

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS



REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

Duxbury High School

Duxbury, Massachusetts

October 21 - October 24, 2012

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

The prime concern of the visiting committee has been to assess the quality of the educational program at Duxbury High School in terms of the CPSS 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 team.

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

The accreditation program for public schools involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the CPSS'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 CPSS in the Follow-Up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school be reevaluated at least once every ten years and that it shows 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 Duxbury High School, a committee of 11 members, including the assistant principal and the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people. The self-study of Duxbury High School extended over a period of twenty-eight school months from January 2010 to April 2012.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their adherence to the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's mission, learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the CPSS, Duxbury High School also used questionnaires developed by The Global Institute 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 the entire professional staff had approved it.

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of sixteen evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the Duxbury High School. The Committee members spent four days in Duxbury, Massachusetts, 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 CPSS's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented high school teachers, central office personnel, library media specialists, guidance counselors, special educators, and school administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Duxbury High School.

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

- 48 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day
- review of the school self study materials
- 32 hours of additional classroom observations
- 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 team 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 team'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 visiting committee's findings will be forwarded to the Committee on Public Secondary Schools that will make a decision on the accreditation of Duxbury High School.

School and Community Profile

Duxbury High School, located in Duxbury, Massachusetts, serves only the residents of the town of Duxbury. Located 35 miles south of Boston, it is a primarily residential community in Plymouth County bordered by Cape Cod Bay, Plymouth, Kingston, Pembroke, and Marshfield. Duxbury is a historical seacoast community, with cranberry and oyster farming as primary industries.

With a population of more than 14,000 citizens, no identifiable minority group comprises more than 0.8% of the population. English is the primary language spoken by 99.97% of the student population; one family speaks Portuguese at home. In 2010, 2.2% of the school district population lived below the low-income level. Most residents are employed in managerial and executive positions in the greater Boston area. The median family income is \$105,683.

Duxbury was a center of shipbuilding until the mid-nineteenth century when ships became too large for the shallow bay. Many historic and beautiful homes dating from the 17th century and the shipbuilding period still exist. Today Duxbury is the sixth largest cranberry producer in Massachusetts and has become famous for its oysters. The coastal location continues to play a vibrant role in the character of the community. Duxbury Beach is a major, unspoiled, natural recreational asset and there are many conservation areas throughout the town. Duxbury is home to Battelle, a global leader in scientific discovery and application, and Island Creek Oysters. It also has one assisted living facility.

In addition to Duxbury High School with a population of 962, Duxbury Middle School includes 839 students and Duxbury's elementary schools Alden (grades 3-5) and Chandler (grades K-2) house 781 and 614 students respectively. Bay Farm Montessori Academy and Good Shepherd Christian Academy are the two private elementary schools located in the community and 193 students attend non-public schools.

The Duxbury Public School District is ranked 277 of 325 school districts in the state in terms of per pupil expenditures and expended \$10,598 per pupil compared to a state average of \$13,006 per pupil in FY2009 and \$10,169 compared to a state average of \$12,448 in FY2008. In terms of per capita wealth, Duxbury ranks 36 out of 351 communities. In FY2010, state, federal, and other resources accounted for 36.93% of all funds received in the district, leaving 63.07% of funding to be obtained through local resources, which are allocated to the public schools. The Duxbury Education Foundation gave out nine grants in FY2011 totaling over \$85,000. Over the past six years the Duxbury Parent Teacher Organization has awarded \$20,000 in teacher mini-grants ranging from \$100 to over \$1,000.

Duxbury High School includes students in grade 9 through 12 with a total enrollment of 962 students divided between 479 males and 483 females. The school population has remained stable over the past ten years. The ethnic, racial, and cultural composition has remained constant with a majority of Caucasian students, 0.4% African American, 0.8% Asian students, 0.5% Hispanic students, and 0.1% Native American students during the 2010-11 school year. The average dropout rate for the past two years has been 0.1%, the

average daily attendance, 96%, and the average attendance rate among teachers, 94%, inclusive of administrative reassignment, professional days, and personal and family illness.

There are 84 teachers at Duxbury High School, creating a student-teacher ratio of 11:1. Individual teachers carry an average load of 89 students with an average class size of 20. In those classes required for graduation, the average class size is 21. Students attend school for 180 days and for a minimum of 990 hours.

Students in grades 9 through 12 may select courses in three levels: college preparatory, honors, or Advanced Placement (where offered). Ninety-three percent of students is enrolled in at least one honors level class, 58% in at least one college preparatory course, and 28% percent in at least one Advanced Placement course. Approximately ten percent of students receives special education services. All students are required to take four years of English, three years of social studies, mathematics, and science, two years of world language, four semesters of physical education, and four semesters of fine, performing, or practical arts. The other courses taken to earn the 130 credits required for graduation come from a variety of elective courses. Duxbury High School offers 47 co-curricular activities and 54 athletic teams (thirty at the varsity level). Annually, 40% of students each year participates in at least one co-curricular activity and 65%-70% in at least one sport.

In the class of 2011, 91% of graduates plans to attend four-year colleges, with 4% enrolling in two-year colleges, and the remaining students entering preparatory schools, the military, the work force or international schools. Graduates take advantage of a diverse selection of colleges and universities across the US and abroad including Ivy League colleges, the Massachusetts state university system, and a variety of competitive private and public four-year colleges.

Educational partnerships include offering opportunities for students who have earned the grade point average necessary to enroll in college classes at local community colleges. In the district, there are nine students who attend vocational school and 32 students in out-of-district placements. While there is no formal dual enrollment program, currently seven students are taking college courses, 35 students are participating in Duxbury's independent study program, and four students are utilizing the PLATO online learning environment. During the 2011-2012 academic year, Duxbury High School will be piloting the Syracuse University Project Advance program (SUPA) in physics and biology, in which students can earn college credit through the AP Physics and AP Biology courses. Duxbury High School offers a work experience program for those students who work the minimum hours and who are looking to receive academic credit for that time. In 2011, forty students participated in senior projects in which they spent the fourth term of their senior year working within the community on an approved project. Students with special needs can go on to participate in the collaborative Marshfield/Duxbury POST (Providing Opportunities for Student Transition) program until the age of 22 where they learn life skills and participate in employment opportunities. Vocational programs within Duxbury High School include the early childhood education classes working with the Magic Dragon Center and the Breadboard culinary program.

Students are recognized for their accomplishments through various awards. The philosophy of the Summa Award for grades 9 through 11 is to allow the faculty the opportunity to recognize students who improve the atmosphere of the school and to recognize students who realize their scholastic potential. Seniors are recognized in a senior awards ceremony where they are awarded academic achievement awards by subject areas as well as scholarships through the Duxbury High School Scholarship Program. In 2011, the scholarship and award amounts totaled over \$270,000. Each term students who achieve honor roll and high honor roll are recognized in the local newspapers, the Clipper and the Reporter. In the middle of junior year, students who earn a cumulative 3.5 grade point average (GPA) are invited to apply for the National Honor Society. Annually three to five Duxbury High School students are selected through the National Merit Competition and receive recognition for this honor at senior awards night. In 2010, 88 students were recognized as AP Scholars for their exceptional achievement on AP exams. Music, drama, art, and athletics have additional awards nights. The superintendent and school committee invite selected students and their families to monthly school committee meetings to recognize their achievements publicly.

DUXBURY HIGH SCHOOL CORE VALUES

Duxbury High School provides a dynamic education that prepares students to meet, both individually and collaboratively, the challenges and opportunities of a global society. All students will pursue academic excellence, become active learners, and develop personal, social, and civic responsibility.

BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING

- All students can learn.
- Learning requires hard work and discipline.
- Learning requires a safe and supportive environment.
- Learning is most effective when meaningful connections are made.
- Learning is best achieved through an active partnership between the school and the community.

LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Duxbury High School encourages a partnership among educators, students, family, and community. With the support of this partnership, Duxbury students will:

- I. Read, write, and communicate effectively using a variety of Media
- II. Acquire, apply, and integrate knowledge
- III. Engage in creative, expressive, and innovative learning
- IV. Work effectively both independently and collaboratively
- V. Demonstrate personal, social, and civic responsibility

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS
STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION**

TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

CURRICULUM

INSTRUCTION

ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING



Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

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

Conclusions

Duxbury High School engaged 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 commitment of the students, faculty, administration, and community is evident throughout the building in the form of posters that remind students about the core values and expectations as well as the general deportment and demeanor of students and faculty that reflect these strongly held beliefs. The core values and expectations are also printed in the student/parent handbook and have a presence on the school's website. The process of identifying core values, beliefs, and learning expectations was started in December of 2008 by a committee of 14 stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, guidance personnel, and administrators. The committee of representatives sought input from faculty and reviewed current research on 21st century skills as the core values work evolved in order to generate lists of characteristics that would be ideal for Duxbury High School graduates. Three working drafts of core values and learning expectations were presented to the faculty for comment in March of 2009, and in April 2009; a vote was taken and the staff initially adopted the core values and learning expectations for the school. During the 2009 - 2010 school year, DHS staff continued to refine the core values and learning expectations. In addition, a set of school-wide analytic rubrics, which reflect the core values and learning expectations, was also developed. Each rubric was brought to the faculty for input and revision and was then voted on and adopted. In November of 2010, the final draft of beliefs about student learning, which included student input solicited through advisories, was approved by the faculty. The school committee reviewed the core values, beliefs, and expectations, ultimately voting to accept them. A formal and inclusive process for determining core values, beliefs, and learning expectations has ensured the creation of values that accurately reflect the culture and character of the school. (self-study, school documents, teacher interviews)

Duxbury High School has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students, which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and which are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. Students are challenged to grow as scholars and citizens and to develop their talents and involvement in co-curricular activities and service to others. The school has a list of learning expectations that can be labeled as academic, civic, or social competencies. The school's learning expectations state that students are expected to read, write, and communicate effectively across a range of academic disciplines using a variety of media. Using current technology, students and faculty conduct research and analysis using a myriad of sources and media to communicate their research findings, to exchange ideas, and to share perspectives. Students are also expected to acquire, apply, and integrate declarative and procedural knowledge gained through focused study and critical thinking. Students are required to go beyond restating knowledge and are expected to draw conclusions from thoughtfully conceived scientific inquiry in the form of laboratory experiments. Examples of this type of applied knowledge are found in the natural sciences such as physics and chemistry as well as in courses like Student Chef where students apply knowledge in the culinary arts. Evidence that students are expected to engage in creative, expressive, and innovative learning can be found in

history classes where students create magazines that capture the issues and historical significance of the era being studied, while daily writing prompts in US history student journals provoke thought about what it meant to be a citizen during that historical time period. Each department is responsible for reporting on student progress for at least two of the five learning expectations. Students are encouraged to self-assess using rubrics and in some instances they can be even more severe evaluators of their own work than their teachers. For some classes in which the use of rubrics is new, grades are assigned to groups as well as to individual students. Senior projects create the opportunity for students to experience learning through self-discovery, reflection, and introspection. Cross-disciplinary learning takes place as science, math, and writing all come together in the form of student-centered learning outcomes. Authentic learning is taking place beyond the campus of the school in meaningful ways. Students are required to demonstrate personal, social, and civic responsibility as articulated in the school-wide rubric. This is evident in the emergence of additional forms of community service recently led by members of student government and National Honor Society in the town's historical society. This spirit of doing good spread to other causes in Duxbury and beyond. A nearby homeless shelter, food bank, and Alden House are examples of opportunities for student involvement. In many academic disciplines, students are assigned work that requires writing in various styles. In adherence to the writing rubric, students complete assignments in creative and critical writing. In AB Calculus, students write reflections on their thought processes and logical conclusions. Students communicate their thoughts and ideas with the use of various forms of media, among them Facebook, X2, Moodle, Blogs audio, and video technology. Students write e-mails in French in language classes and write responses to poetry and short stories in English classes. In history classes, students transitioned from reading short essays on slavery, to primary sources, to analyses of readings from *Logic of Moral Trade*. Students were observed employing higher order thinking skills in 69 percent of classes observed by the visiting committee. English, languages, and the visual and performing arts provide students with the opportunity to engage in creative, expressive, and innovative learning. These school-wide learning expectations challenge students to explore their potential and to grow as learners and people and prepare them for the challenges that the 21st century presents. Students shared that collaboration is a crucial component of the learning process as well as a preparation for competing in a global economy beyond graduation. Moreover, students expressed an appreciation of the integration of new technology by teachers and students in the learning process. Technology was integrated into teaching and learning in 44 percent of classrooms visited during the school day. SMARTBoards, Power Point presentations, scientific measuring, and electronic musical equipment facilitated and enriched instruction and learning in the classrooms.

There is at least one analytic rubric for each learning expectation (including academic, civic, and social), which is applied to all students, and there are specific criteria listed under various levels of achievement so that students, parents, and teachers are fully aware of what is required for student success. Over a 3-year period, the Rubric Committee created three separate rubrics for the first learning expectation: Read, write, and communicate effectively using a variety of media. Each of the analytic rubrics measures the desired level of achievement that the school expects students to attain. They are clearly marked or targeted. It became clear after reviewing samples of student work that the quality of learning outcomes was accurately, consistently, and fairly in

line with learning expectations in all disciplines using comprehensive rubrics. The vast majority of analytic rubrics are consistent with the school's learning expectations. The school's analytic rubrics use the same terminology so students are not confused about different expectations or levels of achievement. For example, in AB Calculus, the levels of acquiring information are delineated by phrases such as *thoroughly*, *effectively*, or *adequately* locates, as well as locates or assesses *minimal* information. As a result of Duxbury High School's work in establishing core values, beliefs, and learning expectations that enhance learning and student achievement, as well as the widespread use of school-wide analytic rubrics that contain challenging and measurable 21st learning expectations for all students, the school has established a measurable set of challenging 21st century learning expectations. (classroom observations, student work, self-study, teacher interviews, staff, students, parents)

Duxbury High 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. Most teachers interviewed stated that the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are integrated into their teaching methodology, influence their relationships with students, and can be seen in the school's culture as a whole. Students corroborated this sentiment, as did the members of the Core Values standard committee. There is further evidence to support the claim that 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the attitudes of the school's students, who commented on the diverse core and elective offerings available to students. They referred to the curriculum as rigorous and organized, and to the teachers as high quality and willing to make the students think. Students commented on the numerous opportunities available to them for collaborative learning in the classroom, on the athletic fields, in the rehearsal rooms, on the stage, and in the community. For example, the family and consumer science course provides opportunities for students to experience and investigate international foods. While students are required to take at least two years of a world language, teachers report that the majority of students continue on to a third and fourth year. Course offerings such as AP Spanish as well as AP Latin, which are running five sections of 22-29 students, are further evidence that the school is meeting the 21st century learning expectations. Senior projects provide a real-world experience to students as they prepare to embark on their post high school careers. Resource allocations have been made in order to support the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and its 21st century learning expectations. Faculty requests for funding for professional development and training are approved by the principal on a case-by-case basis. However, there is no evidence of specific increases in professional development funding to help teachers review data relating to core values, beliefs, and expectations for student learning. Additionally, there is no evidence of additional funding to develop new curriculum or materials, supplies or staffing to create a new course designed specifically for one of the school's learning expectations. There is a wealth of evidence that academic learning is valued and that the school is a community of learners. Students report that there are lofty expectations for them to learn and to achieve academically. Parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at-large have expressed that academic excellence is a top priority in the school and that supporting students in the high school learning process is paramount. The school's curriculum is comprehensive and challenging and teachers create and deliver a rigorous college preparatory curriculum

that challenges all students at appropriate levels of aptitude. Students take, at most, seven academic classes at once. Co-curricular involvement is strongly encouraged. Students participate in a variety of pursuits that extend beyond the classroom. There is a strong sense of mutual respect among students, between adults and students, and among all members of the school community. Most students participate in a variety of activities that cross traditional, social boundaries. This leads to mutual respect among peers and instills a prevailing culture of mutual respect within the entire school community. As a result of this dynamic environment where the school's core values and beliefs are actively reflected in the school, mutual respect amongst all members of the community is ingrained, and decision-making by administration and faculty is based on what is best for all students. Students' educational and co-curricular experiences result in well-rounded students who develop the love of learning and the love of pursuing personal growth. (teacher interviews, students, classroom visits, student work, self-study, panel discussion)

The school has been engaged in an ongoing process of review and revision of its core values over the last six years, as supported by their self-study and comments made by many faculty members and administrators. The school intends to continue to revisit and revise the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations regularly. As they begin preparations to move into the new building currently under construction, the community remains committed to keeping the core values statement current and reflective of the culture of the school. Although the school hasn't completely put into place a firm process and timeline for the review and revision of the school's core values, the administration is confident that the depth at which the core values and beliefs are embedded into the school's culture will be beneficial in developing such a plan. The last three years of preparation for the NEASC visit have made an impact on the building administrators, and their methods of preparation should serve as a successful model for regular reviews and revisions in the future. This model includes internal research in the form of meetings between faculty members and building administrators that facilitates the exchange of thoughts and ideas on the currency and reflective value of the school's core values, beliefs, and expectations. This process begins with the simple activity of voting on each value, belief, and expectation using sticky notes to tag areas that they feel may need to be revisited, changed, or replaced. The school's self-study includes data from a 2010 Endicott College survey that measured staff, student, and parent familiarity with the school's values and beliefs about learning. There was no mention of future plans to continue to monitor the internalization of values and beliefs within the school and community. There is evidence that the results indicated within the Endicott survey, which was conducted in 2010, did cause changes in the school's methods of assisting students internalize the core values. The survey indicated that 71.9 percent of the school's students were "familiar with the school's core values and beliefs about learning". The 9th and 10th grade students scored significantly higher than the 11th and 12th grades, with the 12th grade students scoring lowest of all with a 60.4 percent familiarity with the core values and beliefs. One likely reason for this outcome is that the older students were not exposed to the culture of the school's immersion in the core values at the beginning of their high school experience. The younger students were brought into the school with the core values in place and in practice. The results of the Endicott survey most likely reflect a significant rise across the board with regard to faculty, student, and parent familiarity with the school's values and beliefs now that all

students have been immersed in the school's culture of core values and beliefs. As a result of the school's practice of regularly reviewing and revising its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, this document is accurate and current in its reflection of the culture of the school. With a basis in research, multiple data sources, and district and school community priorities, multiple methods are currently in use to ensure that the core values statement remains accurate and current as the school moves into the future. (self-study, Endicott survey, school leadership Standard committee, curriculum documents, teacher interviews)

Commendations

1. The creation of a set of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations that is clear, easily understood, and has become a part of the fabric of the entire school community
2. The inclusive process, informed by current research, that was used to develop the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
3. The development of school-wide analytic rubrics that contain challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students
4. The strong sense of mutual respect throughout the Duxbury High School learning community
5. The high degree to which core values, beliefs and learning expectations drive the curriculum, instruction and decision making processes at Duxbury High School

Recommendations

1. Develop a consistent review process to revisit and examine the effectiveness of the school-wide rubrics
2. Establish a process with prescribed timelines, research and data sources, and identified stakeholders to guide the regular review and revision of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in keeping with school and community priorities



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.

Curriculum

The curriculum of Duxbury High School is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. The results of the Endicott survey confirm that 73.1 percent of teachers and 87 percent of parents agree that the school's formal curriculum design ensures that all students practice and achieve all of the school's learning expectations. Responsibility for each expectation is divided between individual curriculum areas, with all departments assuming authority for demonstrating personal, social, and civic responsibility. In addition, the learning expectations appear in most of the course descriptions in the program of studies. Evidence of this purposeful design can be found in many aspects of the school. Student presentations use a variety of software, hardware, and web-based technologies. School-wide rubrics are used to assess student projects. All students are required to complete multiple research papers in the disciplines of world language, English, social studies and science. The schedule for the research papers is carefully calibrated term-by-term, discipline-by-discipline. A great deal of innovative learning occurs across the curriculum including a forensics course taught in collaboration with Syracuse University in which students may receive college credit, and an unlevleed history course, Holocaust and Human Behavior, in which students created a museum exhibit and organized a cross-curricular charity fundraiser. Classroom observations provide evidence of students working effectively both independently and collaboratively. This was particularly evident in fine and applied arts, technology, and family and consumer sciences. While there is no graduation requirement for community service, most students do engage in civic responsibility through programs such as athletic team partnerships with the Best Buddies, the empty bowls ceramics food bank program, and AP Photography's and National Honor Society's community service requirement. DHS students are able to explore and acquire knowledge essential for success in the 21st century through a purposeful and innovative school-wide curriculum that allows them to practice and achieve the school-wide learning expectations. (self-study, classroom visits, program of studies, Endicott survey)

The school's core curriculum is written in a common format using the Understanding by Design framework in all subject areas. This format includes units of study, essential questions, essential content, knowledge and skills, learning activities, and assessments. The curriculum reflects the 21st century learning expectations that are evident through the primary and secondary responsibility designations for assessing student work and in departmental use of rubrics in many assignments. The learning expectations are available to students as evidenced by their inclusion in the student handbook and on the First-class server, their attachment to many assignments, their postings throughout the school, and the frequent use of rubrics for assessing student work. In January 2013, students will receive a comment on their report cards measuring their progress on the five learning expectations as articulated by the rubrics. Students interviewed demonstrated a familiarity with the learning expectations and stated that they had been used for the past few years. In addition to supervising curriculum and teachers, department heads and subject supervisors require that teachers provide copies of unit exams and give common assessments. According to subject leaders, the curriculum maps are living documents, which are updated periodically both vertically and horizontally with input from staff, department heads, and subject supervisors. PLATO

was piloted in 2010 and provides access to math and science courses which can be used in the learning centers, and for home tutoring, credit recovery, MCAS intervention, student placement, and when students are transitioning back into school. Task-related rubrics that are aligned with the school-wide rubrics are used in many subject areas. Limited curricular coordination exists among all departments as common planning time is not readily available. English and social studies have aligned their curricula with the intent of collaboration on cross-curricular projects. The common format for curriculum documents, which includes essential questions, instructional strategies, assessment practices, and connections to the school's 21st century learning expectations provide students with a transparent and engaging curriculum across all disciplines. (self-study, teacher interviews, students, panel presentation, curriculum guides)

The curriculum at Duxbury High School emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge. Many examples of student work, such as current events and pop culture, demonstrated authentic learning opportunities through real world applications. There was evidence of linking some of the curriculum to community resources and outreach. Nearly 50 percent of the classes observed used a broad range of integration of technology. Higher order thinking skills were evident in more than 70 percent of classes observed through student shadowing. According to the Endicott survey, 74 percent of staff and parents believe that teachers emphasize higher order thinking assignments. The addition of research papers in all grades and levels further indicates that students are engaged in higher order thinking. All students are informed in the ethical use of technology as they are required to read and to sign the acceptable use policy in the student handbook. These acceptable use guidelines are reviewed with all students during an advisory period each year. Independent study offers additional opportunities for a small number of students to have an advisor and receive credit for courses that are not part of the regular course offerings such as journalism, engineering, ceramics, AP Chemistry or AP Physics, physical therapy, and on-line courses at MIT. Cross-curricular learning is evident in a few areas such as the study of the history of food during the Holocaust by the Breadboard and Holocaust and Human Behavior courses. Art and earth science combine to study the creation of volcanoes and the Empty Bowls for Boston Food Bank project is a collaboration between the Breadboard and the ceramics classes. The pin-hole camera project between the photography and the physics classes is another example. According to the Endicott survey, however, only 27.3 percent of teachers agree that the curriculum emphasizes cross-disciplinary learning. As indicated in the self-study, vocational opportunities are limited at Duxbury High School. Freshman physical education/health class is exceptionally rich in diversity of instruction and authentic assessment, ranging from self-assessment, to written journals, and team building. The varied uses of authentic learning opportunities, recurring thematic concept base design and multi-modal delivery of lessons provide rich learning opportunities for all students to practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (student shadowing, teacher interviews, self-study, curriculum maps, student work)

There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum at Duxbury High School. The Endicott survey confirms that 93 percent of teachers agree with this assessment. Curriculum documents across disciplines are extensive, share a common format, and identify 21st century learning expectations. Teachers' lesson plans and daily

agendas also identify the school's learning objectives and align with the *UbD* templates and curriculum maps. Most examples of student work provided contain these templates. Teachers periodically provide copies of unit exams and common assessments to department heads and subject supervisors. Most disciplines give common assessments for mid-year and final exams that identify the level of the students' mastery of the curriculum and the school's learning expectations. Data are gathered from these assessments to help identify student levels and the need for remediation. Advanced Placement classes enjoy a very high success rate with 79 percent, or 252 students, (23.9 percent of the student body) scoring a 3, 4, or 5 on all exams taken in school year 2011-2012. While department and faculty meetings contain agendas that are rich in opportunities for curriculum coordination, revision, assessment, and alignment, it appears that there is a need for more collaborative conversations within and between departments. Students are able to engage in 21st century learning through a comprehensive, transparent, and deliberate delivery of curriculum that allows all students to practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations (self study, classroom observations, curriculum documents, teacher interviews).

Limited curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among academic areas within the school, but communication with sending schools in the district is increasing with the recent creation of the 6 through 12 supervisory positions. There are monthly department meetings that give staff time to coordinate within departments. In addition, some subject supervisors are currently meeting regularly with sending schools while others are in the process of setting up this communication. There is limited scheduled time to collaborate across the curriculum. The leadership team has the responsibility of assuring the implementation and monitoring of the organization of curriculum, templates, and review of *UbD* templates. A review of the mapping process is scheduled for art, physical education, health, and social studies during the 2012-2013 school year; however, Duxbury High School has not yet designed a regular review cycle for curriculum by staff or from an outside source. The Instructional Advisory Group, comprised of department heads, subject supervisors, curriculum coordinators from the middle and elementary schools, and the assistant superintendent, meets monthly to align curriculum vertically. This group has initiated writing across all curriculums. In addition, DHS staff is provided with summer opportunities to work on curriculum. Effective curricular coordination exists within departments at DHS, but additional coordination among departments and vertically between grade levels will ensure that students have the best chance to meet 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, curriculum coordinators, curriculum mapping schedule)

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, and facilities, are not sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities. While staffing levels are mostly sufficient, there are a significant number of classes that exceed the school standard of a maximum of 24 students per class. The current master schedule reveals that 9.2 percent of core classes and 31.5 percent of co-taught classes exceed 24 students each. Also, 28.5 percent of instructional aid-supported sections are at or above this maximum standard. Teachers feel that some college prep classes are too large to adequately serve the individual needs of all students. Only 28 percent of teachers believe the current facilities fully support the curriculum. While yearly supply budgets are adequate in most departments and

exemplary in some, the athletic department purchases only the most basic supplies from the line item budget. Both the athletic and music departments rely heavily on outside booster clubs to fund larger purchases. Co-curricular funding decreased almost \$7,000 since FY09 according to the FY11 budget. Only 32 percent of staff feels that co-curricular programs are adequately funded. Currently, students pay large user fees for sports and clubs. There is little evidence of a long-range plan to support instructional materials and supplies. This was particularly evident in the lack of responsive action to support departments beyond the core subject areas. Access to technology is generally inadequate to support demand, especially with regard to computer laboratories, although this has been partially remedied with the recent purchases of laptop carts. Teachers have shown ingenuity by shifting some classroom research technology from computers to student-owned smart phones and mobile devices; however, this practice is dependent on student ownership of the devices, which is not universal. Also, wireless Internet access and connection speeds are inconsistent throughout the building. Science laboratories are also inadequate and do not support the delivery of the curriculum due to deficiencies in ventilation hoods and other issues. The wood shop does not contain the mandated air filtration system and the floor of the facility has deteriorated to such a degree as to be a safety hazard. Family and consumer sciences lack storage space and new countertops have been requested in the school's capital plan for the past four years without approval. Only 53 percent of parents feel that the school's technology resources are adequate. The area of the school that comes closest to meeting student needs in regards to supplies and materials is the school library. For the most part, the library's print and electronic collection as well as its technology resources support all areas of the school's curriculum. The Library Media Center is staffed by a full-time certified library media specialist and a full-time library clerk. While the facility is small, the library has adequate resources for student and teacher use and is used on a daily basis, including before school, after school, during lunches, and throughout the school day for individual students and teachers with their classes. Specific initiatives that have improved technology resources in the library include the subscription to several electronic databases and access to many others through the school's affiliation with the Massachusetts Library System, the addition of a computer lab with a SMART board, the purchase of eight laptops for students to sign out, the acquisition of eight Flip Cameras for students and teachers to add more options for integrating multi-media projects into the curriculum, the purchase of a projector for visual presentations and the receipt of a grant from the Parent Teacher Organization used to create an interactive whiteboard. Although the library enjoys some recently purchased technology and an adequate collection of resources, in the school overall, student learning is adversely impacted due to a lack of resources to fully support the curriculum and to allow students to achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, Endicott survey, teachers, students, class observation, building tour)

Duxbury Public Schools provide the school's professional staff with limited time, personnel, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. The assistant superintendent has responsibility for overall curriculum development, while building administrators facilitate ongoing evaluation and revisions, and department heads and subject leaders oversee a review process. While 77.6 percent of DHS staff feels involved in the curriculum writing process, only 33.3 percent of

teachers feel there is sufficient time allocated. There is not a regular review cycle for curriculum by subject area; however, the district has developed a five-stage curriculum review process that involves gathering data, looking at vertical alignment, developing curriculum maps, evaluating curriculum maps, and ongoing revision. Since 2011, an increase in funding provides for professional development work for revision of course offerings and the addition of new courses. Data gathered from MCAS, PSAT's and departmental assessments, and frequent use of rubrics for learning expectations provide information that guides instruction for purposefully designed course offerings that challenge all students. Allocation of additional time, personnel and financial resources will ensure that all students are receiving a purposeful, well-designed 21st century curriculum (self-study, administrators, teacher interviews).

Commendations

1. The purposefully designed curriculum which allows students to practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations
2. The emphasis on depth of understanding and application of knowledge in the curriculum including opportunities for higher order thinking and authentic learning
3. The common format developed for curriculum writing and mapping using the *Understanding by Design* model
4. The alignment between the written and taught curriculum
5. The innovative learning opportunities for students including community outreach and inter-disciplinary projects
6. The emphasis on writing across the curriculum
7. The coordination of specific initiatives in the curriculum such as required research papers in all grades and levels

Recommendations

1. Provide structured time to ensure vertical alignment of curriculum
2. Provide sufficient staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, and supplies to fully implement the curriculum, co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities
3. Establish a time and a schedule for the cycle of curriculum review and revision in all departments
4. Provide adequate funding for curriculum development
5. Provide additional cross-curricular learning opportunities for students
6. Increase students' opportunities for vocational study
7. Provide consistent common planning time for departments and cross-departmental coordination of curricular initiatives



Instruction

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

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

Conclusions

Teacher's instructional practices at Duxbury High School are examined continuously and are revised periodically to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Although the Endicott survey indicates that 67 percent of the faculty believes their instructional practices are aligned with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, it was evident, through classroom observations, that there is an even higher percentage of teachers who demonstrate evidence of this practice. Regularly scheduled department meetings promote collegial collaboration in order to disseminate research-based information to the faculty to provide teacher opportunities to share student work samples while utilizing school-wide rubrics and best practices. Furthermore, teachers are reflective of their instructional practices and continue to improve in response to their formal evaluation process and the self-reflection offered at their pre-and post-conferences with their administrator. Some teachers periodically survey students after individual unit instruction and use this feedback to align the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. By examining assessment data, teachers revise their instructional strategies to ensure that they align with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Continuous examination of the faculty's instructional practices will result in students receiving instruction that is consistent with the school's core values and beliefs about 21st century learning expectations (Endicott survey, teachers, students, central office personnel, school leadership interviews, self-study).

The instructional practices employed by the teachers at Duxbury High School support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations in numerous ways. Teachers personalize instructional practices by using differentiated strategies that allow students to demonstrate knowledge and proficiency. A majority of teachers observed in the classroom demonstrated evidence of these practices. Within curricular content, teachers show personalized instruction by allowing students to choose topics for many of their writing assignments, by individualizing training programs in physical education classes, and by offering courses with mixed honors and college prep leveled students. Personalized instruction is also exhibited by the student advisory program in which teachers and administrators meet all students on a biweekly basis to work on school and social issues. During advisory, teachers and administrators advise twelve to fourteen students over a four-year period with the purpose of making personal connections with them. Many faculty members informally engage students in cross-disciplinary discussions as well and while faculty members and students stated that they prefer cross-disciplinary and cross-subject collaboration activities, common planning time between departments has proven difficult to schedule. In all departments, students benefit from thematic units that include essential questions. Teachers consistently refer to the essential questions in reviewing for formal assessments and class projects. Students are actively involved in their learning by completing project-based learning projects in many disciplines. Problem-solving and discovery learning lessons that challenge students' thinking are demonstrated across the curriculum. In classroom observations, students participating in group collaboration were required to use higher order thinking skills. Students are regularly placed in cooperative learning groups to

work on classwork, projects, studying strategies, and peer-review activities. Teachers function as facilitators and coaches to students who direct their own learning. Teachers ask students to analyze what they have learned, to synthesize concepts, and to make connections to their own lives. Through independent research projects, students are self-directed and engaged in their work. Students at Duxbury High School also have opportunities to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. The chorus and band perform annually in front of audiences at local, state, and national venues, such as the Duxbury Performing Arts Center and Disney World. The family and consumer science department makes real world connections by operating the Breadboard, a small restaurant where the students work to plan, prepare, and serve food to the faculty and student body. Students have the opportunity to apply for the senior project in which a student designs a project that has a lasting impact on the community, implements that project, and reflects on his or her contributions and experiences. For example, one student chose to complete a senior project that created a memorial garden at a local church which not only benefited the community, but involved the community through local fundraisers. Several internships are also available to all Duxbury High School students. The social studies department developed an internship with the Duxbury Historical Society and the Alden House archiving artifacts. Some opportunities for internships and school-to-career options are limited by the rotating schedule, however. Teachers from all content areas consistently demonstrate that they engage students in self-assessment and reflection. Students are routinely asked to reflect on their work and to self-critique through the application of school-wide and teacher-created rubrics. Some teachers allow students to do the activity again, once it has been corrected, for credit. Teachers in English and social studies use current events, literature, journals, and creative writing to offer students the chance to compare and contrast historical ideas with current topics. Teachers from all content areas demonstrate peer review activities with their students. The physical education department allows students to rate each others' strength and conditioning exercises for form and efficiency, while chemistry teachers have student partners peer-review lab work. The vast majority of teachers integrates technology into instruction. The district's Technology Plan states that the school's mission is to provide a state of the art technology environment to ensure maximum learning opportunities. Many teachers use SMARTBoards during their instruction to enhance lessons. Students stated that teachers use the board to show movies, PowerPoint Presentations, and Internet video clips. Music teachers use the music lab that is equipped with Mac Computers and music sequencing software to teach students how to create rhythms. Full 88 key electric pianos are also available for students to learn to self-direct their lessons. The library media specialist integrates technology in the library with laptops, Kindles, and iPod touches and often travels to other classes to assist with classroom technology use. Teachers routinely involve students in using the appropriate technology by assigning projects involving PowerPoint, iMovie, or Adobe Photo Shop. Students in an English class indicated that they were assigned an historical fiction writing project that had to be presented to the class using a PowerPoint presentation. A photography project required students to create a new animal using Adobe Photo Shop and exhibit them in the hallway outside of the lab. All teachers have a webpage to provide information for parents and students, and they also use 'First Class' communication software that allows teachers to email and share instructional files, such as curriculum maps and course documents. Due to teachers' instructional strategies, students are engaged in cross-disciplinary learning, are

self-directed and active learners, practice self-assessment and reflection, benefit from technology and personalized instruction, and are asked to problem-solve and use higher order thinking skills which supports their achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teacher interviews, observations, students, self-study, Duxbury Public Schools Technology Plan)

Teachers regularly adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment during instructional time, strategically differentiating their instructional strategies with organized purposeful group learning activities, and providing support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. According to evidence found in student work, teachers consistently use a variety of formative assessment in classes to gauge student learning, including but not limited to the following: asking students in class for general understanding, pre-writes with peer or teacher editing, revisions, modeling student work, activators and summarizers, group review work, pre-quizzes and review prior to an assessment, labs, and exit 'quickwrites' (ticket to leave). These activities are used so that students can demonstrate how much they understand and so that teachers can identify who needs further clarification or additional assistance. Teachers give students immediate feedback through written and verbal comments during instruction time, one-on-one sessions, and in classwork and homework. Teachers use collected information about individual students to differentiate instructional practices to meet the learning needs of each student. Student information comes from homework checks, classroom discussions and questioning, as well as from content-specific formative assessments. Teachers also provide visual and multi-sensory instruction, scaffolding, extra time to complete assignments, copies of class notes, and co-taught classrooms. Teachers gather the information collected from these various teaching practices to plan for instruction for the next class. It seems to be common practice among most teachers to create group activities for their students to facilitate the wide range of student abilities so students can actively help each other. Teachers across departments organize group learning activities with projects or cooperative learning activities. Because teachers purposefully organize group learning activities, students are engaged in a learning environment that teaches them valuable collaborative skills. The Endicott survey shows that 83 percent of the staff agree that teachers use differentiated instructional practices to meet the needs of all students, and 76 percent of parents agree that the teachers provide additional support to their children as needed. Furthermore, the Endicott survey results show 78.3 percent of students and 89.6 percent of teachers report that group activities play an instrumental role in instructional strategies. The constant revision of instructional practices by organizing group learning, providing additional support and alternative strategies, and differentiating instruction utilized by teachers meet the individual needs of the students of Duxbury High School. (Endicott survey, self-study, teacher interviews, school leadership, students, parents, student work)

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments that include common assessments, mid-year and final exams, MCAS, and a collection of formative assessments regarding communication, reading, and writing assignments. According to department meeting agendas, minimal time is devoted to the examination of student work in order to improve instructional practices. Department meetings are

scheduled once per month for one hour. Teachers also use a variety of feedback from other teachers, supervisors, and parents to improve instructional practices. A mentor program, which provides each teacher a peer with whom they may discuss instructional practices, pedagogy, and assessment, is required for teachers new to the high school. Many teachers receive research-based information on instructional practices from their supervisors and gain feedback from the formal and informal observations and evaluations. A few teachers mentioned that they discuss instructional practices informally when time permits, but those opportunities are limited by individual schedules; therefore, examination of student work is mostly completed by individual teachers. Although parents have the opportunity to contact teachers by email, phone, or in person to discuss their child's instructional needs, many stated they do not involve themselves in this area and that their child should be "self-advocating". Furthermore, many parents said the high school teachers push for student independence as it is a life lesson for them. Many teachers stated they appreciate appropriate feedback from colleagues and administrators as they feel it helps them to improve their instructional practices. When teachers receive research-based material from supervisors, many times it is prior to department meetings so that they can read it before the meeting. Many teachers participate in professional development in the form of seminars and workshops regarding topics such as Project-Based Learning (PBL). In addition, Duxbury School District has a partnership with Bridgewater State University that offers free and discounted college credit courses for teachers. Also, all pre-professional status teachers are required to take a Research for Better Teaching course, paid for by the school district, in the summer after their second year as a teacher at Duxbury High School. Teachers engage in professional discourse with their colleagues at department meetings that are focused on instructional practice, in professional development and in-service days, but there is limited formal time for discussion during regular school hours. Teachers' instructional practices and student learning at Duxbury High School are improved by the analysis of data and feedback from a variety of sources, by examination of student work and by current research which supports all students in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. (Endicott survey, teacher interviews, administrators, students , observations, self-study, student work, parents)

Teachers at Duxbury High School maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices through varied professional development opportunities provided by the school district, as well as by individual efforts. Accordingly, 94 percent of the staff agrees that they maintain expertise in their content area as adult learners and reflective practitioners. Administration regularly offers research-based articles through First Class software that permits teachers to share instructional and curriculum resources through a common portal. Teachers regularly read content-specific literature designed to help them improve instruction, take time to reflect, and collaborate with colleagues at departmental meetings. Teachers use feedback from students, their peers, subject supervisors, school administration, and parents to improve instructional practices. As stated in the Endicott survey, 76 percent of teachers say that they improve their instructional practices by using student data from a variety of formative and summative assessments. Student feedback surveys offer the opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own practices and to revise their instruction. The teacher evaluation gives teachers timely feedback regarding their instruction and offers opportunities for revisions that will increase student learning and encourage

conversation between teachers and their supervisors. Parents are impressed with the amount of time teachers dedicate to professional development ensuring that students are meeting the learning expectations set forth by Duxbury High School. Many teachers seek out learning opportunities on their own; however, they feel that the school district budget does not adequately meet the needs for professional development opportunities. The school district allocates \$59,700.00 from the annual budget for professional development, as well as \$50,000 annually for course reimbursement for teachers across the district. Additional paid professional development time concentrating on curriculum development, literary training, technology strategies, and co-teaching was offered to teachers during the 2011 summer months, but it was limited. Regularly scheduled department meetings focus on best practices, student achievement, data, and instructional strategies. Teachers gain knowledge regarding instructional practices through The Skillful Teacher, SMARTBoard workshops, Webpage Design, X2 training, the MassCue Technology Conference, AP Workshops, and the Syracuse University Project. The district provides five professional development days, and two additional half days within the school year, and oversees incentives as mentioned above to assist teachers with remaining current in their content areas and their instructional practices. As a result of this commitment to maintaining professional expertise, Duxbury High School students continue to receive high quality instruction from a highly qualified faculty. (Endicott survey, teacher interviews, parents, school leadership, central office personnel)

Commendations

1. The ongoing process to ensure continuous examination of instructional practices that are consistent with Duxbury High School's 21st century learning expectations
2. The implementation of subject supervisors who have added additional support and oversight to instructional practices
3. The extensive evidence of personalization and differentiated instructional techniques
4. The use of creative formative assessment during instructional time
5. The purposeful organization of group learning activities during instructional time
6. The commitment of faculty to integrate technology into their instruction
7. The commitment of the DHS faculty to stay current in their areas of expertise

Recommendations

1. Develop a formal process for collection and analysis of student data to inform instruction
2. Develop a formal process for regular examination of student work to inform instruction

3. Provide structured protocols for common planning time to ensure that teachers examine instructional practices, including peer observation and feedback
4. Provide cross-disciplinary common planning time and professional development to provide teachers with the strategies to plan cross-disciplinary instruction
5. Provide additional training for the integration of technology into instruction

4

Assessment of and for Student Learning

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

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

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

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

Conclusions

Duxbury High School has developed a formal process, using school-wide rubrics, to assess whole school and individual progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Seven analytic rubrics, based on school-wide 21st century learning expectations, have been developed and are used to measure student progress. These expectations include reading effectively, writing effectively, communicating effectively, applying, acquiring, and integrating knowledge, engaging in creative, expressive, and innovative learning, working effectively both independently and collaboratively, and demonstrating personal, social, and civic responsibility. Each department is responsible for evaluating at least two of the learning expectations using analytic rubrics. Consistent implementation of the school-wide rubrics is complimented by the use of course-specific rubrics in many classes such as in the science and world language departments. These course-specific rubrics are also based on application of 21st century learning skills. The application and integration of 21st century learning skills is pervasive throughout the school. All departments report that some department time is used to construct and discuss the use of rubrics and the integration of 21st century skills. Students are consistently given feedback on their achievement relative to the school's 21st century learning goals based on the use of these school-wide rubrics. Parents report that their students are consistently using 21st century skills at home in completion of projects and regular assignments. This includes collaboration with peers through social media, integration of technology skills when developing projects, and the presentation of these projects using public speaking skills. As a result of the formal process Duxbury High School has put in place to assess the progress of individual students and the school as a whole in meeting school-wide learning expectations, students and their families know whether they are making progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning goals. (parents, self-study, classroom visitations, student work, students, teacher interviews)

Duxbury High School's professional staff is in the process of developing a plan to frequently communicate individual students' progress and the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning goals to students, families, and the larger school community. In June 2012, teachers made the initial attempt to report student progress on the learning expectations that are each department's primary responsibilities. During the 2012-2013 school year, the school is piloting the use of a report card, which includes numerical assessments for achievement of all the school-wide learning goals, and will be distributed to students and their families. As of the 2011-2012 school year, report cards have also included an assessment of the civic and social learning expectations. All teachers, at least quarterly, evaluate students using the Duxbury school-wide rubric related to social and civic responsibility. Currently, there is no system in place to aggregate this information, however. Over the past several years, the school has used technology more effectively to communicate students' progress in individual classes. Teachers are expected to use the student management system X2 to enter individual student grades. Reports cards and mid-quarter progress reports are posted online through the X2 portal. Some teachers give students real time access to grades in X2, while others do not. There are bulletins and newsletters from the PTO, library, music department and athletic department that are sent home which include information concerning the school's 21st century expectations. At meet-the-teachers nights the school-wide rubrics are discussed pervasively. Parents of freshmen and

students new to the school are supplied with the school-wide rubrics at an orientation meeting run by the administrators and the department heads. School-wide rubrics have been developed to measure progress toward these 21st century learning skills and are widely available to all in the school community. Duxbury High School does an adequate job communicating individual and school progress in achieving its school-wide goals, and when a reporting mechanism is in place to report progress on all of the school-wide learning goals, students will have a clear idea of how well they are progressing towards the school's 21st learning expectations. (Endicott survey, teachers, parents, students)

At Duxbury High School data is collected, disaggregated, and analyzed by teachers and administrators to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. Annually, departments review MCAS data to assess student progress. Students in the "failure" or "needs improvement" range in mathematics, biology, or English are offered remediation courses designed to improve their levels of proficiency. MCAS data from the 8th grade is used to target students who may have problems passing the MCAS exam upon entering high school. An after school tutorial program, Opportunities for Success, is available to all students in need of remediation in math, English, and biology. The web-based program PLATO offers students remediation in all areas covered by the MCAS exam both in and out of school. Most departments use common assessments to identify students who are not performing well. Services available to the students include scheduled help by teachers, modification for struggling students and/or referral to the Student Assistance Team (SAT). The co-teaching model has been expanded to assist the classroom teachers in meeting the needs of students needing more diverse instruction while keeping these students in a regular classroom setting; however, some teachers have reported the high number of students in co-taught classes makes it difficult to fully implement the co-teaching model. If more intervention is needed, students may be referred to the Building-Based Support team (BBST), which will determine if the placement of a student on an IEP or 504 accommodation plan is warranted. Parents report that the response to inquiries about individual learning styles of students varies from teacher to teacher, but that the availability of teachers for students seeking help is exceptional. For the second year in a row, sophomores and juniors took the PSAT exam during the school day at no charge to the student, with the hope that after analyzing the data, students needing remediation and those who excelled on the test could be identified early. As a result of the effective way Duxbury High School collects and analyzes student data, the staff is able to identify students who have not reached proficiency, or who are underperforming, and to provide them with assistance and support through which their achievement can be improved. (self-study, teachers, department heads, parents, students)

Prior to each unit of study, teachers at Duxbury High School communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. Ninety percent of the classrooms visited had the essential questions posted in the classroom; these were used to guide the students through their learning. Teachers kept the essential questions posted and re-visited them throughout the class. In an English 12 class, the essential question was posted in three different areas throughout the room. Many teachers refer back to the essential questions while trying to re-direct students' learning throughout the unit. Posted agendas were clearly visible on the front board of each room and were used as a learning tool to help students direct

their own learning. All of the departments at DHS have a curriculum design that includes the specific learning goals, which are aligned with the 21st century learning expectations in order for the students to be successful and to meet the expectations of the unit of study. The school-wide learning expectations were seen posted in each classroom throughout the school. Students reported that the DHS Learning Expectations were common language both in and out of the classroom and they were able to describe their favorite expectations from the school's core values and learning expectations. Individual course expectations are posted on each teacher's website and when parents attend Open House, they are given copies of both the course expectations and the common rubrics used in the various departments. Communication of the school's learning expectations and unit-specific learning goals prior to each unit supports each student in the development of the defined learning skills. (classroom visits, teachers, students, self-study, school tour, student work)

The majority of teachers at DHS provide rubrics to students prior to summative assessments. These rubrics are school-wide, for the most part, but some teachers also use course-specific rubrics. Each department is required to use school-wide rubrics at least once a term on a summative assessment. Students report that they are familiar with the rubrics and have access to these rubrics prior to summative assessments. They report that the access to, and the discussion of, these rubrics prior to the giving of major assignments was the norm. Of students surveyed, 74 percent agrees with the statement that they understand in advance what they need to do to meet their teachers' expectations. Similarly, 78 percent of students report that their teachers use rubrics and 80 percent report that they understand the purpose of the rubrics. The department head and subject supervisors report that all teachers are using rubrics and that they are supplied to students in advance of an assessment. At DHS, students are consistently supplied with rubrics, both school-wide and course-specific, and as a result, they know what the learning expectations are prior to their assessments. (classroom observations, Endicott survey, teachers, students, administrators, department heads, student work)

In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including both formative and summative assessments. Out of 34 classes observed, 21 classes were actively using formative assessments. These assessments were used to give both students and teachers feedback on students' attainment of the learning goals. The world language classes regularly use the language laboratory to orally assess students in the target language. In some departments, there is significant uniformity in assessment practices among teachers who teach the same class and levels. This was particularly evident in the grade nine biology classes in which common formative assessments and summative assessments are given at the same time in each section. Biology teachers meet and analyze the data gleaned from their assessments and make decisions about teaching and learning based on the data. Teachers in the math department also use the results of their summative unit assessment to guide their teaching. Throughout the school, many of the formative assessments are given as collaborative group work. In world history classes, students learn to motivate, organize, and communicate effectively as a group. In music, classes are utilizing software to record themselves and to play it back for the ensemble to self-assess progress and proficiency in intonation of the instruments. In the area of fine and applied arts, students receive regular feedback, which enhances performance. In music technology, there is a strong commitment to

student self-assessment and teachers work one-on-one with students to develop listening skills and to help students apply what they learn from this iterative process. The same is true in the area of health and wellness as evidenced by the personal feedback provided in the strength and conditioning classes, and in art classes in which each student's portfolio receives an individual review. The Dragon television studio provides students with real time and ongoing feedback as students review their work on digital recordings. Student interviews reveal that teachers are generous in their willingness to allow students to revise assignments, to revisit missed content and to take reassessments as long as students exhibit a willingness to come for extra help before and after school to determine areas of weakness. As a result, tests and unit exams can at times be used as formative assessments because students have the opportunity to try again and to improve their performance. The widespread use of and variety of formative assessments contributes to a high level of student engagement and achievement at Duxbury High School. (students, parents, teacher interviews, classroom observations, student work, portfolio presentations)

There is some evidence that teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments, at Duxbury High School. Within departments, teachers aim to collaborate, create, revise, and analyze all types of student assessment, but there is no time designated in the daily schedule for formal collaboration. Teachers find time if they happen to have a common prep period or if they are working before and after school to discuss assessments. Additionally, time is regularly set aside in department meetings in order to discuss and create both formative and summative assessments. Some teachers use summer work to create common assessments. MCAS specific subjects such as math, English, and biology use these results to assess, revise, and create assessments that are common across the teaching of the curriculum. There is very little evidence of interdisciplinary collaboration concerning formative or summative assessments. The sharing of assessments interdepartmentally did occur, however, during the development of the school-wide rubrics. Interdisciplinary collaboration does occur in a few courses at Duxbury High School such as the pin-hole camera project, ceramic volcanoes project, poetry and lost wax casting, Holocaust-Breadboard, Early Childhood Program and Magic Dragon, Sustainable Duxbury-Science Classes, Art and Earth Science, Batelle/DEF/DHS Science Department partnership, and the Empty Bowls Project. Development of a more coordinated effort to collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of assessments within all departments at DHS will ensure that formative and summative assessments are continually being updated and modified while providing students with a consistent learning experience. (self-study, teachers, student work, Endicott survey)

The majority of teachers at DHS provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their class work, homework, and their multiple assessment opportunities. Most teachers provide feedback related to grades in a timely manner by using the X2 website, which can be accessed both by parents and students; however, there is inconsistent use of the X2 grading portal by teachers at DHS. Some teachers have open electronic grade books, which allow students and parents unlimited access to grades as they are posted, while other teachers only use the electronic gradebook for mid-term and final grades. As a result, not all students are receiving the

same timely feedback on their assessments. Subject supervisors regularly refer to X2 to check consistency among teachers the type and frequency of assessments and most students stated that they checked their X2 site at least two times per/week. Students state that they use rubric results and the teacher feedback to improve and guide their work. Many teachers offer time before or after school opportunities for revision or re-learning of the material. Both the English and the world language departments provide student feedback and multiple opportunities for revision before a re-take of the assessment. Most teachers do not provide full credit but rather both assessments are averaged together to come up with a final grade. In the math department (Calculus AP and level II, grade 12) after the summative assessment has been graded and returned, students are put in groups to self-and peer-reflect on their scores and to come up with an understanding of what they have learned and why mistakes were made on the assessment. The teacher posted on the board the DHS school-wide expectation that in the groups “all students must acquire, apply and integrate their knowledge” in order to discover why the mistakes were made. A geometry class included an in-class assignment during which students made corrections to their tests for homework credit. Students work effectively both independently and collaboratively when they are revising or re-learning the material. Many teachers at the end of the term have students fill out reflection assessments. An example would be in pre-calculus; the Semester I Assessment of Concepts, reflection sheet. This reflection sheet asked two questions and the information received was used to guide the teacher’s strategies and methods to improve the instruction in the class through cooperation. Departmentally, mid-year and final examinations are regularly subjected to item analysis for the purpose of providing teachers with valuable feedback to improve students’ work. In general, students at Duxbury High School receive specific, timely, and corrective feedback on their work; however, equal access to grades from all teachers using the X2 portal will enable students to better measure their progress towards meeting 21st century learning expectations. (classroom visit, teachers, students, student shadowing, self-study, student work, Endicott survey)

All departments at Duxbury High School use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instructions for the purpose of improving learning. In many classes teachers use ongoing forms of formative assessment to determine the degree of student understanding and modify their lesson plans during the course of a class. The types of assessments may include the use of clicker technology, dipsticking, verbal questioning, and peer/self assessment. Teachers of the MCAS subjects use item analysis on midterm and final exams to modify work in every department. Within departments teachers make use of the results of common formative assessments to modify instruction both for the current year and to consider larger modifications to the curriculum on a yearly basis. In science, student work is posted in class and reviewed by peers. The results of this peer review dictate the path the remainder of the class will take. In music, teachers and students use recordings of students’ music to formatively assess the students’ progress. At DHS 94 percent of the teachers feel they use a variety and range of assessment strategies and these can be seen throughout every department in the school. Because of the continual formative assessment that exists at Duxbury High School, within both the classroom and departments, students have consistent feedback as to where they stand relative to improved student learning. (classroom visits, teacher interviews, self-study, students)

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a wide range of evidence of student learning on a regular basis for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving the instructional practices of the teaching at DHS. According to the Endicott survey, 62 percent of the teachers at DHS say that they examine a variety and range of student work, common course assessments, and common grade-level assessments to improve the curriculum and their own instructional practices. Further, 76 percent of teachers report that they examine a variety and range of student work, common core assessments, and common grade level assessments to improve their curriculum and their instructional practices. Also, 78 percent of students agree that teachers use a variety of methods to assess student learning, and 61 percent of parents agree with this statement. Each term, all common-core classes create a common assessment and a corresponding rubric to be examined and graded by more than two members of their department. This is done to revise curriculum and instructional methods based on the results of the assessments. All departments administer at least one common grade level assignment per term, which is graded using the school-wide rubrics, and the results are discussed for the purpose of improving instruction. The world language, math, and science departments also have common chapter and unit exams. Teachers at DHS feel they need some common planning time built into the schedule weekly, but even without that in place, they occasionally meet to review student work and review rubrics. There are grade-specific surveys given annually to all students to provide feedback on their DHS experience and exit surveys are administered to graduating seniors. The high school guidance department gathers evidence from the 8th grade teachers and MCAS results to determine which courses each student should be placed in when they enter 9th grade. The examination of evidence related to learning at Duxbury High School informs the curriculum and instructional practices of the teachers and leads to the improvement of student learning; however, formal meeting time for teachers to examine student work will substantially support this practice. (self-study, teachers, students, student shadowing, student work, Endicott survey)

Grading and reporting practices at DHS are currently being reviewed and revised to bring the school into alignment with its core values and beliefs about learning. DHS recently updated its core values and beliefs about learning and subsequently, school-wide rubrics have been created to assess the school-wide expectations based on the values and beliefs. Due to the recent implementation of these core values and beliefs, and associated rubrics, the common assessment instruments continue to be developed to ensure alignment. Most departments use department meetings, professional days, committee meetings, and summer work to develop common assessment tools that are in alignment with the school's core values and beliefs. Time is also being allocated to review student work and to discuss discrepancies between and among teachers' grading practices. Teachers have included comments on report cards that reflect student achievement of the school-wide civic and social expectations. Although teachers continue to work on bringing grading and reporting practices into alignment with the school's core values and beliefs, at this time, 58 percent of teachers and 65 percent of parents agree, or strongly agree, that grading practices are continually reviewed and revised. With the further expected alignment of grading and reporting practices, all students will acquire a complete understanding of the school's learning expectations

relative to the core values and beliefs. (student shadowing, Endicott survey, teachers, self-study)

Commendations

1. The integration of 21st century learning skills throughout the school and across the curriculum
2. The use of school-wide rubrics at the department level
3. The pervasive use of content-specific rubrics throughout the school
4. The widespread commitment among faculty to encourage students to revise their work or revisit aspects of learning when students request more clarification and support
5. The variety of formative assessments represented in all academic disciplines
6. The communication between teachers and students relative to use of rubrics and their application
7. Use of department meeting time to create, analyze, and revise common assessments
8. Frequent and effective communication with students and parents related to student performance through various means
9. The effective use of essential questions during units of study throughout the school

Recommendations

1. Develop a formal method for collecting data on and reporting achievement of all the school-wide learning expectations to students, parents and the school community
2. Develop a formal process to collaborate regularly on the creation, analysis and revision of formative and summative assessments
3. Ensure that teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to students by using the X2 grading system consistently to communicate student academic progress on a regular basis to students and parents
4. Complete the review of the school's grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

SUPPORT STANDARDS

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING



School Culture and Leadership

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

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

9. Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.
10. Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.
11. The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
12. The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

Conclusions

The school community has worked consciously and consistently to build 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 most reported student violation for the last five years has been limited to tardiness to school. In the Endicott survey 85 percent of students report that they feel emotionally and physically safe and secure. Sample student artwork and evidence of athletic accomplishments are displayed in nearly all public areas. In particular, students in social studies classes have organized a Holocaust Museum in an open display area on the second floor of the high school to educate and raise awareness of this important historic event. Bi-weekly advisory programs address topics such as bullying, harassment, and stress management. There are several additional programs created to maintain a safe and supportive environment, including the Link Crew for transitioning students, and Best Buddies, which pairs disabled students with their non-disabled peers. Students are often challenged to take responsibility for their own learning through self-assessment, as well as by a newly instituted policy regarding use of student agendas for record keeping. All teachers, at least quarterly, evaluate students using the Duxbury school-wide rubric related to social and civic responsibility. Currently, there is no system in place to aggregate this information and analyze this data to inform decisions regarding overall school culture. In an environment where physical and emotional safety, positive attitude, and respectful interactions are the norm, students have the confidence to take responsibility for their own learning and to challenge themselves to meet high expectations. (Endicott survey, student shadowing, self-study, classroom observations)

Duxbury High School is equitable and inclusive and offers the opportunity for all students to experience at least one heterogeneously grouped course during their high school experience. All students are enrolled in a heterogeneously grouped biology class, which is a required course for graduation. Students who wish to earn honors credit in biology may do so by completing individual assignments in addition to the established curriculum. Some biology sections are co-taught by regular and special educators. In these classes, the special education teacher has an active role and closely shares the responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment. In addition, students who take a world language participate in heterogeneously grouped courses as do all students who take physical education courses. There are nine heterogeneously grouped courses in visual arts, five in English, eight in technology and engineering, four in computer science, seven in mathematics, fourteen in music, ten in social studies and two in science and technology. As a result of an accessible program of studies, which offers college prep, honors, Advanced Placement classes, and unlevelled electives, nearly all graduates (96 percent) in 2011 went on to higher education after graduation, and only 2 percent were undecided. Also in 2011, 93 percent of students were enrolled in one honors course, and 28 percent were enrolled in at least one Advanced Placement course. The admission process into the Advanced Placement core subject courses requires a specific grade from the previous year, and often a writing sample. Elective Advanced Placement courses have open enrollment, however. To create a more inclusive program, some core classes at DHS are co-taught. To support this model, teachers were trained in implementation of co-teaching strategies, and also received compensation for summer planning. Students have access to many extra-curricular activities, though some, such as

athletics, clubs, and organizations, require a participation fee, which may be adjusted if a student qualifies for free and reduced lunch status. The requirement for students to take heterogeneous courses in at least one core area, as well as numerous other elective heterogeneous courses and wide-spread access to honors and Advanced Placement coursework, makes Duxbury High an equitable and inclusive school community in which all students can seek the appropriate level of challenge in their work. (self-study, Endicott survey, school profile, program of study, student handbook)

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. The DHS advisory program occurs biweekly, meeting for 30-minutes, and is directed by an established curriculum, and scope and sequence for grades 9 through 12. The program, which began in the fall of 2008, includes topics such as transition to the high school for freshmen, managing stress for sophomores, and college planning sessions for juniors and seniors. There are also school-wide advisory activities on topics related to current events or the events in the school community. Students are randomly separated into advisories led by a full-time faculty member or administrator, with no more than 10-15 students per group. These groups are sorted by grade and remain together over the course of their four years of high school. Through the given curriculum, designed by an advisory committee, the content of each session aims to assist students in achieving one or more of the school's learning expectations. Most faculty members are invested in the idea of advisory, but some are unclear as to its purpose. Administrators and teachers acknowledge that the advisory program is evolving, with changes occurring as a result of student, faculty, and staff feedback. While 72 percent of students agree that they now have an adult in the school with whom they meet regularly and who knows them well, there is still a lack of a school-wide understanding of the purpose and future direction of advisory. The DHS advisory program fosters relationships between the adults and students, but when the school develops more clarity around its purpose, it will enhance the students' opportunities to achieve more meaningful results. (self-study, advisory observation, teachers, Endicott survey, student shadowing)

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 current best practices; dedicate formal time to implement professional development; apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Duxbury High School engages in five full-day professional in-service days and two half-day in-service days per year. Traditionally, these have been district led; however, the current superintendent has requested that all building principals work with building level professional development committees to submit professional development plans that outline the focus of professional development for the school year, and align in-service activities with the district's five-year strategic plan. Several key initiatives have been supported through professional development. After all high school teachers received laptops, the current superintendent instituted monthly meetings with an open invitation to all teachers to participate in professional development on how to effectively implement technology in the classroom. Teachers who co-teach have been sent for training on best practices within the co-teaching model.

A team of 18 teachers, 12 of whom represented DHS, participated last winter in training on Project Based Learning. Having been charged with developing and implementing PBL lessons, these teachers will help lead the next district professional development day as a means to support all teachers as they begin to apply this researched-based, best practice into their daily teaching. All pre-professional status teachers are required to take a Research for Better Teaching course, paid for by the school district, in the summer after their second year as a teacher at Duxbury High School. Central Office budgets money yearly for district-wide professional development; however, these monies are often cut or significantly reduced (in relation to need) due to other budget concerns. The wide array of professional development activities provides teachers with the opportunity to remain current with research-based best practices and to apply these skills to ensure improved curriculum, instruction and assessment. (teachers, school administration, central office personnel, self-study, classroom observations)

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. Teachers without professional status are formally observed a minimum of twice per academic year, with a summative evaluation occurring at the end of each year. The Faculty Evaluation Calendar for the current evaluation plan details the timeline for these observations to take place. Observations are conducted by the subject supervisor, assistant principal, and/or principal and, in a teacher's second year, a third required observation is conducted by either the superintendent or assistant superintendent. The Duxbury Public Schools administration and the Duxbury Teachers Association are currently in negotiations regarding a new evaluation process that aligns more closely with state mandates. Personnel who hold the appropriate license or certificate conduct all observations. For new teachers, a formal mentoring programming is required during their first year of teaching at Duxbury High School. Ideally, these mentors are assigned from within their own departments; however, this does not always occur but all mentors are teachers with professional status. A three-day summer program is required for all new teachers, as are formal meetings once a month with their mentors. Teachers with or without professional status, who do not adequately meet the seven standards required for their observations, are put on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and individual assistance is given to those teachers. School leaders at Duxbury High School use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that hold teachers to high standards in order to increase student learning. (self-study, principal, subject supervisors, department heads, Duxbury Teachers Association contract, Faculty Evaluation Calendar)

Duxbury High School organizes school time to support research-based instruction and the learning needs of all students; however, the schedule does not allow for formal collaboration among teachers. The current instructional schedule provides five, rotating 68-minute instructional classes per day. In 2009, teachers were surveyed to determine their opinions related to the daily schedule. Ninety percent of teachers indicated that they felt the current schedule was adequate or optimal for research-based instructional strategies that involve collaboration and higher order thinking. In the same survey, 87 percent of teachers indicated that the rotation of classes helped them meet the needs of all students. Every two weeks, a small percentage of instructional time is deducted from each period to allow for a school-wide advisory period in which students participate in the advisory curriculum, which is intended to actively

supplement all existing academic curriculum by reinforcing skills such as study habits, goal-setting, college planning, and stress management. Teachers are contracted to remain for 25 minutes after school each day, and extra-help is often provided at this time. Time is limited for professional collaboration and review of student work during the contracted teacher workday. A recently formed scheduling committee, comprised of teachers, subject supervisors, department heads, and administrators has designed a proposed schedule for next year that will incorporate common planning time during the contracted school day to allow for teachers within and among departments to review curriculum, plan instruction, and analyze student work. Although the current schedule seems to be working well for instruction and for meeting the needs of students, the addition of formal collaboration time for teachers will support student achievement by giving teachers time to reflect on their curriculum, instruction and assessment practices. (self-study, program of study, student handbook, observations, teachers, student work)

In most cases, student load and class size at Duxbury High School enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. Class sizes vary from teacher-to-teacher, depending on whether they teach core courses or elective courses. The desired class size is a maximum of 25 students; 24 students in individual science labs; 18 students in technology courses; and 24 students in art courses. Physical education and music have the largest classes in the school. There are a significant number of classes that exceed the school standard of a maximum of 24 students per class. The current master schedule reveals that 9.2 percent of core classes and 31.5 percent of co-taught classes are over-enrolled. Also, 28.5 percent of instructional aid-supported sections are at or above the maximum. Numbers of students in co-taught classes have increased in recent years since their inception. The ratio of special to general education students in these classes can vary because the numbers are impacted by the number of students on IEPs and the number of co-taught courses. The average student load for full time teachers has increased over the past several years from 96 in 2009 - 2010 to 106 in 2011- 2012. Most teachers teach between 95 and 115 total students and by contract, the total number of students assigned to individual teachers cannot exceed 120. All core departments have similar student-to-teacher ratios. In most cases, student loads and class sizes enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students; however, overall student loads are approaching a level in which it will be difficult for teachers to give quality instruction and feedback and ensure that all students are meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, principal interview, subject supervisors, department heads, Duxbury Teachers Association contract)

The principal works inclusively with faculty and staff to provide a working environment that is comfortable for all members of the school community. He has an open door policy, which means he is available to members of the school community whenever they need him. The principal communicates information with faculty and staff members through the DHS virtual round table blog and round table discussions. The Faculty Senate also convenes on a monthly basis, and addresses issues that are reported to the principal from staff and students. Administrators have developed a variety of committees that focus on concerns raised by the faculty, staff, and students. Examples include a schedule committee, advisory committee, and rubric committee. Leadership meetings, consisting of the subject supervisors, department heads, assistant principals, and principal occur on a monthly basis. Prior to the subject supervisors working with

grades 6 through 12, leadership meetings were held on a more frequent basis. Additionally, the director of guidance attends weekly meetings with the high school administrative team. Leadership meetings focus on the use of common assessments within departments, data collection from assessments, analysis of data on student achievement, and the content of the civic and responsibility rubric, among other things. From the topics discussed at these meetings, decisions are brought to the faculty and staff for additional input, and eventually voted upon and decided upon on by those individuals. The principal, working with other building leaders, fully supports and provides respected and appreciated instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. (self-study, principal, subject supervisors, department heads, teachers)

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Teachers appreciate the principal's open-door policy as an effective means to solicit feedback on an informal basis. Recently, the Faculty Council has been reinstated, and this provides a more formal venue for teachers to express their questions and concerns. Subject supervisors for math, science, English, and world language grades 6 through 12, and department heads in social studies and music grades 9 through 12 teach one and three classes, respectively. This active, daily involvement with curriculum and instruction better informs their understanding of the department members they oversee. Students have several formal programs through which they may become actively involved in decision-making, such as student council. Through advisory, students often complete surveys that allow anonymous input on various school topics. Several organizations exist for parents to be directly involved in supporting the school, including the parent-teacher organization, special education parent advisory council, booster clubs, and the Duxbury Education Foundation. Each of these groups regularly provides input that directly affects policies and change within Duxbury Public Schools. The school council provides input to the school improvement plan, reviews budgetary decisions, and makes revisions to the student handbook. The faculty senate was recently reconvened and their mission is "to promote a positive environment that fosters professional and educational excellence within the DHS community." Surveys/questionnaires, focus groups, and other vehicles are used regularly to collect data from various groups. The defined roles of teachers, students, and parents in the decision-making processes at Duxbury High School contribute to a shared sense of ownership among the high school community. (self-study, principal, Standard committee, department heads)

In most cases, teachers at Duxbury High School exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school in order to increase students' engagement in learning. Numerous departments include examples of distributed leadership. The English, math, science, and world language departments, in grades 6 through 12, are led by subject supervisors; the history and music departments in grade 9 through 12 are led by department heads. Teachers are always included on interview committees when hiring staff new to their department, and teachers have the opportunity to serve on multiple committees in the school including the scheduling committee, the advisory committee, the rubric committee, and the faculty senate. In recent years, however, dissatisfaction from some teachers has arisen due to the implementation of several high school building level initiatives by the district central office. The proposal of new

initiatives, including Project Based Learning and additional mandated curriculum requirements within several departments, is a process that traditionally originated at the building level and teachers are having difficulty with this change. In addition, there has been a shift district-wide in administrative responsibilities, with the addition of the subject supervisors being responsible for grades 6 through 12, and two curriculum coordinators in grades K through 2, and 3 through 5, respectively. While all department heads, subject supervisors, and curriculum coordinators report directly to the assistant superintendent, the faculty and staff often confuse the hierarchy of these administrative positions. The switch from the subject supervisors teaching a .6 course load to a .2 teaching load limits the teacher involvement within the classroom, but does give needed time for other curriculum and supervision tasks. Subject supervisors are able to assist in developing curriculum mapping from the middle through high school levels, while exploring additional opportunities for both funding and professional development pertinent to their subject areas. Without the additional time outside of the classroom, these opportunities would not be possible. In addition, some teachers feel that there is a lack of communication between administration and teachers that has been noted in a variety of contexts related to limited professional development provided and limited teacher involvement in leadership decisions. While many teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of Duxbury High School, recent changes in administrative structure and decision-making processes will need to be worked through in order for all teachers to feel that they have a voice in the leadership of Duxbury High School. (self-study, principal, Standard committee, subject supervisors, department heads)

The administrative team, consisting of the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, the technology director, the special education director, the business manager, building principals and assistant principals, the elementary curriculum coordinators, and subject supervisors, meet on a monthly basis to discuss decisions regarding the plan of becoming a 21st century school. A school-based leadership team, consisting of the principal, assistant principal, department heads, coordinators, subject supervisors, and a special education representative meet once a month. School committee meetings occur a minimum of one time per month. The superintendent is the conduit between the school committee and the Duxbury Public Schools. The principal and superintendent also communicate daily on an informal basis, through frequent exchange of emails and routine discussions. In July, 2012, the district developed a strategic plan that serves to unify decision-making across all buildings. This plan provides guidance on topics such as, but not limited to, professional development, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Through frequent and productive communication, the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, principal, subject supervisors, department heads)

The principal serves as the educational, curricular, and instructional leader of the school. The school committee and superintendent rarely disagree with any decisions made by the principal, and do not impose initiatives on the principal that do not align with the school's core values and beliefs. The principal is given authority to organize professional development activities that meet the needs of DHS teachers and students. He has also received support for several staffing decisions in recent years, while being

granted full authority for building hires. The superintendent and school board financially supported a restructuring of positions that allows for more shared responsibility for supervision of curriculum, instruction, and assessment by expanding the existing subject supervisor positions. With consistent and strong support, the school committee and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school to achieve its core values and beliefs, particularly with regard to 21st century skills. (self-study, principal, school committee)

Commendations:

1. The extensive and diverse displays of student work that exemplify ownership, pride, and high expectations for all
2. The positive and constructive individual relationships between and among faculty, administration, and individual students
3. The heterogeneous course experience for every student over the course of his/her high school experience
4. The expansion of supervision responsibilities to allow for more frequent and immediate supervision and feedback
5. The positive and trusting relationship between faculty and high school administration
6. The collaborative development of a district-wide strategic plan to unify efforts and inform long-term budgetary decisions
7. The consistent support by the entire high school community of a safe, positive, and respectful school environment

Recommendations:

1. Provide professional development for staff regarding co-teaching to ensure success for all students within the program
2. Clarify the goals of the advisory program to increase effectiveness for all students
3. Ensure subject supervisors' roles and responsibilities are clarified so that all teachers understand their role
4. Increase the communication between administration and teachers related to the proposal of new initiatives, professional development and decision-making within the school



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.

Conclusions

Duxbury High School has timely, coordinated, and direct intervention strategies for all students including identified and at-risk students that support students' achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Every student at Duxbury High School is assigned a school guidance counselor and is part of an advisory group. The advisory program meets every two weeks, is made up of a small group of students (12-15) in the same grade level, and is led by a faculty member or administrator. Duxbury High School ensures that intervention strategies for at-risk students are timely, coordinated, and directed. The Student Assistance Team (SAT) and Building Based Support Team (BBST) meet weekly to support at-risk students. The purpose of the SAT is to collaborate and formulate a plan to address the emotional and/or behavioral needs of these students. The focus of the BBST is to develop strategies and best practices to be implemented in the classroom to address concerns regarding student learning and achievement. The BBST referral form has the district accommodation plan attached. There is also a crisis team that includes the school resource officer, school psychologist, student assistance counselor, school nurse, transition room teacher, and the guidance counselors. Students are introduced to support staff during an assembly at the beginning of the year. Duxbury High School has three identified English Language Learners and one district coordinator; however, there is no designated program or curriculum for this population. The individual needs for identified and at-risk students are met for the vast majority of students at Duxbury High School allowing them to effectively achieve the school's 21st century learning standards. (self-study, student shadowing, teacher interview, school support staff, school website, Endicott survey)

The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. Students at-risk are referred to either the Student Assistance Team (SAT) or the Building Based Support Team (BBST) and families are notified after these meetings are held. Parents are also contacted regularly by appropriate support staff when issues such as poor attendance, dropping grades, or behavioral or mental health concerns arise. The guidance staff publishes a weekly newsletter and holds regular presentations on issues of relevance and importance to parents. The guidance website is frequently updated, as is the nurse's information section on the school website. Guidance staff is available to meet with parents during specified weekly evening hours and at regularly scheduled parent nights to provide information on a variety of pertinent topics. These occur approximately ten times per year. Families at Duxbury High are fully informed about student support services and the staff provides a high level of support services for all students, which allows them to meet the 21st century learning expectations. (DHS website, support staff, self-study, student handbook, BBST and SAT referral forms, DHS newsletter)

The support services staff at Duxbury High School effectively uses technology to deliver a range of coordinated services for every student. Guidance counselors use X2 to review student attendance on a weekly basis, and to monitor quarterly progress reports and report cards. In addition to X2, the school uses the FirstClass email system for all staff to communicate with students and their families. The guidance counselors have begun using Naviance to provide students and their families with information on the college

search and application process and on career information. All parents/guardians have access to their child's progress reports, report cards, transcripts, and attendance through the X2 online portal system. There is a student services page on the Duxbury High School website. This is updated weekly by most of the student support services departments and includes a wealth of information. A weekly newsletter is available to parents through the school website, by means of an electronic subscription, or a hard copy is sent home if requested. The support services staff collectively uses technology in an effective manner to deliver coordinated services for the benefit of the students at Duxbury High School. (self-study, teacher interviews, school support staff, school website).

The school counseling department has an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental guidance program and meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling. Six licensed guidance counselors, one licensed student assistance counselor, and one licensed school psychologist serve the school population. The average caseload for guidance staff is 170:1, and counselors meet with students at least three times a year, but typically more often, especially with juniors and seniors preparing for college and with students who are at-risk. The school assistance counselor as well as guidance counselors and nursing staff refer students and families to appropriate agencies as needed for assistance with mental health issues, family issues, and high risk behavior. Data is assessed regularly using the X2 system. Grades are checked by guidance on a regular basis and staff interventions with students occur as necessary. Guidance counselors have extended hours in the evenings to make themselves available for parents. Each counselor stays late one night per week for this purpose. The majority of the students report that they feel comfortable going to see their guidance counselor, although only 17.5 percent meet with counselors on a regular basis. On the Endicott survey 65.1 percent of students strongly agree or agree that they feel comfortable talking to their guidance counselor. Students who are returning from home tutoring (school refusal, medical or mental health issues) can begin to transition back to DHS through the Transition Room, which is staffed by a full-time teacher with support from the counseling staff. The DHS counseling department is well staffed and well organized, and works collaboratively to meet the goal of providing academic, social, and mental health assistance in order to meet the needs of all students. (self-study, Endicott survey, support staff, faculty, school profile, Crisis Team list, school website, program of studies)

Duxbury High School's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff that provides ongoing preventative health services and direct intervention services to the students. There are two part-time registered nurses who share a full-time position and service 1,025 students and 129 staff members. Students are referred for services through both formal and informal means. The school nurses provide ongoing, relevant, individual health education and resources to students, parents/guardians, and staff. The school nurses develop and update Individual Health Care Plans, and distribute information and regular updates to teachers and guidance counselors. The nurses provide health counseling and services to students and staff. The school health office uses X2 as a database for health records, family histories, screenings, recent illness and injuries, and documentation of health-related communications to

family and teachers. Every student's visit, arrival and departure times, reason for visit, assessment findings, interventions and outcomes, parent/guardian and teacher communications and recommendations are recorded on the computer. Responses to data to improve health services includes communicable disease prevention education to students and families, information included in the weekly newsletter, and hand sanitizers purchased for every classroom. School nurses complete Nurse Assessment Reports, Communicable Disease tracking and reporting, monthly reports of office visits, and Student and Employee Accident and Tracking. The nurse's office is in close proximity to the guidance suite, which enhances the nurses' ability to work collaboratively with guidance counselors. The school nurses also work in collaboration with the school psychologist, student adjustment officer, school resource officer, administration, staff, and family members. The school's health services provide preventative health services and direct intervention services across the school to meet the needs of students. (self-study, teacher interviews, facility tour, school support staff)

Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified and licensed personnel and support staff. The Library Media Center is staffed by a full-time certified library media specialist and a full-time library clerk. While the facility is small, the library has adequate resources for student and teacher use and it is in full use on a daily basis, including before school, after school, during lunches, and throughout the school day for individual students and teachers with their classes. Specific initiatives that have improved technology resources in the library include the subscription to several electronic databases and access to many others through the school's affiliation with the Massachusetts Library System, the addition of a computer lab with a SMART board, the purchase of eight laptops for students to sign out, the acquisition of eight Flip Cameras for students and teachers to add more options for integrating multi-media projects into the curriculum, the purchase of a projector for visual presentations and the receipt of a grant from the Parent Teacher Organization used to create an interactive whiteboard. The Noodletools online program has also been purchased to use for research and 15 iPod touches have been added. The librarian supports learning for students throughout the school. She started a book group with students and teachers and is using young adult fiction to encourage reading. She also accepts requests for books to order from both students and faculty, and there is a link on the school website to request book titles. The librarian is available to teaching staff either in the library or in classrooms to help with research papers across the curriculum. Some examples of this include her assistance with grade 9 through 12 English research papers; grade 9 through 12 social studies research papers, and science research papers. More specifically, the librarian/media specialist assists with the grade 9 Explorers Project, the AP English 11 paper on controversial topics, the social studies project on speech and debate using SIRS researcher, the Bible as literature unit through the English department, the social studies department project "All Quiet on the Western Front", the Holocaust project using Animoto software, and the Latin class project on mythology using the Glogster software. In addition, there is a grade 9 library orientation held in English classes for all incoming freshmen. Library services are integrated into the curriculum in some departments much more than others. The librarian currently works extensively with the English and Social Studies departments and less frequently with other departments in the building. The librarian works with

special education students in the learning center as needed and requested by staff. The library resources, including excellent staff and appropriate technology, make the library/media center a valuable resource for Duxbury High School that supports students' achievement of 21st century learning skills. (librarian, support staff, self-study, facility tour, school website, newsletter, library orientation letter, AASL standards, Title Wise document, Long Range Planning document).

The 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. There are seven licensed special education teachers, seven instructional assistants, one part-time reading specialist, one district-wide specialist for English language learners, and one part-time speech-language pathologist. There are currently 104 (10 percent) students on an Individualized Education Program (IEP), and 67 (6.5 percent) students on a 504 plan. There is one team chairperson who works in the middle and high school, a district Director of Special Education Services and special education building coordinator for the high school. All special education teachers participate in a full-time inclusion program, working with general educators in the classroom. Special education teachers also work in the Learning Center with their students to develop academic and transition skills. The instructional assistants spend the majority of their time in the general education classes, with some also in the co-taught classes and/or Learning Center. Common planning time for general and special educators is built into the schedule allowing for collaboration and consultation. Liaisons have approximately 14 students on their caseload. Assessment data was a key factor in developing the inclusion model that currently exists. Special education and content area teachers underwent significant training to develop an effective co-teaching model. Special educators work with general educators in English, math, science, and social studies classes, and share in all teaching responsibilities. Data from each content area is incorporated into a student's IEP. This data is also used to construct student-based goals and objectives and has been used to develop two programs to support students: the transition program and an after school MCAS program. Formal and informal communication occurs between special and general educators on a regular basis. Aside from common planning time, weekly SAT and BBST meetings are held to identify at-risk students. In addition, meetings are held on an as-needed basis with identified staff members to discuss individual student accommodation strategies or accommodation plans. Parents and staff agree that there are timely and well-coordinated intervention strategies in place at Duxbury High School. The staff at Duxbury High School believes that there are adequate support personnel, but only 34 percent of the parents surveyed share that sentiment. Through the collaborative efforts and efficient use of technology, the support services at Duxbury High School meet the needs for the majority of identified students. (self-study, teacher interview, school support staff, teacher interviews, records review, Endicott survey)

Commendations

1. The comprehensive intervention strategies and referral process for at-risk students
2. The well staffed and collaborative school support services team which benefits all students at DHS
3. The comprehensive information provided to families regarding available support services on the DHS website
4. The response to collected data from the student support team to improve student support services
5. The library services that are used across the curriculum to assist students and teachers at DHS with research and writing assignments
6. Timely and well coordinated intervention strategies to address the needs of at-risk students
7. The availability of guidance counselors one evening per week for appointments

Recommendations

1. Provide comprehensive services for the ELL population
2. Ensure that all areas of the student services website are updated with comprehensive information
3. Formalize the integration of library services across all departments



Community Resources for Learning

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

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

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

Conclusions

The community and district's governing body provide limited funding for a wide-range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. Duxbury Public School District is ranked 277 of 325 school districts in the state in terms of per pupil expenditures, and the current per pupil expenditure is significantly lower (\$2,400) per pupil than the state average. However, in terms of per capita wealth, Duxbury ranks 36 out of 351 communities, with a median family income of \$106,245.00. The school committee, administration, staff, and students all report that no school programs or services have been eliminated over the last three years, and some academic classes, athletic teams, and co-curricular activities have, in fact, been added. However, all report that the vast majority of athletic, music/band, and co-curricular activities are funded primarily by booster groups and extensive student user fees (i.e. \$225 per sport, \$270 per student bus fee, \$100 parking fee, etc.) which have been in place for approximately eight years. Members of the school committee report that Duxbury has a 98 percent residential tax base, and despite generous contributions by parent and community groups, fees have consistently increased over the past eight years. In addition, many community groups, such as the PTO and Duxbury Education Foundation, fund mini-grants for teachers for instructional supplies and materials. During 2010-2011, DEF provided the high school with \$35,146 in teacher grants. The community's commitment to providing additional funding to the district allows DHS to continue to support and create academic and extra-curricular programs and services for its students. Per the report of the school committee, as well as the self-study, there was a minimal increase in budget expenditures for DHS for the 2012-2013 school year. The self-study and the reports of the principal and staff indicate support staff positions have been cut yearly (including the loss of paraprofessionals and of secretarial staff.) Results of the Endicott survey indicate that only 40 percent of staff feels the school receives dependable funding for professional and support staff. The self-study reports that the district does not provide dependable funding for instructional materials and supplies and the Endicott survey supports this claim with only 50 percent of teachers agreeing that instructional materials and supplies are sufficient. The school committee reports that there has been balanced funding for supplies and instructional materials, as well as for instructional staffing which meets the standard of 1.4 FTEs per 25 students for the last three years. The principal is requesting a 5.6 FTE increase in the 2013-2014 budget to meet the needs of the projected student population. He has received preliminary approval from the superintendent for 3.0 FTEs. The superintendent and members of the central office staff report that they have had to struggle for a \$1M increase over the last two years, when like districts are spending \$600-800 more per student. The district lost ARRA and other key funding last year, and the 2012 budget clearly shows that the town is not contributing enough to the school district to bring it back up to level funding after the loss of these federal funds. All members of the central office staff and the building principal report that funding for professional development and curriculum revision has been the most contentious budget issue. The assistant superintendent reported, and the self-study confirmed, that over the last several years, no set funds have been put aside for curriculum revision. The monies for this initiative change with the budget each year. ELA and social studies have received the bulk of monies to revise their curricula due to

the recent implementation of and alignment with Common Core Standards. The principal and assistant superintendent report that there is currently no formal curriculum review process, however, the district is currently taking steps toward instituting a formal process. The total PD budget for FY12 for the district is \$56,344.38. This includes staff, student and School Council training, including workshops, conferences, and consultants. Principals use Duxbury's long range Strategic Plan and Action Plans to prioritize the use of professional development funds in their buildings. Central office staff members, the principal, and DHS staff members report that RBT and UbD training have been the primary PD initiatives for the last three years, as well as co-teaching/co-planning consulting and AP College Board training. The principal reports that because the PD budget does not cover any teacher training outside of what is required by the district, he must utilize his own contracted services and supplies budget to pay for individual staff PD that the regular budget does not fund. The superintendent and preliminary budget reports indicate that there has been slightly more funding available for PD this year because there was a decrease in electric/gas contract costs. The superintendent also cites the Duxbury Education Foundation as the primary district "PD supplier." There is also a lack of consistent and equitable access to technology at DHS which makes it difficult for teachers to advance classroom teaching and to integrate required 21st century learning skills into the curriculum, as evidenced by only 50 percent of staff agreeing that the district provides a full range of technology support. The self-study indicates that there has been an increase in acquisition of technology equipment over the past few years to include projectors in most classrooms; SMARTBoards, desktops linked to SMARTBoards, and document cameras in every math and science room, as well as SMARTBoards in various classrooms; five COWs (laptop carts on wheels); classroom clickers in several rooms; and, this year, all teachers received personal laptops. In addition, all physical education teachers received iPads to allow for their more mobile class structure. There are other various forms of technology throughout the building; however, there has been little to no professional development or technology support provided for this equipment. The principal cites one of the reasons for the lack of technology support is that the majority of technology funds have had to pay for infrastructure and related labor costs. The age of the Duxbury High School building presents challenges for adequate technological infrastructure as well as many other programs and services. The original building, opened in 1968, is badly in need of replacement. To their credit, Duxbury citizens recognized this need and approved the construction of a new co-located Middle and High School building to replace existing buildings. Voters approved a feasibility study in 2009 and the final design and construction funds in the fall of 2011. The total cost of the building will be between 125 and 130 million dollars, with the town's portion costing around 70 million dollars. Construction is ongoing and the new building will be ready for occupancy in the fall of 2014. Completion of the building project will resolve many of the curricular issues related to the facility. A new building, coupled with a strong commitment from the community to provide dependable funding for programming, supplies, and materials, and professional development, will allow teachers to provide the necessary curriculum and instruction to support the highest quality 21st century education. (self-study, staff, principal, superintendent, assistant superintendent, business manager, school committee, Endicott survey, district FY12 budget documents)

Duxbury High School has several programs in place to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, as well as to properly maintain, catalogue, and

replace equipment; however, there is an abundance of system and infrastructure issues that cannot be addressed, replaced, or repaired due to lack of funding for capital improvements. In addition, the levels of cleanliness throughout the building are variable and often limited. According to the building maintenance and service visit schedule, automatic temperature controls, rooftop units, unit ventilators, HVAC units, incremental units, exhaust fans, hot water pumps, cabinet heaters, unit heaters, boilers, oil burners, and related systems are each inspected at least twice per year. Though the 2010 Building Feasibility Study indicates that the boilers, and many components of the heating, mechanical, HVAC, plumbing, electrical and temperature controls require replacement, as they are no longer energy efficient or code compliant, reports by the maintenance manager, building administration and parents indicate that the building is sufficiently staffed and maintained to provide quality curriculum and instruction to its students. Per the report of the maintenance manager, there are seven custodians working in the building daily: one on the day shift, two who come in at 1:00 p.m., and four who work the evening shift. In addition, there are two grounds maintenance staff members who are also responsible for painting, deliveries, trash removal, etc. School budget records and the maintenance manager indicate that the school acquired a new work truck this year equipped with a plow to facilitate snow removal in winter months, and another truck is being replaced as part of next year's fiscal budget. The manager also indicated that the DPW assists with snow removal in the parking lots. The lack of consistent temperature control cited in the self-study was confirmed by reports of students, staff, and administration. In addition, the maintenance manager reported that antiquated univents and deteriorating rubber tubing in the air system results in leaks that may cause extreme fluctuations in temperature in affected areas of the building. Though teachers feel that the temperature differentiation issue was detrimental to student learning, no students supported this claim. The district energy manager reported that the school uses an online Energy Management System to address HVAC issues throughout the building. This system is and can be accessed by the Energy Manager 24 hours per day, and is often done via Smart Phone application for immediate response to temperature control issues. Per the maintenance manager and administration, DHS also utilizes *School Dude*, a web-based program, to initiate, monitor and respond to work requests by all members of the staff. According to *School Dude* reports provided by the maintenance department, the average response time to a work request varies from a couple of hours to a couple of weeks, depending on the task complexity, the employee assigned, and the availability of supplies and equipment to implement repair procedures. Both teachers and the maintenance manager indicate that there is a discrepancy in efficiency of work order response and completion based on the employee assigned. In addition, staff members and students report that there is a discrepancy in the level of cleanliness throughout the different areas of the building. The maintenance manager and energy manager report that the "night" custodians are each assigned to a different zone in the building and are responsible to meet the daily cleaning requirements set forth in the document entitled *Standards/Frequency for Cleaning*. These standards designate the cleaning responsibilities of the custodians in each area of the building, and address the specific procedures for ceiling tile replacement and carpet care. Both managers report that the building maintains an appropriate level of cleanliness on a daily basis. The maintenance manager reported that each custodian cleans each of his assigned classrooms daily to include: sweeping, trash removal, general pick up, and removal of graffiti on desks. He also reported that

all bathrooms are disinfected daily, and the hallways are swept and mopped daily. Hallways are also burnished once per week. However, as noted in the Endicott survey, 50 percent of students and 65 percent of staff feel the building is not appropriately cleaned on a daily basis. Per staff reports, the response to requests and the quality of the cleanliness in their rooms and hallways varies depending on their section of the building. The maintenance manager recognizes that this is an issue for both repairs and cleaning procedures, and has begun to monitor both of these processes through the *School Dude* reporting system, and will be communicating with the seven building custodians and the principal to improve the quality and timeliness of both repairs and standards of cleanliness. Though both the principal and the maintenance manager indicate that maintenance and repair are addressed “within a day or so,” the self-study and results of the Endicott survey indicate that only 10.5 percent of staff members feel that needed repairs are completed in a timely manner. Despite the varied perceptions of repair procedures, maintenance and building cleanliness, and the effects of these efforts on student learning, the dedication of the DHS staff and students to strive for excellence overshadows any external deficiencies that may exist in the learning environment. (Endicott survey, students, staff, administration, maintenance and energy managers, self-study, 2010 Feasibility Study Report)

The Duxbury Public School System has recently created and implemented a five-year strategic plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. The plan was developed in July 2012 by the superintendent with assistance from Future Management Systems, Inc. The strategic plan proposes that all schools will develop and offer no less than two academic enrichment activities annually that are of high interest to students. Strategies to achieve this goal include surveying student interests/needs, collaboration with PTOs and PTAs, and providing activities in each building aligned with curriculum goals. Another goal for program development is the inclusion of parent and family “experts” that can enhance school projects and provide sponsorship of and expertise for school activities. One of the financial action goals of the five-year plan is strategic planning between the superintendent and school committee members to develop ways to enhance current and potential funding sources to bring a minimum of an additional \$500,000 for new and innovative methods for quality improvement of education. The Duxbury Public Schools expects a steady stream of retirees over the next five years that may result in an increasingly younger and less experienced teaching staff. However, they also expect enrollment to decline by 2.1 percent over the next ten years. As a result, the district does not expect any significant changes in staffing needs throughout the duration of the five-year plan. Based on the school’s FY12 budget and projected FY13-14 budget, DHS has approximately \$500,000 budgeted for custodial/maintenance contractual services, equipment repairs, supplies, and extraordinary maintenance to ensure that the current physical plant continues to meet fire, health, and safety codes as well as to ensure that any needed repairs and replacements are addressed (such as carpet and ceiling tile replacements, repair of HVAC equipment, boiler and other equipment parts, etc.) until the construction of the new middle/high school is completed in 2014. The superintendent reported that acquisition and infusion of technology will continue to be a priority for the district. He expects that there will be a 1:1 ratio of students to computers at the new building. The strategic plan indicates that an annual technology plan will delineate hardware, software, PD, and academic goals for the use of technology as a tool for students learning and advancing the goals of the strategic

plan. The Director of Technology, in conjunction with the Technology Committee and Leadership, will collaboratively develop the annual technology plan. In addition, teachers will be required to include the active use of 21st century technology as part of their annual goals. Currently, Duxbury's school budget is about 58 percent of the total town budget, and the town only receives about 10 percent of its revenue from the state. As a result, funding for capital improvements (including technology, mechanical equipment, extraordinary building and grounds repairs, furniture, etc.) is challenging. From FY04 to FY08, capital requests were not funded at all, and in FY09 to FY11, the average annual capital budget was \$372,000. Through the implementation of the five-year plan, the town and schools have committed to greater consistency in capital budget allocation. The strategic plan currently addresses a goal of working with the town to reduce non-educational expenses and focusing more funds on education. Though there are no specific funding sources identified for this goal, the strategies include setting up regular "cost reduction" meetings with the town manager and superintendent and identifying collaborative bidding and service projects that may consolidate expenses. There are initiatives in place for the various individuals/groups involved in the different areas of the strategic plan to meet yearly or more often to review, assess, and make recommendations relative to the individual goals and action plans for the strategic initiatives set forth in the plan. The town has approved the funding of a new co-located middle and high school building, as well as several other capital projects that will require temporary tax increases for the community. Per the strategic plan, the school department will work closely with the district administration to determine how to provide at least the same level of service while closing per pupil spending gaps and still promoting high educational standards that support 21st century learning goals, all the while maintaining reasonable annual budget requests. It is critical that the school system acquire and maintain a budget that will adequately provide funding for all programs, services, staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. The Duxbury Public School System has prepared a five-year strategic plan that addresses the critical needs of all schools in the district which, if implemented, reviewed and revised as needed with fidelity, will ensure the long-term success of all Duxbury students. (Duxbury Public Schools Strategic Plan, superintendent, school committee, self-study)

Duxbury High School's principal actively involves his department heads and other building leaders in the development and implementation of the budget each year; however, involvement of individual teachers in the process is limited. The principal indicates that he receives budget materials based on a preliminary estimate from the town in early September of each school year. Both the self-study and the principal report that department heads meet with their corresponding teaching staff in early fall to discuss their needs and requests for supplies and equipment for the upcoming fiscal year. The department heads review these requests and determine department priorities for the following school year. The building administrators and subject supervisors/department heads then meet to make additional changes and/or additions. The principal reports that he meets individually with any staff member that does not have a department head to review priority needs and requests prior to the leadership meeting. The principal then compiles a package containing fiscal program descriptions and budget requests and submits this to the business manager's office in mid-September. As suggested in the self-study report and the school budget timeline

provided by the principal, the budget is then reviewed by the superintendent, business manager, school committee, and town manager between the end of September and the end of November, and the school committee votes on both the proposed and capital budgets in early December, based on the superintendent's recommendations. In March, the town votes on the school district's budget. Though both the self-study and the principal describe the same budget process for DHS, reports of the staff and the results of the Endicott survey indicate that 63 percent of staff feels they are not actively involved in the school budget process, and many areas, such as music, feel there are extreme discrepancies in departmental needs, requests, and granted funds each year. Although the teachers feel their involvement in budget preparation is limited, the principal and department heads clearly work together to ensure that the staff receives the majority of their priority supplies and materials requests necessary to provide quality educational services to all DHS students. (principal, school committee, central office staff, Endicott survey, students, staff, self-study)

Though the staff works collectively to provide high quality school programs and services, the current school site and plant provide scattered support for the delivery of high quality school programs and services; the current facility is inadequate for the student population and for implementation of 21st century skills across the school. There are four science classrooms with lab space, and the labs are in poor condition. Chemicals and products used for science are kept in a locked storage room, but these items are not in locked cabinets within the storage room and the room is not always locked when students are present. Though the science labs have access to water and gas, and have working emergency showers, they have not been updated to foster the dynamic, forward-moving education Duxbury aims to offer. The MSBA Feasibility Study identifies that the population has doubled since the school was built, and the technology requirements are significantly different than they were at that time. A specific example is identified in a letter to *The Duxbury Clipper* newspaper that identifies that the National Science Foundation (NSF) recommends science rooms contain lecture and separate lab station areas. The NSF recommends 1,600 – 1,800 square feet, whereas the science rooms at DHS have combined lecture/ lab areas that are 1,100 square feet and do not contain adequate electrical outlets and/or hot water. Furthermore, the labs do not possess working fume hoods and other recommended safety equipment. The library media center (LMC) offers a computer lab area with 14 desktop computers in addition to a computer cart that contains 25 laptops. The Endicott survey showed 67 percent of students agreed that computers are available to them before, during, and after school hours. Though the LMC offers physical space for independent research, school-wide implementation of research paper writing and project-based learning (PBL) will challenge the LMC's ability to provide equitable access to its resources. Another physical challenge is space for food service; the underclassman dining area is a multi-used space that is set-up and taken down by custodial staff daily, requiring extra custodial hours that serve a limited space. Upperclassmen may eat in a separate student lounge that also has access to outdoor seating; however, students who want to purchase hot lunch have to purchase it in the regular cafeteria and then navigate the hallway with food as other students travel to their classes. One strength of the physical plant is its new performing and visual arts center located across the street; all major productions take place there. Within the original school building, drama classes, class plays, and drama club activities take place either in the auditorium or the Good Knight black box theater; both these spaces are outdated and would need extensive renovations to allow for high quality

programs. The building lacks adequate room for additional technology space, improved space for special education services, and dependable private conferencing areas. In various interviews with guidance counselors and nursing staff, people expressed the need to “scramble” to find space for private space to meet with students, parents, or small groups. The self-study corroborates the school’s lack of adequate space for private conferences to support special education and guidance and notes its lack of soundproof offices. According to the Feasibility Study, “Many dividing walls between classrooms are operable partitions that no longer function and are fixed in the closed position. These are not adequately sealed to the adjacent surfaces, and have poor sound insulating performance.” Classrooms on the hallway end of the partitioning division lack access to windows, hence they also lack fresh air and self-regulation of temperature. Staff members express that the loud noise the HVAC system produces often discourages them from running it more than absolutely necessary, creating an uncomfortable teaching and learning environment, a pervasive problem according to the self-study’s report of deficiencies in heating, ventilation, and temperature control. The Feasibility Study documents the negative impact window conditions have on the overall teaching and learning environment: Windows in the building are in extremely poor condition, and most operable units no longer function and no longer provide minimum ventilation requirements. As a result, nearly all faculty members complain that rooms are overheated and stuffy. Poor ventilation has a direct effect on student and faculty health. Winter drafts caused by poorly performing windows can overburden outdated mechanical equipment and affect the health of occupants. Though records show that the facilities staff regularly maintains equipment and responds to requests as they get posted to School Dude, the Endicott survey shows 75 percent of staff disagreeing about needed repairs getting completed in a timely manner. The Endicott survey also shows that 65 percent of staff and 41 percent of students do not consider the school clean and well maintained. When the survey was taken, the system was using Maintenance Service System (MSS), and now it is using School Dude. The facility and custodial staff members’ recent increased use of and access to School Dude’s available functions and reports is improving tracking of problems, requests, and responses. Some staff express concerns about the general cleanliness and overall health of the current building, and teachers report mold problems in some carpeted areas of the building, which a moldy smell in those areas supports. The school profile documents, for the past two years, a 96 percent daily attendance rate for students and a 94 percent attendance rate for teachers, which does not implicate an unhealthy building. The school is significantly deficient in meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act as identified in the Feasibility Study, and building conditions would not pass current building and code standards if being built today. The Duxbury Public School District has recognized these deficiencies. To compensate for lack of barrier-free restrooms, students in wheelchairs are given a key to the backdoor of the health office to be able to access the handicap bathroom in one of two private sections of the health office; however, this backroom space is also one of the only areas where staff can meet privately with students or families. The roles of this multipurpose space (handicap bathroom accessibility, storage, and private meeting space) create challenges for the health office staff members, though they willingly accept those challenges with a positive attitude. Though focus is on Duxbury’s future co-located middle and high school buildings, increased formal attention is necessary to ensure the present school site and plant support high quality school programs and

services for the current student population. (self-study, classroom observations, panel presentation, teachers, Endicott survey, facility tour, support staff, observations)

Though DHS consistently maintains documentation relative to the adherence of the physical plant and facilities to applicable state and federal laws, the age and deteriorated state of the building systems and infrastructure, the compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations is limited. The self-study, the maintenance manager, and the principal report that the building maintains up-to-date records for fire safety standards, including annual fire inspection, annual fire extinguisher inspection, fire suppression, and kitchen hood inspection. In addition, the district director of plant facilities reports the possession and maintenance of applicable certificates indicating that the physical plant and its facilities meet all federal and state regulations. Despite acquiring the appropriate documentation to pass necessary fire, safety, and health inspections, the Feasibility Study completed by Dore & Whittier Architects, Inc. cites that the boilers, and many components of the heating, mechanical, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and temperature controls require replacement, as they are no longer energy efficient or code compliant. In addition, they cite insufficient insulation to maintain consistent and adequate heat levels during the winter months. The maintenance and energy managers support these reports from the Feasibility Study, however, the maintenance manager states that the boilers, which have been in place since 1994, are in adequate working condition, are very dependable, and are inspected yearly. He indicates that they have only had one boiler issue in the last ten years, and it was repaired in the summer before students occupied the building. The maintenance manager also reports that the building generator is fired manually once per week because the automatic system does not always work to test the generator. According to the maintenance manager, eye wash stations in the science labs are inspected by the fire department yearly, and a subcontracted plumber inspects work stations and gas in the science labs prior to the start of school each year. The facilities manager maintains reports in the building that each of these items is safe and has passed inspection. The Feasibility Study indicates that the building does not provide for barrier-free access as required by ADA guidelines. They cite door handles throughout the building that feature knobs instead of levers for barrier free access; lack of way-finding signage, including Braille characters for room identification; steps below doors at most entrances and egresses, preventing wheelchair access; inadequate vertical dimensions of doors for accessible means of egress during emergencies; most door clearances inadequate for wheel-chair egress during an emergency; no toilets or toilet stalls are barrier-free compliant, feature grab-bars or are wide enough for ADA codes; assembly, bleacher and cafeteria seating do not allow a variety of locations for barrier free viewing; and drinking fountains project too far from corridor walls, thereby posing a barrier to corridor travel. Noted in the 2009 AHERA Three-Year Re-inspection Report for DHS, there are areas in the building that contain asbestos; however, the report cites that none of those areas are determined hazardous or disturbed. There are no reports beyond 2009 with regard to the status of the asbestos in the building. Reports by the new food services manager indicate that all aspects of the cafeteria, Breadboard restaurant, and all food service workers adhere to USDA and state guidelines. The food services department acquires its products from Chartwell vending company. The manager reports the use of fresh, local produce whenever possible, and all products from Chartwell are peanut-free. The food services manager reported that the cafeteria was inspected within the past month by the Board of Health, and

certificates for same, citing no issues or infractions, are in the food service office. The food services manager is also a registered dietician and provides training for the food service workers monthly regarding food safety. In addition, every employee in food services is Serv-Safe trained and certified. Though DHS has limited ability to meet all compliance laws for fire, health, and safety due to the deteriorating condition of the building and the lack of funding for capital improvements, most of these areas meet compliance standards. In addition, the building administration, as well as the food services, and facilities and maintenance staff, make every effort to ensure the health and safety of the students and staff at DHS on a daily basis. Construction of a new middle/high school will resolve all of the issues related to the deficiencies of the current physical plant and will create a safe and healthy learning environment for all students. (Feasibility Study, self-study, maintenance manager, facilities manager, food services manager, building administration, facilities maintenance documents)

As a whole, Duxbury High School regularly attempts to engage parents and families in each student's education; many professional staff members and all guidance counselors reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. The Endicott survey shows a discrepancy between staff and parent perception about how actively the professional staff engages parents and families as partners in students' educations, with 85 percent of staff and 51 percent of parents being in total agreement about this engagement. This may be due to a disparity between what it means to be "partners in each student's education." Some parents appreciate DHS's tendency to encourage students to self-advocate, while some parents seek more direct contact with instructional staff. The school has a number of established programs to engage parents and families as partners: one open house night in the beginning of the school year and a night for individual conferences after the first marking period. Both are held during the evening hours in order to accommodate as many parents as possible. To further ensure nighttime access to staff members, two guidance counselors per day work 2-9 pm instead of their regular daytime hours; parents may pre-schedule meetings, but the counselors also accept walk-ins during those hours. In addition, parents are regularly encouraged to schedule conferences with individual or small groups of teachers throughout the school year. For those new members of the community, the school offers a special open house prior to the beginning of the school year in order to facilitate their assimilation into a new school system; parents new to Duxbury receive the "New Parent Handbook," which contains information and advice not only for parents' own interactions with school staff, but also that encourages parents to steer children toward self-advocacy when appropriate. Parents with access to electronic communication, and the wherewithal to use it, have access to an abundance of information regarding all academic, co-curricular, and social aspects of life at DHS. The school's use of the student management system X2 has expanded and streamlined teachers' ability to provide parents with academic information such as real time grades, quarterly progress reports for all teachers and teacher-maintained websites, some of which include upcoming assignments, projects and class documents. DHS realizes that not all families will make use of or have ready access to X2's offerings. To ensure equal access to information and to engage families less connected with the school, the head of guidance ran a report to produce a list of families that had not accessed X2 after midterm progress reports; she distributed the students' names to their guidance counselors who in turn contacted families to determine the reason for their not accessing the system and took necessary

measures to ensure future access – such as mailing home hardcopies of documents or informing families (who had missed previous communication notifying them) of their ability to access X2. In addition to X2, district-provided email accounts promote increased communication between staff and families. According to the self-study, “The Duxbury Public School system regularly updates the district’s web page, which includes information such as details about the school building project, the annual report, the school calendar, sporting events, MCAS schedules, bus information, upcoming events, and forms that parents may need to fill out.” In addition to web-based communication, DHS employs Connect Ed, a telephone-based mode of contact through which recorded messages are directly communicated to every household in the community, and to faculty and staff members’ households, regarding cancellation of school, health-related issues, upcoming events, deadlines for school events, and other important time-sensitive announcements. Parents are also actively involved as members of committees including the Principal’s School Council, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and several booster organizations. DHS’s pervasive engagement of family, with its inclusion of nighttime access to staff and formal inquiry into reasons behind lack of involvement, creates an educational environment in which stakeholders may work in concert to guide and support students through the challenges and choices high school presents. (self-study, faculty, website, parents, school profile, New Parent Handbook, Connect Ed log)

DHS extensively develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. There is clear evidence of DHS’s ties with the Duxbury community at-large for financial support, life-skill training, and service opportunities. The athletic department is extensively supported by and actively supports the people of Duxbury. Examples include the Boys Basketball team donating food to the Brockton Food Shelter, the Boys’ Ice Hockey team raking the town cemetery, the Football, Baseball and Girl’s Soccer teams holding events to support the American Cancer Society or Breast Cancer Awareness, and members of the Football team mentoring two local adults with special needs. Students also have opportunities to participate in internships in the community, although the current rotating schedule hinders some students’ access. One effective partnership is with the Duxbury Police; regular education students have access to an internship program to explore law enforcement career opportunities, and special education students are offered job-training opportunities (clerical and maintenance); a community resource officer works within the school and sits on the Student Advisory Team; the police also coordinate a DARE program for the high school. Duxbury Fire Station also offers students an internship program that introduces students to careers in firefighting. In addition to these civic opportunities, Batelle Labs – where scientists work with younger students on Science Fair projects – offers an opportunity to expand academic rigor beyond the classroom and offers authentic application of scientific skills. DHS also has relationships with the Duxbury Historical Society and Alden House; both historical societies provide internship opportunities, and both are conveniently located within walking distance, allowing for student involvement despite the rotating schedule. Other noted partnerships include community service options at the Senior Center and through the Council of Churches; educational programs through the Duxbury Legion and Duxbury Bay Maritime School; Dual Enrollment access to college-level classes at local colleges, including Massasoit Community College, Bridgewater State College, and Quincy College; the Syracuse forensics partnership not only offers students weekly

programming but also provides teachers with free and discounted courses. The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) strongly supports teacher- and administration- initiated initiatives, such as paying for a motivational speaker to address the freshman and senior classes while the sophomore and junior classes were taking PSATs. Athletics and music both enjoy generous community and parent booster organizations that allow students to compete at highly competitive levels. Duxbury High School clearly builds and fosters productive relationships with local businesses and organizations that offer students authentic opportunities to nurture academic, civic, and social skills. (self-study, evidence box document, panel presentation, newsletters)

Commendations

1. The generous and consistent financial support of parent and community groups for programming and services
2. The continued dedication of the DHS administration and staff to provide exemplary educational services despite limited funding and resources
3. The creation and implementation of a five-year strategic plan that addresses all major deficiencies in the Duxbury School System
4. The community's approval of the construction of a new middle/high school to provide its students with a high quality 21st century educational environment
5. Active involvement and engagement with local civic organizations
6. Enthusiastic support from parents and community groups
7. The overwhelming pride and academic focus of the DHS students despite financial and physical plant deficiencies

Recommendations

1. Provide consistent yearly funding for DHS programs, services, materials, and supplies that is not dependent on assistance from parent and community groups
2. Ensure cleanliness of the entire school building
3. Resolve ADA compliance issues
4. Minimize user fees for all athletics and co-curricular activities
5. Monitor and control the fluctuations in temperature throughout the building
6. Provide all staff members with technology training and support to ensure they are able to teach to 21st century learning standards
7. Create a school-based plan to ensure that the distribution of technology and equipment is equitable for all staff members, as everyone is required to meet 21st century teaching and learning standards

8. Create a system/team to conduct quarterly progress monitoring and maintain data for all initiatives cited in the strategic plan that affect all stakeholders at Duxbury High School
9. Broaden the types of businesses offering internship opportunities

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 Duxbury High School. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting committee recommendations.

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

A school's initial/continued accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing valid recommendations of the visiting committee and others identified by the Commission as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. To monitor the school's progress in the Follow-Up Program the Commission requires that the principal of Duxbury 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 on 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.

**Duxbury High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
September 30 – October 3, 2012**

Visiting Committee

<p>Alyson Geary , Chair Hopkinton High School Hopkinton, MA 01748</p>	<p>Kristen Della Volpe Litchfield High School Litchfield, CT 06759</p>
<p>Ellen Booras, Assistant Chair Sandwich High School Sandwich, MA 02537</p>	<p>Jay Chandler Wayland High School Wayland, MA 01778</p>
<p>Joseph Yutkins Masconomet Regional High School Topsfield, MA 01983</p>	<p>Lisa Dahill Lexington High School Lexington, MA 02421</p>
<p>Deb Vaughn Mashpee High School Mashpee, MA 02649</p>	<p>Michael Murphy Weymouth High School Weymouth, MA 02190</p>
<p>Mary Grady Kennebunk High School Kennebunk, ME 04043</p>	<p>Nicole Sheahan Dartmouth High School Dartmouth, MA 02748</p>
<p>Colleen Lutkevich Oliver Ames High School North Easton, MA 02356</p>	<p>Amy Allen Southbridge Public Schools Southbridge, MA 01550</p>
<p>Margaret Furlong Amesbury High School Amesbury, MA 01913</p>	
<p>John Bookis Concord-Carslile Regional High School Concord, MA 01742</p>	
<p>Tara Draper Sandwich High School Sandwich, MA 02537</p>	
<p>Benjamin Youngman Newton South High School Newton, MA 02459</p>	

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

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

Appendix C

Commendations and Recommendations

Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations

Commendations

1. The creation of a set of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations that is clear, easily understood, and has become a part of the fabric of the entire school community
2. The inclusive process, informed by current research, that was used to develop the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
3. The development of school-wide analytic rubrics that contain challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students
4. The strong sense of mutual respect throughout the Duxbury High School learning community
5. The high degree to which core values, beliefs and learning expectations drive the curriculum, instruction and decision making processes at Duxbury High School

Recommendations

1. Develop a consistent review process to revisit and examine the effectiveness of the school-wide rubrics
2. Establish a process with prescribed timelines, research and data sources, and identified stakeholders to guide the regular review and revision of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in keeping with school and community priorities

Curriculum

Commendations

1. The purposefully designed curriculum which allows students to practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations
2. The emphasis on depth of understanding and application of knowledge in the curriculum including opportunities for higher order thinking and authentic learning
3. The common format developed for curriculum writing and mapping using the *Understanding by Design* model
4. The alignment between the written and taught curriculum

5. The innovative learning opportunities for students including community outreach and inter-disciplinary projects
6. The emphasis on writing across the curriculum
7. The coordination of specific initiatives in the curriculum such as required research papers in all grades and levels

Recommendations

1. Provide structured time to ensure vertical alignment of curriculum
2. Provide sufficient staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, and supplies to fully implement the curriculum, co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities
3. Establish a time and a schedule for the cycle of curriculum review and revision in all departments
4. Provide adequate funding for curriculum development
5. Provide additional cross-curricular learning opportunities for students
6. Increase students' opportunities for vocational study
7. Provide consistent common planning time for departments and cross-departmental coordination of curricular initiatives

Instruction

Commendations

1. The ongoing process to ensure continuous examination of instructional practices that are consistent with Duxbury High School's 21st century learning expectations
2. The implementation of subject supervisors who have added additional support and oversight to instructional practices
3. The extensive evidence of personalization and differentiated instructional techniques
4. The use of creative formative assessment during instructional time
5. The purposeful organization of group learning activities during instructional time
6. The commitment of faculty to integrate technology into their instruction
7. The commitment of the DHS faculty to stay current in their areas of expertise

Recommendations

1. Develop a formal process for regular examination of student work to inform instruction

2. Provide structured protocols for common planning time to ensure that teachers examine instructional practices, including peer observation and feedback
3. Provide cross-disciplinary common planning time and professional development to provide teachers with the strategies to plan cross-disciplinary instruction
4. Provide additional training for the integration of technology into instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Commendations

1. The integration of 21st century learning skills throughout the school and across the curriculum
2. The use of school-wide rubrics at the department level
3. The pervasive use of content-specific rubrics throughout the school
4. The widespread commitment among faculty to encourage students to revise their work or revisit aspects of learning when students request more clarification and support
5. The variety of formative assessments represented in all academic disciplines
6. The communication between teachers and students relative to use of rubrics and their application
7. Use of department meeting time to create, analyze, and revise common assessments
8. Frequent and effective communication with students and parents related to student performance through various means
9. The effective use of essential questions during units of study throughout the school

Recommendations

1. Develop a formal method for collecting data on and reporting achievement of all the school-wide learning expectations to students, parents and the school community
2. Develop a formal process to collaborate regularly on the creation, analysis and revision of formative and summative assessments

3. Ensure that teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to students by using the X2 grading system consistently to communicate student academic progress on a regular basis to students and parents
4. Complete the review of the school's grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

School Culture and Leadership

Commendations:

1. The extensive and diverse displays of student work that exemplify ownership, pride, and high expectations for all
2. The positive and constructive individual relationships between and among faculty, administration, and individual students
3. The heterogeneous course experience for every student over the course of his/her high school experience
4. The expansion of supervision responsibilities to allow for more frequent and immediate supervision and feedback
5. The positive and trusting relationship between faculty and high school administration
6. The collaborative development of a district-wide strategic plan to unify efforts and inform long-term budgetary decisions
7. The consistent support by the entire high school community of a safe, positive, and respectful school environment

Recommendations:

1. Provide professional development for staff regarding co-teaching to ensure success for all students within the program
2. Clarify the goals of the advisory program to increase effectiveness for all students
3. Ensure subject supervisors' roles and responsibilities are clarified so that all teachers understand their role
4. Increase the communication between administration and teachers related to the proposal of new initiatives, professional development and decision-making within the school

School Resources

Commendations

1. The comprehensive intervention strategies and referral process for at-risk students
2. The well staffed and collaborative school support services team which benefits all students at DHS
3. The comprehensive information provided to families regarding available support services on the DHS website
4. The response to collected data from the student support team to improve student support services
5. The library services that are used across the curriculum to assist students and teachers at DHS with research and writing assignments
6. Timely and well coordinated intervention strategies to address the needs of at-risk students
7. The availability of guidance counselors one evening per week for appointments

Recommendations

1. Provide comprehensive services for the ELL population
2. Ensure that all areas of the student services website are updated with comprehensive information
3. Formalize the integration of library services across all departments

Community Resources

Commendations

1. The generous and consistent financial support of parent and community groups for programming and services
2. The continued dedication of the DHS administration and staff to provide exemplary educational services despite limited funding and resources
3. The creation and implementation of a five-year strategic plan that addresses all major deficiencies in the Duxbury School System

4. The community's approval of the construction of a new middle/high school to provide its students with a high quality 21st century educational environment
5. Active involvement and engagement with local civic organizations
6. Enthusiastic support from parents and community groups
7. The overwhelming pride and academic focus of the DHS students despite financial and physical plant deficiencies

Recommendations

1. Provide consistent yearly funding for DHS programs, services, materials, and supplies that is not dependent on assistance from parent and community groups
2. Ensure cleanliness of the entire school building
3. Resolve ADA compliance issues
4. Minimize user fees for all athletics and co-curricular activities
5. Monitor and control the fluctuations in temperature throughout the building
6. Provide all staff members with technology training and support to ensure they are able to teach to 21st century learning standards
7. Create a school-based plan to ensure that the distribution of technology and equipment is equitable for all staff members, as everyone is required to meet 21st century teaching and learning standards
8. Create a system/team to conduct quarterly progress monitoring and maintain data for all initiatives cited in the strategic plan that affect all stakeholders at Duxbury High School
9. Broaden the types of businesses offering internship opportunities