services?
- Does the school have a formal process for evaluating programs and services?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- agendas of faculty meetings, professional development sessions, collaborative time, or workshops that educators have been involved in that support continuous improvement
- minutes of meetings, such as a data team or other groups that analyze data
- agendas and minutes from collaborative meetings, such as professional learning community (PLC) or other professional group meetings
- current research that has been read and/or implemented by the faculty
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 1.5 The school’s culture promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How is the school community’s culture dynamic and vibrant with a shared sense of agency and responsibility?
- How does the school culture ensure and support learners and educators in understanding that learning from mistakes is an important part of intellectual and personal growth?
- What norms and protocols are in place that support respectful discourse including diverse perspectives, experimentation, innovation, and a disposition to listen well and learn from others?
- How does the school culture emphasize the importance of persistence and opportunities for revision of student work?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- ways in which the school culture is nurtured to be dynamic and vibrant
- ways in which a shared sense of agency and responsibility is communicated, planned, and implemented
- retake or reassessment policies
- norms or protocols used in faculty, department, or other group meetings
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 1.6 The school has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How does the principal, working with other building leaders, provide instructional leadership that sets high standards for student achievement and fosters a growth mindset?
- How do school leaders facilitate school improvement efforts to realize the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate?
- How does the school involve educators, students, and families in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership?
- How does the school community encourage educators to exercise initiative, innovation, and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning?
- What structures or procedures are in place to ensure the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive?
- Is the principal given appropriate decision-making authority to lead the school?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- ways in which high standards and a growth mindset are communicated to the school community, such as publications, announcements, forums, etc.
- agendas and/or minutes from school council/advisory meetings and/or other meetings that involve parents, students, and educators
- principal's or school's vision statement
- educational plan or school improvement/growth plan
- data from various sources that reflects an increase in student engagement in learning as a result of initiative, innovation, and leadership
- supervision/evaluation documents for administrators and teachers
- other examples/evidence that demonstrates the school's alignment to this Principle



**Principle 1.7 The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How does the school’s culture encourage social awareness, upstanding behavior, and fair and respectful treatment between and among all members of the school community?
- How does the school ensure that democratic values of agency, civil dialogue, adjusting thinking in the face of new information, equality, and a commitment to the common good to inform the curriculum, characterize classroom behavior, and guide school governance?
- How does the school culture support and encourage learning experiences that connect to or make an impact on the community beyond the school campus?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- student handbook or other publications which outline policies and procedures for behavior and treatment of others
- anti-discrimination, anti-bullying or other policies which promote social awareness, respectful behavior and treatment of others
- programs, services, exhibitions, lessons, etc., which promote the school’s values
- any type of community service programs or community internships
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

## Standard 2: Student Learning

**Principle 2.1** The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success and provides feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving this vision.

### Potential questions to consider

- Does the school's vision of the graduate include knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success? Does the school's vision of the graduate include transferable skills?
- Are the transferable skills defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which target high levels of achievement? How does the school measure individual student progress toward achieving the transferable skills?
- Describe the school's formal process to assess and communicate individual learner and whole-school progress toward achieving the school's vision of the graduate.
- How is the school's vision of the graduate embedded into curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices?

### Possible evidence to consider

- the vision of the graduate document which defines skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success
- the specific and measurable criteria for success that define the school's transferable skills for the vision of the graduate
- reports provided to individual students and their families identifying progress made in achieving the vision of the graduate
- reports provided to the community identifying the school-wide or whole-school progress in achieving the vision of the graduate
- examples of ways the school embeds the vision of the graduate in to curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 2.2** There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate.

**Potential questions to consider**

- Describe the extent to which the written curriculum for all courses in all departments/all grade levels includes:
  - units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills
  - instructional strategies
  - assessment practices
  - discipline-specific, higher order thinking and transferable skills
  - dispositions, such as independence, flexible thinking, and persistence
  - disciplinary/interdisciplinary knowledge
  - the school's vision of the graduate.
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- written curriculum documents for all courses and departments at all grade levels
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 2.3** Curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.

**Potential questions to consider**

- How does the curriculum make connections to prior knowledge across disciplines?
- How does the curriculum place an emphasis on learner application of knowledge and skills?
- In what ways does the curriculum emphasize deep understanding through interdisciplinary learning, project-based learning, and authentic learning experiences?
- How are discipline-specific, higher-order thinking and transferable skills and dispositions integrated into the curriculum?
- How is the curriculum articulated/constructed vertically and horizontally to ensure depth of understanding?
- How does the curriculum embed skills and competencies necessary to attain the school's vision of the graduate?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- written curriculum documents
- agendas or minutes from curriculum meetings or other meetings where content and vertical and horizontal articulation and construction are discussed and determined
- lesson plans which emphasize assignments that result in deep understanding
- videos of teaching practice demonstrating implementation of curriculum
- project-based assessments
- interdisciplinary classes, projects, or classroom experiences
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 2.4 Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.****Potential questions to consider**

- In what ways are teachers strategically differentiating, individualizing, and/or personalizing instructional practices based on student learning needs?
- How is formative assessment used to adjust instruction in all classrooms?
- In what ways are group learning activities purposefully organized?
- How do teachers and support staff provide additional support and alternative instructional strategies within the regular classroom?
- What organizational, grouping, and tiered intervention strategies are in place to meet the needs of each learner within the regular classroom?
- What structures and supports are available to provide all learners with access to rigorous learning opportunities?
- What opportunities do teachers have to collaborate with others regarding instructional practices designed to meet the needs of all students?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- formative assessments
- examples of how data from assessments is used to adjust instruction
- school-wide tiered intervention strategies, such as Response to Intervention
- examples of lessons where purposeful organization of group learning activities are used
- lesson plans which include differentiation, individual plans for students, and personalizing of instructional practices
- videos of lessons that include purposeful organization of group learning activities or other instructional practices designed to meet the learning needs of all students
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

## **Principle 2.5 Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning.**

### **Potential questions to consider**

- What strategies are used to ensure that learning that is personalized, relevant, and authentic?
- What examples in the curriculum or in lessons provide opportunities for students to determine learning outcomes?
- How is project-based learning incorporated into individual classrooms and throughout classrooms in the school?
- In what ways does learning foster student agency by providing opportunities for students to set goals and reflect upon the results to guide their own learning process?
- How do students apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks?
- In what ways are student discourse and reflection on learning incorporated into classroom learning?
- In what ways do students have choice, engage in pursuit of personal interests, and have opportunities for creative expression which are integrated into learning experiences.
- What opportunities do students have to learn in and out of school?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

### **Possible evidence to consider**

- student work exemplars that demonstrate project-based learning and application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks from various courses and grade levels
- lesson plans or videos that demonstrate student discourse and reflection
- documents used for student reflection on their work
- assessments from various courses and grade levels that demonstrate examples of student choice, pursuit of personal interests, and opportunities for creative expression
- student-led conferences
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 2.6 Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How are learners engaged in the use of inquiry and problem solving, the incorporation of questioning, analysis, and understanding impacts?
- Describe learning activities from various grade levels and departments that prioritize deep understanding, analysis, synthesis, creativity, making connections, and understanding relationships.
- How do learners develop critical and creative thinking skills?
- How do learners develop dispositions, such as independence, flexible thinking, and persistence through the use of inquiry, problem-solving and higher order thinking?
- How are learning and assessment experiences deliberately designed to be cognitively challenging and require learners to develop and exercise a full range of thinking skills and learning dispositions?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- assessments designed to measure the skills, knowledge and dispositions embedded in the vision of the graduate
- learning and assessment experiences that are cognitively challenging and help learners develop critical thinking skills
- lessons, assignments, and assessments that engage students in inquiry and problem solving and questioning, analysis, and understanding impacts
- other evidence/examples that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 2.7 Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- Is assessment of, for, and as student learning used?
- Describe the range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments, and how the results are used to inform and differentiate instruction.
- Does the school have common assessments that serve to ensure consistent and equitable learning opportunities across grades or courses?
- Do educators provide specific and measurable criteria for success to learners prior to assessments?
- How do educators communicate the school's vision of the graduate and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed prior to each unit of study?
- How do educators regularly and consistently check for understanding in ways that engage every learner's thinking about the concept, skill, or information being learned?
- What opportunities do learners have for presentation of learning to authentic audiences, including students, families, community members, and professionals?

- In what ways do results from assessment strategies inform classroom instruction and curriculum in all content areas?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- a range of assessments, both formative and summative
- specific and measurable criteria for success provided to learners prior to assessments
- examples of educators regularly checking for understanding during classes
- opportunities learners have to present their work to authentic audiences
- examples of how results of various assessment strategies changed classroom instruction and/or curriculum
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 2.8 Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How are learners provided with multiple and varied opportunities over time to demonstrate their learning?
- How do learners receive consistent, systematic, specific, and timely corrective feedback on their work?
- What opportunities and time do learners have to revise and improve their work?
- How are learners provided with teacher feedback as well as peer feedback and self-reflection to guide next steps in learning?
- Is there a separate grading/reporting and feedback system for work habits and academic skills?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- retake or reassessment policies
- examples of learners receiving consistent, systematic, specific, and timely corrective feedback on work
- student work that demonstrates opportunities for learners to revise based on feedback
- school-wide, department, and classroom grading policies
- student grade report(s) or the feedback system for work habits and academic skills
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 2.9 Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How do learners use technology in informed, effective, and ethical ways to communicate clearly and creatively?
- How do learners use technology to personalize the pace of learning and access, support, document, and supplement their learning?
- How do learners use technology to share work with an audience beyond the school community and broaden their perspectives locally and globally?
- How do learners collaborate digitally to support their learning?
- How is technology used to engage in learning beyond the constraints of the school building and school day?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- the acceptable use policy
- examples of learners using technology to communicate clearly and creatively
- examples of learners using technology to support, document, and supplement their learning
- online courses, credit recovery courses, or other ways that students use technology to personalize the pace of learning
- teachers' digital classroom sites
- lessons and assessments that integrate technology and examples of how teachers help/guide learners to use technology to benefit learning
- information literacy curriculum materials and examples of how learners incorporate them into learning
- examples of how technology is used by learners to share work beyond the school community
- examples of ways technology broadens students' perspectives locally and globally
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle



## Standard 3: Professional Practices

**Principle 3.1** The school engages all stakeholders in the development and implementation of a school improvement/growth plan, which reflects the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.

### Potential questions to consider

- How does the school improvement/growth plan promote a strategic mindset that incorporates backward design?
- Does the school improvement/growth plan include specific and measurable goals with expected learning impacts?
- Is the school improvement/growth plan informed by the perspectives of the school community and current research?
- Is the school improvement/growth plan aligned with district priorities?
- Is the school improvement/growth plan aligned to the Standards for Accreditation?
- Does the school improvement/growth plan inform decision-making in the school?
- Does the school improvement/growth plan reflect the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate?
- Does the school improvement/growth plan include the evaluation of initiatives with opportunities for reflection and input from the various stakeholders?
- Is the school improvement plan updated/revised regularly and by what stakeholders?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

### Possible evidence to consider

- the school's growth/improvement plan
- a copy of any district-wide strategic plan or improvement plan
- agendas, notes or minutes of meetings in which growth/improvement plan goals or outcomes were discussed
- data collected and analyzed following plan implementation
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 3.2 Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How do educators, individually and collaboratively:
  - continuously examine their practice to ensure consistency with the school’s core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate?
  - engage in authentic professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning?
- What opportunities do educators have to engage in formal and informal collaboration?
- In what ways do educators examine their practice to ensure consistency with the school’s core values, beliefs about learning, and the vision of the graduate?
- What opportunities do educators have to engage in formal and informal professional development to improve student learning and well-being?
- How do educators use resources outside of the school, including educational research, to maintain currency with best practices?
- Do educators engage in peer observation? Under what conditions? How often?
- Do educators engage in supervision and evaluation using effective and timely feedback to improve practices that result in increased student learning?
- How do educators apply the skills and knowledge gained through professional learning to their practice?
- How have ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development improved student learning and well-being?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- schedules for any types of formal collaboration
- minutes and/or agendas from department, professional learning community (PLC) or other professional practice meetings that demonstrate professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and the analysis of teaching and learning
- professional development activities in and outside the school/district that educators attended to improve student learning and well-being
- professional development schedule
- professional development plan
- protocols for peer observation
- the supervision and evaluation practices/systems
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 3.3 Educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- What is the process for educators, individually and collaboratively, to examine a range of evidence of student learning including:
  - student work
  - common course and common grade-level assessments
  - data from a variety of formative and summative assessments
  - achievement data, disaggregated by subgroups
  - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school’s vision of the graduate
  - data from sending schools
  - post-secondary data
  - feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other educators, supervisors, families, and the school community?
- How do educators use the examination of evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices?
- In what ways do educators analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement?
- How is data and evidence used to improve programs and services, including health, counseling, library/information, and student support services?
- How do educators ensure that grading and assessment practices are aligned with the school’s beliefs about learning?
- How has examining evidence of student learning and well-being improved curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- protocols used to look at student assessment data
- processes used to determine student well-being
- agendas and/or minutes from data team or other meetings where educators examine data from a range of assessments and other achievement data
- examples of ways educators analyze data to respond to inequities in student achievement
- examples of ways data is used to improve health, counseling, library/information and support services
- examples of ways data and feedback are collected from parents and students, other educators, families, etc.
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 3.4 Collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of curriculum.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- What collaborative structures and processes are in place to achieve effective curricular coordination within and among each academic area, department, and program in the school?
- What structures and processes are in place to achieve vertical articulation and implementation of the curriculum within the school and with sending schools in the district?
- What structures and processes ensure clear alignment between the written, taught, and learned curriculum?
- How do the collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of the curriculum?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- agendas or minutes from meetings where vertical articulation of curriculum is discussed or results from these meetings
- structures and processes that ensure alignment of the written and taught curriculum
- agendas or minutes from academic content or department meetings, cross-curricular, cross grade level, or other meetings where curriculum coordination is discussed
- scope and sequence for content areas or curriculum maps
- ways curriculum is supported and implemented
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 3.5 School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- How are school-wide organizational practices designed to meet the learning needs of each student? Who is involved? What data is used to make decisions about the design?
- How do school-wide organizational practices ensure access to challenging academic experiences for all learners?
- How does the school ensure courses throughout the curriculum are populated with learners reflecting the diversity of the student body?
- How does the school provide and support learning environments and practices that are inclusive?
- How do school-wide organizational practices support opportunities for students to learn with and from students who are different from them, such as heterogeneously grouped courses?
- How are organizational practices examined and adjusted on a regular basis to ensure the needs of each student are being met?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- program of studies or other explanation of all courses offered to students
- course selection and approval process documents provided to students
- descriptions of heterogeneously grouped courses
- efforts made to ensure challenging academic experiences for all learners
- efforts made to ensure courses throughout the curriculum are populated with learners who reflect the diversity of the student body
- changes made to organizational practices to better meet student needs
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 3.6 Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning.****Potential questions to consider**

- In what ways do educators enable and promote relationships with the community, businesses, and higher education institutions that support authentic student learning experiences?
- How do educators engage students, faculty, and families in the school improvement process?
- How do educators engage students and families as partners in each learner's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- partnerships with community organizations, business and higher education institutions that support authentic student learning including a list of students who benefit from these partnerships
- communications from the school to parents to engage parents in supporting learning
- agendas, calendars, logs, or schedules from parent meetings, calls, or conferences about students
- procedures or processes in place to support professional staff in contacting families that are less connected with the school
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to the Principle

## Standard 4: Learning Support

**Principle 4.1 All students receive appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success.**

### Potential questions to consider

- What is the range of timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that the school provides to support each student's academic, social, and emotional success and well-being? Who is involved?
- How are the interventions monitored and what are the next steps for students who achieve success as well as those who are still struggling? Any tiered interventions?
- Is there a formal, defined process to identify and refer students who need additional assistance? Describe this process and who is involved.
- Are any outside interventions used? Describe those services and when they are used.
- How and from whom do families, especially to those most in need, receive information about available student support services?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

### Possible evidence to consider

- support services available for all students and details regarding where students and families can find the services or contacts
- sequential steps in the formal, defined process to identify, refer, and provide interventions for students who need additional assistance
- a list of the ways families, especially those most in need, receive information about available student support services
- examples of data analysis to determine students' progress
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 4.2 All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.**

### Potential questions to consider

- Do school counseling services have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff to deliver effective services to students?
- Do school counseling services include the implementation of a written, developmental guidance program? How is this program delivered and what topics are included?
- How do school counselors ensure regular meetings with students to provide personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling?

- Do school counseling services include the delivery of collaborative outreach and referrals to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers?
- Do counseling personnel engage in program evaluation or collect feedback to improve services?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- a list of all certified/licensed counseling personnel and support staff and brief descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of each position
- curriculum documents or topics for the developmental guidance program
- a description, log, or other form of data that indicates amount of time counselors spend with individual students related to personal, social, emotional, academic, career and college counseling
- a list of mental health and social service agencies with which the school has a partnership or direct affiliation
- a description of any counseling groups available for students and where this information is published
- feedback from students and parents regarding school counseling services including program evaluation or survey data
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 4.3 All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- Do school health services have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff to deliver appropriate health services to students?
- In what ways do school health services include preventative health services and direct intervention services to students?
- How do school health services ensure the use of an appropriate referral process to meet the needs of students in a timely manner?
- In what ways are school health services informed by ongoing student health assessments?
- How do health services ensure the physical and emotional well-being of students is being met?
- Do health services personnel engage in program evaluation or collect feedback to improve services?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- a list of certified/licensed health services personnel and brief descriptions of roles and responsibilities of each individual’s position
- a description of ongoing, preventative, and direct intervention strategies provided by school health services
- the health services referral process and how it is accessed

- examples of ongoing student health assessments
- a list of agencies that students may be referred to for additional services
- feedback from students and parents regarding school health services including program evaluation or survey data
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 4.4 All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- Do library/information services have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff?
- How are library/information personnel and staff actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum and instructional practices to support student learning?
- Describe the range of materials, technologies, and other information services that support the school's curriculum.
- Are library/information services available for students and staff before, during, and after school?
- How are library/information services responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning? What types of outreach are used to engage students and foster inquiry and deeper learning?
- Does the library/media center or information services area include a physical setting that encourages collaboration among students, opportunities for inquiry, and authentic learning?
- Do library/information services personnel engage in program evaluation or collect feedback to improve services to students and student learning?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- a list of certified/licensed library/information services personnel and support staff including brief job descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of each individual
- operating hours of the library media or other facility providing information services before, during, and after school and where the operating hours are published
- an inventory of print materials, non-print materials, computer hardware and software, and other resources that support the school's curriculum and how it can be accessed
- examples of library/media personnel are actively engaged in the implementation of the curriculum
- feedback from students and parents regarding library/media services including program evaluation or survey data
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle



**Principle 4.5 Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- Are there adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff to meet identified students' needs?
- How do support services ensure collaboration among all educators, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve success in meeting each identified student's goals?
- How do support services include appropriate and challenging educational experiences for identified students?
- In what ways do support services ensure inclusive learning opportunities and instruction for identified students?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- a brief job description of the roles and responsibilities of each school certified/licensed personnel and support staff who provide services for identified students, including special education, 504, and English Language Learners
- examples of collaboration among educators, counselors, and support staff to achieve student goals
- examples of programs and services offered to identified students
- ways in which learning for identified students is supported
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

## Standard 5: Learning Resources

**Principle 5.1 The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services.**

### Potential questions to consider

- How well do the school buildings and facilities ensure a safe, secure, and healthy environment that support the delivery of high-quality programs and services for all students?
- Are the school buildings and facilities adequately sized for the school community, population, and programs and services?
- Do the school buildings and facilities have appropriate spaces to support student learning and the curriculum?
- Are the buildings and facilities kept clean and well maintained?
- Do the buildings and facilities have appropriate mechanical systems that work properly and are up to date?
- Does the building(s) and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are they in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

### Possible evidence to consider

- a list of maintenance personnel and job descriptions or roles and responsibilities
- maintenance and cleaning schedules for the school
- documents regarding school compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and with local fire, health, and safety regulations
- a description of any negative impacts as a result of building or facilities issues on teaching and learning or the delivery of services
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

**Principle 5.2 The school/district provides time and financial resources to enable researched-based instruction, professional growth and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services.**

### Potential questions to consider

- How is time during the school day organized and does it support research-based instruction, professional collaboration among educators, the learning needs of all students, and student programs and services?
- What time and resources are provided for professional development, evaluation and revision of the

curriculum, and improvement of instruction using assessment results and current research?

- What time and resources are dedicated to the development, improvement of school programs and services?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

#### **Possible evidence to consider**

- the school schedule
- budget or other data/information about funds dedicated to enable research-based instruction, professional growth, and development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services
- the professional development schedule for the academic year and a description of monetary allocations which support professional development activities
- a description of professional learning community (PLC) or common planning groups that meet regularly
- a description of any intervention blocks during the school day
- descriptions/listings, agendas, or other opportunities for teachers to develop curriculum during the school year and/or at other times
- current research reviewed by faculty members to improve instruction
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

#### **Principle 5.3 The community and the district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.**

#### **Potential questions to consider**

- Describe the range of school programs and services funded and supported by the district's governing body.
- Is there any planning for future programs and services with a plan to secure funding?
- Are there sufficient professional and support staff to ensure appropriate class sizes and teacher load to fully implement the curriculum for all students?
- Is there adequate and dependable funding for equipment and technology?
- Describe the resources to support library services and information technology.
- Describe the funding for a full range of technology support.
- Is there adequate and dependable funding for instructional materials and supplies to implement the curriculum for all students?
- Is there adequate funding for co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities for students?
- How does the school/district ensure proper maintenance and replacement of furniture, technology, and equipment?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- the school’s program of studies
- the array of co-curricular activities or other learning opportunities funded by the district
- the total number of professional staff and support staff and their roles
- course loads for each teacher
- the school’s approved budget for the current school year
- budgeted amounts for the last two years for professional development, curriculum revision, technology and technology support, equipment, and instructional materials and supplies and the adequacy of the funding to accomplish goals
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 5.4 The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities.****Potential questions to consider**

- How does the school/district ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and facilities?
- How often does the school/district schedule regular maintenance and repair of the building and facilities?
- How does the school/district ensure safe, secure, and adequate buildings and facilities on their campus through short- and long-term plans?
- What provisions does the school/district make to address projected enrollment changes and staffing needs in relation to the building and facilities?
- Is there a district technology plan to provide sufficient technology for the needs of students and staff short and long term?
- Is there a capital improvement plan to ensure the maintenance of buildings and grounds and future needs for infrastructure improvements if necessary?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- maintenance and repair plans for the school/district
- capital improvement plan(s)
- district technology plan
- enrollment projections
- data to support any written plans or any future considerations for inclusion into capital, short- or long-term plans
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school’s alignment to this Principle

**Principle 5.5 The school has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations.**

**Potential questions to consider**

- What protocols, including infrastructure are in place to ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors in the event of an emergency?
- Is there written documentation that describes responses for various situations?
- Describe the working relationship and emergency protocols between the school and emergency services personnel in the school and in the community
- Does the school have a crisis team that meets regularly to review and revise protocols? Who is included in this group, how often they meet, and what is discussed at meetings?
- In what other ways does the school align to this Principle?

**Possible evidence to consider**

- crisis response plans
- agreements with emergency services personnel
- agendas/crisis team meeting minutes
- other examples/evidence that demonstrate the school's alignment to this Principle

## Appendix C

### Foundational Elements Rubric

**Use the following criteria to determine whether the school is meeting each of the Foundational Elements in the Standards.**

Standard and Foundational Element	Criteria necessary to meet the Foundational Element	Does the school meet the Foundational Element as based on the school's written narrative?
<b>MEETS:</b> All criteria of the Foundational Element are evident in the school.		
<b>DOES NOT MEET:</b> Some criteria of the Foundational Element are not yet evident in the school.		
<b>1.1a</b> The school community provides a safe environment.	The school community deliberately builds and maintains a physically safe environment for learners and adults. The school community maintains policies and processes to ensure the safety of learners and adults.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>MEETS</b></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><b>DOES NOT MEET</b></div>
<b>1.2a</b> The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.	The school community has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>MEETS</b></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><b>DOES NOT MEET</b></div>
<b>2.2a</b> There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments.	The written curriculum includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills</li> <li>• instructional strategies</li> <li>• assessment practices.</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>MEETS</b></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><b>DOES NOT MEET</b></div>
<b>3.1a</b> The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.	The school has a plan that includes school-specific goals and informs decision-making in the school.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><b>MEETS</b></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><b>DOES NOT MEET</b></div>

Standard and Foundational Element	Criteria necessary to meet the Foundational Element	Does the school meet the Foundational Element as based on the school's written narrative?
<b>MEETS:</b> All criteria of the Foundational Element are evident in the school.		
<b>DOES NOT MEET:</b> Some criteria of the Foundational Element are not yet evident in the school.		
<p><b>4.1a</b> The school has intervention strategies designed to support students.</p>	<p>The school provides a range of intervention strategies for students and a process to identify and refer students who need additional assistance.</p>	<div data-bbox="1118 525 1458 602" style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><b>MEETS</b></div> <div data-bbox="1118 638 1458 716" style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><b>DOES NOT MEET</b></div>
<p><b>5.1a</b> The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.</p>	<p>The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure a safe, secure, and healthy environment</li> <li>• are clean and well maintained</li> <li>• meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="1118 756 1458 833" style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><b>MEETS</b></div> <div data-bbox="1118 869 1458 947" style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><b>DOES NOT MEET</b></div>

## Appendix D

### Principles of Effective Practice Rubric

Use the following continuum to determine the school's current phase of implementation which best describes the school's alignment to each Principle in the Standard.

Not yet Evident	Initiating "Thinking About It"	Developing "Working on It"	Implementing "Living It"	Transforming "Shifting the Paradigm"
Elements of the Principle are not yet evident in the school.	The ideas or concepts in the Principle are being considered by the school community, but not yet in action.	Some elements of the Principle are in place and the school has developed plans and timelines for full implementation.	All elements of the Principle are firmly in place in the school. Organizations or systems have been formed to support and sustain these practices.	The Principle is driving innovative and transformative practices to achieve the school's vision of the graduate.

Standard 1: Learning Culture					
<b>1.1</b> The school community provides a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>1.2</b> The school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>1.3</b> The school community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student and can demonstrate how each student is known, valued, and connected to the school community.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming



Not yet Evident	Initiating "Thinking About It"	Developing "Working on It"	Implementing "Living It"	Transforming "Shifting the Paradigm"
Elements of the Principle are not yet evident in the school.	The ideas or concepts in the Principle are being considered by the school community, but not yet in action.	Some elements of the Principle are in place and the school has developed plans and timelines for full implementation.	All elements of the Principle are firmly in place in the school. Organizations or systems have been formed to support and sustain these practices.	The Principle is driving innovative and transformative practices to achieve the school's vision of the graduate.

<b>1.4 The school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>1.5 The school's culture promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>1.6 The school has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>1.7 The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming

Not yet Evident	Initiating "Thinking About It"	Developing "Working on It"	Implementing "Living It"	Transforming "Shifting the Paradigm"
Elements of the Principle are not yet evident in the school.	The ideas or concepts in the Principle are being considered by the school community, but not yet in action.	Some elements of the Principle are in place and the school has developed plans and timelines for full implementation.	All elements of the Principle are firmly in place in the school. Organizations or systems have been formed to support and sustain these practices.	The Principle is driving innovative and transformative practices to achieve the school's vision of the graduate.

Standard 2: Student Learning						
2.1	The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success and provides feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving this vision.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
2.2	There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
2.3	Curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
2.4	Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming

<b>Not yet Evident</b>	<b>Initiating "Thinking About It"</b>	<b>Developing "Working on It"</b>	<b>Implementing "Living It"</b>	<b>Transforming "Shifting the Paradigm"</b>
Elements of the Principle are not yet evident in the school.	The ideas or concepts in the Principle are being considered by the school community, but not yet in action.	Some elements of the Principle are in place and the school has developed plans and timelines for full implementation.	All elements of the Principle are firmly in place in the school. Organizations or systems have been formed to support and sustain these practices.	The Principle is driving innovative and transformative practices to achieve the school's vision of the graduate.

<b>2.5 Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>2.6 Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>2.7 Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>2.8 Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>2.9 Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming

<b>Not yet Evident</b>	<b>Initiating “Thinking About It”</b>	<b>Developing “Working on It”</b>	<b>Implementing “Living It”</b>	<b>Transforming “Shifting the Paradigm”</b>
Elements of the Principle are not yet evident in the school.	The ideas or concepts in the Principle are being considered by the school community, but not yet in action.	Some elements of the Principle are in place and the school has developed plans and timelines for full implementation.	All elements of the Principle are firmly in place in the school. Organizations or systems have been formed to support and sustain these practices.	The Principle is driving innovative and transformative practices to achieve the school’s vision of the graduate.

<b>Standard 3: Professional Practices</b>					
<b>3.1</b> The school engages all stakeholders in the development and implementation of a school improvement/growth plan, which reflects the school’s core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>3.2</b> Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>3.3</b> Educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>3.4</b> Collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of curriculum.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>3.5</b> School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>3.6</b> Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming

Not yet Evident	Initiating "Thinking About It"	Developing "Working on It"	Implementing "Living It"	Transforming "Shifting the Paradigm"
Elements of the Principle are not yet evident in the school.	The ideas or concepts in the Principle are being considered by the school community, but not yet in action.	Some elements of the Principle are in place and the school has developed plans and timelines for full implementation.	All elements of the Principle are firmly in place in the school. Organizations or systems have been formed to support and sustain these practices.	The Principle is driving innovative and transformative practices to achieve the school's vision of the graduate.

Standard 4: Learning Support					
<b>4.1</b> All students receive appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>4.2</b> All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>4.3</b> All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>4.4</b> All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>4.5</b> Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming

<b>Not yet Evident</b>	<b>Initiating “Thinking About It”</b>	<b>Developing “Working on It”</b>	<b>Implementing “Living It”</b>	<b>Transforming “Shifting the Paradigm”</b>
Elements of the Principle are not yet evident in the school.	The ideas or concepts in the Principle are being considered by the school community, but not yet in action.	Some elements of the Principle are in place and the school has developed plans and timelines for full implementation.	All elements of the Principle are firmly in place in the school. Organizations or systems have been formed to support and sustain these practices.	The Principle is driving innovative and transformative practices to achieve the school’s vision of the graduate.

<b>Standard 5: Learning Resources</b>						
<b>5.1</b>	<b>The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>5.2</b>	<b>The school/district provides time and financial resources to enable researched-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>5.3</b>	<b>The community and the district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>5.4</b>	<b>The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming
<b>5.5</b>	<b>The school has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations.</b>	Not Yet Evident	Initiating	Developing	Implementing	Transforming



## NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Commission on Public Schools (CPS)

### 2020 Standards for Accreditation

For public elementary, middle, and high schools seeking Accreditation in 2020 and beyond

#### Introduction

The **New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Public Schools (CPS)** requires member schools to demonstrate alignment with the Standards for Accreditation. The revised Standards for Accreditation, effective for all schools in 2020, are streamlined into five core Standards intended to promote an effective learning organization with the capacity to meet the needs of all students through continuous reflection and growth.

#### Standards for Accreditation

Standard 1 <b>LEARNING CULTURE</b>	Learning Culture promotes shared values and responsibility for achieving the school's vision.
Standard 2 <b>STUDENT LEARNING</b>	Student Learning practices maximize the impact of learning for each student.
Standard 3 <b>PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES</b>	Professional Practices ensure that practices and structures are in place to support and improve student learning.
Standard 4 <b>LEARNING SUPPORT</b>	Learning Support ensures that the school has appropriate systems to support student learning and well-being.
Standard 5 <b>LEARNING RESOURCES</b>	Learning Resources ensure that the school has the resources necessary to meet the learning needs of all students.

#### Principles of Effective Practice

Each Standard includes Principles of Effective Practice, which define the expectations for that Standard. Schools will be asked to reflect on and report their progress in aligning with the Principles for each Standard.

#### Descriptors of Effective Practice

Descriptors of Effective Practice serve as examples of what each Principle looks like in practice in a school. Descriptors are guidance or benchmarks to assist schools in aligning with each Principle.

## Foundational Elements

At a minimum, Accredited schools must align with each of the Foundational Elements. The Foundational Elements represent essential building blocks for each Standard. Schools that are not yet aligned with the Foundational Elements are expected to prioritize work to ensure alignment with those Elements.

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION	FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS
Standard 1 <b>LEARNING CULTURE</b>	<p>The school community provides a safe environment.</p> <p>The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.</p>
Standard 2 <b>STUDENT LEARNING</b>	<p>There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments across the school.</p>
Standard 3 <b>PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES</b>	<p>The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.</p>
Standard 4 <b>LEARNING SUPPORT</b>	<p>The school has intervention strategies designed to support learners.</p>
Standard 5 <b>LEARNING RESOURCES</b>	<p>The school site and plant support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.</p>



# NEASC/CPS 2020 Standards for Accreditation

## Standard 1: Learning Culture

The school provides a safe learning culture that ensures equity and fosters shared values among learners, educators, families, and members of the school community. These shared values drive student learning as well as policy, practice, and decision-making while promoting a spirit of collaboration, shared ownership, pride, leadership, social responsibility, and civic engagement. The school community sets high standards for student learning, fosters a growth mindset, and facilitates continuous school improvement to realize the school’s core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.

<b>PRINCIPLES of Effective Practice</b>	<b>DESCRIPTORS of Effective Practice</b>
<p><b>1.1</b> The school community provides a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought.</p>	<p><b>The school community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe environment for learners and adults</li> <li>• demonstrates a culture of learning focused on the strengths of both students and adults</li> <li>• creates policies and protocols to define and support respectful treatment of all members of the school community</li> <li>• ensures all learners are known and valued and have equitable access to a full range of school programs and services</li> <li>• identifies learning gaps and social disparities and develops programs and initiatives to address them</li> <li>• ensures individuality among all community members is a positive opportunity for extended learning and growth</li> <li>• actively emphasizes and strengthens understanding of, and commitment to, equity and diversity</li> <li>• supports a diversity of opinion and personal experience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 1.1a</b> The school community provides a safe environment.</p>	<p><b>The school community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deliberately builds and maintains a physically safe environment for learners and adults</li> <li>• maintains policies and processes to ensure the safety of learners and adults.</li> </ul>

<p><b>1.2</b></p> <p>The school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources.</p>	<p><b>The school community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research and best practices to identify, commit to, and regularly review and revise its core values and beliefs about learning</li> <li>• develops a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success</li> <li>• ensures the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are known and understood by all members of the school community</li> <li>• ensures the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are actively reflected in the school culture and drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom</li> <li>• ensures the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate promote a commitment to continuous improvement and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 1.2a</b></p> <p>The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.</p>	<p><b>The school community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.3</b></p> <p>The school community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student and can demonstrate how each student is known, valued, and connected to the school community.</p>	<p><b>The school community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintains and supports high expectations for all students</li> <li>• is focused on providing a balance of academic, social, and civic opportunities to meet the needs of diverse learners</li> <li>• helps students develop the skills necessary to achieve a positive school/life balance</li> <li>• has a plan and services in place to identify and support</li> </ul>

	<p>the social and emotional needs of students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensures that each student is known by an adult mentor in the school, or through some other formal process, to assist him or her in achieving the school’s vision of the graduate</li> <li>• has a broad commitment to all areas of learning</li> <li>• acknowledges the importance of and assists in building each student’s readiness to learn</li> <li>• demonstrates the value it has for all learners through its instruction and assessment practices</li> <li>• ensures that classroom educators and support staff share responsibility for struggling learners.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.4</b> The school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection.</p>	<p><b>The school community’s professional culture:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• embodies a spirit of continuous improvement</li> <li>• promotes the use of innovative methods to achieve common goals</li> <li>• demonstrates a commitment to research-based instruction and reflective practice</li> <li>• promotes ongoing and authentic formal and informal collaboration</li> <li>• commits to a sense of ownership and responsibility for achieving the school’s core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate</li> <li>• demonstrates a growth mindset</li> <li>• creates the conditions and trust necessary for the full and active participation of all educators</li> <li>• supports educators in maintaining expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices</li> <li>• values educators as collaborative problem solvers, curriculum creators, and co-learners</li> <li>• emphasizes the use of evidence-based research, reflective practice, data, and feedback to improve learners’ educational experiences</li> <li>• uses ongoing and relevant assessment data, including</li> </ul>

	<p>feedback from the school community, to improve school programs and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has a formal process for evaluating programs and services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.5</b> The school's culture promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth.</p>	<p><b>The school culture:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is dynamic and vibrant with a shared sense of agency and responsibility</li> <li>• ensures learners and educators understand that learning from mistakes is an important part of intellectual and personal growth</li> <li>• promotes norms and protocols that support respectful discourse, including diverse perspectives, experimentation, innovation, and a disposition to listen well and learn from others</li> <li>• emphasizes the importance of persistence and opportunities for revision of student work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.6</b> The school has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning.</p>	<p><b>The school community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensures the principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that sets high standards for student achievement and fosters a growth mindset</li> <li>• ensures school leaders facilitate school improvement efforts to realize the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate</li> <li>• involves educators, students, and families in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership</li> <li>• encourages educators to exercise initiative, innovation, and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning</li> <li>• ensures the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive</li> <li>• ensures the principal is given appropriate decision-making authority to lead the school.</li> </ul>

**1.7**

The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility.

**The school culture:**

- encourages social awareness, upstanding behavior, and fair and respectful treatment of all
- relies on the democratic values of agency, civil dialogue, adjusting thinking in the face of new information, equality, and a commitment to the common good to inform the curriculum, characterize classroom behavior, and guide school governance
- encourages learning experiences that connect to or make an impact on the community beyond the school campus.

# NEASC/CPS 2020 Standards for Accreditation

## Standard 2: Student Learning

The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, disciplinary/interdisciplinary knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary to prepare learners for their future. Students are assured consistent learning outcomes through a defined curricular experience and have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in a variety of creative ways. Students actively participate in authentic learning experiences while practicing the skills and habits of mind to regularly reflect upon, and take ownership of, their learning.

PRINCIPLES of Effective Practice	DESCRIPTORS of the Effective Practice
<p><b>2.1</b></p> <p>The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success and provides feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving this vision.</p>	<p><b>The vision of the graduate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• includes transferable skills defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which target high levels of achievement</li> <li>• includes knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success</li> <li>• is embedded into curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.</li> </ul> <p><b>The school has:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a formal process to assess and communicate individual learner progress toward achieving the school's vision of the graduate</li> <li>• an annual report on whole-school progress toward learner achievement of the vision of the graduate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.2</b></p> <p>There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate.</p>	<p><b>The written curriculum includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills</li> <li>• instructional strategies</li> <li>• assessment practices</li> <li>• discipline-specific, higher order thinking and transferable skills</li> <li>• dispositions, such as independence, flexible thinking,</li> </ul>

	<p>and persistence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disciplinary/interdisciplinary knowledge</li> <li>• the school’s vision of the graduate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 2.2a</b></p> <p>There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments.</p>	<p><b>The written curriculum includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills</li> <li>• instructional strategies</li> <li>• assessment practices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.3</b></p> <p>Curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.</p>	<p><b>Learners engage in a curriculum that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• makes connections to prior knowledge across disciplines</li> <li>• places an emphasis on learner application of knowledge and skills</li> <li>• emphasizes deep understanding through interdisciplinary learning, project-based learning, and authentic learning experiences</li> <li>• includes discipline-specific, higher order thinking and transferable skills and dispositions</li> <li>• embeds skills and competencies necessary to attain the school’s vision of the graduate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.4</b></p> <p>Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.</p>	<p><b>Instructional practices include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategically differentiating, individualizing, and/or personalizing based on student learning needs</li> <li>• using formative assessment to adjust instruction</li> <li>• purposefully organizing group learning</li> <li>• providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom</li> <li>• organizational, grouping, and tiered intervention strategies that meet the needs of each learner within</li> </ul>

	<p>the regular classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• structure and support to provide all learners with access to rigorous learning opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.5</b> Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning.</p>	<p><b>Active learning strategies include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learning that is personalized, relevant, and authentic</li> <li>• opportunities for students to determine learning outcomes</li> <li>• project-based learning</li> <li>• learning that fosters student agency by providing opportunities to set goals and reflect upon the results to guide their own learning process</li> <li>• application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks</li> <li>• student discourse and reflection on learning</li> <li>• student choice, pursuit of personal interests, and opportunities for creative expression</li> <li>• opportunities to learn in and out of school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.6</b> Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.</p>	<p><b>Inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills require learners to engage in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• questioning, analysis, and understanding impacts</li> <li>• activities that prioritize deep understanding, analysis, synthesis, creativity, making connections, and understanding relationships</li> <li>• critical and creative thinking skills</li> <li>• dispositions, such as independence, flexible thinking, and persistence</li> <li>• deliberately designed learning and assessment experiences that are cognitively challenging and require learners to develop and exercise a full-range of thinking skills and learning dispositions.</li> </ul>



<p><b>2.7</b></p> <p>Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum.</p>	<p><b>Effective assessment practices include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessment of, for, and as student learning</li> <li>• a wide range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments, to inform and differentiate instruction</li> <li>• common assessments that serve to ensure consistent and equitable learning opportunities across grades or courses</li> <li>• specific and measurable criteria for success provided to learners prior to assessments</li> <li>• communication of the school’s vision of the graduate and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed prior to each unit of study</li> <li>• regular and consistent checks for understanding in ways that engage every learner’s thinking about the concept, skill, or information being learned</li> <li>• presentation of learning to authentic audiences, including students, families, community members, and professionals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.8</b></p> <p>Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning.</p>	<p><b>Learners are provided with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multiple and varied opportunities over time to demonstrate their learning</li> <li>• consistent, systematic, specific, and timely corrective feedback</li> <li>• opportunities and time necessary to revise and improve their work</li> <li>• teacher feedback as well as peer feedback and self-reflection to guide next steps in learning</li> <li>• separate grading/reporting and feedback for work habits and academic skills.</li> </ul>

**2.9**

Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning.

**Learners use technology in informed, effective, and ethical ways to:**

- communicate clearly and creatively
- access, support, document, and supplement their learning
- construct knowledge, create, and problem-solve
- broaden their perspectives locally and globally
- personalize the pace of learning
- share work with an audience beyond the school community
- collaborate digitally to support learning
- engage in learning beyond the constraints of the school building and school day.

# NEASC/CPS 2020 Standards for Accreditation

## Standard 3: Professional Practices

The school maintains and implements a school improvement/growth plan, organizational practices, and productive community relationships to meet and support student learning needs. Educators engage in ongoing reflection, collaboration, and professional development to improve their practice and examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, programs, and services.

PRINCIPLES of Effective Practice	DESCRIPTORS of Effective Practice
<p><b>3.1</b> The school engages all stakeholders in the development and implementation of a school improvement/growth plan, which reflects the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.</p>	<p><b>The school develops and regularly updates a school improvement/growth plan that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotes a strategic mindset that incorporates backward design</li> <li>• includes specific and measurable goals with expected learning impacts</li> <li>• is informed by the perspectives of the school community and current research</li> <li>• is aligned with district priorities</li> <li>• is aligned to the Standards for Accreditation</li> <li>• informs decision-making in the school</li> <li>• reflects the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate</li> <li>• includes the evaluation of initiatives with opportunities for reflection and input from the various stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 3.1a</b> The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.</p>	<p><b>The school has a plan that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• includes school-specific goals</li> <li>• informs decision-making in the school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.2</b> Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration,</p>	<p><b>Educators, individually and collaboratively:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continuously examine their practice to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs about</li> </ul>

<p>and professional development to improve student learning and well-being.</p>	<p>learning, and vision of the graduate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● engage in authentic professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning</li> <li>● engage in formal collaboration</li> <li>● engage in formal and informal professional development</li> <li>● use resources outside of the school, including educational research, to maintain currency with best practices</li> <li>● engage in peer observation</li> <li>● engage in supervision and evaluation using effective and timely feedback to improve practices that result in increased student learning</li> <li>● apply the skills and knowledge gained through professional learning to their practice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.3</b> Educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services.</p>	<p><b>Educators, individually and collaboratively:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● examine a range of evidence including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● student work</li> <li>● common course and common grade-level assessments</li> <li>● data from a variety of formative and summative assessments</li> <li>● achievement data, disaggregated by subgroups</li> <li>● individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school’s vision of the graduate</li> <li>● data from sending schools</li> <li>● post-secondary data</li> <li>● feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other educators, supervisors, families, and the school community.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● use the examination of evidence to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices</li> <li>● analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>student achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve programs and services, such as health, counseling, library/information, and student support services</li> <li>• ensure that grading and assessment practices are aligned with the school’s beliefs about learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.4</b> Collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of curriculum.</p>	<p><b>The school uses structures and processes to ensure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective curricular coordination within and among each academic area, department, and program in the school</li> <li>• vertical articulation within the school and with sending schools in the district</li> <li>• clear alignment between the written, taught, and learned curriculum.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.5</b> School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.</p>	<p><b>Organizational practices include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to challenging academic experiences for all learners</li> <li>• courses throughout the curriculum that are populated with learners reflecting the diversity of the student body</li> <li>• learning environments and practices that are inclusive</li> <li>• opportunities for students to learn with and from students who are different from them, such as heterogeneously grouped courses.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.6</b> Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning.</p>	<p><b>Educators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enable and promote relationships with the community, businesses, and higher education institutions that support authentic student learning experiences</li> <li>• engage students, faculty, and families in the school improvement process</li> <li>• engage students and families as partners in each learner’s education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.</li> </ul>

# NEASC/CPS 2020 Standards for Accreditation

## Standard 4: Learning Support

The school has timely, directed, and coordinated interventions for all students. The school provides targeted supports to meet each student’s individual needs, including counseling services, health services, library/information services, and other appropriate support services to assist each student in meeting the school’s vision of the graduate.

PRINCIPLES Effective Practice	DESCRIPTORS of Effective Practice
<p><b>4.1</b> All students receive appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success.</p>	<p><b>The school provides:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that support each student’s success and well-being</li> <li>• a formal, defined process to identify and refer students who need additional assistance</li> <li>• information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 4.1a</b> The school has intervention strategies designed to support students.</p>	<p><b>The school provides:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of intervention strategies for students</li> <li>• a process to identify and refer students who need additional assistance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.2</b> All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.</p>	<p><b>School counseling services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff to deliver effective services to students</li> <li>• include the implementation of a written, developmental program</li> <li>• ensure regular meetings with students to provide personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling</li> <li>• include individual and group meetings with all students</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include delivery of collaborative outreach and referrals to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.3</b> All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.</p>	<p><b>School health services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff to deliver appropriate health services to students</li> <li>• include preventative health services and direct intervention services</li> <li>• ensure the use of an appropriate referral process</li> <li>• are informed by ongoing student health assessments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.4</b> All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.</p>	<p><b>Library/information services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff</li> <li>• ensure personnel and staff are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum and instructional practices</li> <li>• include a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum</li> <li>• are available for students and staff before, during, and after school</li> <li>• are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning</li> <li>• include a physical setting that encourages collaboration among students, opportunities for inquiry, and authentic learning.</li> </ul>

**4.5**

Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.

**Support services for identified students:**

- have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff to meet students' needs
- ensure collaboration among all educators, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve success in meeting each student's goals
- include appropriate and challenging educational experiences
- ensure inclusive learning opportunities and instruction.



# NEASC/CPS 2020 Standards for Accreditation

## Standard 5: Learning Resources

The school has adequate and appropriate time, funding, and facilities to support the realization of its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate. The school and school community provide time, funding, and facilities for student learning and support; teacher collaboration and professional growth; and full implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs in the school. The school has appropriate plans, protocols, and infrastructure in place to ensure consistent delivery of its curriculum, programs, and services.

<b>PRINCIPLES of Effective Practice</b>	<b>DESCRIPTORS of Effective Practice</b>
<p><b>5.1</b> The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services.</p>	<p><b>The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure a safe, secure, and healthy environment that supports the diversity of the student body</li> <li>• are adequately sized for the school community</li> <li>• have appropriate spaces to support student learning and the curriculum</li> <li>• are clean and well maintained</li> <li>• have appropriate mechanical systems</li> <li>• meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 5.1a</b> The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.</p>	<p><b>The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure a safe, secure, and healthy environment</li> <li>• are clean and well maintained</li> <li>• meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.</li> </ul>

<p><b>5.2</b></p> <p>The school/district provides time and financial resources to enable researched-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services.</p>	<p><b>The school/district provides:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• time during the school day organized to support research-based instruction, professional collaboration among educators, learning needs of all students, and student programs and services</li> <li>• sufficient time and resources for professional development, evaluation and revision of the curriculum, and improvement of instruction using assessment results and current research.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.3</b></p> <p>The community and the district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.</p>	<p><b>The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a wide range of school programs and services</li> <li>• sufficient professional and support staff to ensure appropriate class sizes and teacher load</li> <li>• sufficient equipment and technology</li> <li>• resources to support library services and information technology</li> <li>• a full range of technology support</li> <li>• sufficient instructional materials and supplies</li> <li>• proper maintenance and replacement of furniture, technology, and equipment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.4</b></p> <p>The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities.</p>	<p><b>The school/district develops and maintains plans to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and facilities</li> <li>• schedule regular maintenance and repair of the building and facilities</li> <li>• ensure safe, secure, and adequate building and facilities/campus</li> <li>• address enrollment changes and staffing needs</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide sufficient technology</li> <li>• implement capital improvements.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.5</b> The school has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations.</p>	<p><b>The school maintains:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protocols to ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors in the event of an emergency</li> <li>• written documentation that describes responses for various situations</li> <li>• a positive working relationship and emergency protocols between the school and emergency services personnel</li> <li>• a school crisis team that meets regularly to review and revise protocols.</li> </ul>

An effective history and social science education incorporates diverse perspectives and acknowledges that perceptions of events are affected by race, ethnicity, culture, religion, education, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and personal experience.

The traditional motto of the United States is “E pluribus unum” – out of many, one. A history and social science education that does justice to the remarkable diversity of our country must tell the histories of individuals and groups, and honor a plurality of life stories while acknowledging our ongoing struggle to achieve a more perfect union. Teaching how the concepts of freedom, equality, the rule of law, and human rights have influenced United States and world history necessarily involves discussions of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics. Effective instruction challenges students to value their own heritage while embracing our common ideals and shared experiences as they develop their own rigorous thinking about accounts of events. Effective instruction celebrates the progress the United States has made in embracing diversity, while at the same time encouraging honest and informed academic discussions about prejudice, racism, and bigotry in the past and present.

--Guiding Principle 2 of the [2018 Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework](#)

### How does the Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework support instruction that recognizes the role of individuals' identities and social positions?

The [2018 Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework](#) lays out ten guiding principles for effective history and social science instruction. **Guiding Principle 2** emphasizes that history and social science instruction should be:

**Inclusive:** It should incorporate and center a diversity of historical perspectives, voices, and narratives.

**Critical:** It should challenge students to consider how identity and social position shape people's perceptions of events, and encourage honest and informed discussions about power, prejudice, and oppression.

**Responsive:** It should offer all students opportunities to connect their multiple identities and experiences to their study of the past.

### Why is Guiding Principle 2 important in planning and instruction?

Guiding Principle 2 supports more accurate, rigorous instruction. Teaching how the concepts of freedom, equality, the rule of law, and human rights have influenced history necessarily involves discussions of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, education, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and other characteristics. Considering multiple perspectives on the past challenges students to avoid an oversimplified “single story.”<sup>1</sup> It “demands a level of cognitive dexterity”<sup>2</sup> as students are challenged to think critically and navigate conflicting narratives about the past.

Additionally, a central goal of history and social science education is preparing students to be active, engaged citizens in a diverse and pluralistic society. To do this, students need to learn about how and why others' perspectives might differ

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#### References:

Chimimanda Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story,” filmed July 2009, video, 18:34,  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story).

<sup>2</sup> Clint Smith, “How Culturally Responsive Lessons Teach Critical Thinking,” *Teaching Tolerance*, November 25, 2019,  
<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2020/how-culturally-responsive-lessons-teach-critical-thinking>.

from their own.<sup>3</sup> Further, to be empowered to challenge injustices in the present, students must learn truthfully about instances of injustice in the past.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, Guiding Principle 2 helps avoid the silencing that can result when certain groups' experiences are consistently "ignored, dismissed, or devalued" in the curriculum.<sup>5</sup> While a more inclusive approach to history instruction benefits all students, research also suggests positive effects on both academics and self-efficacy for students of non-dominant identities when they see their cultures and experiences centered in their coursework.<sup>6,7</sup>

## How does Guiding Principle 2 relate to the three pillars of the History and Social Science Framework?

As teachers make decisions about how to teach the content, practice, and literacy standards in the [Framework](#), Guiding Principle 2 can help them make these decisions in a way that leads to more inclusive, critical, and responsive instruction.

Guiding Principle 2 is supported by many of the practice standards that characterize high-quality historical thinking, found on pp. 23–25 of the Framework. For example, to understand how identity impacts individuals' perspectives about the past, students can **analyze sources' purpose and point of view** (Practice Standards 4 and 5). Similarly, inquiry-based lessons that prompt students to **ask their own questions and gather sources independently** (Practice Standards 2 and 3) can prompt students to construct a complex historical narrative that includes multiple voices and experiences.

## How can this resource support the use of Guiding Principle 2 to plan instruction?

The planning questions on page 3 can be applied to any Topic (set of related content standards) in the Framework, helping educators approach instruction in a way that is inclusive, critical, and responsive to student identities. Along with their existing unit planning and backwards design process, educators can work through these questions individually or, ideally, in collaboration with others. The questions support reflection on how existing biases and experiences affect teaching, encourage deep dives into less commonly explored historical narratives, and facilitate thoughtful decision making about instructional practice. They aim to prompt meaningful reflection and help educators identify where seeking out additional research and resources might be appropriate to continue building their expertise (*see inset*).

Additionally, DESE has created examples illustrating how these questions might be answered about selected Topics from a variety of grade levels within the Framework. Created in consultation with content experts, these Topic-specific examples include suggested resources and historical developments tied to each question.

### What resources can help teachers apply these planning questions to Topics in their own course?

The [Supplement to the 2018 History and Social Studies Framework](#) links to further resources about the history of specific groups often marginalized in historical narratives. It has sections on African/African American history, the history of native peoples of the Americas, women's history, Latinx history, Asian American/Pacific Islander history, and LGBTQ+ history. The Supplement also includes a list of resources to support classroom discussions of difficult topics.

<sup>3</sup> Meira Levinson, "'You Have the Right to Struggle': Constructing Historical Counternarrative," in *No Citizen Left Behind* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012), 99–137.

<sup>4</sup> LaGarrett J. King and Prentice T. Chandler, "From Non-Racism to Anti-Racism in Social Studies Teacher Education: Social Studies and Racial Pedagogical Content Knowledge," in *Rethinking Social Studies Teacher Education in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Alicia R. Crowe and Alexander Cuenca (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 3–21.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Burke, Martha A. Adler, and Maureen Linker, "Resisting Erasure: Cultivating Opportunities for a Humanizing Curriculum," *Multicultural Perspectives* 10, no. 2 (2008): 65–72.

<sup>6</sup> Worokya Duncan, "The Effects of Afrocentric United States History Curriculum on Black Student Achievement," *Contemporary Issues in Education Research* 5, no. 2 (2012): 91–96.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas S. Dee and Emily K. Penner, "The Causal Effects of Cultural Relevance: Evidence from an Ethnic Studies Curriculum," *American Educational Research Journal* 54, no. 1 (2017): 127–66.

## What additional work can support planning and instruction that is inclusive, critical, and responsive to student identities?

Planning and adjusting instruction to be more inclusive, critical, and responsive to student identities is ongoing and iterative work—and it is work that is essential to effective history and social science education. These planning questions are one place to start. To further their efforts towards inclusive, critical, and responsive practice, educators can also:

- Ensure that instruction is inclusive and responsive to learners with a variety of academic and language needs through providing appropriate supports for students with disabilities and English Language Learners.
- Continue to learn about culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy<sup>8,9</sup> through resources like [DESE's e-learning module](#) in order to better invite student identity and experience into the classroom without perpetuating curricular harm, particularly to students of marginalized identities.
- Seek out strategies to create a safe, respectful classroom culture that encourages productive discomfort to facilitate deeper, more meaningful engagement with challenging topics. Resources like [Teaching Tolerance's Let's Talk! guide](#) or [Facing History and Ourselves' Fostering Civil Discourse](#) can support this work.

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<sup>8</sup> Geneva Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 3rd ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Django Paris, "Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: A Needed Change in Stance, Terminology, and Practice," *Educational Researcher* 41, no. 3 (April 2012): 93–97.

## Guiding Principle 2 Planning Questions: Planning Through an Inclusive, Critical, and Responsive Lens

**STEP BACK:** *Where am I starting, and where do I want to go?*

- What **content** is included in this Topic? What **prior knowledge and beliefs** do students have about this Topic? What narratives was I taught about this topic, and what **biases** might I have about it?
- How might this Topic present the possibility for **problematic messages** or **curricular violence**? How and when will I **partner with students** to learn about their experiences of the curriculum?
- What is my **goal** in teaching this Topic? What do I want students to learn about themselves, the past, and the world? What essential questions, skills, knowledge, and enduring understandings are at the heart of this Topic?

**REFLECT, RECONSIDER, AND PLAN:** *What is my current practice, and what would I like to do differently to be more inclusive, critical, and responsive?*

<b>INCLUSIVE</b>	
<b><i>My instruction should incorporate and center a diversity of historical perspectives, voices, and narratives.</i></b>	
<i>Reflect:</i>	What is the dominant narrative about this Topic? Whose voices and experiences are typically centered?
<i>Reconsider:</i>	What and who is marginalized or missing in that narrative? Whose voices should be included to tell a more holistic and complete story?
<i>Plan:</i>	What instructional approaches can I use to foster student engagement with these voices and experiences? How will I ensure these voices and perspectives are included equitably, not marginalized?
<b>CRITICAL</b>	
<b><i>My instruction should challenge students to consider how identity and social position shape people's perceptions of events, and encourage honest and informed discussions about power, prejudice, and oppression.</i></b>	
<i>Reflect:</i>	Where and how is the role of identity and social position (race, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc.) typically addressed in this Topic, if at all?
<i>Reconsider:</i>	How else did people's intersecting identities and social position shape their experiences within this Topic? Where was prejudice and oppression present, and how was it reinforced or challenged?
<i>Plan:</i>	What instructional approaches will empower students to engage in meaningful and <b>brave</b> conversations about identity, power, oppression, and resistance within this Topic?
<b>RESPONSIVE</b>	
<b><i>My instruction should offer all students opportunities to connect their multiple identities and experiences to their study of the past.</i></b>	
<i>Reflect:</i>	Do my students typically see their identities reflected in this Topic? If so, which students and how?
<i>Reconsider:</i>	What other opportunities does this Topic present for my students to see their multiple identities reflected in the Topic, or explore aspects of their identities more deeply?
<i>Plan:</i>	What instructional approaches can I use while teaching this Topic to provide students with opportunities to make connections to their own identities and experiences?

**LEARN AND PLAN FORWARD:** *What was the impact of my planning and instructional choices?*

Based on student feedback, patterns of participation and engagement, student performance on formative and summative assessments, personal reflection, colleagues' observations, etc.:

- What were the **effects** of the decisions I made? How did they shape students' experiences learning about this Topic?
- What would I like to **continue doing** when I teach this topic again, and what **changes** would I make next time?



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## Race, Racism, and Culturally Responsive Teaching in History and Social Science in Massachusetts: Frequently Asked Questions

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### What are the state’s requirements and guidance about how history and social science should be taught in Massachusetts?

In Massachusetts, decisions about curricula and instructional materials are largely a matter of local control. The state provides guidance documents and resources to inform district planning. State Curriculum Frameworks for each content area are a central resource, which lay out the content and skills that educators should teach at each grade level as well as the guiding principles that should shape their instruction.

In 2018, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released a revised state [History and Social Science Curriculum Framework](#). The Framework revision process was a two-year endeavor that drew extensively on input from educators, content experts, and community members before the final document was ultimately unanimously approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Prior to 2018, the Framework was last updated in 2003; there are no current plans to revise it again in the near future.

Accompanying the Framework are several additional state guidance documents. The [Supplement to the 2018 Framework](#) provides teachers with a list of resources for teaching particular themes and topics in the Framework’s content standards; DESE is currently working on updating this document to include additional resources to help teachers address Asian-American/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, and LGBTQ+ history, perspectives which are often missing from existing curricular materials. Furthermore, in Fall 2020, DESE published a [Quick Reference Guide to Guiding Principle 2](#), which expands upon the Framework’s call for inclusive, critical, and responsive history and social science instruction.

In 2021, Massachusetts was [commended by the Fordham Institute](#) as one of only five states with “exemplary” history and civics standards. In their review, Fordham sought to find standards that “give America’s core principles and many achievements the respect they are due and that ...[do] not whitewash, downplay, or neglect the many painful chapters in our nation’s history.” Describing the Framework, the reviewers commented that “Massachusetts’s U.S. History standards are exemplary, with an impressive emphasis on America’s founding principles and Americans’ long struggle to make those principles a reality.”

### Does the Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework promote the teaching of diverse perspectives?

The Framework is rooted in ten Guiding Principles. Guiding Principle 2 states:

An effective history and social science education incorporates diverse perspectives and acknowledges that perceptions of events are affected by race, ethnicity, culture, religion, education, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and personal experience. The traditional motto of the United States is “E pluribus unum” – out of many, one. A history and

social science education that does justice to the remarkable diversity of our country must tell the histories of individuals and groups, and honor a plurality of life stories while acknowledging our ongoing struggle to achieve a more perfect union. Teaching how the concepts of freedom, equality, the rule of law, and human rights have influenced United States and world history necessarily involves discussions of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics. Effective instruction challenges students to value their own heritage while embracing our common ideals and shared experiences as they develop their own rigorous thinking about accounts of events. Effective instruction celebrates the progress the United States has made in embracing diversity, while at the same time encouraging honest and informed academic discussions about prejudice, racism, and bigotry in the past and present.” Race and racism are part of America’s complicated history, and a complete history and social science education must include an honest examination of prejudice, bigotry, and oppression in the past and present (*Massachusetts 2018 History and Social Science Curriculum Framework, page 13*).

In addition, the Framework states that “an effective history and social science education builds students’ capacities for research, reasoning, making logical arguments, and thinking for themselves.” Thus, in an effective history or social science classroom in Massachusetts, teachers present students with diverse sources and nurture their critical thinking skills, so that each student develops their own richly informed and historically accurate understanding.

## What does the Massachusetts History/Social Science Framework say about how race and racism should be taught?

Guiding Principle 2 of the Framework states that effective history and social science instruction “celebrates the progress the United States has made in embracing diversity, while at the same time encouraging honest and informed academic discussions about prejudice, racism, and bigotry in the past and present.” To this end, the Framework’s content standards not only address instances of racial oppression and prejudice in age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate ways, but also highlight the individuals and movements who have challenged it. These standards also address the way in which diversity has been and continues to be a strength of our nation. Some representative examples of content include:

- **Grade 1:** Students learn about ways in which people in the United States are both united and diverse, and how people from different parts of the world have different customs.
- **Grade 3:** Students examine how the interactions of Native Peoples, Europeans, and enslaved and free Africans shaped the development of Massachusetts.
- **Grade 5:** Students learn about the prevalence of slavery in the early U.S. Republic as well as the ways in which enslaved people sought their freedom; they study both the oppression of African-Americans after the Civil War as well as the role of the Civil Rights movement in challenging these limitations.



- **Grade 8:** Students analyze key laws and Supreme Court decisions that have expanded civil rights for all citizens.
- **High School:** Throughout a two-year U.S. History sequence, students examine topics such as the role and treatment of immigrants during industrialization, the way in which the Civil Rights movement was a model for later movements, and issues related to race relations in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Additionally, the Framework urges history and social science teachers of all grade levels to include discussions of current events, which may include issues of race and racism, as part of their instruction. As emphasized in Guiding Principle 8, history and social science teachers “have a unique responsibility to help students consider events—including current events—in a broad historical, geographical, social, or economic context.”

### What does the History/Social Science Framework say about how the study of race and racism should look in the classroom?

The vision of history and social science education laid out in the Framework is one focused on the process of historical inquiry, in which students use evidence to construct their own understanding of the past. Just as the concepts that students learn about race and racism become more complex over time, so too does the way in which teachers engage them in that learning. Starting in elementary school, students should be asked to gather information about the past from age-appropriate sources; contrast points of view in multiple sources; and identify key information about the maker, date, place of origin, and audience of these sources. As students get older, they begin to put multiple sources into dialogue with each other, consider their usefulness and possible limitations, and identify and pursue directions for further inquiry.

Throughout students’ history education, teachers should present them with sources that depict a multitude of perspectives and experiences and support them in examining the sources closely and critically, rather than relying on a textbook or lecture to convey preconceived narratives about historical events. This is true of any event or historical development students might study. As a result, in learning about past and present injustices, students within a single classroom may well come to competing conclusions about the causes of, and best way to remedy, these injustices. The Framework encourages students and teachers to grapple with this complexity, emphasizing that whatever conclusions students draw must be historically accurate and justified by the sources available.

Discussions about inequality, prejudice, and oppression can often be challenging or uncomfortable for both teachers and students. It is crucial that educators take the time to create a respectful classroom culture that encourages productive discomfort and facilitates deeper, more meaningful engagement with these topics. The Department refers educators to [Learning for Justice’s Let’s Talk! guide](#) and [Facing History and Ourselves’ Fostering Civil Discourse](#) as useful resources to support this work.



## Does teaching an honest account of the past conflict with preparing students to be active, engaged citizens in our American democracy?

DESE believes that the mission of history and social science education is to prepare students for civic life, empowering them to make sense of, deliberate about, and take action on complex and controversial issues in order to continue the legacy of democracy. In order for students to be thoughtful and active participants and leaders in our diverse democratic society, they must develop essential civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. This includes developing an understanding of democracy’s potential and achievements while at the same time recognizing its challenges and inherent dilemmas – and learning about those who have worked to make our democracy more inclusive and just.

When teaching American history and civics, educators should provide students the opportunity to grapple with both the promise and the shortcomings of our democracy. According to a consortium of leading scholars and educators, teachers must “offer an account of US constitutional history that is simultaneously honest about the wrongs of the past without falling into cynicism, and appreciative of the founding of the country without tipping into adulation.”<sup>1</sup> The Framework, and its supporting documents, aim to support educators in thoughtfully navigating this tension – not only as it relates to teaching about race and racism, but with regards to any topic.

## How are schools and districts ensuring that the required student-led civics projects are truly nonpartisan?

Chapter 296 of the Acts of 2018, *An act to promote and enhance civic engagement*, requires that schools provide students with a nonpartisan, student-led civic action project once in eighth grade and once in high school. The law stipulates that civics projects may be individual, small group or class wide, and designed to promote a student’s ability to: (i) analyze complex issues; (ii) consider differing points of view; (iii) reason, make logical arguments and support claims using valid evidence; (iv) engage in civil discourse with those who hold opposing positions; and (v) demonstrate an understanding of the connections between federal, state and local policies, including issues that may impact the student’s school or community.

It is essential that these projects are student-led; while teachers may set boundaries on the topics that can be addressed (e.g., working with a science teacher to engage students in action around an environmental policy issue), the choice of topic and action plan should ultimately be student-generated. Although these projects can and likely will lead to discussion of pressing and contemporary issues, as explained in the [Civics Project Guidebook](#), action plans should not be directed at electoral politics, nor should they be developed in support of candidates in particular elections. Furthermore, the law requires that if classes engage in a project collaboratively, students must have the option of doing an individual project instead.

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<sup>1</sup> [Educating for American Democracy Roadmap](#)



## What is culturally responsive teaching, and what does it look like in a history/social science classroom?

As defined by scholar Gloria Ladson-Billings in her seminal article “Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy” (1995), culturally responsive teaching is teaching that promotes:

- **Academic achievement:** Holding high, transparent expectations for all students, and supporting the development of students' academic skills and identities as learners.
- **Cultural competence:** Affirming students' backgrounds and identities and fostering their ability to understand and honor others' cultures.
- **Sociopolitical awareness:** Partnering with students to identify, analyze, and work to solve systemic inequities in their communities and the world.

DESE firmly believes that [culturally responsive teaching is great teaching](#). Research shows that when educators are responsive to students' cultures and identities in this way, it leads to better learning experiences and ultimately to better outcomes and achievement. To this end, in Spring 2021, the Department released a [rubric](#) and [video calibration library](#) intended to deepen educators' understanding of what culturally responsive teaching can look like in practice.

Culturally responsive teaching is closely connected to the emphasis, in both the 2018 History/Social Science Framework and civics project legislation, on developing students' capacity to be active and informed participants in a diverse democratic society. The practice standards include both demonstrating civic dispositions like respect for others as well as taking informed action based on students' classroom learning; these skills foster students' cultural competence and sociopolitical awareness, respectively. The [Quick Reference Guide to Guiding Principle 2](#) offers a set of planning questions that history and social science teachers can use to make their instruction more culturally responsive, and the [Civics Project Guidebook](#) includes a section on centering students' identity and lived experience in their civic action work.

