

New England Association of Schools and Colleges



Commission on Public Secondary Schools

Report of the Visiting Committee for

Edwin O. Smith High School

Regional School District 19

Storrs, Connecticut

March 27-30, 2011

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

THE DISTRIBUTION, USE AND SCOPE OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

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

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

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

- Teaching and Learning Standards
 - Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations
 - Curriculum
 - Instruction
 - Assessment of and for Student Learning

- Support of Teaching and Learning Standards
 - School Culture and Leadership
 - School Resources for Learning
 - Community Resources for Learning.

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

Preparation for the Evaluation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Edwin O. Smith School, a committee of seven members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people. The self-study committee included all members of the faculty but did not include students, parents, school board representatives and citizens rather they provided feedback at different points of development of the self-study.

The self-study of Edwin O. Smith High School extended over a period of 12 school months from October 2009 to December 2010.

Public schools evaluated by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their adherence to the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's mission, learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Commission, Edwin O. Smith High School also used questionnaires developed by The Research Center at Endicott College to reflect the concepts contained in the Standards for

Accreditation. These materials provided discussion items for a comprehensive assessment of the school by the professional staff during the self-study.

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of 16 evaluators was assigned by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the E.O. Smith High School. The Committee members spent four days in Regional District #19, Storrs, Connecticut, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students, and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school meets the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools, central office administrators, vocational institutions, and institutions of higher education, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of E. O. Smith High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 64 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day
- a total of 30 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility
- individual meetings with 32 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers
- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

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

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

Overview of Findings

Although the conclusions of the visiting committee on the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation appear in various sections of this report, the committee wishes to highlight some findings in the paragraphs that follow. These findings are not intended to be a summary of the report.

Edwin O. Smith High School has employed the self-study process as a means of examining programs and services it provides for students as well as its fundamental beliefs about teaching and learning. It has delineated many of its accomplishments and some significant needs in the self-study documents. Its identification of strengths and needs, in addition to the conclusions and recommendations found in this report will form the basis for continued school improvement at E. O. Smith High School.

E. O. Smith High School's comprehensive curriculum, designed to meet the needs of its students in a variety of traditional and alternative settings, has benefitted from adequate budgets and dependable funding as well as inclusive support by the local community. The school culture is deeply rooted in its core values and beliefs. The school is currently in a period of transition of addressing needs in the area of curriculum, instruction, and assessment driven by the establishment of the schools' 21st century learning expectations. Thoughtful planning, examination of the use of time for both instruction and collaboration, formalized professional development, and continued commitment to the use of technology will determine the outcomes of this work to further support achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations for all students.

Teaching and Learning at Edwin O. Smith High School

Students are the focus of everyone in the E. O. Smith High School community. There is a strong sense of pride and partnership among the faculty, staff, students, parents, and the community and a commitment to provide a variety of programs and services in light of student needs. The Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) research-based program implemented several years ago serves as the foundation for the development of the school's core values and beliefs. "Edwin O. Smith High School is a community committed to academic excellence, personal achievement and integrity. Students are encouraged to respect diversity and become self-directed learners with a responsibility to contribute as literate members of an interdependent world." While the core values and beliefs are evident in the daily environment of the school, there is not as much familiarity or comfort in discussing the school's 21st century learning expectations. Work needs to be done to further articulate the learning expectations and to measure students' progress toward achieving them. The core values and beliefs statement guides the decision-making process within the school, and members of the school community feel that there are clear connections between the ideas expressed in the core values and beliefs and the programs and services planned and implemented are evident.

The faculty needs the time, resources, and a specific plan to align the curriculum with the expectations for student learning. The use of Rubicon Atlas, an electronic curriculum tool, has been made available for the faculty for four years. All teachers and departments should be accountable for entering curricula and consistently using it to inform planning, instruction, and assessment for all students. While school-wide analytical rubrics have been developed and adopted to measure the progress of students on the ten 21st century learning expectations, they are being used inconsistently. Following the defined school-wide plan for assessing how well individual students meet these learning standards and how well the school as a whole performs in meeting the learning goals will allow faculty members to adjust both the

curriculum and instructional practices. Once the faculty fully institutes the defined plan, the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations will become a driving force for teaching and learning at E. O. Smith High School.

The success of future efforts at refining curriculum, instruction and assessment is also dependent on the thoughtful planning of the use of time and structured professional development. Teachers need time to research and discuss effective practices, to collaborate with peers, and to use data purposefully in order to become reflective practitioners. Understanding how to effectively use multiple data sources will help teachers develop a protocol to review student work, not only in their own classes, but through interdisciplinary projects, initiatives, and learning. Much of the provided student work reflected a variety of methods to demonstrate that students understand concepts and are able to apply their learning and understanding. A professional development committee needs to be convened to do an analysis of needs and develop a schedule for ongoing tiered support, including technology, and structure the best use of time during faculty and department meetings, common planning time, and early release days. The faculty would benefit from working together to galvanize efforts defined in the 21st century learning expectations.

E. O. Smith High School offers students a wide array of courses in multiple settings to meet the needs of all students. This effort to address student learning comprehensively in a variety of different settings and time frames is commendable. Course work reflects state and national standards as well as community beliefs concerning a strong curriculum. Special programs are provided for students who need special education or an alternative learning environment. Pupil services and regular education faculty members cooperate in order to provide a supporting learning environment for all students. The faculty needs to further their work together through their collaborative assistance team (CAT) to develop and implement a response to intervention program that addresses as many needs as possible at the classroom level. In addition, attention needs to be given to the current practice of leveling core classes (A, B, and G). The wide array of opportunities for students to be engaged in co-curricular activities, interscholastic athletics, internships, and partnerships with higher education further add to the rich learning experiences at the school.

E. O. Smith High School teachers employ a wide variety of instructional strategies, many of which help to personalize the learning experiences for students. Teachers often provide specific and immediate feedback to students in order to clarify and revise their work. While many teachers provide a variety of instructional strategies that immediately engage and sustain students' involvement, others demonstrate a consistent teacher-centered traditional approach where students are not engaged. While many teachers collaborate informally, embedding the discussion and practice of effective instructional strategies into the culture of the school would provide consistency for all students, including those staff members who provide additional support to students. Both teachers and the administrators feel that the present system of teacher supervision and evaluation is not providing valuable feedback that would assist teachers in refining their instructional practices.

Support of Teaching and Learning at Edwin O. Smith High School

The climate at E. O. Smith High School is positive and supportive. The atmosphere of trust and collegiality permeates classrooms, activities, informal gatherings, scheduled meetings. The team-orientation of the principal, superintendent, and board of education is evident in conversations and initiatives to consistently improve student learning experiences. The board of education is supportive of school leadership and works hard to obtain the resources necessary to meet the needs of students. The

inclusion of the faculty in decision-making and the high level of involvement of parents in meetings and organizations to support student learning is part of the culture of the school. Students feel safe, trusted, and empowered to be individuals. All the adults in the school express their care and concern for student growth, safety, and acceptance, and they work well together in their efforts to guide and assist students in meeting the social and civic expectations as well as the academic expectations.

E. O. Smith has programs and services to meet student needs. While classes in core subjects are provided on various levels tailored to the ability of students, the elective programs help to foster heterogeneity and provide students with the opportunity to interact with a variety of their school peers. Guidance and special education services, as well as the alternative programs, were developed according to law and best practices to meet specific student needs. Students in special education have case managers who monitor their individual education plans and communicate with other faculty members. The guidance faculty has a significant impact on the personalized environment of the school as its members schedule annual individual meetings with students and their parents/guardians. They support students in all dimensions, socially, emotionally, and academically and effectively communicate with parents and faculty members. Health services are extensive and thorough and provide proactive, as well as responsive, personalized care for all students. Technology is used throughout the school and supports 24 hour communication for students and parents regarding grades and assignments through the Parent portal in Power School. Virtually all forms and communication are available online; the guidance department offers numerous support resources online, and the local paper and community television provide additional sources of communication. Parents express appreciation of the efforts made by the school to keep them informed and involved.

The school underwent an extensive renovation in 1998, and the physical plant is well maintained. Attention to facility needs is provided in-house through a computerized SchoolDude program. A recent referendum resulted in a decision to upgrade the track, tennis courts, and adjacent field. While there is an ongoing commitment to the upkeep of the school, there are some areas of concern, particularly the auditorium, which has an extensive schedule of use both during the school day for classes and for activities after school and in the evening.

The community support for the school is demonstrated in a variety of different ways. Opportunities for internships through the Depot campus program, cooperative work experience (CWE), sharing of community facilities, support for global, international and local initiatives to raise awareness and provide service, and partnerships with higher education are but a sample of the experiences available to students. The community support, coupled with the dedication of the faculty and school leadership, and the partnership with parents, will enable E. O. Smith High School to meet the goals expressed through its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations for all students.

School and Community Profile

Edwin O. Smith High School in Storrs, Connecticut, serves the communities of Ashford, Mansfield, and Willington. The school is located in rural eastern Connecticut, twenty five miles east of Hartford and in close proximity to the University of Connecticut, bordering the campus. Most workers in the region are employed in education, light industries, or commercial services.

The three communities that make up Regional District 19 /E. O. Smith High School have a combined population of 34,472. With a population of 23,993 Mansfield is the largest of the three sending towns (70% of the district's total population), followed by Willington with a population of 6,153 (18% of the district's population), and Ashford with a population of 4,326 (12% of the district's population). The largest minority population is found in Mansfield (16.3%), followed by Ashford (8.4%) and Willington (6.1%). The two largest minority groups in the district are Asian Pacific and Black. English is the primary language spoken at home by 96.2% of the district's population, while 3.8% of the population speaks 19 other languages in home settings. Median household incomes are \$68,131 (Ashford), \$65,140 (Willington), and \$61,897 (Mansfield). 8.3% of the students are eligible for free/reduced price meals.

Most workers in the tri-town region are employed in services, with this economic sector dominating employment in Mansfield (65.7% of all workers) and in Ashford (57%). Willington's largest employment sector is transportation and utilities (33.7%) followed by services (24.5%). Institutions of higher education, such as the University of Connecticut in Storrs and nearby Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic, are major employers in the district. In 2008 the three sending towns recorded unemployment rates ranging from 4.3% to 4.7%, significantly below the state average of 5.7%.

Regional School District 19 is a one-school district comprised of E. O. Smith High School. The school district has a total population of 1,201 students. 1,125 students come from the three sending towns: Mansfield (631 students; 56%), Willington (259 students; 23%), and Ashford (235 students;

21%). Additionally, 63 tuition-paying students from several surrounding towns are enrolled primarily in the school's Agricultural Education, Depot Campus, and Students Transitioning through Age Appropriate Routes (STAAR) programs. 13 students receive special education services in out-of-district placements. Each sending town has a separate K-8 school district.

Regional School District 19 ranks in the upper 50% of school districts in the state in terms of per pupil expenditures, and it expended \$15,103 per pupil compared with a state average of \$14,371 per pupil in 2010-2011 (secondary districts only). In fiscal year 2010-2011, 94.92 % of all funds received in the district was obtained from local sources; the remaining 5.08 % was obtained from state, federal, or other sources.

Edwin O. Smith High School includes students in grades 9-12 with a total enrollment of 1,201 students, 49.2% males and 50.8% females. Enrollment has remained stable over the past ten years. The ethnic, racial, and cultural composition has remained fairly constant with 11.7% minority enrollment in 2009-2010. Minorities include American Indian (0.6%), Asian American (4.9%), Black (2.5%), and Hispanic (3.7%) students. The average dropout rate for the past two years has been 10%, the average daily student attendance 96%, and the average attendance rate among teachers 95.5%.

There are 103.7 teachers at E. O. Smith High School, creating a student-to-teacher ratio of 12:1. The average class size is 17.3 students. Students attend school 180 days each school year, a minimum of 1,050 hours—150 hours above state requirements and 43 hours above the state average.

Students attending E. O. Smith select from a variety of leveled courses during their four-year high school experience. In a typical grade nine program of study, freshmen take full-year courses in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Most also take a world language, physical education/health, and an elective. Levels include A (most challenging); B (college preparatory); and G (general). Students may incorporate different leveled courses into their program of study. Students in grades ten to twelve also have leveled courses (A, B, and G), and, in addition, they often may select from 30 Early College Experience (ECE) courses through the University of

Connecticut or from 16 other college-level courses offered through the Career Pathways program with Manchester Community College and Quinnebaug Valley Community College. Many ECE courses are also certified Advanced Placement courses. One hundred eighty-five students receive special education services (15.8% of the student body). Required credits for all students include English (4), mathematics (4), science (3), social studies (3), physical education (1.5), vocational or fine arts (1), computer education (.5), health (.5), and at least 5.5 electives, a minimum of 23 credits. E. O. Smith also offers a variety of co-curricular activities, including 58 student clubs and organizations and 28 competitive sports programs, many at three levels: varsity, junior varsity, and freshman.

In the class of 2010, 53% of graduates attended four-year colleges, 18% enrolled in two-year colleges, 2% enrolled in business and technical schools, 2% entered the military, and the remainder entered the workforce. Most E. O. Smith graduates took advantage of the considerable educational opportunities available at local public colleges and universities such as the University of Connecticut, Eastern Connecticut State University, and area community colleges. A significant number of graduates from the class of 2010 were also enrolled in dozens of private colleges.

In recent years E. O. Smith has established formal partnerships with local businesses through its Cooperative Work Experience (CWE) program, job-related internships at the Depot Campus (Big Picture Learning model), the STAAR program with the University of Connecticut, and Allied Health program with Windham Hospital. A number of Career Day programs have also been organized on site by the Guidance Department.

E. O. Smith High School has established formal partnerships with local institutions of higher education, including the University of Connecticut and the community college system. Qualified E. O. Smith students, mainly juniors and seniors, may enroll in one or more college level courses for credit each semester through the ECE and Career Pathways programs. These courses are offered at E. O. Smith at no cost to students. In 2010-2011, 258 students were enrolled in ECE courses offered by seven departments: English, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, technical education, and

agricultural education. In 2009-2010, E. O. Smith offered more ECE courses than any other school in Connecticut and was the only high school that offered ECE courses in all four of the University of Connecticut's general content subjects. The total value of University of Connecticut ECE courses offered at E. O. Smith was \$502,580. In addition, qualified students may take UConn courses on the Storrs campus, again at no cost.

In recent years E. O. Smith students and staff have organized school-wide activities to raise social awareness and to assist people in need. Over the past decade tens of thousands of dollars have been raised to help people in America and around the world, including Haiti (2010), Sudan (2007), East Asia (2005), Sierra Leone (2004), and Kenya (2003). Several of these initiatives were developed in cooperation with outside organizations such as Roots of Development and American Friends of Kenya. School-wide collaborative teach-ins such as Living in a Time of War (2008), Climate Change (2007, 2010), and Invisible Children (2010-2011) have been organized. Many students, working on their senior projects, have also volunteered in local soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and animal rehabilitation facilities. Some students have participated in national efforts such as Hurricane Katrina relief (2006).

Students are recognized for their accomplishments in many ways. Since 1988 the annual Senior Awards Night formally recognizes senior students for a wide variety of achievements in academics, the arts, and community service. Students who have participated in state and national competitions also receive many awards and honors, some of which are showcased in the main lobby display cases. These awards represent a cross section of achievements by students at the school over time—academic awards, performance awards, and club and organization awards. Athletic Award Nights at the conclusion of all three sports seasons recognize individual and team achievements. A number of individual and team athletic awards are featured in the athletic lobby display cases. In 2008 the first ten alumni were inducted into the E. O. Smith High School Hall of Fame; five recipients were honored for athletic achievement and five for achievement in business, the arts, and the humanities.

Core Values and Beliefs and 21st Century Learning Expectations

Vision

We are a community of learners engaged in a passionate and imaginative quest for excellence. Genuine learning must inspire lives of personal integrity in which we become agents of positive social change.

Core Values and Beliefs

Edwin O. Smith High School is a **community** committed to academic excellence, personal **achievement** and **integrity**. Students are encouraged to **respect** diversity and become self-directed learners with a **responsibility** to contribute as literate members of an interdependent world.

Learning Expectations

Academic Expectations

Students at Edwin O. Smith High School will demonstrate:

- problem solving and decision-making skills.
- critical thinking and visual literacy.
- reading literacy.
- writing literacy.
- interactive communication skills and collaboration.
- information and technological literacy.
- inventive thinking, creativity and curiosity.

Social and Civic Expectations

Students at Edwin O. Smith High School will demonstrate:

- cultural literacy, global awareness and adaptability.
- civic literacy, personal productivity, and interpersonal skills that actively support and contribute to the community.
- health literacy.

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Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

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

The Edwin O. Smith High School community engages in a dynamic, collaborative and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. The school has a clear set of core values that are easily identifiable: community, respect, responsibility, achievement, and integrity. The school has a record available of the process used by the stakeholders, including its meeting dates and the names of the participants and their role in the school. This record reflects work initiated in December 2005 when the high school community began work to establish the school's five core values, which became the central focus of its mission statement. This work was driven by the faculty's decision, through a vote, to implement the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) program as a vehicle to improve school culture. A team initially consisting of administrators and department representatives hosted discussions with the faculty focusing on the development of core values and school-wide academic and behavioral expectations. In March 2006, the PBIS team conducted a full day professional development workshop outlining a detailed plan for the selection and implementation of core values. In the development of the core values and beliefs, the school reviewed current research-based best practices. Additional professional development for faculty and staff members as well as activity periods for students served as forums to facilitate the development of E.O. Smith's core values. Through a school-wide systems survey, the five core values were selected. In November 2007, school matrices and course expectations were reviewed and revised to reflect the school's core values and academic and behavioral expectations. The process of reviewing and revising the school's mission statement continued through 2009 when it was adopted by the board of education. Because this was embraced by the school community, the school's core values and 21st century learning expectations are tied to its principles. Clearly, all necessary stakeholders have embraced implementation of the five core values to which the school has dedicated itself. Teachers, students, parents, and administrators can state what the core values and beliefs about learning are and indicate how these values and beliefs about learning impact their lives. The core values are readily

available throughout the school and on the school's website. To reinforce the core values, a "Reach for the Stars" behavior incentive program was initiated. Community members help to support the program by displaying the core values in their places of business. The core values have been essential to the implementation of academic, behavioral and outreach programs. E .O. Smith High School's commitment to its core values and beliefs is reflected in the positive culture which exemplifies the school's five core values of respect, responsibility, achievement, community, and integrity. (self-study, panel presentations, teachers, students, parents)

The school has identified challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies that are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. In November 2007, interdepartmental faculty committees were formed to begin to revise the mission statement and academic, social and civic expectations. Initially, twenty learning expectations were identified and approved to prepare students for the remainder of the 21st century; school-wide rubrics were also developed. In the Fall of 2009, a three-year implementation schedule was developed. During the Spring of 2010, each department was assigned either the problem-solving or reading expectation rubric to assess performance of an identified task. In February 2010, the original twenty learning expectations were condensed to ten with some revisions made to the rubrics, including the addition of the point scale indicating four levels of achievement. The compacting of these learning expectations continued to reflect preparation of students for the remainder of the 21st century. The school has a matrix outlining each department's responsibility for implementing the 21st century school-wide analytical rubrics. Each department is implementing two school-wide rubrics during 2010-11 with implementation of all rubrics scheduled for 2011-12. Departments assess the learning expectations in academic, social, and civic competencies at least once or twice (depending on the department) during each semester using the rubrics as a common measurement. Each department is responsible for implementing two, three, or four

of the school-wide rubrics. For example, the social studies department is responsible for implementing the writing, reading, civic, and cultural school-wide rubrics. The foreign language department implements interactive communication skills, reading, and cultural literacy rubrics. Other departments are in varying stages of implementation. The school-wide analytic rubrics serve as a diagnostic tool, and the planned use of software (Limelight) is expected to longitudinally track student performance and provide valuable data for individual classroom teachers on students' formative performance on each of the learning expectations. These analytic rubrics have identified the desired level of achievement that the school expects students to attain. The rubrics use the same terminology (exemplary, proficient, developing, and beginning) so students receive common messages about the different levels of achievement. The learning expectations are consistent with the core values and beliefs about learning. Although the school has developed measurable learning expectations which address academic, social, and civic competencies that are defined by school-wide rubrics, the rubrics are being used inconsistently and sporadically by the students and faculty, which does not allow the school to make meaningful, data-driven decisions to impact student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. (student shadowing, student work, teachers)

While the school's core values and beliefs and its 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, the 21st century learning expectations are used inconsistently to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom. The core values are actively reflected in the culture of the school. The widespread commitment to international causes, relief efforts for national and global crises, and wide variety of programs exposes students to various cultures and reinforces E.O. Smith's social and civic expectations. The staff is in the process of incorporating the core values and 21st century learning expectations, including their corresponding rubrics, into the curriculum. The expectations have become the guide for the evaluation of current and future programs and procedures.

Some focused common planning time has been allocated so that departments may collaborate to embed the learning expectations into curriculum, instruction and assessment. The district leadership is committed to using the core values and beliefs to guide important decisions that impact student learning. An example of a specific decision being made to change curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices in response to the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and 21st century learning expectations is the planned phasing out of the G-level course in English and social studies commencing in the fall of 2011, with other disciplines to follow. School and district leaders are committed to allocating the necessary resources to support E.O. Smith's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Currently, the school is in a transition of developing and monitoring electronically the implementation of curriculum electronically and in the early stages of monitoring student performance through the use of the school-wide rubrics with the new Limelight software. E. O. Smith's community of learners reflects and values a commitment to academics and civic and social learning. The school exudes a climate of respect which is rooted directly in the core values and beliefs. The infusion of the core values and beliefs into the school culture has created an environment in which students can achieve academic excellence. However, the inconsistent implementation process of the school-wide analytical rubrics to measure the 21st century learning expectations, currently does not allow for making data-driven decisions about curriculum, instruction, and assessment. (panel presentations, student shadowing, teachers, school board, school leadership)

The school is beginning to implement a plan to review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, and district and school community priorities. The core values and beliefs statement are scheduled to be reviewed every four years to coincide with the four-year high school cycle. Student fulfillment of the learning expectations is scheduled to be monitored through performance on standardized tests such as the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), ACT, Accuplacer, SAT and advanced placement

(AP), as well as through data collected through classroom assessments that incorporate the school-wide rubrics. Implementation of the Limelight software program to disaggregate student data from these assessments and record them in individual student portfolios is part of this plan. A review of performance data will determine and inform which program adjustments the school needs to make to help the students meet the 21st century learning expectations. The school examines data of student performance on standardized tests and various surveys to determine targeted school-wide learning priorities. There are currently no formal data teams that analyze results of learning expectations as measured by school-wide rubrics. Although administrators, guidance personnel, and some faculty members are engaged in discussions about student performance using data sources, school-wide rubrics are not yet a source of data for this purpose. Faculty informally shares research on learning, including an assessment of the implications of such research on the school's beliefs about learning. The school has implemented a variety of research-based programs using data to improve the education of all students. E. O. Smith has established post-secondary participation, course failures, and dropout rates as priority items for review. The school reviews students' grades and discipline records quarterly to identify those students in need of academic or behavioral intervention. A tiered privilege system has been implemented to reward those who maintain a strong academic and behavior record. The "Guidance Blog" (<http://eosguidance.blogspot.com/>), provides access to parents, students, and faculty members to research-based discussions about the implications of decisions. The Naviance program, facilitated by the guidance department, provides an avenue for students to design course patterns that will maximize learning and career options. In addition, the guidance department records and updates students' intended and actual post-secondary endeavors. The administration monitors all students who do not graduate on time and helps these students to obtain an E. O. Smith diploma through summer school, PLATO, or the credit recovery program. All data, including post secondary plans and graduation rates, are reviewed annually and used to improve the school's academic and behavioral support programs.

Although the school has established a plan and a supporting process for reviewing and revising its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, the plan is not yet in full scale operation, thus, its goal of ensuring that every student meets these expectations is not fully supported by consistent data collection to coincide with the four-year high school cycle. (self-study, department leaders, teachers, panel presentations)

Commendations

1. The school culture reflects the core values and beliefs
2. The inclusion of faculty, students, parents, and community members in the process of developing and implementing the five core values and beliefs
3. The research-based Positive Behavior and Intervention Support (PBIS) program as a vehicle to improve school culture and positively effect the achievement of core values, beliefs and 21st learning expectations
4. The academic and behavioral data to inform individual and school wide program adjustments as well as to develop new initiatives
5. The academic and behavioral support for students
6. The school's technology, including the school website, and Naviance software, to develop blogs, podcasts, and eBoard in order to share information and current research, with students, parents, faculty, local community members, and school board members
7. The Reach for the Stars incentive program to reinforce the five core values

Recommendations:

1. Implement a professional development plan to bring deeper meaning to the 21st century expectations and use of analytic school-wide rubrics
2. Develop and implement a system to ensure accountability for the consistent and accurate use of school-wide assessments and the analytic rubrics

3. Collect and analyze data from the school-wide rubrics to make informed decisions on the review and revision of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
4. Use the school-wide rubrics as a diagnostic tool to longitudinally track student performance, program efficacy, and post-secondary outcomes
5. Articulate a four-year timeline for review and revision of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

2

Curriculum

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

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

The curriculum is not yet purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The faculty has identified the content areas responsible for developing and implementing benchmark assessments to evaluate each of the school's ten learning expectations. While the process of incorporating these learning expectations into the curriculum began in the spring of 2010, the 21st century learning expectations are not consistently embedded in the curriculum documents. Some departments have electronically completed the revisions of their curriculum to include 21st century learning expectations; others have not. However, the 21st century learning expectations have been incorporated in many of the student learning experiences through the use of school-wide rubrics that have been developed to measure student achievement. For example, in math, the teachers have incorporated the problem-solving and decision-making expectation into authentic assessments. The social studies department has aligned the writing literacy expectation to classroom assessments, and the science department has created a common assessment that measures achievement of problem-solving and decision-making and writing literacy. The world language department has implemented common assessments to measure interactive communication skills. Agricultural education has implemented problem-solving and decision-making and civic literacy. Career and technology education has implemented inventive thinking expectations. The critical thinking rubric was evidenced in all aspects of fine arts. Overall, the English department has not yet completed the revision and uploading of the curriculum in the school's electronic system, Rubicon Atlas, thus, there is no consistent way to ensure the practice and achievement of those 21st century learning expectations by all students. (teachers, panel presentation, student work)

Most of E. O. Smith High School's curriculum is written in a common format that includes units of study, essential understandings, concepts, content, skills, instructional strategies, and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. E. O.

Smith purchased Rubicon Atlas in 2007 and established a common format for all curricular documents

for which each department is responsible to upload and then access electronically. The template includes Connecticut state standards, enduring understandings (not essential questions); concepts, content, skills, instructional strategies, and assessments (performance outcomes.) The school is in the process of incorporating its 21st century learning expectations into the electronic curriculum. The staff has made progress in placing existing curriculum into the common format. Summer funding has been provided each year for staff members to revise and create curriculum as well as duty release time granted to teachers wishing to begin the process of updating their curriculum to reflect the adoption of the 21st century learning expectations, essential understandings, and benchmark assessments. Additionally, a timeline for new and revised curriculum is in place whereby teachers/departments may submit proposals that are reviewed for approval. Since purchasing the curriculum software in 2007, most departments have uploaded their curriculum guides on Rubicon Atlas. A notable exception is the English department. Since 2009, the school has phased-in the use of school-wide rubrics that measure 21st century learning expectations. In the spring of 2010, each department implemented one benchmark assessment that evaluated either reading or problem-solving and decision-making and then began to add these assessments to the curriculum. Implementation and use of these rubrics is not systemic however. While E. O. Smith has made efforts to implement a common electronic curriculum format,, not all departments have completed this task; therefore, opportunities to discuss and share learning experiences and practices electronically with colleagues is incomplete, and determining consistency of students' learning experiences is not furthered. In addition, the use of the school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics, which are included in the course curriculum, are not always linked to common assessments resulting in an un-systemic use of data.(self-study, teachers, department chairs)

Some of the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities and informed and ethical use of technology. While the electronic curriculum documents

do not reflect the depth of understanding and application of knowledge, a review of student assessments indicates application of knowledge in the classroom. For example, the senior project, a requirement for all students, demonstrates authentic learning, higher order thinking, and the cross-disciplinary learning experiences. Also included is a mandatory community connection component which offers student community service opportunities. According to the Endicott survey, over 70% of teachers provides opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning at least once per semester. There is collaboration between the world language and agricultural education departments on a horticultural project, construction classes working with ag-ed on building projects, and world languages and culinary arts planning cultural-specific events.. In addition, the school has held multiple teach-ins, a week-long series of school-wide seminars devoted to a current issue led by representatives from the faculty and community, on such topics as Climate Change: Economic Impacts and Solutions that was held in the fall of 2010. In general, cross-disciplinary experiences are not planned parts of the curriculum but rather take place informally.

Through the peer editing process, the writing center provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate higher order thinking skills across disciplines. Inquiry and problem-solving as well as higher order thinking are strongly emphasized in many parts of the school's curriculum. For example the English curriculum requires students to research connections between literature and current or historical events or issues. Ag-ed students manage and care for a crop or animal from start to finish. Business students are asked to identify, analyze, and evaluate investments, incorporate them in a portfolio, and then manage the portfolio by making decisions to buy or sell. Math assignments require students to identify a problem, organize data, solve the problem, and evaluate the solution. In science, students are required to design and implement experiments to solve problems. As a result of identifying problem-solving as a 21st century learning expectation, many departments have incorporated a rubric to measure this skill into their classroom assessments.

The school provides a number of opportunities to apply learning beyond the school campus. Including courses at the University of Connecticut and Manchester Community College, 45 courses at E. O. Smith confer college credit. Students are also permitted to travel to the UConn campus and enroll tuition-free in a variety of courses not available at the high school. At any given time, approximately 250 students are taking courses for college credit either on or off E. O. Smith's campus. Additionally, Cooperative Work Experience (CWE) classes offer students the opportunity for authentic learning outside the classroom. Students are placed in internship experiences that are monitored by the faculty as well as those specifically designed for interests and courses at the Depot campus. Performances both in and out of school are a key part of the instrumental and vocal music programs. Ag-ed requires students to obtain work experience out of school; the Future Farmers of America (FFA) component of the Ag-ed program involves authentic learning experiences outside of school. In the allied health program, students are involved in job-shadowing at Windham Hospital. The world language department has an extensive international exchange program with schools in Germany, France, and Spain.

According to the Endicott survey, over 65% of teachers regularly remind students of the ethical use of technology. Students are expected to adhere to school policies regarding computers and the Internet. Senior projects, which are mandated for graduation, require students to use technology in their presentations. All seniors are required to submit their research papers on www.turnitin.com to ensure the appropriate citing of sources and the authenticity of their work. The English, science, and social studies departments use this tool frequently. The library media center (LMC) and English department provide lessons in appropriate citing of resources and the ethical use of technology. The information and technology literacy rubric is in the process of being implemented.

The leveling of core classes (A, B, and G) presents inconsistencies in the expectations of all learners. While 45% of the school is enrolled in level A classes, 16% is enrolled in G level classes. Commencing in the Fall of 2011, the G level will be eliminated in freshmen English and social studies

and continued elimination will take place on a graduated basis over four years. Because the curriculum documents do not explicitly incorporate inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning and authentic learning opportunities, there is inconsistency of how, and at what frequency, these are incorporated into the students' coursework to emphasize depth of understanding and application of knowledge equitably for all students. (student work, student shadowing, interviews with students)

There are only informal structures to ensure a clear alignment between written and taught curriculum. Formal structures such as department meetings and course-based professional learning communities (PLCs) promote consistency between the written and taught curriculum. Some departments have embedded the emphasis on alignment within the culture of the department and its routines. For example, some teachers of math, science, and physical education have time during the school day to discuss specific course curriculum. Some teachers of world language, English, special services, and social studies meet informally to facilitate the alignment between written and taught curriculum. Some department chairs use their department meeting time to align the written and taught curriculum by reviewing and revising the curriculum posted to Rubicon Atlas. The supervision process is used by some department chairs and building administrators to support the alignment. All departments have informal processes to monitor the alignment between the written and taught curriculum. Major assessments, such as semester exams in a given course, demonstrate a high level of consistency. Departmental variations can be found in more routine assessments. In general, teachers report that curricular documents allow for up to 25% teacher discretion in common assessments. Recently implemented PLCs facilitate a greater degree of consistency and improve instruction. Courses without PLCs continue their informal approach to alignment. Many students who are enrolled in A, B, and/or G level courses report a wide range of learning experiences that are not consistently available across levels to all students. Because there are no formal structures to ensure clear alignment between the written

and taught curriculum, it is likely that students taking the same course may experience a significant difference with respect to content and expectations. (teachers, students, self study)

There is minimal curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district. The high school provides interdepartmental planning time to foster collaboration. Department meetings are held at least once a month, and additional department meetings are periodically scheduled. These meetings consist of administrative and informational tasks depending upon current needs. Within the high school, some department chairs use their meetings for curricular coordination between grade levels, ongoing curriculum revision, or to collaboratively develop new and revise existing curriculum and to assess its quality. Department planning time to foster collaboration is done informally, with many teachers accessing Rubicon Atlas to assure consistency in delivery of curricula. Since the school is in its first year of implementing PLCs for those sharing the same courses, the process is still in development, and only four academic departments are currently operating using this course-specific PLC model. Most math teachers share a common planning time where pacing, topics to be taught, and curriculum work are discussed. The Algebra 2B curriculum is currently being written using PLC time. The newly formed 9B English team meets weekly during common planning time to discuss content pacing, common exams, and the piloting of new texts.

E. O. Smith High School receives students from three primary K-8 sending districts as well as tuition students from three additional districts. There are challenges in vertical curriculum articulation as multiple school districts merge into the E. O. Smith curriculum, beginning in ninth grade. Within the three feeder K-8 schools there are inconsistencies, specifically in the math courses (one offers only pre-algebra, another offers pre-algebra and algebra), and world languages where one district offers multiple languages and two districts offer only Spanish. Many teachers in math, science, world language, and music report that they meet informally with grade eight teachers from the three feeder districts; however,

there is no formal process to do so. Math teachers report that they meet after the school day to discuss math content. Two out of the three feeder schools use the same textbook, but one school does not, thus not allowing for a smooth transition for students. The high school principal and director of guidance have initiated meetings with sending district grade eight students and families to provide an overview of the curriculum. During these meetings, Naviance, a course-planning tool, is modeled and used with families. While teachers and administrators have made efforts to coordinate curricular alignment within the school and among the feeder schools, these efforts have not assured that alignment. With a lack of structured vertical curriculum articulation from the K-8 feeder schools, there are initial inequities in preparation for the 9-12 curricula. In addition, because of the varying stages of 9-12 vertical curriculum review and development, monitoring of student practice and achievement of the 21st century learning expectations may be compromised. (department chairs, teachers, self-study)

There is sufficient staffing, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities and the resources of the library media center to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning experiences. E. O. Smith provides multiple alternative paths to learning within its comprehensive high school. In addition to the traditional core curriculum at the high school, students have opportunities in agricultural education, the Depot campus school that uses the Big Picture model, Positive After School Support (PASS) and the Students Transitioning in Age Appropriate Routes (STAAR) program. There has been little or no increase in budgetary allotment over the past few years. Department chairs distribute their allocated funds to meet the requirements of implementation of the curriculum. Some departments have sought and received outside grants to supplement curriculum, in particular drama and music, from the local education foundation. The partnership with the University of Connecticut, Manchester Community College, and Quinebaug Valley Community College provide course enrollments for students with no cost on a “seat availability” basis. The library media center supports the curriculum adequately by providing acceptable access to both

print and non-print materials. It features 18 student-access computers, a 24-seat computer classroom, and a recently created six computer writing center supported by trained staff as well as a student-to-student evaluation model.

E. O. Smith is very proud of the number and diversity of its co-curricula offerings to meet the needs and interests of all students. Over 1,000 students participate in the co-curricular program which includes 58 clubs and 28 interscholastic sports teams. A wide range of programs in the visual and performing arts, agriculture, culinary arts, and social justice such as Peer Natural Helpers (PNH), Future Farmers of America (FFA), robotics, art club, socialism club and a club entitled Ending Genocide around the World. Teachers and students report that if a student is interested in starting a club (i.e. fencing), it is common practice for a faculty member to step forward as the advisor. The school is very proud of its highly successful interscholastic athletic program and the high level of involvement in Unified Sports. Many of the co-curricular programs are supported through the generosity of community and booster clubs during tight fiscal times.

The information technology department has made strides to keep up with the increased demand for technology. There are technology labs in each area of English, science, social studies, math, world language, and technology education to support 21st century learning expectations. Over the last five years, a policy has been implemented to inventory and update computers to meet the requirements of a 21st century curriculum. This includes two new student computer labs in science and English as well as a classroom set of mobile laptop computers increased computer access in the agricultural education department, and the implementation of wireless computer access for approximately 40% of the school facility. Some of the district's requests for interactive whiteboards, individual student response systems, and graphing calculators have been supplemented by grants funded from sources such as the Edwin O. Smith Foundation. The integration of new computer labs has necessitated a re-allocation of departmental teaching space in both English and science, which has taxed the availability of classrooms to the extent

that the school has reached its scheduling limit in the science labs. While there are ample computer labs, there is minimal technology in the classrooms. Students report that teachers do not use technology on a regularly either because it is not available or because teachers don't have a high level of comfort using it. Limited access to technology in classrooms is becoming an issue as the school continues to revise curriculum to include deeper integration and use of technology as a tool for teaching and learning. (self-study, department chairs, facility tour)

The district provides the school's professional staff sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using the assessment results and current research. Financial support to review, evaluate, and modify curriculum has been consistent over the last three years. There is a clear timeline for curriculum revision and a new course proposal process that has been in place for over three years. Teachers may apply for summer workshop funding to write new or revise existing curriculum. In addition, the faculty is given professional development time to ensure that curriculum is written in a common format and includes the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. In addition, some teachers have duty release time to work in their content-specific PLC to update and revise their curriculum. A curriculum subcommittee of school board members, teachers, and department chairs discusses new curriculum ideas based on best practice or research. For example, the writing center, based on the Connecticut Writing Project and the National Writing Project, reflects research-based goals and is designed to raise awareness among staff and students of the importance of writing across the curriculum, to provide models of excellent writing in assignments across the curriculum, and to coordinate and assist in the training of peer editors. Several teachers of social studies researched the use of artifacts to teach culture and thought in different periods of history and incorporated the findings into the curriculum. In addition, the school board supported a four-year math requirement to bring equity among students and their preparation for advanced mathematics and career options. As a result, new math curriculum such as

financial literacy has been written. The infusion of technology to enhance the curriculum is supported by the board of education and evidenced by multiple computer labs in content areas; however, current technology (SMARTboards, etc.) is not found in most classrooms where it could be used to enrich the curriculum and support 21st century skills. The use of time to discuss assessment results and current research is not consistent across the school. Although many departments have at least two common assessments, not all teachers collect and analyze student results with the purpose of evaluating and revising the curriculum. Social studies teachers do use the freshmen reading assessment and CAPT to monitor and adjust the curriculum, and math teachers use a CAPT practice assessment to assess the accuracy of the freshmen math placement. Science teachers have developed the integrated physical science course in response to CAPT scores, and teachers place students in the lab-based 9B English class in response to reading scores. Without a purposeful school-wide focus on using assessment results and current research to collaboratively develop, evaluate and revise the curriculum, there are inconsistencies among and between teachers in content areas and in different disciplines. (self-study, school board presentation, teachers)

Commendations

1. The multiple curricular programs available to meet the needs of all learners both on and off campus
2. The senior project requirement for all students
3. Depth and diversity of co-curricular programs
4. The extensive curricular and internship opportunities for students to apply learning beyond the school
5. Sufficient staffing, instructional materials, equipment and supplies to support the delivery of curriculum
6. The allocation of school resources for regular update and revision of curriculum

7. The adoption of Rubicon Atlas electronic curriculum format
8. Curriculum-embedded inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary, and authentic learning opportunities in many classes
9. The teachers and leaders' creative ways to fund curriculum needs
10. The international and global events and collaboration

Recommendations

1. Create accountability for all subject areas to update and maintain curriculum electronically on Rubicon Atlas using the developed curriculum template to document 21st century learning expectations
2. Use formal collaborative time to align curriculum vertically and horizontally using assessment data and 21st century learning expectations
3. Assess technology services and materials, specifically at the classroom level, and professional development to support 21st century learning expectations
4. Expand common planning time to include all curricular areas
5. Use a common data collection protocol to analyze common benchmark assessments to inform, monitor, and adjust the curriculum
6. Ensure consistent alignment between written and taught curriculum
7. Advance merging of B and G level curriculum in core classes to provide equitable opportunities for all students to meet the 21st century learning expectations
8. Develop curriculum documents for the after school, summer school, and Depot Campus programs
9. Develop processes for planning and supporting a wider range of cross-disciplinary curricular opportunities

3**Instruction**

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

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

Teachers' instructional practices are occasionally examined to ensure consistency with the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Most teachers provide course syllabi that include the school's core values and beliefs and 21st century learning expectations. In the area of 21st century learning expectations, there is strong emphasis on writing across the curriculum. In addition, essays, projects, and presentations include problem-solving and decision-making skills, critical thinking skills and visual literacy, inventive thinking, creativity, and curiosity. Some teachers implement instructional strategies that reference the 21st century learning expectations as well as the core values and beliefs. Some teachers have developed lessons to specifically address core values; for example, presentation on achievement and responsibility. In some departments, teachers have been given release time from their duties to coordinate instruction and align the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations with curriculum, instruction, and assessment. In most classes, the school's core values and beliefs about learning are interwoven with instructional practices to create interactions between teacher/student and student/student. Reflective practices take place on an informal basis. In weekly department meetings, there is inconsistent focus on the reflection on instructional practices. When formative and summative observations take place, there is some inconsistency in the focus of instructional practices and how instruction can be improved. Many teachers report they would welcome the opportunity to discuss instructional practices with their department chair and/or administrator responsible for supervision and evaluation. While the core values and beliefs are a consistent part of instruction, discussion of instructional practices relative to 21st century learning expectations is not a significant part of the professional culture of the school. (self-study, teachers, instruction committee)

Teachers' instructional practices often support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning, engaging students as active and self-directed learners, emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking, and applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. Some

teachers integrate technology and engage students in self-assessment and reflection. Teachers often personalize instruction by providing multiple learning activities to address individual learning needs. Teachers report employing a wide variety of instructional strategies such as reading assignments, lecture and discussion, hands-on activities, debates, panel discussions, discovery lessons, group work, demonstrations, performances, projects, laboratory activities and calculations and use of audio and video. The hands-on nature of fine and performing arts classes necessitates continual personalization of instruction. Individualized instruction is a defining characteristic of the Depot campus, where each student is mentored according to individualized learning plans. The school also offers a wide range of extra help opportunities to support personalized learning, ranging from a teacher's extra help sessions to full-time tutors and the Positive After School Support (PASS) Program. Personalized instruction through the support in the special education department meets the specific requirements outlined in students' IEPs. Teachers often offer a choice of project topics to further personalize instruction. For example, students in science classes may choose among various topics and presentation methods when completing wikis. Independent study courses are offered to personalize the curriculum; for example, students work individually on projects with the guidance of a teacher in an organic chemistry project, a coral project and a project in programming games. In agricultural science education, students choose individual projects based on academic and career interest and are engaged in hands-on learning that challenges their thinking. The required senior project provides for personalized learning for all students.

Teachers strive to involve students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking. Inquiry is a defining characteristic of science classes where lab activities begin with a question to be investigated. The learning expectation of problem-solving was one of the first to be introduced through the use of the school-wide rubric. Some social studies assignments require student-led research that applies problem-solving skills to answer questions. Health classes require students to analyze and present a current event topic to their peers, extending their knowledge of health issues beyond the

classroom. The career and technical education department infuse problem-solving through the student operated school bank and student participation in Distributive Education Club Association (DECA) activities. Teachers use essential questions and understandings from the curriculum to focus on major themes. English teachers use essential questions to drive activities and writing assignments throughout the unit. In world language classes, essential questions focus on extending knowledge in cultural contexts and practical themes in communication. Use of higher order thinking is displayed in cooperative learning groups through courses such as economics, applied mathematics, and leadership. Influences from these classes are seen in a variety of ways; for example, when students develop a plan for an industrial plant that will be used in the creation of sneakers, students make predictions of cost factors influencing APR, roles of leadership, and architectural design based in industry specific standards. In English, both fiction and non-fiction readings are used to engage students in relating text through character analysis to aid in the development with student understanding of self.

Many teachers integrate cross disciplinary activities to enhance student learning. The science and mathematics departments regularly integrate topics in their lessons such as calculus and physics, biology and statistics, and chemistry and algebra. Latin students integrate language arts by working on figures of speech, literary terms, writing styles, characterization, and rhetoric when studying Cicero. The German, social studies, and marketing teachers share information regarding the development of the European Union. The world language and social studies departments collaborate on a project involving World War II. The fine arts department participates in an interdisciplinary study of culture viewed through the lens of several different historical periods. School-wide events such as the Climate Change Teach-in, Ending Apathy, Ending Genocide Around the World, and Teach-in for Peace involve teachers across content disciplines as well as experts from the community.

Many teachers use instructional strategies that engage students as active and self-directed learners through group projects, labs, discovery activities, panel discussion, and student-taught lessons. Students

in a politics class must act a role, present their arguments, cite their evidence, and respond to other panelists and class questions. Other opportunities for self-directed learning include senior projects, Depot campus internships, school-to-career experiences, supervised agricultural experience (SAE) projects, independent physical education, and portfolio work in art classes.

Many teachers ask students to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks within lessons. Students discuss and write for audiences beyond the classroom. Depot students present their work at quarterly and annual mentor celebrations. Senior projects, choral, band, and orchestra concerts, the culinary classes' restaurant, child development pre-school, wiki and web pages, world language national poetry contests, exchange programs, and art shows exemplify students engaged in meaningful projects that result in formal presentations. Internships, CWE, the STAAR program, job fairs, agriculture fairs, student markets, and services provided the public such as small engine repair, welding, and floral arranging provide further opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills in authentic ways.

Teachers use a variety of tools to encourage students' self-assessment and reflection. Incoming ninth graders complete a self-report of academic skills allowing them to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Evaluation of final products, research papers, and quarterly exhibitions help students be more reflective as well as use of student journals, personal workout logs, and individual and peer editing to monitor their own progress. The special services and school counseling programs facilitate student self-assessment and reflection through the use of Naviance to set goals and plan careers and help students with individualized transition planning. Engaging students in reflection and self-assessment is easily seen in the fine arts department programs and the Depot campus offers a formal program that extends school- to-career through internship as well as providing opportunities for students to share exhibitions and portfolios with parents and members of the community. Panel discussions and socratic seminars, as well as debates, are used to synthesize concepts dealing with various themes in the

curriculum to achieve a deeper understanding of content; however these practices are not always evident at all levels. Several teachers still employ teacher-centered instruction that does not actively engage students in thinking and learning. Use of school-wide rubrics of 21st century learning expectations provides all students the opportunity to reflect and self-assess their work. Through the process of rewriting or resubmission, students are given the opportunity to improve their work after receiving feedback from their teachers.

Some teachers effectively integrate technology into instructional practices. An English teacher uses wiki spaces and wordles in the creation of art and video. Discussion threads are also used to discuss readings. Physical education classes use computer-based exercise equipment. Students are assigned a variety of projects which requires them to choose the appropriate technology to successfully complete their assignments. There is some additional technology such as SMARTBoard, smart music in the performing arts, student response systems, and graphing calculators in math (used in A-Level classes), but these are not used to full capacity. Some teachers have applied for technology grants from the E.O.. Smith Foundation and other organizations while others have sought out professional development in the use of technology on their own and then share new skills with their colleagues; however, many teachers do not yet embed technology in their instruction to enhance student learning. While there are multiple learning experiences for students, the unequal distribution of technology throughout the building, coupled with limited professional development for its use by teachers, results in unequal access to technology and its use for students who do not have the best opportunity to become actively engaged in their learning through technology. (self-study, student work, student shadowing, instruction committee)

Some teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessments, strategically differentiating, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and by providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Reading and spelling assessment given to all 9th graders within a few weeks of school is used to identify students

in need of immediate interventions. Accommodations are made to address reading disparities at the B & G levels through the English lab and reading instructor. Numerous formative assessments across the content areas are used prior to instruction. For example, in social studies, a pretest on the Middle East is administered to gauge students' content knowledge; world language and science teachers give pretests to measure students' background knowledge. Calculus, business, and AP Statistics often give ungraded assessments before graded assessments. Submitted ungraded rough drafts of lab reports and writing assignments are available so students can receive constructive feedback before submitting their final version. There is continuous formative assessment in some classes like physical education and art where journals are kept. The Depot campus program uses numerous formative assessments and strategic differentiation, but this practice is not common throughout the school's main campus with the exception of the teachers providing special education services and in the cooperative work experience program, where teachers work to develop individualized training plans and students receive credit for real work experiences. Teachers often comment that they identify differentiating instruction with the leveling of classes at the school (A, B, and G). Teachers report differentiating instruction within individual classrooms, especially in G and B level classes, based on the varying levels of students' ability. For example, Algebra G places emphasis on practical applications of mathematical concepts while the A level algebra includes greater breadth and complexity of concepts. Similarly, chemistry A emphasizes representation of concepts by mathematical reasoning while chemistry B emphasizes application of chemistry concepts to society. Students in A level classes move at a faster pace, covering material in greater detail than students in B or G levels. There is also some evidence of differentiating instruction within particular courses, as well. The physical education department routinely differentiates instruction according to their adapted physical education program. Many teachers adapt lessons and assessments to accommodate students with specific challenges such as blindness or autism, with modifications such as the use of Braille labs and textbooks, and shortened or modified assessments. Pre-algebra, Algebra G,

Math for Daily Living, Investment Math, and Exploring Topics I and II are co-taught by a mathematics teacher and a special education teacher. This collaboration permits teachers to differentiate instruction within the class more efficiently. Assignments are modified and material is taught again as needed. Some teachers differentiate by allowing students to choose among various types of assignments; this practice is more prominent in G level classes than in B or A.

Students are frequently purposefully organized in group activities in science laboratory activities and math problem-solving. In social studies, students self-select to form family stories while studying the Holocaust; in English, students work in small groups and provide peer feedback; in world language, students work together to perform skits in the target language or present translations; in physical education, students are deliberately organized to ensure diversity and fairness in team activities. Agricultural education teachers work together to plant a vegetable garden; culinary arts students work together to prepare menus, food, and provide service; and students in the performing arts work in groups on a regular basis as part of the culture of performances. Some teachers strategically pair students in cooperative learning experiences to enhance maximum learning at all levels. Teachers provide additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom in a variety of ways. While teachers report that they believe that leveling within content areas and specific subjects indicates a school-wide effort to address different learning needs of the student body, all departments provide additional support and alternative strategies inside and outside the regular classroom. Tutors, co-teaching, extra classes in math and English, use of study halls, and scheduled after school help are available for students. The weight room is open after school for students needing extra help achieving better physical fitness. Teachers regularly provide extra help sessions weekly or biweekly. Students receive individual help by making appointments with teachers to meet either after school or during a teacher's preparation period. Students can also sign up to receive help in the writing lab. The panther tutoring program, in cooperation with the University of Connecticut, provides extra help in all academic

areas. Students in the special services program receive regular extra help in the form of scheduled resource blocks. Within the classroom, teachers often provide students with specialized rubrics, assistance in breaking down assignments into smaller steps, alternative test options that require fewer and shorter answers, enlarged font assignments, and individualized learning plans and check-ins. Teachers also provide online activities and electronic copies of assignments, post homework for students via teacher eBoards, and email reports to parents of their child's progress. Student-centered initiatives are available through tutoring for English language learners (ELL) from members of the world language honor society, peer tutoring in writing in the writing center and reading help from the special services department. More emphasis is placed on providing instructional support in B and G-levels.

Students enrolled in B & G level classes comment that only a few teachers will take time from instruction to clarify assignments or concepts while many students are willing to sit passively while instruction is delivered. Some teachers adjust instructional practices to address learning at all levels or in all classes. While there is evidence of the use of formative assessments, organized group activities, and an abundance of additional support available to students, the inconsistent adjustment of instructional practice and strategic differentiations on the spot during instruction in classes is not meeting the needs of all students and their achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. (instruction committee, student shadowing, students)

Some teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve instructional practices by using achievement data, examining student work, using feedback from a variety of sources, examining current research, and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Some teachers informally collaborate to improve instruction. Although weekly department meetings are scheduled, this time is not necessarily devoted to a formal collaborative time to review multiple data sources critical for improved instruction. Meeting times to discuss achievement data varies greatly by departments. Teachers who teach the same courses are often more likely to use their common planning time to look at

data; for instance, the four social studies teachers who are assigned to U. S. history meet one period a week to discuss achievement data from formative and summative assessments and to adapt their lessons appropriately. There are some departments, such as career and technical education, special services, and fine arts, whose members meet once monthly to formally discuss achievement data. Use of CAPT and CMT data has resulted in program changes but not necessarily focused on improved instructional practice. On a yearly basis, teachers review incoming freshman CMT data and sophomore CAPT results in G level courses such as Essentials of Algebra/Geometry and Essentials of Geometry of Probability. The science department created Introduction to Physical Sciences based on CAPT results to better meet the background knowledge needs of students. Teachers use student work in a variety of different ways, and the discussions usually take place at the department level. The English department uses the ninth grade reading assessment to aid in placement of students in the appropriate course levels and to design modifications such as reading support. The mathematics department members participate in shared scoring and discuss the results. Resource teachers meet with classroom teachers to examine student work and provide feedback. The physical education teachers examine physical fitness results and adjust instruction accordingly. World language teachers use placement exams for students who have studied a language over the summer in order to skip a level of instruction. For the majority of the departments, there is no explicit discussion specific to using student work to inform instructional practice; rather department meeting time is frequently used for student placement in one of the leveled classes.

Although many teachers receive student and parent feedback through emails, use of the eBoards, personal contact, and parent conferences, parents have little, if any, input in the adjustments of teacher instruction. In physical education, students are often asked for feedback in choosing activities that meet individual fitness needs. Many teachers receive feedback from students in reflection forms at the end of units or as a separate question on their final exam. However, this practice offers minimal input for teachers to adjust instruction throughout the duration of the course. Anecdotal evidence suggests some

teachers often use informal discussions and journal prompts asking students to reflect on their learning. Teachers report using this informal data to modify the scope and pace of their curriculum, but not necessarily to adjust their instruction. Several departments, such as English and world languages, use common rubrics and feedback/reflection forms throughout the year to acquire ongoing responses from students. At the Depot campus, regular use of feedback from students, supervisors and parents and examination of student work during quarterly demonstrations are data that are used to inform instruction. The high school engagement survey conducted in 2007 found that about 80% of students are positively engaged in their studies. Of the remaining 20%, the guidance department is able to individually identify students and offer them the assistance that they need to be successful in their classes. The guidance department chair has initiated parent, student, and teacher information resources as well as blogs to increase the exchange of feedback. The use of Power School has increased attention to monitoring grades by students and parents, but this student self-monitoring is isolated from instruction. However, students and parents both report that more emphasis and attention is paid to the G level and A level students, with the larger majority of B level students being overlooked. Some teachers and students in the G level courses agree with this assessment.

There is no consistency in the frequency of formal meeting times for discussing current pedagogical research; but, there are examples of how individual examination of current research has been used to improve instruction at the school. Research into the Big Picture learning model helped to implement and integrate research involved in the creation of the Depot campus. Standardized assessments and surveys in agricultural science, career and technical education, given to schools receiving Perkins funding, directly assesses the learning results of instructional strategies. Outcomes of this survey aid teachers in the development of future instructional strategies. School counselors and department chairs sometimes email professional articles to teachers, but no formal faculty time is set aside to discuss this research. Many teachers welcome more focused discussions on instructional strategies with their

department chairs and administrators. Only through an organized structure to look at multiple data sources,(i.e., achievement data, student work, feedback, research, and collegial professional discourse), will the improvement of instructional practices for all students be maximized (instruction committee, teachers, parents, guidance, student shadowing)

As adult learners and reflective practitioners, many teachers maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Teachers are afforded many opportunities to attend conferences outside of school to learn content-specific strategies. However, conference attendance outcomes are teacher-specific with no formal structure designed for teachers to share this new learning upon their return with colleagues to improve all instructional practices. The school maintains a record of continuing education units (CEUs) through the online program Protraxx. Most of the conferences attended are content-specific, although many could be beneficial to other departments. The mathematics department is involved in a multi-district community collaboration on planning and implementing technology in the math classroom made possible through a technology grant from EASTCONN. The use of the school's electronic curriculum, Rubicon Atlas, provides an efficient in-house way for teachers to view alignment of courses and share instructional practices; but this practice is not fully adhered to by all teachers. As reflective practitioners, many teachers maintain their own forms of journals and portfolios through revision of lesson and unit plans, instructional practices, assessments, and reflections on their professional annual goals; however, most teachers do not maintain a portfolio or journal in the traditional sense, nor necessarily tie it to improving instructional practices based on student data. Most members of the professional staff report they consult pedagogical and content-specific professional literature. Individual as well as department subscriptions and online journals are used by many teachers. For example, the special education department subscribes to the *LD Online Newsletter* while the physical education department uses the *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*. In addition to consulting literature, some members of the science and mathematics departments have

written and published articles in content-specific journals. The library media center once had a large section of professional material, but its use has diminished over the years, and, as a result, the books have been integrated within the general library resources that relate to education. Although teachers have personal subscriptions to various professional journals and magazines, the library maintains a few periodicals and uses mainly cost-effective electronic databases like iconn.org and The Educator's Research Center, where there are over 1,100 periodicals and 200 reports from the U. S. Department of Education. Many teachers share content-specific instructional strategies informally within their own department; however, without structures in place, reflective practice is not embedded in the culture of the school. (instruction committee, teachers, self-study)

Commendations

1. The efforts to personalize each student's educational experience through a variety of curricular programs
2. The quality of authentic learning activities in many classes
3. The integration of problem-solving and decision-making skills within the realm of real world application in many classes and cross-disciplinary teach-ins
4. Students' active role in the direction of their learning through senior projects, internships, the fine and performing arts, culinary arts, CWE, agricultural SAE and the Depot campus
5. The use of technology in some classes (i.e., SMART technology, SMART music, graphing calculators in A-level math, technology education, use of wiki space, wordals and discussion threads)
6. Teachers' opportunities to attend conferences
7. Introduction of formal common planning time for teachers of same courses
8. The use of the online Guidance Matters as an instructional resource for students and parents

9. The improved communication among and between parents, teachers and students through the use of technology
10. Research to create the Depot Campus

Recommendations

1. Embed discussion of effective instructional practice into the culture of the school
2. Identify the school's 21st century learning expectations explicitly aligned with instruction
3. Create and implement an in-house professional development calendar to include an examination of instructional practices, the use of formative assessment to inform instructional practices, differentiated instruction that is not equated to leveling classes, and examination of student work as evidence of learning
4. Implement regular structured opportunities for teachers at department meetings and full faculty meetings to examine, discuss and reflect on instructional practices
5. Provide regular, ongoing feedback on instructional practices from department chairs, administrators, and peers
6. Provide instruction for all staff members to become proficient in the use of existing and future technology
7. Provide the level of technology in all classrooms that will enable the use of technology into all instruction
8. Provide a more formal system for feedback from students and parents regarding instruction
9. Increase formal collaboration across disciplines to inform instruction, including co-taught classes and examination of student work



Assessment of and for Student Learning

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

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

Most of the professional staff continuously employs a formal process, based on the school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations; but the assessment and analysis of student progress is very limited. In spring 2009, the staff adopted the school's core values and beliefs statement. In a series of faculty meetings and professional development days, the staff developed the ten 21st century learning expectations with each department assigned two to four school-wide rubrics to implement over a three-year period. During spring of 2010, every department piloted one school-wide rubric, either reading-literacy, or problem-solving and decision-making. These two rubrics plus four additional ones were formally introduced during the 2010-11 school year. In 2011-12, the four remaining school-wide rubrics will be implemented. Currently, the math teachers use the problem-solving rubric regularly in instruction. The students in geometry class use problem-solving and self-assessment as a daily part of the class. Social studies teachers use the writing rubric aligned to CAPT protocols to assess students. Teachers in science use the writing rubric for research projects, essays, and CAPT-based assignments, and the senior projects. Students in physical education and health are assessed in health literacy and critical thinking. Career and vocational education students are assessed regularly in inventive thinking. Students in music are assessed regularly in reading literacy and interactive communication skills. There are posted guidelines for using the rubrics on the teacher "M" drive. Based on the implementation guidelines by departments, each student has multiple opportunities to be assessed on the currently implemented learning expectations using the rubrics. Each department is required to use two rubrics with students twice per semester; but, there are wide discrepancies in the frequency of their use. The teachers rely more heavily on their own department and individual teacher assignments and rubrics than on the school-wide rubrics. Although the implementation of the school-wide rubric is in its beginning stages, some content areas have made greater strides in the use of the school-wide rubrics than others. As a

result of the inconsistency among departments in implementation of school-wide rubrics, teachers are not purposefully using the school-wide rubrics consistently to analyze student progress and achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self study, teachers, student shadowing, students)

The school's professional staff does not systemically communicate individual student progress in achieving each of the 21st century learning expectations to students, their families, and the community each year. Professional staff members communicate student progress primarily through graded assignments, progress reports, report cards, and the results of standardized testing. The school uses eBoard and PowerSchool to communicate online with students and their families about student progress. The guidance department website provides multiple sources of information on standardized testing. The school's core values and beliefs and learning expectations are posted on the school website; but most parents were not aware of specific learning expectations. While all students are aware of the school-wide rubrics, they have varying degrees of knowledge about the learning expectations. Only some teachers discuss or post learning expectations during class time, but all students said that they are assessed, at times, using school-wide rubrics. A letter was sent to each family explaining the process for scoring and assessing 21st century learning expectations. Future plans include assessment data from the rubrics that will be shared along with semester grades. This will be made possible once the new Limelight software is in use. As a result of the varying degrees of understanding of the use of school-wide rubric and the data system that is yet to be put in place, communication is not systemically designed to provide reports of students' progress on the achievements of each of the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study; parents, teachers, students)

Most of the professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement; however, this usually takes place only within teachers' individual classes. According to the self-study, ninety-six percent of teachers reported that they collect and analyze

data or use the data provided by the principal to address inequities in student achievement.

This data includes the annual survey of freshmen reading skills, Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), course-specific units, and midyear and final examinations. However, there are few examples of teachers using data to inform decisions beyond the individual classroom, such as data teams. A purposeful and significant practice in the school is the screening of all freshmen English students during the first few weeks of school. Students complete a self report of academic skills, a spelling dictation of twenty to twenty-five words, and the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, a nationally-normed vocabulary and comprehension test. This data is analyzed to determine any inequities in reading skills and a determination of intervention strategies. English teachers also report receiving portfolios from sending schools but report they lack the time or structure to evaluate the contents of the portfolios. The principal and guidance director have begun to collect grade level or course-specific data and provide that data to the department chairs for professional discussions at those levels. Pockets of teachers who teach common courses sometimes collect and analyze data to inform their common assessments. In response to the 9-10% drop out rate noted in 2008, the superintendent's office collected data from the students who dropped out and their families to seek out indicators of at-risk students. Included in this study was an examination of socioeconomic status, ethnic background, academic tracking, and home town to determine any correlations with dropouts. The results showed no correlation. The school responded to this data by opening the Depot school which targets students who have difficulty succeeding in the existing structure of the regular school day.

Teachers meet informally to discuss results of CAPT examinations to look for areas of achievement gaps within the school. Teachers review special education assessments and classroom assessments in order to differentiate their instruction for those students in need of improvement. Special education teachers review students' modification plans to determine if there is a need for a more structured transition to the adult world. Students who are identified in this population are recommended to

Students Transitioning through Age Appropriate Routes (STAAR) program, which is a partnership on the UCONN campus of college students who help high school students with life skills. The principal has presented whole-school graphic analysis of student grades by year (9, 10, 11, 12) and by academic level (A, B, and G) to promote discussion of student performance. School-wide efforts to address inequities in student achievement include the founding of the Depot campus for nontraditional students, continued support for English language learners (ELL), Positive After School Support (PASS), Students Transitioning through Age Appropriate Routes (STAAR), the reading lab, and the writing center; additional class time for 9B English students; math tutors, organized peer tutoring, tutoring by the University of Connecticut students, and a broad spectrum of special education services which serve the needs of students ranging from severely disabled to college bound. Furthermore, the school provides a rich array of advanced courses addressing the needs and skills of the academically gifted and talented, both in house through Early College Experience (ECE) classes or Advanced Placement (AP) classes or on the University of Connecticut campus, all leading to the awarding of college credit. In the absence of a structured expectation for all teachers to analyze data, formal identification and response to inequities in student achievement reside in the principal's office, and there is no formal basis on which decisions can be made. (Endicott Survey, teachers, central office personnel)

Prior to each unit of study some teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. Most teachers provide course syllabi and/or course descriptions which list objectives and grading, but these are not necessarily tied to the school's 21st century learning expectations. The majority of course descriptions list the school's core values (respect, responsibility, integrity, achievement, community); but only the fine arts department explicitly states the school's 21st century learning expectations uniformly. Most teachers provide information to their students on assessments through a variety of ways, including rubrics, assignment sheets, or orally; however the learning objectives are not consistently and explicitly

stated on a school-wide basis. Specific courses and grade levels in the social studies, math, and English departments specify school learning expectations. For example, in math learning objectives are displayed daily at the beginning of the lesson and in the 21st century learning expectations. While many teachers explain to their students what they will be assessed prior to each unit of study, they are not consistently tied to the school-wide 21st century learning expectations. The Endicott Survey of all faculty members indicates that 95% of teachers were planning to identify unit-specific 21st century learning expectations prior to each applicable unit of study, but there are no post-surveys to assess whether this has been done. Because teachers do not consistently communicate the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations, students are not able to relate them to the unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. (assessment committee, student shadowing, students, teachers)

Prior to summative assessments, most teachers provide students with corresponding rubrics. According to the Endicott Survey, ninety-two percent of teachers provide students with a rubric prior to summative assessment. Teachers within every department either provide students with a hard copy of the rubric or post it on eBoard. Students in the Depot campus are given specific rubrics ahead of time for exhibitions and student internships. Social studies teachers provide students with corresponding school-wide rubrics as well as content-specific rubrics prior to summative assessments such as reports, presentations, scrapbooks, and posters. Fine arts students receive specific rubrics prior to summative assessments that help them understand the grading criteria for each specific project. Senior projects, required of all students, have a common rubric that includes a timeline and specific criteria for project design, research paper, and presentation and includes the core values and beliefs and 21st century expectation for student learning. According to the Endicott Survey, the frequency with which teachers provide students with advance rubrics prior to a summative assessment varies by teacher and type of assessment. By providing students with corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments, teachers assist students to better understand the course expectations. (Endicott Survey, student work, student

shadowing, teachers)

In each unit of study, the majority of teachers employs a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. According to the Endicott Survey, seventy-nine percent of teachers indicated that they used formative practices that allowed students to revise their work based on teacher feedback and student reflection. For example, teachers in English and social studies use formative assessments to determine whether students should be provided with an intervention. The writing center is an available resource to assist students with written assignments and revisions with assistance from trained tutors. Student revision and re-working assignments can be found in most courses. In addition, students in the visual and performing arts, culinary arts, agricultural education, and technology education use ongoing formative assessments as regular practice by providing specific and immediate feedback to students during the process of their project and performance-based assessments. For formative assessment, teachers regularly use quizzes, projects, homework assignments, class participation activities, written reflections, exit slips, self-assessments, learning logs, drafts of essays, writers' notebooks, presentations, and socratic seminars as well as skill-building and content-related review games. All students are required to complete a senior project in order to graduate. This includes designing and researching their project, writing a research paper, and presenting to an audience. Teachers use a wide range of summative assessments to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning and understanding, including paper and pencil objective and essay tests, end of unit and chapter tests, projects, debates, performances, internships, exhibitions, research papers, art shows, and portfolios, as well as midterms and final exams. While some teachers comment that most assessments do not require the use of rubrics, several pointed out that teacher modeling and student work are often used as exemplars for assignments and projects. Employing a range of assessment strategies allows different learners to find and demonstrate success and helps to identify those students who need additional assistance, and further informs planning and instruction (teachers, students,

evidence documents, Endicott Survey)

Some teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. More often, there is informal collaboration taking place among teachers. Informally, teachers meet after school, during lunch, and through Internet communications to create and improve assessments. In several departments, collaboration is leading to some common assessments being implemented, but this system is in the formative stages. To facilitate collaborative planning in 2010, the administration revised some teachers' daily schedules to provide common planning periods to support teacher teams within departments. This scheduling innovation increases formal teacher collaboration (e.g., English 9B, Introduction to Physical Science, World Civilizations, Essentials of Algebra, Geometry and Probability G) and encourages the creation of many common assessments, especially tasks related to the 21st century learning expectations. During collaborative meetings, some teachers regularly evaluate student performance on mid-year, final, or statewide exams, and make adjustments to their curriculum, instruction and assessment. Some faculty members within departments meet regularly to plan assessments and to review student work. Social studies teachers report that common assessments were developed in the U. S. History G level classes; although this level is scheduled to be phased out next year. The math teachers report that they use the same assessments in each of their course and levels. The science teachers report they use a variety of data to help inform instruction. While this information is being collected, it has not been widely shared within the department. Some English teachers are engaging informally in collaborative assessments. Similarly, the Depot campus staff meets and collaborates weekly to create and revise assessment instruments such as exhibitions, independent projects, and writing assignments. Formal interdepartmental collaboration created the school's ten school-wide rubrics to measure the 21st century learning expectations, which are being phased into the assessment practices of all departments. Currently, formal collaboration time for most teachers is very limited. Teachers meet during planning

periods or after school. Formal planning time for interdepartmental initiatives is not scheduled during the school day, yet many collaborations, (world language and art, science and social studies) have resulted in joint classroom projects, assessments, and numerous meaningful school-wide events. Examples include Living in a Time of War Teach-in, Saving Darfur, Ending Apathy, and Climate Change Teach-in. Assessment of student learning during these events is both informal, based on observations of student participation, and formal when teachers link assignments to the activities. School administrators and department leaders meet to discuss the development and use of assessments, common grading practices and trends in student performance; but these are not consistent practices. In some content areas, department leaders meet with teachers after school to review assessment data for student achievement and to plan lessons and develop common assessments, but this is not consistent. Many teachers report a high level of interest in collaborating with their colleagues. A formal structure to collaborate on common assessments within departments would provide consistency in same-course curricula as well as better gauge all students' progress toward the achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, self study, assessment committee)

Most teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure that students revise and improve their work. The data from the Endicott Survey indicates that the majority of students and parents feel that teachers provide timely and corrective feedback that assists students in revising and improving their work. Seventy-nine percent of teachers report they allow students to revise work using teacher feedback. Ninety percent of teachers review assessments before moving on to the next unit but did not indicate if students have the opportunity to be reassessed. Many teachers provide specific, immediate, and corrective feedback during class which students use to improve their work. Students in art receive immediate feedback on their progress on their projects. The physical education teachers give oral feedback to individual students as well as the entire group with regards to their performance. In geometry, students are given immediate verbal feedback during problem-solving at the board, and

students immediately fix their work. Many teachers allow students to make corrections on summative assessments to improve their grade. Teachers across the content areas provide students with specific and corrective feedback on initial and final versions of assignments in the form of questions, leading students to revise and resubmit their work. When teachers consistently give students specific, timely, and corrective feedback, students are encouraged to work toward mastering skills or tasks. (Endicott Survey, student shadowing, teachers, students, student work)

Many teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. The choral teachers use continual formative assessments during class using Smart Music and face-to-face examination to fully prepare students for their summative assessment, the concert. Teachers use formative assessment techniques such as observations and feedback during physical education and fine arts; questioning in foreign language class is frequently used and students solving math problems on the board is regular practice. These teachers use this to inform their planning and instruction. In contrast, some teachers talk the whole period or strictly write on the board with no input taken from students. Several students report a regular occurrence in some classes of having little opportunities to participate in classroom discussion. The special services department uses constant formative assessment to inform instruction and evaluate student progress. This allows the staff to differentiate classes by breaking them down into small groups based on their respective skill gaps. Teachers' use of formative assessments is directly related to their willingness to adapt their instruction and ultimately provide opportunities for students to improve their learning and understanding. (student shadowing, teachers, student panel)

Many teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, use some evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including student work, common course assessments, monitoring progress in achieving school's 21st century learning expectations, standardized assessments, data from sending schools and post-secondary institutions, and

surveys of data from current students and alumni, although this analysis is not consistent across the school. Some teachers use recent student performance data, including standardized test results, classroom and department formative assessment results, assessments based on school-wide rubrics, portfolios, culminating projects, and competency-based projects to improve instructional practices and revise curriculum. Some teachers collaborate informally to create and implement common course and grade level assessments. Teachers meet informally to plan instruction and assessments. During weekly common planning periods and team curriculum meetings, some teachers share student work and collaborate on common assessments such as mid-year and final exams or assignments using the school-wide rubric. Most department chairs work with teachers on curriculum and assessment data but there is little focus on using that data toward the improvement of instructional practices. While most departments have limited common planning periods, teachers are using their non-teaching time and time after school to meet with colleagues. The school administration is phasing in common planning and curriculum revision time for all teachers who teach the same course, this now takes place in the majority of departments.

Curriculum changes have been made based on the examination of student work, sending schools, statewide assessments, and current information from post-secondary institutions. For example, English 9B students now meet one extra class period each in a writing laboratory, earning an additional .25 credit, as a result of information from the community college Accuplacer scores, which disclosed that 60% of E. O. Smith enrollees needed remedial work in writing before being admitted to the required introductory course in writing. Through the use of the My Access program with students, the English 9B teachers collect data that help them assess and improve individual student writing skills. The course, Introduction to Physical Science, was introduced in 2005 in response to weak student scores in physical science on the CAPT. Visual arts teachers used information gathered from observations of student work to create an introductory class focusing on a variety of art media, terminologies, and practices.

Informal conversations of teachers in math and world language from the sending K-8 schools have contributed to some curricular adjustments. In addition, communication with post-secondary institutions assures compliance with college standards and the requirements for AP, ECE, and Career Pathways programs. While there has been a school-wide effort to use the software program, Rubicon Atlas, to track and examine curricula across subject areas and to institutionalize the revision process, its use among departments has been uneven. Although this software has been available in the school for the past four years across all content areas, its use is uneven with some academic areas providing little information. The implementation of common planning time for teachers to collaborate and examine a range of student work provides a vehicle to identify effective instructional practices, increase consistent assessment of student progress, and help ensure that all students in similar grade levels and courses exit those courses with similar experiences, content knowledge, and achievement of 21st century learning skills. (self-study, administrators, teachers, guidance)

Grading and reporting practices are occasionally reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The school has a formal cumulative grading process for transcripts, but there is no school-wide grading practice in individual courses. The process of calculating course grades varies between departments. Within departments, teachers are asked to follow specific guidelines in the calculation of the final grade. Grading practices have shifted toward the use of rubrics, the creation of more common assessments, more consistency in assignments and the grading and weights of grades within courses. Incentives such as the privilege system, including the café study hall and the "blue card" permitting open campus for seniors, are now tied to academic performance and adherence to the core values, especially personal achievement and responsibility. Consequences and interventions for poor classroom performance or irresponsible behavior include mandatory study halls, PASS, and grade-point deductions for unexcused absences. To further clarify students' responsibility for their graded work, intradepartmental collaborations have established common policies for accepting

or not accepting late work. A major change in the grading and reporting practice that reflects the school's core values and beliefs about learning is the implementation of the computer-based reporting systems, first IntegratePro, then PowerSchool. In 2010-11 portals were opened to provide students and parents or guardians continuous electronic access to grades and student performance. This replaces the need for interim reports. The core values of personal achievement and responsibility are supported by the use of PowerSchool as it puts the onus on students to keep track of their achievements. Parents have expressed support for this upgrade in reporting as evidenced by 8,500 hits from parents and 17,000 from students. Another recent shift in the grading and reporting process is the use of school-wide rubrics to assess 21st century learning expectations. The school plans to report these 21st century skills using the programs Limelight and Inform, which are still in a development process. Revision and progress toward a formal structure of reporting practices is being well received by students and parents; the further development of consistent guidelines for grading and the use of the school-wide rubrics will provide the data to measure the progress toward achievement of the 21st century learning expectations for all students. (self-study, students, teachers)

Commendations

1. The assessment of all freshmen by the reading teacher to establish baseline data in reading and provide appropriate and timely interventions
2. The specific, timely, and corrective feedback provided to revise and improve work
3. The use of wide range of formative and summative assessments
4. The senior projects graduation requirement
5. The introduction of common planning time to collaborate on assessment practices and results
6. The writing center and math lab
7. The use of PowerSchool to inform parents and students of progress
8. The multiple data sources used by principal to initiate achievement conversations and address inequities and needs

9. The guidance department's structure and use of technology to plan, implement and monitor student progress in multiple learning opportunities and to keep parents informed
10. The informal collaboration between and among faculty in the use of assessments to inform planning and revisions of curriculum
11. The multiple programs created for students (Depot campus, PASS) created based on assessment data

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a formal process, based on the use of school-wide rubrics, to assess whole school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. Develop and implement a process to communicate whole school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Provide professional development on how to implement explicit 21st century learning expectations on formative and summative assessments across all content areas
4. Provide professional development on analyzing student work and using data to inform curriculum, instruction and assessment
5. Provide structured time to work in collaborative data teams to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement
6. Systemize and expand formal intradepartmental collaboration in the creation, analysis, and revision of assessments and consistent grading practices
7. Provide professional development on PowerSchool features to increase communication with students and families including the progress reporting of achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations for all students
8. Analyze writing portfolios from sending districts as a source of student assessment data

5

School Culture and Leadership

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

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

The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. The implementation and integration of the school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) program has helped foster an atmosphere of student responsibility and desirable behavior and has provided the foundation for a strong and supportive culture for learning. The effectiveness of the PBIS program is evidenced through the decrease in disciplinary infractions. The majority (98%) of students report feeling safe in their school environment. School safety is demonstrated in multiple areas by both faculty members and students. Although the school has an open campus policy, student movement in and out of the building is carefully monitored through the use of attentive staff members and blue cards which give students privileges based on academic and behavioral expectations. Senior students earn the right to monitor themselves. Student handbooks containing board policy clearly outline behavioral and safety expectations and the administrator's discipline continuum progressive approach to consequences ensures that the students receive an opportunity to learn from their choices. Students who do not meet the school's behavioral and academic expectations are referred to the collaborative assistance team (CAT), which serves as an intervention and planning team. The purpose is to compare the effects of traditional interventions followed by more creative individualized responses.

Through the use of online surveys, counselors identify students who do not feel safe and address problems directly. The Reach for the Stars program has been particularly helpful in encouraging positive behavior and has given students an incentive to exhibit desirable behavior. Teachers and staff members award star cards when they observe a student demonstrating the school's core values, submit the star cards to the office, and the names of winners of the weekly drawings are aired on the morning announcements to the entire school. Students are also recognized through the many awards in the display cases located in the hallways and lobby areas, and birthdays are broadcast weekly on TV

channel 17. The school faculty and staff consistently models positive behavior throughout the building. The school strives to create an atmosphere of acceptance and an appreciation for individual differences as evidenced by the Gay Straight Alliance and its school-wide activities such as the Day of Silence. The Unified Sports Program and Best Buddies insure that all students engage together to create a positive and healthy school environment. The Peer Natural Helpers (PNH) program provides one of the best examples of student involvement and empowerment. Now in its fourth decade of existence, the PNH plays an integral role in maintaining positive student-faculty relationships. Before attempting to implement new policy, advisors and administrators consult the PNH for student input. The PNH provides an opportunity for students to have a stake in any new school program or policy and therefore allows the student body to embrace the latest initiatives and take ownership in their learning.

A positive and supportive culture is strengthened through the faculty's encouragement of student involvement in co-curricular activities. The school provides over 58 clubs and 28 sports programs to engage students. Students with additional interests are encouraged to start their own clubs and members of the staff are always willing to facilitate new clubs and support individual student interests. The combined efforts of administrators and faculty and staff members to model and maintain a positive, respectful and supportive culture have empowered students and led them to believe that they personally can have the greatest impact on their education. (self-study, students, classroom observations, panel presentation)

While the school's culture is inclusive, its tracking process limits student opportunity to enroll in a heterogeneously grouped core class during their high school experience. In core subjects (English, science, social studies, math), students are leveled in A, B, or G classes. Forty-five percent of students are in the A level classes, 39% in the B level classes, and 16% in the G level classes. The sole option available for students to participate in a heterogeneously grouped core class is enrollment in a first or second year world language course. In addition to the world language offerings, the school provides an

ample number of elective courses that are heterogeneously grouped and available to most students. Examples of this include health, physical education, the fine and performing arts classes, Genocide, and reading comprehension. Commencing in the fall of 2011, G-level classes in English and social studies are scheduled to be phased out starting with the incoming freshmen class. Phasing out G-level courses is a critical step in providing more heterogeneous grouping in additional core-courses, thereby promoting an equitable and inclusive school culture in which students have a more equitable opportunity to meet the school's 21st century learning expectation. (self-study, school support staff, school leadership team)

With the exception of the school counselors, there is no formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school who knows the student well and assists him or her in achieving 21st century learning expectations. The school implemented an advisory program in 2008, but eliminated it in 2010, a decision primarily based on union issues about an additional teacher preparation. Several students as well as adults reported they enjoyed and valued the advisory program which met bimonthly in small grade level gatherings. Although no formal advisory program is in place, the faculty members who advise senior projects instituted in 1993 act as mentors while those students complete their projects over the course of their senior year. The school provides informal mentoring and the opportunity for students to connect with an adult through a myriad clubs and sports programs. The school reports over 1,000 students are involved in at least one club or sport, providing those students the opportunity to have a meaningful relationship with an advisor or coach. However, some students still report having no meaningful relationship with an adult in the school. The reinstatement of the previously piloted advisory program that ended in the 2009-2010 school year will ensure every student is connected to one adult in the school and assist students in meeting their 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, students, Endicott Survey)

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff have identified the need to provide a structured focus to regularly engage in a variety of professional development efforts and discourse for reflection, inquiry, and the analysis of teaching and learning. Most departments at the school are provided common planning times and are charged with aligning curriculum, examining scope and sequence, and engaging in an effort to ensure consistency of expectations and rigor. Some departments have used this time better than others. The social studies department has begun to work on identifying common expectations across levels and aligning curriculum in the U.S. history and civics classes; the fine arts department has tied exemplars across the classes to curriculum and has identified common expectations for students. The world language department focuses on teaching to a variety of learning styles, and the math department is working to make greater use of resources and identifying and engaging students who they know are having trouble understanding new ideas. Despite this work in some departments, faculty members report that they do not systematically share best practices, nor do they know how to systematically use the data provided by administrators and the school support services personnel. Aggregated information is disseminated to department chairs who are then supposed to share this with their faculty members, but this is inconsistently done by the department chairs and there is insufficient training in how to change practice reflectively in order to improve achievement. Faculty meetings are largely used to discuss information that could be disseminated through email. As reported in the self-study, structured time is needed to discuss pedagogy and assessment, and to disseminate and discuss the administrator's educational vision.

Informal collaboration among colleagues is common practice. Virtually every department subscribes to content-specific, nationally recognized professional journals. The director of guidance frequently emails articles of interest to the entire faculty, topics ranging from student engagement to post-secondary options for students. Although the faculty does not read the same professional books or engage in full-faculty discussions of professional journals, it does review academic and behavioral

performance data to identify areas in need of attention. Faculty members have voiced concerns about the lack of formal opportunities for discussion about teaching and learning; however, although there is a formal monthly faculty meeting, the focus is commonly on a summary of issues and data analysis but typically is not a discussion of pedagogy. Professional development requests are generally supported by the administration. The central office personnel report that they cannot remember a time when a faculty or staff member has been denied an opportunity to attend local professional development opportunities. Unfortunately, there is no structure in place to share the information garnered with individual departments or with the faculty as a whole. Although there is a healthy spirit of collaboration among teachers, a formal professional development structure does not exist to focus on the improvement of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that includes opportunities for engagement in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning. (self study, teachers, administrator, central office personnel)

School leaders do not use a research-based evaluation and supervision process that focuses on improved student learning. In 2008 a teacher evaluation revision committee redesigned the pre and post-observation steps to streamline the evaluation process. In the evaluation plan, teachers in their first four years are observed at least three times each year and given feedback as indicated in the teacher evaluation document. Formal observations and evaluations of tenured staff members take place every three years. Department chairs discuss evaluations with teachers in their departments, although some teachers report the lack of regular comments from the evaluators on their performance in classrooms. The State guidelines at the time were focused on student learning; but the revision of the supervision and evaluation model does not reflect this focus on student learning. The model shows little effort to tie the evaluation to improving student performance and learning. There is no information provided regarding differentiation of instruction, use of a variety of instructional tools and technologies, or how assessment should inform instruction. The model currently used is that department chairs observe but do not

evaluate teachers. The three school administrators divide the departments equally among themselves and are responsible for the formal and written evaluation; the department chair and the administrator in charge collaboratively write the summative evaluation. However, the three school administrators do not always meet with the individual teachers, rather they convey their information to the department chair to share with the individual teacher. Although many of the department chairs have been trained in BEST/TEAM, this methodology is designed to be used only with new teachers. Mentoring does take place within the first years of hire. The self-study cite trainings in whole school instructional models; however, there are not specified follow through plans described, nor are there any signs of explicit improvements which have directly emanated from supervision and evaluation. New state and national guidelines for teacher supervision and evaluation are expected to serve as the foundation for the revision of the current model and place more emphasis on using assessment to inform instruction. Although the principal has made an effort to share and use data with teachers and department leaders, there is no structured focus on examining the impact of instructional practices on learning and achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, department leaders, administrators, assessment committee)

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers and the learning needs of all students. The master schedule is based on an eight-period template. The bell schedule divides the eight periods into 41 minute classes on a normal Monday schedule, with six of the eight classes meeting for 58 minutes on three of the remaining four days. Two classes rotate out each day Tuesday through Friday. For most departments length of class time is not an issue, though teachers in two departments find Monday's classes too short. The daily schedule is occasionally adjusted for activities such as CAPT, senior project presentations, school-wide assemblies, read-ins, and early release days. Teachers in many departments find the frequency of schedule changes to be disruptive in maintaining curricular continuity. Time is allotted for collaboration on half days and

professional development days. Half days were created four years ago in response to a survey conducted by the board of education, where teachers requested more collaboration time. Commencing in the 2010-11 school year, common planning time has been scheduled for some core teachers teaching the same course. Teachers also meet informally to collaborate during their lunch periods, prep periods, or after school. Several programs have been implemented which allow for alternative organization of time. The afterschool program (PASS) offers students an abbreviated day and more individualized instruction along with the opportunity for employment. The Depot campus offers a nontraditional curriculum based on the Big Picture learning model. Students involved in a cooperative work experience (CWE) program can work at jobs during part of the school day. Students at risk of failure have the opportunity to come to school over school vacations and remediate their time on learning. Furthermore, eligible juniors or seniors may take college courses on the University of Connecticut campus at Storrs for both high school and college credit as a part of the ECE program. Some teachers also report that the abundance of field trips often cuts into valuable teaching time. The master schedule has not been thoroughly reviewed in the last ten years. While there have been significant changes in meeting the needs of many students in alternative learning experiences, further attention to the organization of time in the traditional school day should be examined to further address the instructional needs of the school. (self-study, teachers, administrators, parents, students)

Generally, student load and class size enables teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. Most teachers and students believe smaller class sizes foster effective teaching and learning. Classes and labs offered to those students with learning gaps, behavioral challenges, and special needs are liberally staffed, and well used by the entirety of the school population. Some academic areas such as science labs and Early College Experience (ECE) have caps on class sizes; yet the actual enrollments at times may exceed the guidelines. Regional School District #19 acknowledges the positive impact of limiting teacher-student ratios through its support of the Depot campus alternative model (1:7 ratio),

Positive After School Support (PASS), STAAR, and low enrollment electives. However, some A and B level sections have enrollments of 25 or more; sometimes there are not enough desks to seat every student as well as space limitations in science labs. Depending on the nature of the course, some classes are smaller than others resulting in some inequity of student load. Student shadowing found that, overall class size was consistently small and the individual room's square footage was more than capable of handling an increased student load. Most faculty members consistently attempt to personalize instruction. Recent program changes have attempted to address student disengagement and academic underperformance. Some courses in math and science are currently co-taught with special education teachers to address student needs more effectively. Classroom aides are assigned to some larger class sections, but instructional support is not available for all classes that require additional assistance. The institutionalization of PBIS, supported by the schools' core values and beliefs, encourage students to take responsibility for their achievement and to seek help when needed. Although the school's continued commitment to smaller class sizes meets the needs of many individual students, attention to the growing number in some science classes and labs warrants attention. (self-study, student shadowing, department chairs)

The principal, working with other building leaders, is beginning to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. The principal is a visible presence in the school's daily routines, monitoring hallways at passing time, in the cafeteria during lunch periods, and at the buses in the morning and afternoon. In collaboration with the superintendent and department representatives, the principal has initiated the use of school-wide rubrics for classrooms as well as for extracurricular activities, to reinforce E. O. Smith's core values and beliefs. In an effort to support the learning of all students, the school leadership team has implemented several programs, including the credit recovery program, PASS, the Depot campus program, freshman study halls, academic study halls, a privilege system, the writing center, the Collaborative Assistance

Team (CAT), and the advisory program (2008-10) although the latter was discontinued. The principal also served as an advisory session leader and is on the steering committee for the senior project. He monitors and further promotes student academic success through the implementation of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS), school-wide rubrics, the PowerSchool parent portal, grade 9 reading comprehension classes, honor roll recognition, and perfect attendance awards. He regularly updates the school's website and provides the town magazine and local newspaper with school news. The Reach for the Stars initiative and the senior awards night provide more opportunities for school leaders to assist the principal in fostering academic achievement and the development of social skills. The principal attends regular meetings with faculty members, the administration from sending schools, and with families from sending schools to inform them of the learning expectations that have been established by the school. Direct and consistent communication with members of the E. O. Smith community takes place through faculty and student group meetings in person or via email, the principal's eBoard, the automated message system, or letters to parents. The E. O. Smith website, E. O. Smith News, agricultural education department notices, the TV Channel 17 program, and board of education highlights provide other means of communication.

The principal and assistant principals have designated departments for which they are responsible. They observe teachers through a cyclical evaluation process. There are inconsistent follow up discussions and focus on instructional practices as well as inconsistent use of assessment to inform instruction, between and among the administrators, department leaders and teachers. Professional discussions of teaching and learning are supposed to take place within regularly scheduled curriculum committee meetings; however that is not a consistent expectation or achievement. Monthly department and faculty meetings follow an agenda, but the focus is not on using assessment data to inform instructional practice and its impact on student learning. Although purposeful structures have been put into place rooted in the school's core values and beliefs, there is no consistent focus on instructional

practices to promote the progress and achievement of the schools 21st century learning expectations; thus, the faculty and administration do not share a common vocabulary or instructional and assessment philosophy about teaching and learning, how to implement change based on best practice, research and/or data collection, or a clear understanding of the principal's vision for the school. (self-study, school leadership panel, teachers, administrators)

Teachers, students and parents are often involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision making that promote responsibility and ownership. A 2008 engagement survey of students indicated that 75% of them believe that they have a voice in classroom and or school decisions. Faculty members agree that students, teachers, and parents are meaningfully involved in decision-making. Faculty members participate in decision making committees such as PBIS, curriculum, and negotiations as well as serving on hiring committees. Students and staff members maintain a healthy level of autonomy regarding decision-making in extracurricular clubs and organizations. Interdisciplinary teams began the revision of the current core values, beliefs, and the 21st century learning expectations before it was presented to students and parents for further review and discussion. There is an active principals' advisory group where department representatives raise issues. A grief crisis team was reinstated as a result of this. Parent support and alumni organizations as well as music and athletic booster groups support their respective programs using the core values and beliefs as their anchor point. A student representative sits on the board of education. The principal and assistant principals explore student opinion before enacting various initiatives, often through the avenue of the Peer Natural Helpers' retreat. The parent teacher organization (PTO) requested a change in GPA calculations for advanced classes that led to a policy adjustment. Parents report that if they notify a guidance counselor, a teacher, or a member of administration, their concerns will be individually addressed. Both faculty members and students routinely use informal methods of involvement to express concerns which are more the norm at the school. Students and staff members alike stop the principal in the halls to discuss a concern or

deliver an accolade; assistant principals sit at a variety of tables in the cafeteria during lunch, the superintendent knows the names of students at the Depot campus. The principal is known for his accessibility and his ability to fairly examine many points of view before making a decision that will impact the school as a whole. The school uses an abundance of vehicles to communicate with and survey all stakeholders. These include, but are not limited to, online surveys, letters home, mass calling, phone trees, an active and accessible school board, emails, and visits to a variety of sending school community groups. As a result of the transparency and openness of the school as a whole, stakeholders feel as if they have an active voice in the decision-making at this school. Their sense of pride and ownership is readily apparent. (self-study, teachers, students, parent panel)

Teachers intermittently exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and improving student learning. Teachers serve on committees that review and revise curriculum and assessment practices. Teachers serve as department chairs in all departments except career and technical education and the fine arts, whose chairs were eliminated through retirement and as a result of budget decisions. Teachers are actively engaged in committees such as PBIS and PAC, they present at professional development workshops, collaborate with their colleagues to maintain currency in their field, bring guest speakers and artists in their classrooms, initiate creative activities on Pi day, develop a strong DECA program that attracts students with marketing interests, and have expanded the culinary arts class to include a restaurant component. Members of every department have taken individual and collective initiative to implement large-scale projects that involve all students and staff members such as Teach-in programs on social justice issues and environmental and global issues. In the latter, leadership was provided primarily by English and social studies teachers. Members of the physical education department have enriched the school through Unified Sports, Special Olympics, and Relay for Life events. Members from every department have coordinated their efforts to engage the whole school in activities such as providing food for the local soup kitchen, aiding victims of natural disasters, and

supporting community development in Kenya, Sudan, and Haiti. Curriculum work is ongoing in the school with teachers taking initiative in many areas. For example, the social studies department reworked the long established curricula for both civics and U.S. history. The math department initiated the complete use of the math lab for students who are either at risk of failing or who need additional assistance with a particular math concept. The fine arts department has been working without a department head this year, but has continued to move forward and collaborate with core curriculum teachers to add breadth to the student experience. While teachers initiate activities and are actively engaged and involved in the culture and climate of the school, there is no designated committee engaged in organizing the professional development of the faculty so that these engaged professionals can actively participate in improving their own skills. (self study, teachers, school leadership, administrators)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The principal and superintendent, housed at the opposite ends of the same building, share a separate, but collaborative working relationship. At their weekly meeting, they review and reflect upon board of education initiatives and school operations. Interviews with the school board indicate that all members place a great deal of trust in the superintendent and principal to provide an environment capable of supporting school learning expectations. Members of the board of education, superintendent, and principal share a collegial and team-oriented relationship. Much of their collaboration time is devoted to considering the superintendent's budget proposals as indicated by the board's budget preparation manual. The board acknowledges that the principal has been successful in his efforts to promote and foster positive behavior and credit him with strong leadership skills. The principal, in conjunction with the superintendent, submits a monthly report to the school board that outlines current issues and updates the board on the progress of current initiatives. The superintendent indicates that the board makes all efforts to accommodate budgetary requests; the board, in turn, acknowledges that the superintendent has an

open-door policy for all of its members. The collaborations of the principal, superintendent, and school board are characterized by reflection and a desire to improve learning for all students. After reviewing a study of the class of 2008, the policy subcommittee implemented a credit recovery program for students at risk of losing credit because of attendance issues and to specifically address and decrease the drop-out rate. The focus of the annual fall retreat, attended by board members, the superintendent, and the principal, is to analyze and evaluate the previous year and to set annual goals, including budget goals, for the new academic year. The superintendent and principal take advantage of the close proximity of their respective offices, which allows for frequent professional discourse and cooperation in an effort to meet student needs. The principal reports that the superintendent is always open to suggestions and most often finds ways to meet any school need. The pervasive cooperation and willingness of the board of education and superintendent to accommodate school needs allows the principal to continually work towards facilitating student learning expectations. (self-study, school board, central office)

The school board and superintendent always provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. The formal job description of the principal clearly defines the responsibilities related to teaching and learning and the school community's core values and beliefs. The principal is able to make important decisions about hiring, staff allocation, professional development training, program implementation, and policy. The superintendent and school board seek input from the principal before making budget decisions. . Although current economic restrictions may not allow the school board or superintendent to meet all of the principal's budgetary and staffing requests, it is clear that the principal is supported by the school board in his efforts to meet all of his job requirements as outlined by his formal job description. The principal plays an active role in hiring staff, implementing and eliminating programs, and choosing appropriate professional development opportunities. The principal also provides input and feedback to central office staff members and the school board in order to create a budget capable of meeting the needs of the school. In collaboration

with the board, six in-service half days were approved for 2010-11. The principal and the superintendent have collaborated in the PBIS initiative, the core values and beliefs statement, and the 21st century learning expectations rubrics. Programs that have been implemented under the leadership of the principal, with the support of the superintendent and faculty include the Depot campus, credit recovery program, PASS, PLATO and summer school.. The principal essentially is involved in all policy decisions and in all phases of policy implementation. Because the principal is given decision-making authority, he is able to provide a solid basis from which students can meet 21st century learning objectives. (self-study, central office personnel, school leadership, school board)

Commendations

1. The positive school culture fostered by the cooperative efforts between and among faculty, students, administration and the community
2. The strong sense of pride and ownership by all stakeholders
3. The strong relationship among the superintendent, principal, and board of education focused on learning for all students
4. The faculty efforts to engage every student and to encourage student achievement
5. The extensive involvement of students and staff members in co-curricular activities that meet the needs of all students
6. The multiple high-quality programs to address the needs of students
7. The involvement of students, parents, teachers and community members in discussions about core values and beliefs and 21st century learning expectations
8. The school board and superintendent support of the school principal
9. The accessibility of the principal
10. The significant efforts of the principal and support services personnel to provide data to faculty to focus on student achievement
11. The encouragement of new initiatives by the school community

12. The attention to global issues and community service as part of the school climate

13. The online Guidance Matters blog with current and reflective information

Recommendations

1. Create a structured professional development committee to address teaching and learning
2. Structure time in faculty meetings to share pedagogy
3. Establish a common practice in the dissemination and use of data
4. Develop a supervision and evaluation model focused on instruction to improve student learning and achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations
5. Explicitly share the vision of the school
6. Initiate a comprehensive review of the master schedule to address time for teaching and learning, common planning, class size, and teaching loads
7. Ensure that all students are connected with an adult in the school
8. Implement plans to merge B and G level classes in core classes
9. Monitor and assess the drop out rate
10. Provide leadership and supervision in career and technical education and the fine arts
11. Adhere to class size of science labs as defined by safety standards



School Resources for Learning

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

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

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

The school has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, which support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Many of the programs and interventions that support students academically, emotionally, and medically are available throughout the school day. The collaborative assistance team (CAT), comprised of members of the administration, a school counselor, a school social worker, a school psychologist, a nurse and a teacher, meets weekly. The purpose of the team is to create a plan with appropriate strategies to ensure a student's success. The strategies may be formal or informal depending upon the needs of the student. Academic support is offered through peer tutoring by members of the National Honor Society and the world language honor society, the math tutoring center and the writing center. The writing center is staffed by high school students who are peer tutors trained in the editing process and overseen by an English teacher. Student interns from the University of Connecticut are also available for tutoring on a regular basis. Support throughout the day is also provided for students through reading labs, the health center, English language learning center, health services, counseling and clinical support in the guidance office. The Positive After-School Support System (PASS) meets the needs of students who are struggling academically. Monitors assist students with work completion. The Depot campus is a non-traditional program offering a nontraditional approach to learning which engages students in project based learning with career exploration and internships as critical components. Special education students who are 18-21 years old and are in need of transition services are enrolled in STAAR (Students Transitioning through Age Appropriate Routes). This collaborative effort between the high school and the University of Connecticut provides opportunities for students at the high school to learn additional life skills while fostering relationships with college-age peers. The school offers a variety of ways to earn credit that includes taking college courses through the Early College Experience with the University of Connecticut, recovery of credit in summer school, online courses, and the adult education program. While the school makes students

aware of these options, the drop-out rate of 9-10 % remains high. There are many opportunities for academically, artistically, and athletically gifted students to extend their abilities beyond the classroom. Staff members serve as mentors for students who participate in clubs and competitions on the state, regional, and national levels. E. O. Smith offers the largest number and the widest variety of Early College Experiences (ECE) in the state through the University of Connecticut; in addition there are numerous courses awarding credit through Manchester Community College. Although there is an abundance of support services and defined programs offered to all students, data has not been collected and analyzed to determine if students are achieving the school's 21st learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentations, parents, school support staff)

The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. Parents say that they feel well informed about the support services that are available, especially to students in need. The Endicott Survey indicates that at least 75% of students and staff as well as 66% of parents agree this is the case. Information about support services, including intervention strategies for all students, is provided to families by many programs. Every summer the administration publishes and mails home a calendar/handbook outlining board of education policies, including attendance and discipline. The district's website (www.eosmith.org) provides general school information, calendars, and eBoards. The eBoards provide information to families ranging from medical forms to homework assignments. Other website features include a school directory, a PowerSchool portal, an activities calendar, research databases, multiple newsletters, and *The Oracle*, the school newspaper. Off-campus program information (STAAR and Depot campus) is also available.

The school distributes numerous newsletters to parents, students, and alumni, all of which are available online. Many support services, such as the writing center, reading lab, PASS, tutoring, and the privilege system, are detailed in readily accessible pamphlet form. Some departments send supplemental financial aid information home with students along with the field trip permission slip

forms. Parents can call the school's voice mail system to get an update on the status of school trips. The principal has implemented a notification system, AlertNow, to inform parents of general announcements, weather-related schedule changes, and emergency situations. The administration also submits articles to a community newsletter distributed to the three sending towns.

Families who are new to services in special education receive *A Parent's Guide to Special Education* as well as information about common terms and procedural safeguards to protect students' rights. Parents of these students also receive individualized education plans (IEP) and reports, in addition to information about workshops via email, mail, and telephone. A school wide open house is held every September. In addition, several individual programs such as STAAR, Depot campus, and agricultural education hold their own open houses. This information is conveyed through a variety of traditional and non-traditional forms of communication, including home mailings, newsletters, open houses, student handbooks, student athlete handbooks, the school website, eBoards, the PowerSchool parent portal, and *The Continuum of Support Services for Regular Education Students* pamphlet.

Each school counselor meets annually with all students and their parents for course selection and post-secondary planning. Additionally, the director of guidance has launched two new online sources of information for families: Guidance Matters and Learning Matters. The former provides information to students and parents, and the latter poses pertinent questions about education. Each online source has links to valuable research materials and videos. They are written as a blog and readers have the option to post comments. A Power Point on financial aid is included on Guidance Matters. The guidance department is in the process of creating a podcast that includes students speaking about relevant topics. Because of the various methods of communication with families, the school community feels knowledgeable about the support services that the high school has to offer. (school website, parents, guidance counselors, administrators)

Support services staff, including members of the guidance department, special education department,

health services and library media center use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. All of these departments have web pages on the school's web site. Contact information is listed in all of these locations to facilitate communication, and each certified staff member has their own computer. In 2009, E.O. Smith moved to PowerSchool, a web-based software program that stores student data including demographic information, academic, health, discipline, and attendance records. Parents have access to students' grades daily through the parent portal in Power School. Naviance is a web-based software program used by school counselors and families. Students can do an online career inventory and a college search in Naviance. Students can also create their own electronic portfolios to be used in postgraduate planning. Data has been stored in Naviance since 2004 regarding college admissions decisions for the high school students. This year, the guidance department purchased an additional service in Naviance so students can develop a four-year course plan and determine how the rigor of their academic program aligns with the selectivity of colleges. Health services uses technology to access emergency contact information and to track compliance with state mandates. The department eBoard provides general information as well as specific requirements for students participating in academic and extracurricular activities. Technology streamlines day-to-day activities such as management of individualized care plans, student allergy listing, and treatment data collection and reporting. School psychologists use software to complete reports for their psycho-educational evaluations. Special services professionals such as the speech pathologist/audiologist and physical therapist use software and hardware tools specifically designed to address speech, audio, and physical development. A recent grant recently funded room amplification systems for all classrooms in the core departments of English and social studies, benefiting the entire student population. Case managers in special education use IEP Direct to create individual education plans. These plans fulfill the state and federal mandates for providing direct services to students with special needs. Communication among the support services staff, counseling staff, and parents or guardians is supported

by the use of email, conference calls, website postings, and access to the parent portal of Power School. Assistive technology is utilized by special education students in regular education classes. In addition, students with multiple handicaps have access to a range of technologies including, but not limited to, household appliances, personal computers and assistive devices to develop functional life skills. The STAAR program has only two computers, for instruction in the use of safe social networking, access to online resources in the community, writing skills, and talking software. Students learn the appropriate use of cell phones, tip calculations, and grocery store budgeting. Depot campus students use 20 laptops, digital cameras, software, and data projectors. Online courses are a source of enrichment or recovery credit for students; they can do this by using online instructional technology to complete coursework for graduation requirements. PLATO Learning system, Virtual High School, Brigham Young University, and online coursework approved by the Connecticut State Department of Education are all examples of online credit recovery options. The library media center (LMC) technology includes a variety of online databases, catalogs, and audio books in MP3, CD, tape, and Kindle formats. There are 20 computer stations available for student use during study hall or after school, and there is a separate 24-station computer lab with a data projector for class instruction. The writing center in the LMC has six computers and a printer that support the student writing assistance program. Because the support staff uses a range of technologies, coordinated services for each student are being delivered in a consistent and efficient manner. (school support staff, department leaders, self-study)

Student counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members to deliver a comprehensive program that meets the academic, personal/social, and career and college needs of each student. The guidance department has six school counselors, each with a caseload of approximately 190 students, one director, with a caseload of approximately 70 students, and two administrative assistants. The comprehensive developmental guidance program delivers three major components: educational development, personal and social development, and post-secondary career

development. According to the Endicott Survey, 75% of students expresses comfort going to their guidance counselor. The guidance program has developed appropriate goals outlined in a flexible, sequential curriculum for students in each grade. It is aligned with the Connecticut State Department of Education *Common Core of Learning* and the guidelines of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). The counselors meet with students and families in individual meetings for 30-60 minutes every year to ensure individualized attention, and they go into the classroom for large group meetings addressing specific themes. The department effectively uses technology in the blogs, Guidance Matters and Learning Matters. The department uses Naviance to administer both pre-packaged and custom-designed surveys online to students. Students also complete four-year plans of study in Naviance that are parallel to their post-secondary goals, including resume building, college and career searches, and SAT preparation. The data generate meaningful conversation about academic, personal, and post-secondary issues. Email and eBoards facilitate communication with students and parents. Naviance is a web-based software program used extensively by students and families to explore careers and colleges. Not all students plan to attend four-year schools, but some form of higher education is expected for all students. Grant-funding and budgeted line items finance local campus visits and additional opportunities to take placement tests. The counselors facilitate small groups, consult with faculty members, administrators, and parents on issues pertaining to individual students, and make referrals for special programs to families to meet the needs of all students. The department regularly seeks feedback from the students, parents and faculty through surveys. Analysis of this data serves as instruments of change in the services that the school counselors deliver. Counseling services create a rich and personalized environment with many resources for students and parents to utilize. (school support staff, department director, students, parents)

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who provide preventive health, direct intervention services, referrals, and health assessments to

improve services and ensure each student achieves the schools 21st century learning expectations. E. O. Smith has two full-time registered nurses, one full-time licensed practical nurse, and one full-time health assistant/secretary. A substitute nurse is available as needed. According to the Endicott Survey, 90% of the staff agrees that the school has sufficient certified/licensed health services personnel; 70% of students state that they are comfortable going to the school nurse. Health services include daily health care and behavioral assessments, emergency response, triage, and medication administration. Mandated health care screenings include vision and scoliosis for freshmen. Service training includes subjects such as blood-borne pathogens, medication administration, and referral processes. The Health services personnel provide instruction to staff, coaches, and advisors in the areas of health, nutrition, infection prevention, and emergency protocol. Working closely with the academic, counseling, and athletic staff, they provide additional referral information in medical, psychiatric, and athletic training. A member of Health services serves on CAT and collaborates with support services, counseling staff members, and administrators to assist with students who are eligible under section 504, as well as those identified as having special education needs. The nursing staff implements care plans to manage the needs of those with a variety of complex medical issues. Health services directly oversees clearance of every athlete prior to the start of each season. ImPACT testing software measures cognitive changes in athletes who have sustained a concussion. The nursing staff works closely with the athletic trainer and outside medical providers to review ImPACT testing results and to formulate a spectrum of accommodation for students who are injured or have long-term illnesses. The department uses technology to coordinate, improve, and communicate services. The eBoard makes available necessary student health forms and releases; postings include pertinent topics such as H1N1 prevention and preparedness. Nursing personnel maintain cumulative health records and inform staff members of student health concerns as needed. Health services also maintain three automatic external defibrillators at central locations in the school. Health services oversee health care issues for the Depot campus and the STAAR program. While they are not on site, the

nurses are in direct communication with the two sites. The department co-facilitates the Eastern Highland Health District program called Be Well, offering resources that promote a healthy lifestyle and preventive care. Health services continues to investigate and implement practical and progressive ways to use 21st century technology to continue to improve preventive and direct intervention services to the students, parents, and the entire school community. While the school health services personnel are responsible for the health care of all students, the delivery of services to students in the Depot campus program is compromised. Triage must often be done over the telephone in response to emergency situations. (health services, students, parents)

Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members to actively engage in the implementation of the school's curriculum and provide services that ensure each student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The library media services program provides materials and instruction that are integrated into the school's plan for curriculum and learning. The library director meets with teachers to plan instruction and orientation for their classes in the library. This collaboration can involve an exchange of academic goals and objectives, database and website evaluation, or a cart of appropriately selected books. A full-time library assistant responsible for all circulation tasks works an alternate schedule to extend daily library hours. A technical assistant maintains all computer-related records of the online catalog and processes purchasing for the library. Other departments also purchase through the library, taking advantage of its organization and accountability. A full-time audio visual technician replaced a certified library media specialist who retired in 2008. This staff of four is adequate to meet student and staff needs as indicated by 83.7% of positive staff responses in the Endicott Survey. The survey also showed 78% of staff agrees that library personnel are actively engaged in implementing the school's curriculum. The number of classes visiting the library during the 2009-2010 year was 787, a 7% decline from the previous year. The librarian is available to meet with classes in the many computer

labs located in the school. Library orientation is embedded in assignments involving direct use of the subscription databases, primarily through the English and social studies departments. This orientation includes instructing students in general policies and procedures. The librarian uses handouts and pathfinders with instructions in the unique elements and features of the databases. Newly developed applications for the iTouch, iPhone, and iPad now make it possible to access all of the Gale/Cengage Learning products. These references and resources are always available. The online catalog circulation software is very flexible and includes features for creating bibliographies and resource lists. Website evaluations, assessment, analysis, and source reliability are often topics for instruction. The library program provides a wide range of print and non-print materials for learners at all levels. The annual inventory shows the current print collection has 18,900 volumes with access to over 25 subscription databases funded through the State of Connecticut (iconn.org). The school budget funds 10 additional databases to support the curriculum. Funding has been consistent over the years with increases going primarily to online resources. Library inclusion in the ECE program has opened University of Connecticut library resources to the school community.

To better serve students struggling with required English materials, the library received a competitive grant to purchase three Kindle e-Book readers that include all required reading in grades 9-12. Features of this reader assist learners in ELL and special education as well as other students. The library now provides these same reading materials on MP3 players. The special services department noted the success and popularity of these pilot projects and purchased similar materials for use under library management. Ninety-two percent of staff members agree that the library personnel provide a wide range of materials including technologies to support the curriculum. Students, staff, and faculty members have regular and frequent access to all facilities and resources in the library where there are over 40 computers available for student use. Wireless Internet provides easy online access for those with laptops. Seniors with privileges may visit during their free periods while sophomores and juniors may choose the library

during their study periods. Freshmen may visit with a pass from a subject teacher during a study hall, lunch period, or before and after school hours. Doors open at 7:10 a.m. just as the buses arrive and are open throughout the day, including all lunch periods. The afternoon hours extend to 3:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and 3:45 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays in coordination with late buses. In 2009-2010, the average monthly attendance was 6,916 students, an increase of 9.3% over the previous year. This reflects students coming to the library on their own time and working independently or in cooperation with classmates on projects and research-based learning. Library personnel take requests for interlibrary loans, provide access to a university community borrower's card, instruct students individually on software and hardware issues, follow up on previous library instruction, provide readers' advisory, and offer many other services to help assure that the library is responsive to student interests and needs, resulting in independent learning.

Each spring the librarian emails faculty members a survey regarding library services. The inquiry includes current needs for new information, support material for future coursework, and ways to enhance the collection's usefulness. The library staff asks teachers to reflect on the success of their projects and research units in the library. This feedback, in combination with collection analysis and faculty consultation, helps to improve services, forming the basis for new priorities and direction. Through the Endicott Survey, 76% of students and 92% of staff members indicated their approval of the wide range of resources. The library media certified staff welcomes more collaboration with the teachers to ensure achievement of the 21st century learning expectations for all students. (self-study, library media center, teachers, students)

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members who provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. Collaboration is ongoing with teachers, counselors, and

identified services. The special services department oversees a wide range of available services for students, including those identified with disabilities under IDEA, Section 504, and ELL. Additionally, the department provides accommodations for students who are hospitalized or homebound because of illness or injury. The department coordinates all district-funded tutoring and any specialized transportation for students who are experiencing academic difficulties or who are unable to attend school. E. O. Smith High School has an adequate number of personnel to provide these services, including 13 special education teachers, one special education/ELL teacher, 1.2 certified speech pathologists, a part-time occupational therapist, a physical therapist, a certified school psychologist, a certified social worker, a support services counselor, and a licensed practical nurse. In addition, there are 28 paraprofessionals (3 district employees, 25 contracted through EASTCONN). Other contracted services include a full-time special education teacher/behavioral specialist and an assistive technology specialist. When needed, the district contracts with private providers of services such as neuro-psychological, hearing, and psychiatric evaluations. The special services department is supervised by a school administrator and supported by two secretaries.

Special services department members participate in school-wide professional development activities and contribute to the development and understanding of the school's 21st century learning expectations for all students. The school adheres to federal and state laws regarding identification, monitoring, and referral of students. All procedures associated with these laws are based on the guidelines provided by the Connecticut State Department of Education. Service to students with mild disabilities is delivered through a resource room model, although special education teachers work regularly with general education teachers on needed modifications and accommodations. Eighty-eight percent of surveyed staff members strongly indicate satisfaction with collaborative efforts by support services. Paraprofessionals assigned to general education classrooms provide additional support. The resource room provides a supportive environment to complete assignments, acquire study skills, develop test-taking strategies, and improve basic skills beyond what is offered in the general education classes. Students also use the

resource room as an alternative test-taking site. Case managers oversee the transition planning process and coordinate services required under IDEA. Instructional methods and intervention techniques are research-based. The majority of identified students receive their accommodations and modifications through general education classes. Special education teachers co-teach English, social studies, and math. Students with intellectual and/or other severe learning disabilities receive self-contained instruction in math and English with curricula designed through individualized education plans (IEP). Students identified with English language learning (ELL) needs are provided a case manager certified in ELL and special education. These students receive support for their general education classes. Staff members are trained in accommodations and modifications. The district has developed a strong set of transition services and programs for students who have completed four years of high school but continue to have skill deficiencies. The STAAR program, staffed by a certified special education teacher, a transition coordinator, and five paraprofessionals, is a cooperative arrangement with the University of Connecticut designed to provide an age appropriate environment for students between 18-21 years of age. Annual reviews are conducted with all identified students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators to assess services and student goals to ensure that each student's IEP is designed to achieve the school's 21st learning expectations. The special services director meets bimonthly with administrators to reflect on student and teacher performance. Regular contact between the special education and guidance departments provides ongoing opportunities to assess student programs and address concerns as they arise. There has been a recent increase in the number of special education students due to an increase of identified 9th graders and individuals moving into the community. There has also been an increase in referrals, which can be attributed to a desire on the part of general staff to intervene with struggling students and an inadequate school process of pre-referral intervention through regular education. While the special education department employs an adequate number of staff and support services to support the students' individual need, the collaborative assistance team (CAT) can be instrumental in developing a

wider range of response to interventions (RtI) for teachers to use in the classroom. (self-study, special services, parents)

Commendations

1. The support personnel and resources for identified students
2. The wide range of tutoring programs: National Honor Society, World Language Honor Society, writing center, math tutoring lab, University of Connecticut interns, reading labs
3. The use of technology to communicate with families
4. The technologies for students including kindles, assistive technology and additional programs in Naviance.
5. The school counselors' availability and individualized attention to students and families
6. The highly professional and organized health services program, including online medical forms
7. The accessibility of the library/media center and personnel resources to all students
8. The alternative education programs that meet a variety of student learning needs
9. The collaborative assistance team (CAT) to identify further interventions and support
10. The extensive opportunities and resources at the University of Connecticut
11. The full-time ELL teacher to support and fully mainstream students
12. The transition and orientation program for freshmen students and parents

Recommendations:

1. Ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations by eliciting feedback from the school community
2. Provide adequate coverage for students at the Depot campus and to meet the needs of students who leave the building for field trips
3. Develop and implement a plan to reduce the drop- out rate

4. Provide opportunities for professional development in technology and its application to instruction and learning
5. Continue to develop and implement a long-range plan for funding and staffing of the informational technology department to keep pace with needed software and hardware updates
6. Increase awareness of response to interventions (RTI) at the classroom level required prior to the referral process



Community Resources for Learning

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

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

The community and the district's governing body adequately provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. Over the past three years, the budget has been passed with zero to modest increases. While a few positions have been either eliminated or not replaced after retirement over the past two years, sufficient professional and support staff faculty are available to conduct and support educational services. There has been a 27% reduction in the professional development budget, but staff members report their requests to attend workshops are often granted. Funding for curriculum writing is in place so that new curriculum documents can be written and existing documents can be uploaded on to the Rubicon Atlas software program. The school dependably funds a full range of technology support. There is a technology plan for purchasing updated equipment and making sure all stakeholders have access to it. While the plan is in place, realizing it has not always been financially feasible. Most teachers and students report that there is adequate technology for their use. The district budget for equipment, instructional materials, and supplies has remained unchanged for the past five years. Although the amounts have not increased, funding has been adequate and consistently dependable in view of the current economic conditions. Because the governing body provides consistent and adequate funding for a wide range of program, staffing, professional development, and instructional needs for teaching and learning, E. O. Smith High School continues to offer a wide range of services for its teachers and students. (self-study, facility tour, with teachers, central office personnel)

The school efficiently and appropriately develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. The director of building and grounds, who oversees daily maintenance of the physical plant, identifies and prioritizes budget needs to maintain the school and delegates responsibilities to custodial staff and maintenance technicians. The 250,000 square

feet is cleaned on a daily basis by the nine full-time custodians; two custodians work during the day and seven work the night shift. One of the night custodians is the head custodian and one part-time custodian works at the Depot campus. The school implemented a green cleaning program five years ago. Two full time maintenance technicians work during the day. Most teachers report that the school and their classrooms are cleaned daily. The school uses SchoolDude, a computer maintenance management system specifically designed for educational facilities, to manage daily custodial and preventive maintenance. For daily maintenance requests, faculty and staff members can access School Dude on the school's web page to complete a maintenance request form. The work orders are sent to the supervisor for assignment. All software, plans, catalogs, and documents pertaining to the maintenance of the school grounds are housed in the building and grounds director's office in the main hallway of the building. While most teachers report that their classrooms are clean and specific requests are being addressed in a timely fashion, a few teachers report that the cleanliness of their areas, particularly physical education, athletics and the band area, are not attended to with the same immediacy and attention. The school's positive environment is directly attributed to the implementation of a clear and organized system for maintaining, repairing and cleaning the facility. (teachers, parents, facility tour)

The community adequately funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. Long-range projections of future enrollment from sending towns serve as a guide to identify staffing needs and develop a budget that supports the district's strategic plan. The self- study states that there are ten traditional academic departments, eight support service areas, and alternative experiences such as the Depot campus, STAAR, and PASS programs, which are adequately staffed and funded. A three year (2009-12) comprehensive plan outlines the district's objectives for technology and has adequately funded it for purchasing updated equipment and making sure all stakeholders have access to it. The board of education is committed to meeting current and future funding requirements in order

to maintain and upgrade technology. The ten-year capital improvement plan is updated annually by the director of buildings and grounds based on the life cycles of facilities, grounds, and equipment. A town referendum was recently approved to upgrade the track, tennis court, and field adjacent to the school. School administrators report that construction of this work will commence in May 2011 with completion expected in September. In addition, the Edwin O. Smith Foundation, an organization governed by a separate board of trustees, awards funds to supplement and enrich any school-related need. As a result of the funding support provided by Region 19, E.O. Smith students benefit from a variety of traditional, nontraditional, and extra-curricular programs which enhance the learning experience for all students and help support students' achievement of 21st century learning expectations (self-study, facility tour, central office personnel)

The faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. The budget process begins in the fall. Initially, individual teachers indicate their needs to their respective department chairs. Department chairs and school leadership review and determine priorities and sometimes make modifications to what the staff has identified. The principal submits a proposal to the superintendent. Upon review by the superintendent, the proposed budget is presented to the school board for extensive discussion and review. Public hearings are held and a formal vote is taken by the community in May of each year. If the budget is not approved, school leadership determines modifications to the original proposal. School leadership communicates further concerns to teachers on an informal basis before the final decision. Because the budget process actively involves faculty members and the building administrators, the consistent quality of services and programs support the needs of the students. (self-study, teachers, school leadership, central office)

The school site and plant adequately supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services. The main facility was renovated in 1998. The vocational agricultural program facility was updated in 2000, and the Depot campus building was renovated in 2008. The improvements made to the

gymnasium, library media center, and the guidance and special services suite enhance the services that are provided to students. While most areas of the facility are adequate, there are a few areas of concern. While the number of science labs is sufficient, there are times during the day when it is close to reaching its scheduling limit based on safety standards. School leadership and the self-study indicate that the lack of space could limit the availability of course offerings by projected future enrollment. During the warm weather months, instruction is sometimes impacted due to high temperatures which affect both teachers and students. Two second floor computer labs do not have air conditioning, impacting those systems at the end of the school day. The track was deemed unsafe but as a result of an approved town referendum, renovations will begin in May 2011. The auditorium is another area of concern. In general, the stage is too small and the technology systems are outdated. Scheduling conflicts abound because five arts programs (strings, band, orchestra, chorus, and theater) as well as numerous academic and student activities and organizations, compete for the space. When the auditorium was built, the school had half the current population so that only half of the student body can be seated at one time. In addition, the acoustics and aesthetics of the auditorium have not been updated, affecting the overall quality of sound of the highly popular and highly enrolled performing arts program. Because of the adequate support for the physical plant, the school buildings are able to adequately deliver high quality school programs and services; however, attention needs to be given to the needs related to the auditorium. (student shadowing, facility tour, teachers)

The school maintains updated and organized documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health and safety regulations. The school district's director of facilities and grounds is responsible for maintaining all documentation regarding the physical plant and facilities. All documents are stored in the director's office and are accessible both on paper and electronically through the SchoolDude software. The school is in compliance with all state, federal, and local laws and regulations. The director addresses and

schedules regular repairs, inspections, and maintenance. The district budget includes a line item to fund any identified issues resulting from inspections. Because the school building has been well maintained since the building renovation, there has been a limited number of issues identified during inspections. The district's ongoing commitment to maintain the facilities and adhere to regulations ensures a safe environment for the school community. (self-study, facility tour, central office personnel)

Frequently, all professional staff members actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. The school works to engage students and parents in all educational areas. Eighth grade parents from the sending districts are invited to attend an informational program conducted by the principal and director of guidance. Incoming freshmen participate in an orientation prior to the first day of school, facilitated by Peer Natural Helpers, the guidance department, administrators and teachers. In September, parents are invited to an open house to meet teachers, to follow student's schedules, and to receive course expectations including the school's core values and beliefs statement. In addition, parents of both freshmen and seniors are invited to attend specific presentations for the designated classes. Parents of freshmen are introduced to administrators, specific teachers, and support services staff members, all of whom provide overviews and expectations. There is a presentation for parents of seniors outlining the framework and goals of the senior project. For parents who cannot attend the open house, school counselors are available to answer questions pertaining to their children's educational program. Yearly, students and parents receive the E.O. Smith Calendar and Handbook. In addition, the principal posts articles on the school's website and in a local community magazine. Parents are also encouraged to attend parent association meetings held on the first Monday of each month. The use of technology assists parents in accessing information and staying connected with the school. While some teachers engage parents through phone calls, many staff members communicate through email. The school's website allows parents to access faculty eBoards for student assignments, projects, and

available resources. Students and parents have 24-hour access to student information which includes updated teacher grade books, attendance, and behavioral interventions. The school community also has continuous access to Channel 17, which is broadcast through local cable television, and upcoming events are listed on a display board located at the entrance of the school. The guidance department conducts annual individual planning meetings with all students and their parents. They also provide an abundance of information through Naviance regarding course selection processes, financial aid, testing, and frequently asked questions and resources. Students and parents report a high level of accessibility to the guidance department via one-on-one and school-wide meetings. When parents are unable to attend a night information meeting sponsored by the guidance department (SAT, financial aid, etc.) it is posted on the website for easy access. The department of special services provides planning and placement team (PPT) meetings and transition meetings to work in partnerships with families and promote further engagement of parents. The Depot campus involves parents in all aspects of the student's education including their child's panel presentations. Because the school utilizes a variety of methods to engage parents, families are afforded many opportunities to be connected with their child's education. (self-study, school support staff, parents, teachers)

The school has developed highly productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. In 2009-10, 70 students took college courses on the University of Connecticut campus during the school day. E.O. Smith offered 29 advanced courses through the university's Early College Experience program (ECE). Some of these course included certified AP courses. Approximately 40% of the student body takes advantage of these opportunities. Students are also afforded opportunities to take as many as 16 college level accredited courses through the Career Pathways program at Manchester Community College and Quinebaug Valley Community College. The STAAR program, used to transition 18-21 year old students, is located on the University of Connecticut campus. The high school works in partnership with the schools of education at the

University of Connecticut (which is 300 yards from the school) and Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) in nearby Willimantic. Interns and student teachers from UConn and ECSU regularly work in the classroom and offer tutorial services to students. In addition to the strong partnerships with institutions of higher education, the school also has strong ties to parent and community organizations and businesses. Active parent groups include music parents association, the drama parents association, the parent association, the Future Farmers of America (FFA), and the parent/alumni group. Reaching out to the community is highly valued at the school. Students have generously contributed their time and energies to the community through the Leo Club, the American Red Cross, the Windham Area Interfaith Ministry, Relay for Life, and promotion of environmental awareness through the “Cool It” team and Annual Bike to School week. Commitment to the national and international community is demonstrated through programs that raise money and awareness of communities in need, such as Darfur, the Ariang School, Invisible Children, Amnesty International, Haiti (Roots of Development), and the regions affected by Hurricane Katrina. The school has also welcomed a variety of guest speakers into its classrooms and teach-in events. Through the required senior projects, students work with local businesses, charities, and civic organizations. This connection affords the community an opportunity to witness the students’ academic, social, and civic involvement and growth. Further, Mansfield Community Center provides the swim team with facilities for its program. In conjunction with the Mansfield Recreation Department, outreach and employment opportunities are available to students interested in physical education, coaching, and child development. The program also trains students for positions as youth coaches and referees. Local businesses and organizations provide students with paid and unpaid work experience, including the Cooperative Work Experience (CWE), Learning through Internships (LTL), mentorship placements at the Depot campus, the STAAR program, and the Allied Health Program. The Edwin O. Smith Foundation awards grant funds to teachers and programs who apply for new classroom technology and

who foster innovative teaching. Because of the strong connection with their community and local institutions of higher education and the involvement of the faculty, students are afforded an array of unique and enriching learning opportunities and experiences that assist them in progress toward meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teachers, school leadership, student work)

Commendations

1. The adequate budget and dependable funding
2. The strong partnerships with higher education institutions and opportunity for students to earn college credit
3. The strong partnerships with local community and opportunities for internships and service
4. The variety of resources to facilitate parent communication
5. The well organized maintenance of facility
6. The support of large number of athletic and club activities
7. The active involvement of faculty, staff, and administrators in budgetary decisions
8. The non-traditional educational experience at the Depot Campus
9. The variety of programs to extend learning outside the classroom
10. The active involvement by students and staff in supporting community events and fundraisers
11. The commitment to upgrade track, tennis courts and field

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a plan to address climate issues including the need for installation of air conditioning on the second floor, particularly the computer labs
2. Develop and implement a plan to update the auditorium to meet the usage needs of the multiple groups
3. Ensure the regular schedule of cleaning physical education, athletic, and music areas
4. Adhere to the technology plan to replace and update equipment as much as the economy will allow

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Commission has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Commission within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Commission's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 15. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Commission office has current statistical data on the school.

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

The visiting committee expresses its deep appreciation to members of the E. O. Smith High School community for its preparation prior to the visit and their kind hospitality extended over the course of the visit. Students, parents, teachers, board members, and school administrators were very generous with their time to answer questions and share all aspects of their learning community.

**Edwin O. Smith High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
March 27-30, 2011**

Visiting Committee

<p>Dr. Suzi C. D'Annolfo, Chair The University of Hartford West Hartford, CT. 06117</p> <p>Anne Marie Mancini, Asst. Chair CREC Magnet Schools Hartford, CT. 06006</p> <p>Dawn Bartz New Canaan High School New Canaan, CT 06848</p> <p>Jaunice Edwards Bloomfield High School Bloomfield, CT 06002</p> <p>John Fulco Killingly High School Dayville, CT 06241</p> <p>Jonathan Harder Cromwell High School Cromwell, CT 06416</p> <p>Robert Haxhi Wilby High School Waterbury, CT 06416</p> <p>Thomas Kessler Bacon Academy Colchester, CT 06415</p>	<p>Karen Leacu LeDuc Natick Public Schools Natick, MA 01760</p> <p>Marilyn Lynch West Haven High School West Haven, CT 06516</p> <p>Angie Magnano Newington High School Newington, CT 06111</p> <p>Karen McGrath Sandwich High School E. Sandwich, MA 02537</p> <p>Katharine Kavanagh Martha's Vineyard Reg. High School Oak Bluffs, MA 02557</p> <p>George Mitesser Northwestern Regional High School Winsted, CT 06098</p> <p>Roy Taylor Bristol Eastern High School Bristol, CT 06010</p>
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Commission on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

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