New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

Report of the Visiting Committee for
Brookline High School

Brookline, Massachusetts

November 13-16, 2011

Robert Hale, CHAIR

Peter Badalament & Richard Pearson, ASSISTANT CHAIRS

John Ritchie, HEADMASTER

New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.
209 Burlington Road, Suite 201, Bedford, MA 01730-1433

TEL. 781-271-0022
FAX 781-271-0950

www.neasc.org

STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

THE DISTRIBUTION, USE, AND SCOPE OF THE

VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

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

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Statement on Limitations

Introduction.....4

Overview of Findings 6
Quality of the Self-Study
Discussion of Significant Findings regarding
Teaching and Learning and the Support of
Teaching and Learning

School and Community Summary 10

School's Statement of Mission and Expectations for Student Learning…….12

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations 14

Curriculum 17

Instruction 25

Assessment of and for Student Learning 30

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership.....37

School Resources for Learning.....46

Community Resources for Learning.....55

Follow-Up Responsibilities.....62

APPENDICES

A. Roster of Visiting Committee Members…….64
B. Commission Policy on Substantive Change……..……65

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

Teaching and Learning Standards

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

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership
School Resources for Learning
Community Resources for Learning

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

Preparation for the Evaluation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Brookline High School, a committee of seven members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and

facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included one member of the central office staff.

The self-study of Brookline High School extended over a period of 18 school months from May 2010 to November 2011.

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

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of 17 evaluators was assigned by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Brookline High School. The Committee members spent four days in Brookline, 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 Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools, central office administrators, school administrators, and teachers, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Brookline High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 51 hours shadowing 17 students for a half day
- a total of 20 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school

- tours of the facility

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

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

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

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

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

Overview of Findings

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

Teaching and Learning at Brookline High School

Brookline High School is a vibrant and unique learning community that serves the students of Brookline, Massachusetts. All of the school's constituencies embrace the long-standing tenets of "Freedom with Responsibility" and "Hard work over time" which form the basis of the school's core values and beliefs. Students embrace these tenets well and handle the significant freedoms afforded them maturely and responsibly. They are dedicated to current and future success and are well connected to the school community.

The expectations for student learning reflect the curriculum and instructional practices but have yet to be adopted as a driving force for curriculum, instruction, and assessment. As the school creates more intentional and systematic connections between the expectations and the process of teaching and learning, these principles will have a greater impact on assuring that all students meet the 21st century learning expectations. As teachers, administrators, and students become more comfortable and fluent in this effort, the school curriculum, instructional practices, assessment strategies, and school

programs and policies will become more strategically aligned to support every student in their achievement.

The curricular and co-curricular offerings at Brookline High School are both numerous and rich. Students, parents, teachers, and administrators proudly recognized the strength of the school's program offerings and the degree to which they serve the diverse needs and interests of the school's 1,700 member student body. In addition to varied, challenging, and esoteric courses and extracurricular offerings, Brookline High School offers a variety of specific programs that address the variety of learning styles and needs of its students.

The school has impressive curricular offerings that allow all students to pursue their own areas of interest. The Brookline Educational Foundation and the school's 21st century fund have had a dramatic impact on the school's ability to develop and implement innovative programs. A host of specific and school-within-a-school programs provides additional and alternative instructional environments that support the learning styles and needs of a diverse student population.

While the delivered curriculum is well developed and varied, the written curriculum documents do not adequately describe and support them to ensure an effective delivery of the school's challenging and comprehensive programs, and, at this time, curriculum documents do not ensure consistency of teachers' delivery and provide accurate and detailed articulation that can be used to coordinate curriculum effectively across the school and district. As revision and expansion of written curriculum documents continues, the curriculum guides need to incorporate the richness of instructional approaches evident in classrooms across the school. They should also identify specific assessment strategies including the use of school-wide rubrics and link instruction and assessment directly with the school expectations of student learning.

Classroom observations, analysis of student work, interviews with teachers, students, and parents, demonstrate that there is a wealth of effective teaching at Brookline High School where students can expect challenging, creative, and authentic instructional activities. The highly qualified faculty is dedicated to providing the best in instructional practices. Teachers use a variety of strategies to personalize instruction and support student achievement. As technology is integrated more frequently in classroom instruction, it has the capacity to further personalization and help students practice and demonstrate their mastery of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Teachers use a variety of individual as well as departmental assessments to chart student progress and understanding. The school-wide rubrics will need to be refined and implemented throughout the school to assess student achievement of the expectations for student learning. There is already a variety of appropriate and authentic assessment in classroom instruction and shown in samples of student work. There should be more attention to implementation of a systematic process for both teachers and students of using the school-wide rubrics and related mechanisms to assess individual achievement and the school's achievement in implementing its own high expectations for student learning. This will make the rubrics a powerful tool for continuous improvement.

Support of Teaching and Learning at Brookline High School

Brookline High School has created a positive culture that maximizes student learning. Students assume a high degree of responsibility and are afforded significant freedoms. The multi-building campus is "open" for most students, who are expected to be responsible for being at assigned classes but can structure their own unassigned time.

At the time of the committee's visit there was an interim principal who was serving until a new headmaster was appointed. The school's longtime headmaster had been a dynamic and galvanizing force in the school and community for nearly two decades. His influence on the school, its programs, and the culture are recognizable, and school personnel continue to perpetuate his philosophies that are now the hallmark of the school.

There is an outstanding level of support for students by all of the school's staff members Students with special needs are well served and integrated into the school through an extensive inclusion program that serves most of them. Brookline High School provides programming and learning opportunities that are designed to meet the learning needs of its diverse learning community. Programs include the Brookline Resilient Youth Team (BRYT), a program that transitions students back into mainstream classes who have had extended absences that may include hospitalization; Opportunity for Change (OFC), a program for regular and special needs students; African American Scholars Program (AASP), part of the initiative to close the achievement gap for African American and Latino students; Community-Based Classroom (CBC), a program for the most physically disabled students; Excellence in Community Education of Learning (EXCEL), a program for special needs students in need of a more structured environment; Winthrop House, a program for emotionally fragile learners; School Within the School (SWS), an alternative program that highlights student democratic participation; and Steps to Success (STS), a comprehensive achievement program for low income students. The library media center has an appropriate collection of media and resources that support teaching and learning. The facility hosts up to 700 students per day, but space and technology are not sufficient to meet the demand. The health services extend beyond the usual mandates and provide an avenue where students can share concerns that can be addressed in collaboration with other support services. The guidance program is complete and comprehensive, and students repeatedly speak about the positive relationship with their counselor and the support they have received, especially regarding post high school planning.

The school buildings ably support a comprehensive program. They are in good shape for their age. Students are respectful of the Brookline High School campus and take responsibility for the cleanliness of the school. There are significant enrollment increases projected so that the school will not be able to be accommodated within the present schedule and facilties. It is important that the school develops plans and begins to implement them to address this upcoming need to assure that the school program continues to flourish. While the school has a number of computer labs that support teaching and learning, the access to technology in regular classrooms is limited so that

further integration of technology in classroom learning will help further personalize, individualize, and modernize teaching and learning at Brookline High School.

The school has a varied and rich involvement with parents and the community and enjoys their support. It maintains a host of partnerships with business and higher education that provide on and off campus educational experiences.

School and Community Summary

The Town of Brookline

Brookline High School serves a residential community of 58,732 citizens. The town borders the city of Boston on three sides and has a median income ($92,451) higher than the state average. Residents of Brookline have the highest percentage of graduate or professional degrees in the nation. The most recent (2010) unemployment figure for the town is 5%. 7% of families in the community have incomes below the poverty level with 6% of children in grades Kindergarten through Grade 3 eligible for Chapter I. There are two small areas in town designated for light industry. The major employer for the community is the Town of Brookline.

The Brookline Public Schools

The Brookline School System, serving 6747 students, is composed of eight K-8 elementary schools and one 9-12 comprehensive high school. The High School is located on three plus acres in a residential area of the town which has more single family homes than multi-unit dwellings. In 1995, the citizens of Brookline passed by a 70 to 30 margin a $43.8 million override to renovate the high school, a three-year process that was completed in 2000. The renovated building is largely handicapped accessible, has improved access to technology, an enhanced Library and seventeen additional classrooms. The High School is directly accessible by the Riverside branch of the MBTA Green Line. Four non-public elementary and three non-public secondary schools serve approximately 960 additional students.

Demographics

Brookline High School's current enrollment is 1750 students with a highly diverse ethnic composition: 9% African American, 61% White, 14% Asian 11% Hispanic, 5% Multi-ethnic, and less than 1% Native American. The High School's international population represents 76 different countries and 31 different languages; 26% of the students speak English as a second language. 90 students participate in the METCO program. In 2009, Brookline spent $16,847 per pupil while the state's per pupil expenditure was $13,006. Local resources make up the majority of the school budget.

Student Data Profile

In the graduating class of 2011, 91% attended the high school for four years. The drop-out rate reported for the past two years was 2.8%. The average student attendance rate for 2011 was 95.5% and the average teacher attendance rate was 97%. 90.6% of the graduates in the Class of 2011 attend a four-year college or university; an additional 4.7% attend two-year colleges or other post high school programs. 0.3% of the 2011graduates entered the work force; another 4.4% entered the military. The remaining students planned to travel or were undecided about their immediate plans. These percentages have remained remarkably stable over the past twenty years. Over the course of the last ten

years, the mean combined SAT scores have risen from 1140 in 2001 to 1165 (1744 with new Writing section) in 2011.

Student Achievements

Brookline High School students receive recognition in both academic and non-academic areas. The class of 2011 had 10 National Merit Finalists, 43 students receiving commendations for National Merit, one Finalist in the National Achievement Scholarship Program, and three Semi-Finalists in the National Hispanic Recognition Program. In the 2010-2011 academic year, 340 students took 636 Advanced Placement exams. 51 of these students were named Advanced Placement "Scholars," 39 were named "Scholars with Honor," 34 were named "Scholars with Distinction," and two were named "National Scholars." The Drama Department has been selected to compete in the Massachusetts High School Drama Festival finals seven times in the last ten years, and students have won numerous awards in acting and set design.

Approximately 45% of the student body participates in the athletic program. The High School fields 74 teams in 40 sports. The boys' cross-country team was State Champions in 2010. Hundreds of students participate actively in the Community Service programs, and a leadership class organizes and runs various community service initiatives.

At its annual spring awards assembly, the school recognizes over 115 students for academic and personal achievements. The Brookline Scholarship Committee annually awards over $325,150 in higher education grants.

The Core Values of The Brookline Public Schools

1. High Achievement For All
2. Excellence In Teaching
3. Collaboration
4. Respect For Human Differences
5. Educational Equity

Brookline High School Mission Statement

The mission of Brookline High School is to develop capable, confident, life-long learners who contribute to their community, participate thoughtfully in democracy, and succeed in a diverse and evolving global society.

Institutional Goals

- To provide intellectual and personal challenge with support for all students.
- To deliver instruction which blends the traditional with the innovative, emphasizing both the acquisition of knowledge and its application.
- To encourage in students the curiosity to ask questions and the resourcefulness to find answers.
- To develop clear communication and creative expression in a variety of media.
- To celebrate diversity so that our students gain an understanding of differences and an appreciation of our essential kinship.

To these ends, the administration, faculty, staff, and students work together to provide a safe setting in which all can flourish as members of this community.

Expectations for Student Performance

Expectations for student performance are the skills that we want our students to possess upon graduation from BHS. They must be observable and measurable.

Content Knowledge and Understanding

BHS students:

- develop the skills and knowledge described in the BHS course syllabi.
- develop the skills and knowledge to respond satisfactorily to a variety of mandated internal and external assessments.

• will meet graduation requirements as defined by the Brookline School Committee.

Cognitive Powers/Critical Thinking

BHS students:

• learn to analyze, to synthesize, and to draw reasonable conclusions.

Communication

BHS students:

• develop skills to communicate clearly and persuasively through writing, speaking, technology, and the arts.

• develop skills in listening and reading.

Citizenship/Social Values

BHS students:

• adhere to community standards as defined by the Code of Conduct in the BHS Handbook.

• demonstrate proficiency in collaborating and negotiating with individuals of varied backgrounds.

• behave in a respectful and ethical manner.

• demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives and respect for human diversity.

Life Skills

BHS students:

• develop organizational and time management skills.

• set goals and work to achieve them.

Teaching and Learning Standard

1 Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

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

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

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

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

Conclusions

Brookline High School engaged in a dynamic process to identify its core values and beliefs about learning, but the self-study notes that parents and students were not included in the process. Administrators and faculty and staff members spent approximately half a school year defining the school community's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations (CVBLE) based on the school's current initiatives and practices. The members of the CVBLE Standards committee that created the current document say they recognize that this process did not include parents and students and the school is planning to include all stakeholders in the review and revision process. When students and parents were not included in the opportunity to impact the formulation of the CVBLE document, the school lost an opportunity to invite and ensure greater investment by all constituents. Thus, description of an inclusive process as part of the review is necessary to ensure community investment in school goals. (*teachers, students, self-study, administrative council members,* CVBLE standards committee)

Brookline High School has challenging 21st century learning expectations for all students, but it is not clear if these are measurable and manageable in relation to the number of expectations outlined. Several of the learning expectations may not be measurable according to what is stated within their assessment rubrics. The language of the rubric restates the learning expectations but does not indicate how the student can achieve the standard in a measurable way. The self-study acknowledges that the implementation of the school-wide rubrics is a work in progress, and the CVBLE standards committee observes that there has been little teacher "buy-in". When the school has integrated the newly identified CVBLE into the already strong core values, it will be able to assess whether or not the new expectations are measurable. When the assessment system using the current expectations and rubrics has been tested, the teachers will be able to cooperatively determine an improved format for any rubrics that are not effective. . (*teachers, students, self-study, school-wide rubrics, administrative council members, Endicott Survey*)

The Brookline High School Core Values, Beliefs, and 21st Century Learning Expectations are reflected in the culture of the school. While these do not explicitly drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, teachers model the school's values and beliefs in ways that make it clear that they hold all students to high standards. There are numerous examples of curricular units that are clearly the result of collaboration among teachers. The core values guide the schools' policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. Programs such as BRYT, Opportunity for Learning, African-American Scholars, general education Help Centers, Excel, and SWS exemplify the impact of the school's core values in shaping school programs and policies. While the decisions and resource allocations are made with the core values in mind, continued work on explicitly connecting curriculum, instruction, and assessment to the school's CVBLE will help bring them greater immediate impact. (*self-study, teachers, students, administrators, sample curriculum units, administrative council members, student shadowing, classroom observations, advisory*)

Brookline High School regularly reviews many of its programs and initiatives that are driven by its core values and beliefs; however, there is no current formal process for reviewing and revising the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research and multiple data sources. The self-study and school constituents acknowledge that a formal review and revision process is necessary and would be beneficial. The self-study proposes that a quadrennial convening of a core values committee composed of representatives from all members of the school community including students, parents, teachers, administrators, and staff will review the CVBLE documents to ensure that they still accurately describe BHS. Because BHS has acknowledged the need to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, the school can easily formalize such a process. (*self-study, teachers,* CVBLE *standards committee, administrative council members*)

Commendations

1. The students' ability to identify key beliefs related to the school's core values: "freedom and responsibility", ownership of learning, and self-advocacy

2. The faculty, staff, and administration's strong sense of commitment to the achievement of every student

3. The school's commitment to equity in the development of numerous programs to support students with a variety of learning challenges

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a process to revise the core values and learning expectations regularly

2. Revise and implement school-wide rubrics to make them more analytic and specify levels of performance for each learning expectation

3. Determine ways in which learning expectations can be measured through school-wide rubrics

4. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers to examine ways to use core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment development

5. Include all stakeholders, including parents and students, in reviews and revisions of CVBLEs

Teaching and Learning Standard

2 Curriculum

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

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

2. The curriculum is written in a common format that includes:
   - units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills
   - the school's 21st century learning expectations
   - instructional strategies
   - assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics.

3. The curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through:
   - inquiry and problem-solving
   - higher order thinking
   - cross-disciplinary learning
   - authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school
   - informed and ethical use of technology.

4. There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum.

5. Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district.

6. Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.

7. The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research.

Conclusions

Because the school's 21st century learning expectations have only recently been adopted the school has yet to revise curriculum documents to align to them. While most curricula are influenced by the strong core values of the school, there is no current systematic process to integrate the learning expectations in all curriculum areas. Aspects of the expectations can be found in some curriculum documents, and the learning expectations are generally reflected in classroom practice. Faculty members describe the classroom connections to the new learning expectations as implicit but not explicit. While 21st century learning expectations align with many instructional practices, they have not been specifically identified for students. Because the connections between the curriculum and the 21st century expectations are implicit and informal, the school cannot yet guarantee that all students in all classes are provided ample opportunity to practice and achieve the skills they represent. Thus, the school has yet to revise its curriculum documents to purposefully design the curricula to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (*self-study, curriculum sub-committee, teacher meetings, curriculum documents, leadership team, teacher interviews, student work, classroom observations)*

Curriculum documents at Brookline High School take the form of course syllabi that include some, but not all, of the required elements for curriculum guides. Some of the submitted curriculum documents are written in a common format that includes learning objectives, learning experiences, course outlines, and course materials. In contrast, the format used by other departments, including the visual arts department, includes skills, concepts, processes, student expectations, and course outlines. In the majority of the syllabi reviewed, learning objectives reflect 21st century skills, but the 21st century skills are not explicitly identified within the learning objectives. Specific assessment tools and essential questions do not generally appear in the course syllabi. Instructional strategies are not clearly articulated or suggested in all curriculum documents. While the curriculum documents do not typically include reference to assessment tools or essential questions, it is clear that classroom assignments and lesson plans do include these elements. In the Endicott Survey, only 29.9% of the staff responds that Brookline High School employs a common curriculum format in all subject areas. The self-study states "every teacher creates a set of expectations for each course and while these expectations vary in style and content from course to course and teacher to teacher, they all describe what students need to do to be successful in the course, the required materials each student needs and an explanation of how students will be assessed". As a result, curriculum documents at Brookline High School do not reflect strong collaboration across department areas although it is evident that a level of

collaboration exists within departments. Because curriculum guides vary in design and do not typically include reference to the school's 21st century learning expectations or suggested instructional strategies or assessments, course expectations vary according to the teacher for each course, and there is currently no systematic way for the school to ensure the equitable delivery of curriculum to all students. (*student work samples, curriculum guides, teacher interviews, curriculum sub-committee, district administrators*)

The delivered curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge but the written curriculum guides do not guarantee consistency across classes and teachers. There is strong evidence of in-depth understanding and an application of knowledge in student work, such as guided note-taking in biology, making summary judgments based on data analysis in chemistry, and weekly reflective writing in drawing and painting classes. In math, students internalize understanding of various math strategies and demonstrate that understanding through the creation of word problems. In the more lecture-based science courses, students are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate higher order thinking and inquiry-based learning. Cross disciplinary and authentic learning opportunities in and out of school are seen in digital videos produced in both world languages and in digital music class. In the Good Citizen in a Good Society Senior Seminar, students participate in a cross-curricular class that promotes greater awareness of social justice and of the responsibilities of democratic citizenship. In the medical careers program, students learn to perform suture techniques on simulated skin at Brigham and Women's Hospital. In the visual arts, artistic challenges are presented around essential questions that encourage students to use their imagination, hone observation skills, listen to their intuition, and view outside sources in order to create independently conceived and executed artwork. The students then analyze and interpret the content and formal design aspects of their work. In addition, through an inquiry-based exploration of two and three-dimensional media, students learn to use the visual arts as a means to communicate with the viewer regarding experiences, observations, and thoughts about a shared world. Students are encouraged to question results and rethink expected conclusions to problems. For example, students in a drawing class reconsider early composition solutions when the teacher makes incremental changes in the required specifications, causing them to explore different approaches and focuses of their work. Challenging students to make a variety of changes helps them to re-examine, refine, and reach a more complex and sophisticated design. As a result of this emphasis on depth of understanding, students at Brookline High School have the opportunity to develop higher order thinking skills. The arts and vocational programs provide many opportunities for authentic learning, problem-solving, and critical thinking. The video program using the on-campus facilities of Brookline Access Television gives students experience with contemporary equipment and techniques. The student-run copy center and restaurant give students experience in running a business while performing work of value to the school community. A construction class built a house in the school parking lot to learn building techniques, and the beautiful tables that grace alcoves in the hallways were constructed in the woods program. Students often have internship opportunities associated with vocational classes as well. The art department has a gallery of student work and displays work in the classroom building as well. Co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities abound at Brookline High School that allow students

opportunities to learn in depth and demonstrate their proficiency of 21st century skills. The Sagamore, the school's impressive print and online newspaper, engages students and informs the community about the school. The school sponsors nearly 40 separate sports that reflect both individual and team oriented sports. Nearly 50 co-curricular clubs are available to students and include both local and worldwide focus. While teachers generally emphasize depth of understanding and application of knowledge, inclusion of these methods in written curriculum documents will help ensure their contistent use throughout the school. (*teacher interviews, student work samples, lesson plans, teachers, students, administrators, parents, school committee members, school documents, classroom observations*)

Although the prevailing school culture of instructional autonomy does not require development of systematic curriculum guides, written course syllabi align with the taught curriculum. The only formal indicators of alignment are some common assessments in core curriculum areas. What is written is taught, but the documents do not represent a complete curriculum. Most courses at BHS give common midterm and final exams, and those that don't frequently give exams that are strikingly similar in describing concepts, content, and skills that students are expected to know. In the Endicott Survey, 70% of the Brookline faculty members believes that the written curriculum aligns with the taught curriculum. The common mid term and final assessments suggest that teachers do follow a written curriculum. Teachers are trusted to implement the curriculum as they see fit. Those who teach the same course actively share lessons, activities, assignments, and assessments with each other, informally. The district has moved toward aligning its curriculum. Vertical articulation has begun with the development of the Brookline Learners Learning Expectations, a K-8 skills for lifelong learning document, with which district administrators say the high school curriculum will eventually align. Thus, the high school will develop consistent and complete curriculum documents aligned with this K-8 curriculum, and this process will allow a judgment of whether the teachers can align the written and taught curriculum. (*Brookline Learners Learning Expectations, district administrator, self-study, curriculum sub-committee*)

There is inconsistent curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district. Other than course syllabi, BHS presents no curriculum guides to illustrate effective coordination and articulation between and among all academic areas within the school. According to the omnibus survey, 51.9% of teachers revises curriculum alone, and 84.9 % of teachers reports that most of their curriculum development has taken place "outside school time". Brookline High School has a 7-year curriculum review cycle for each subject area. The cycle itself lasts for 4 years, during which time, the subject area under review is examined, providing these departments with an opportunity to look at their vertical articulation within the high school and in the upper grades of the sending schools. Faculty interviews and the curriculum self-study report indicates that teachers feel that there is little common planning time for teachers to collaborate on curriculum articulation. Data from these same sources, and others, support the strong faculty belief in academic autonomy around course content and delivery. Departments do meet twice annually with 7th and 8th grade teachers. These meetings focus on common curricular

concerns in the preparation and transition of students from 8 th to 9th grade. As richer curriculum guides are collaboratively developed to document the delivered curriculum, it will give teachers an opportunity to more effectively articulate and coordinate the curriculum across the school and the district. (*Endicott Survey, teachers, administrators*)

Brookline High School staffing levels, instructional materials, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the data base resources of the library are sufficient to fully implement the school's curriculum and co-curricular programs. The current level of technology is seen as a major area of concern that negatively impacts the otherwise stellar facilities and equipment at the school. Three quarters of the staff members, 85.9% of students, and 90.8% of parents respond to the Endicott Survey that the school provides adequate instructional materials to implement the curriculum. Areas of concern identified by staff members and administrators are a deficit of available technology and the need for expanded library space. The shortage of classroom technology is preventing a more complete integration of 21st century skills in teacher instruction, student research, and communication. Teachers cite situations of failing technologies as a deterrent to planning and utilizing technology in their classroom presentations. Staffing is adequate with a pupil teacher ratio of 73.9 students per teacher in core subjects, allowing for implementation of the curriculum. Observed classes in the unified arts building are varied in student numbers but remain at reasonable levels, and the rooms are spacious, bright, and extremely well equipped in each of the observed areas, including six kilns in the ceramics room, jewelry and print making facilities, a 3D room, a drawing room, a painting room and gallery space, a state-of-the-art television studio (BATV), two digital media labs, and kitchen facilities. The school has climbing walls, a massive weight room, tennis courts, and two dance studios. Two facility concerns are that the jewelry room has had a problem with venting, and the library becomes over-crowded during some periods and must turn students away. As a result of the expansive and well-equipped facilities, students are able to access most of the curriculum in a variety of creative and innovative ways. Science laboratory facilities are usable, but showing signs of wear. The chemical storage room needs safety updates, particularly to secure storage shelves to walls, provide a safety lip on the front of shelves, and repair or replace corroded shelves. (*teacher interviews, Endicott Survey, and a tour of facilities, self-study, student shadowing, classroom observations, teacher meetings*)

The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum. Still, there remains a consensus among faculty members that in-school time for this work is insufficient. The assistant superintendent for curriculum and Instruction is responsible for the district and school-level curriculum and articulation. Each department has a curriculum coordinator overseeing the 9-12 grade curriculum and personnel. Curriculum coordinators are responsible for reviewing the long-term course objectives, the alignment with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and the practices, themes, and content for each course. Curriculum coordinators participate in an ongoing comprehensive and intensive review of department curriculum and programs. Use of assessment results and current research to inform this curriculum work is limited to times when distrit and school administrators gather and review data, making a socio-

economic breakdown of MCAS scores and course grades, for example, in order to inform curricular changes. To address the achievement gap revealed in the data, programs such as Steps to Success, African American Scholars, the Calculus Project, and Tutorial were created and implemented at Brookline High School. Teachers report that they are directly involved in curriculum evaluation, review, and revision work. Active response by teachers to the academic needs of their students and the freedom to adjust the curriculum accordingly is a significant part of the culture of Brookline High School. In the last few years, a group of English teachers has revised the sophomore writing curriculum, creating common assignments such as a passage paper and a common grammar packet. Mathematics teachers have completely transformed the curricula for Algebra and Problem-Solving I, the junior standard level math course, into a topics-based course with a large technology component. In science, the BSCS biology teachers worked to revise the labs and curriculum. In world languages, teachers have worked hard to integrate music and film into the curriculum. In 2004, the Brookline Public Schools implemented a new four-phase study for program review that includes assessing the current curriculum, creating a vision for future curriculum, planning the implementation of the vision, and then reviewing the process. Major curriculum revisions are put off until the summer when teachers have more time to collaborate. This work is usually done in workshops created by the teachers themselves who are supported financially by the school system. Some of the summer workshops are funded through the school budget, but a major portion of the curriculum development is supported through outside funding. Every fall, many curriculum development seminars are provided during a professional development day. The 21st Century Fund and the Brookline Education Foundation have been the primary sponsors for the development of numerous programs at BHS. These funds have been instrumental in the creation of the humanities-based courses and programs including The Good Citizen and the Good Society and the new Global Leadership Program, the Engineering by Design program, African American Scholars, the Arts Infusion Program, and the Tutorial Program. Many teachers choose to participate in these professional development options. However, once school starts, there are very few school-sponsored opportunities to revise and assess curriculum. Also, teachers and staff members have the opportunity to enroll, either free or at a reduced rate, in seminars and courses at Primary Source and Teachers as Scholars (TAS), where they learn information that will enhance curriculum. However, there is little to no time provided during the school year to modify the curriculum. Only 36% of teachers reports that they have sufficient time to be engaged in formal curriculum evaluation, review, and revision work. One particular area that has required significant curricular revision over the last few years has been in the special education department. As the district has modified its inclusion program, more students with special needs are taking mainstream co-taught courses. However, time and resources provided to co-teaching teams to modify the curricula of these co-taught courses has been insufficient. As a result, district curriculum development, coordination, and articulation has not yet been fully achieved and expressed. The creation and delivery of an equitable core curriculum for all students cannot be guaranteed. *(self-study, curriculum sub-committee, teachers, administrators, central office personnel, board of education members, school documents, curriculum documents)*

Commendations

1. The curriculum that prioritizes higher order thinking and problem-solving

2. Brookline High School's outstanding physical resources that enable the school to successfully deliver a high quality program to all students

3. The wide and diverse curriculum offerings that provide opportunities for all students to engage in rigorous, personally meaningful experiences

4. The strong relationship with the community and other friends of education groups and individuals that contribute financially and professionally to the Brookline High School program toward developing innovative course offerings and instructional experiences

5. The cooperative arrangement that allows the school to use the BATV resources

6. The faculty commitment to designing and delivering engaging, high quality, diverse, and dynamic courses to students

7. The public support for professional development and new curriculum initiatives

8. The impressive opportunities for extracurricular involvement and co-curricular learning

9. The outstanding quality of the school's newspaper *The Sagamore* which includes both classroom and extracurricular participation

10. The authentic learning opportunities provided students, especially in the arts and vocational areas

Recommendations

1. Ensure that the school revises its curriculum documents to purposefully design the curricula to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations

2. Increase teacher collaboration across departments and develop a common complete format for curriculum documents

3. Ensure that curriculum guides outline units of study and include essential questions, concepts, content, and skills, reference the school's 21st century learning expectations, suggest instructional strategies, and describe assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics

4. Align teacher designed, written, and taught curriculum with district-wide written curriculum

5. Develop a plan to improve and implement curricular coordination and district-wide curriculum development and articulation from within the school and from the sending schools

6. Develop and implement a technology plan that supports the integration of technology into the curriculum

7. Seek and implement creative ways to provide the additional time teachers and curriculum leaders and administrators will need to do the necessary coordinated curriculum work required to meet district curriculum goals

Teaching and Learning Standard

3 Instruction

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

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

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

3. Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by:
   - using formative assessment, especially during instructional time
   - strategically differentiating
   - purposefully organizing group learning activities
   - providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.

4. Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by:
   - using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments
   - examining student work
   - using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents
   - examining current research
   - engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.

5. Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

Conclusions

At Brookline High School (BHS), teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. This is evident in teacher-submitted lesson plans, course syllabi, course expectations, and teacher interviews. Teachers are clearly familiar with the school's identified beliefs about learning but do not always explicitly articulate them in course syllabi or lesson plans. Teaching practices in classes are consistent with the school's core beliefs, values, and 21st century learning expectations. However, variation in the level of expectation was observed in classes, lesson plans, and student work. Teachers engage in formal and informal reflective practices around the beliefs about learning although more formal time would be beneficial. Formal processes include teacher supervision and evaluation, mentoring programs, student course evaluations, and department meetings focused on instruction, and the informal processes include conversations at lunch, in the hallways, during planning time, and in e-mails exchanged. As a result of a highly qualified and reflective faculty, instructional practices are consistent with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, but these are not always explicitly expressed. (*classroom observations, self-study, student shadowing, teacher interview, student work, leadership*)

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; and engaging students in self-assessment and reflection. Brookline High School is in the process of enhancing the integration of technology into regular classroom instruction. Where technology is available, teachers integrate it into instruction. Teachers personalize instruction in a variety of ways. In the 9th grade social studies research project, the teacher works with the librarian to use a "Habits of Mind" and information literacy survey to assess students' previous experiences in information literacy prior to the project. In English class, a teacher asks students to consider the relevance of a 19th century novel to students' personal lives and modern society. Teachers rarely engage students in formal cross-disciplinary learning although some teachers informally share examples of cross-disciplinary lessons. Most teachers engage students as active and self-directed learners, and many teachers emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking. There are variations in rigor as a result of the lack of explicitly expressed learning expectations in lesson plans. Students hold lively discussions, stay on-topic, and use critical thinking skills to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. In a music project, students create rhythms using unique materials. Students gain first hand food service experience in the student-run restaurant where they are responsible for all aspects of restaurant management. The School Within a School (SWS) program provides students a unique ownership of their school experience. Students in SWS authentically exercise the democratic process by holding regular town meetings, reviewing and discussing classroom policies, and having a say in the academic direction of their

courses. In the unified arts programs, students engage in video production in a state-of-the-art recording studio, create art projects for gallery display, and perform in front of live audiences. Teachers ask students to reflect on their learning. Both formal and informal feedback and reflection takes place at the end of instructional units, quarters, or semesters. Students provide their classroom teachers with feedback through letters, journal entries, surveys, formal and informal discussions, and conferences. Elective programs ask for self-reflection during and at the end of creating artistic works, shared classroom experiences, and performances. Tutorial and BHS Learning Center students also discuss their progress periodically with their teachers to re-evaluate goals and performance. Teachers show strong interest in integrating technology, but their efforts are hindered by the lack of resources and/or inequitable distribution of resources. Because Brookline High School teachers employ a range of effective instructional strategies, they enhance student learning and critical thinking. (*classroom observations, self-study, student shadowing, teacher interview, school leadership, student work*)

Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment, especially during instructional time, by strategically differentiating, by purposefully organizing group learning activities, and by providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Many teachers use formative assessments, especially during instructional time. In a biology class, a teacher engages students and assesses student knowledge by posing questions about a set of slides and asking students to do a pair share. In English and world language classes, teachers give short check-in quizzes to get a snapshot of students' mastery of the material. In an algebra class, a teacher "invents" a new sport of ladder-climbing to assess student knowledge of negative and positive numbers. Teachers strategically differentiate to meet the needs of each student by using a variety of teaching strategies, such as group work, jigsaw activity, class discussion, Socratic seminar, and lecture format. Teachers adjust their instructional practices to appeal to a wide variety of learning styles, such as auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. In the Endicott Survey, 72% of students reports that teachers use a variety of teaching strategies in their courses. In a world history class, students hold a debate on the merits of three ancient Chinese philosophies. In Chinese class, students stand for greeting and sing to practice oral skills. Teachers purposefully organize group learning activities. In the Endicott Survey, 87% of students reports that teachers use group activities in class. In Spanish class, students sit around hexagonal tables to brainstorm. In English class, students of varying levels engage in group work to co-author a paper. Some teachers provide additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Teachers address differentiated student needs through modification and adjustment of assignments. Some classes, particularly beginning level world language, include two teachers from the same department. The first serves as the primary teacher while the second acts as a teaching assistant to provide student support. In inclusion classes, some students develop their own outlines and draft papers, while other students use graphic organizers. Because teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of individuals, BHS students are engaged in learning. (*classroom observations, self-study, student shadowing, teacher interview, school leadership, student work, Endicott Survey*)

Teachers use assessment, examination of student work, collaboration, and professional development to improve their instructional practices, and they use data from formative and summative assessments to improve their instruction. These assessments, which are created both individually and collaboratively as a department or curriculum team, help teachers identify the level of students' understanding, which in turn guides instructional practices. Portions of department meetings are the only formal time allotted for departmental analysis of these assessments, however. Informally, individual teachers and voluntary Critical Friends Groups (CFGs) value their analysis of assessment results and carve out time for examining student work to inform their instruction. Consistent implementation of evaluation and supervision will improve instruction and student learning. Most teachers report that they often examine student work with the purpose of improving their instruction. Some CFGs use protocols to examine student work to provide a systematic and thorough way to inform instruction. Teachers at BHS use feedback from students, other teachers, and supervisors to improve instructional practices. Teachers can bee observed monitoring students' level of understanding during instruction and taking action to help students who need assistance learning the particular lesson. Teachers distribute evaluation forms to students at the conclusion of the course that ask for feedback on the instruction of the course. More than half of the teachers reports that students are asked to self-assess and reflect about their learning. In 2010, a school-wide intersession day had students reflect on what they considered "authentic learning", how they learn best, and what activities they find important to their learning. The results were used to generate general recommendations for all teachers on how they could improve their instructional practices. Some teachers subscribe to educational journals such as The Science Teacher, Math Teacher, and English Journal to stay current in their practice. However, this is not done on a school-wide basis. Throughout the school year and in the summer, teachers engage in a variety of professional development activities to maintain expertise in instruction and in their content areas. When teachers use assessments, collaboration, and professional development to improve their classroom instruction, it improves student learning at BHS. (*classroom observations, self-study, student work, teacher interview, teachers, school leadership, department leadership*)

Teachers are responsible for maintaining a level of expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. The school district provides information about professional development opportunities, which many teachers use to remain current in their content area. A number of teachers participates in CFGs, which inform them about new information and best practices in their curriculum areas. The district fosters a culture that enables staff members to pursue professional development. Funding for new ideas comes from multiple sources, including the Brookline Education Foundation and the school's 21st Century Fund. Brookline belongs to organizations such as Primary Source, EDCO, and Teachers as Scholars, where faculty members attend conferences and courses relevant to their fields. Teachers would like even more time built into the school day to pursue research, compare data, and collaborate to increase their content-area knowledge and improve their instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. Under the current bargaining agreement in 2013-2014, because of early release, high school teachers will have forty minutes per week to meet about the preceding issues. Teachers are concerned about the reduction of the position of director of professional

development to less than full-time as they believe it may limit their access to quality and quantity of professional development opportunities. In an effort to achieve 21st century learning expectations, teachers need to maintain and increase knowledge and skills in their content areas. The culture of BHS encourages a high level of expertise, which translates to high quality instruction and student learning. (*self-study, teacher interview, teachers, school leadership*)

Commendations

1. The highly qualified and dedicated faculty committed to using best instructional practices

2. The extensive use of personalized instruction and a wide variety of teaching strategies that support student achievement

3. The effective use of a variety of formative assessment opportunities used to inform instruction

4. Extensive use of differentiated and authentic approaches to teaching and learning

Recommendations

1. Formalize opportunities and programs for teachers to remain current in instructional practices.

2. Integrate technology into all classrooms.

3. Develop formal opportunities for faculty members to collaborate on, and students to participate in cross-disciplinary instruction.

Teaching and Learning Standard

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

The school has yet to effectively implement the use of school-wide rubrics to assess whole school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Teachers state an implicit connection to assessment of 21st century skills, but there is no formal process in place. Teachers state that they assess with either teacher or course-specific rubrics to evaluate students' development of 21st century skills, and there are varied informal processes of assessment of the 21st century learning skills. Faculty members describe assessment of all skills that takes place "organically". Prior to the development of the current 2011 BHS Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations, the school used "Parameters of Greatness" as a measure of the whole school's progress toward stated goals for academic, social, and civic achievement. Until the school-wide rubrics are systematically used to evaluate 21st century learning skills, however, Brookline High School (BHS) students will not have consistent and regular feedback on their development of 21st century skills. (*self-study, teachers, student*s)

BHS does not yet communicate individual student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations to students and parents. Teachers state that they address many of the school's learning expectations with current course and unit assessments; however, reporting this student progress to students and parents is not a priority at BHS. Students say that they are not aware of their personal progress toward these learning expectations. Central office personnel state that families believe 21st century skills are embedded within the rich experiences of the curriculum and also that there are no current plans to update the report cards to reflect student achievement toward these expectations. Because the school has yet to collect data regarding student assessment using the school-wide rubrics, it cannot effectively report student achievement of the learning expectations to parents and students. (*students, assessment sub-committee, central office personnel*)

The BHS faculty collects, disaggregates, and analyzes some data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement but has yet to analyze data specific to student achievement of the school-wide expectations. Teachers and administrators who want to research areas of student achievement can request the assistance of the district data specialist to assemble and format the appropriate data. The administration monitors the MCAS results of BHS students as well as those of 7th and 8th grade students. There are many programs within the school that also help to respond to inequities in student achievement, such as Steps to Success, the Calculus Project, African American Scholars, and the newly created Literacy Project. A similar program, Opportunity for Change (OFC), uses student grades and test scores to identify and provide support to underachieving students who are in danger of failing mainstream classes. Of the faculty and staff at the school, 66% states that they use data to respond to inequities in student achievement in the classroom. However, lack of school-wide analytical rubrics does not allow for collaborative analysis of school-based consistent assessment of student work. In addition, lack of time for formal review of student work and summative assessment does not allow for any responsive resolution of inequities, whether it be an end-of-unit project or semester or year-end portfolio. The school has many programs and a variety of resources to help students who may be in danger of not succeeding at BHS; many of these programs have been founded as a result of student assessment that revealed a need; and many of them serve students whose needs are discovered as a result of external testing. The school has a high graduation rate, and most students move on to be successful after BHS. Further work on analysis of students' achievement of the 21st Century Learning Expectations will help to ensure that all students are meeting them and poised for success in the future. (*self-study, Endicott Survey, facilities tour, assessment workroom material*)

Specific learning expectations are consistently communicated at the beginning of each unit. However, until recently, 21st century skills have not been expressed in an appropriate form to be used as unit assessment, so they have not been explicitly introduced. According to the Endicott Survey, 64% of students states that 21st century skills and unit specific goals are introduced prior to the unit of study. Students report a variety in teacher's learning expectations between sections of a given course. Teachers speak enthusiastically about authentic projects that demonstrate 21st century skills. These include hands-on experiences in the visual and performing arts, research projects in history classes requiring critical thinking, and presentation skills in many other courses. Although these skills are being practiced in the classrooms, the introduction of 21st century learning expectations prior to units of study is not widely practiced. Teacher assessment focuses mostly on unit-specific goals. Although some students have the benefit of unit-specific learning goals prior to unit study, the absence of planned access to 21st century skill development must become a common practice throughout the school to render them familiar and effective as guiding principles. (*self-study, students, teachers, student work, student shadowing*)

Teachers frequently provide students with corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments. Student work has shown use of rubrics, checklists, and scoring guidelines. For example, a biology lab report has a lengthy self-assessment and teacher evaluation rubric. Students have observed that many teachers provide them with the appropriate rubrics. According to the self-study, approximately two thirds of the faculty indicates that they "always" or "frequently" distribute a rubric when assigning a paper, report, or project. Classroom observations show a wide variety of students who exhibit an understanding of what they are expected to know. Students in world language, visual arts, and restaurant and culinary careers report frequent use of rubrics in their classes. Rubrics that have been examined are course or teacher-specific. The Endicott Survey reportd 82% of students states that they understand in advance what work they need to accomplish to meet their teachers' expectations, and 75% claims that teachers use rubrics to assess their work. Although students are aware of the expectations for a summative assessment, they do not receive consistent related and purposeful reminders of their 21st century skill development. (*teacher interview, student work, self-study, students, Endicott Survey*)

In each unit, teachers employ a wide range of assessments, including formative and summative assessments. Teachers use a wide variety of assessments that include formative and summative assessments such as work sheets, projects, research papers, lab reports, CO (Core Objective) checks, writing prompts, presentations, debates, discussions, and position papers. Chemistry students have fill-in the blank check-in quizzes, lab reports with rubrics, and work sheets within a given unit. The modified biology unit on ecological footprint contains on-line surveys, work sheets, a fill-in the blank quiz utilizing word banks, and a multiple choice summative test. In a Chinese IV class, students are asked to illustrate a cartoon strip, which had new vocabulary and phrases on city living. Because of the wide range of formative and summative assessments, all types of learners are engaged and able to show what they know, and teachers know exactly how to improve student learning, ensuring as well that teachers and students are well aware of where they stand in relation to learning expectations. (*student work, students, teacher interview, teacher meetings, classroom observations, student shadowing*)

Teachers collaborate within departments informally, but regularly, regarding the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. However, a formal process for collaboration within and between departments needs to be implemented. During teacher interviews and meetings with teachers, many staff members state that they collaborate informally but that there is limited time to collaborate regularly in a formal setting. However, in the Endicott Survey, it is noted that 62% of staff members indicates that they meet formally to discuss and improve both formative and summative assessments. Faculty and staff members also indicate that there is a need to improve on collaboration among members of departments. Teachers also state that they "prefer to assess common skills" rather than use common assessments to evaluate student achievement. There is no current notable use of the school-wide rubrics, and teachers do not regularly examine these rubrics to ensure they are meeting student needs. The implementation of a formal process by which teachers

can effectively collaborate and create, analyze, and revise assessments is needed. Common assessments would ensure that all students are evaluated on whether or not they are meeting the learning goals of the course as well as the expectations put forth in the school-wide rubrics. (*assessment sub-committee, teacher interviews, teacher meetings, Endicott Survey*)

Some teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure that students revise and improve their work. Some student work shows effective feedback given by the teacher so that students may improve upon their work, and 78% of students indicates that their teachers offer suggestions on how to improve their work. However, some students state that some teachers check homework specifically for completion rather than for accuracy. They also say that, in some cases, they are "left on their own" to figure out how to solve a problem. Furthermore, another student states that she helps a friend with class work on the phone almost every night, because of the absence of feedback from the teacher during class. In other instances, teachers use CO checks, revised drafts in English class, and history and science test corrections to give students specific, timely, and corrective feedback. Providing students with feedback on their progress through the curriculum allows for correction, if needed, before summative assessment. (*teachers, Endicott Survey, BHS Assessment Committee, students, student shadowing, student work, self -study*)

Teachers regularly use formative assessment at BHS to improve student learning. During an Algebra I class, the teacher checked homework for correctness prior to starting her lesson, using both an overhead projection and table self-checks. During research projects in history and English, teachers check note cards and drafts to provide ongoing feedback to students. A student receives feedback from his art teacher regarding how to proceed with his project. The self-study states that 80% of faculty members indicates they use assessment results to modify their instruction. Consistent use of formative assessment results to drive instruction ensures that students are progressing toward desired outcomes. (*student shadow, teachers, self-study, student work*)

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, revise curriculum and instructional practices based on evidence of student learning. Teachers state that, occasionally, department meeting time is used for creation of assessment or analysis of student work and assessment results to improve instruction. Teachers use test and quiz scores in psychology to make class content information more accessible to students the next semester. Teachers state, "80% of mid-term and final assessments in science are common assessments." They also meet after mid-term exams to look at results and find mistakes. However, teachers state that there is little time allotted for in-depth examinations and revisions. Central office personnel describe summer workshops as vehicles for collegial work which only limited numbers of faculty members have taken advantage of for collaborative analysis of student work to improve instruction. In a 7-year cycle, a formal 4-year process committee evaluates curriculum with the goal of making revisions when necessary. Teachers also observe that there is often "organic" collaboration during shared lunches and department meetings when they evaluate student assessment questions. When teachers collaborate, students benefit from improved

instruction, personalization, and updated curriculum. (c*entral office personnel, teachers, teacher interview, self-study*)

Grading and reporting practices are sometimes reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. While over 80% of teachers reports that their assessments are aligned with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, 50% of staff members states that grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised. Teachers do not regularly review and discuss the school's grading practices in light of the core values and beliefs about learning. There are some teacher and course-specific rubrics and some department-wide rubrics, but the absence of department-wide rubrics across the curriculum does not support consistent grading processes within some departments and across curricular areas. However, in the science department, teachers have begun to revise grading practices by having three or four teachers evaluate the same piece of student work and discussing the outcomes. In 2009-10 academic year, school constituencies did work together to develop policies regarding the scope of homework assigned over school vacations and for adding plusses and minues to the letter grade system. Ensuring that grading and reporting practices are reviewed and revised on a regular basis, leads to consistency and equity when evaluating students. (*self-study, Endicott Survey, BHS Assessment sub-committee*)

Commendations

1. The number and variety of teacher-based assessments

2. The implementation of various programs and measures that remedy inequities in student achievement

3. The great extent to which unit-specific learning goals are communicated consistently to students

4. The extent to which teachers use formative assessment to adjust instruction and improve student learning

5. The wide-spread use of formative assessment in classes that helps teachers adjust instruction and gives students feedback about their learning

Recommendations

1. Use school-wide rubrics throughout the school to formally assess student and school-wide progress toward mastering the BHS 21st Century Learning Expectations

2. Make 21st century learning expectations explicit to students and their families and regularly communicate each student's progress towards achieving them

3. Provide time for formal teacher collaboration, both within and among departments, on assessments and assessment practices

4. Meet regularly to align grading practices within and among departments and ensure that they align with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

5. Regulary provide students with rubrics used to assess expectations, including the school's 21st Century expectations, to effectively communicate the level of work that teachers and the school anticipate.

Support Standard

5 School Culture and Leadership

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conclusions

The clear portrait of Brookline High School is one of a culture that is safe, positive, and supportive and of a community that values the mutually reciprocal values of freedom and responsibility for both students and staff. The data supports this; 91% of the students feels safe at school, and 98% of the staff feels that the culture is safe, positive, and supportive. Students participate in three student government bodies, including student council, judiciary council, and legislative council, which are responsible for putting the practice of respect, freedom, and responsibility into action, an example of which is the change in the electronic device policy which allows greater use of personal electronic devices. Three years of data compiled in a BHS School Safety and Discipline Report point to the relative infrequency of student assaults, fights, and drug infractions. Moreover, only 16% of students perceive that bullying is a problem at the school. The hallmark of the school is the thoughtful and reflective staff and students, who think about the knowledge they are constructing. Through the school's departing survey, graduating seniors underscore their high level of feeling safe and connected to the school in general. When the correct balance of freedom and responsibility is struck for students and staff members, a sense of ownership is fostered and a reflective community is maintained at Brookline High School. (*Endicott Survey, self-study, teachers, school leadership, teacher meetings, student meetings, parent meetings*)

Brookline High School offers a wide range of opportunities for personalization and individualization for students. While there is no systematic or intentional effort to guarantee that each student will be enrolled in a heterogeneously grouped core course, the majority of students will have this experience during their four years at BHS, because of the significant number of mixed level and unleveled classes available. For example, ten out of eighteen Senior English classes are designated as unleveled. Similarly, in the

Social Studies Department, there are many mixed level course offerings. Interviews with teachers revealed that, although they believe that unleveled courses work well in elective classes, they themselves are skeptical of the effectiveness of such grouping in the core content areas. In order to fully meet the standard for a guaranteed heterogeneous experience, the school must develop processes to insure that all, not just most, students are enrolled in heterogeneously grouped core classes during their four year high school experience. (*self-study, teachers, teacher interview, student shadowing, examination of student work*)

Brookline High School has a formal school-wide program which provides regular contact to connect each student with an adult member of the school community in additional to the school counselor. Beginning with the Class of 2012, grade nine students are assigned to advisories consisting of approximately twenty students, one faculty advisor, and two or three upper-class student mentors. While there is a more formal program in grades 9 and 10, juniors and seniors continue to check-in with their faculty advisor. Counselors, social workers, and nurses report that this program is effective in connecting students with teachers in the building. In addition, there are Steps to Success, African-American Scholars Program, and Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO); these are programs where at-risk or non-minority populations are provided with mentors who provide support to assist in navigating the students' high school experience. This group consists of over 150 students. However, none of these programs currently assesses and records the success of students in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, and there is no other program in the school that records or assists with the 21st century school-wide expectations for regular students. As a result of the advisory program, students are less likely to "fall through the cracks", are oriented to the school's core values, and are provided the foundations for success in the school. (*self-study, parents, school support staff, administrators, observation of advisory period*)

Throughout the academic year, there is a wealth of professional development opportunities and resources available to professional staff members at BHS. There is formal and informal collaboration within departments, typically taking place during scheduled department and professional development times, although the staff has expressed the need for more interdepartmental meetings. The student services staff members are responsible for the creation of their own professional development opportunities, and there is no formal school coordination and support of their efforts. In the past year, the counseling department has collaborated to create 504 accommodations plans, counselor recommendations, and college tours. Under the leadership of the former principal, there were professional readings available and shared in a variety of venues with all staff members. It is common for teachers to attend conferences and programs that enhance their teaching strategies in specific content areas. Professional staff members are encouraged to apply for grants through organizations such as the Brookline Education Foundation (BEF) and the Teachers and Administrators Training Fund (TATF). Outside resources are available via a number of partnerships within the community. These include, but are not exclusive to, Teachers as Scholars and the EDCO collaborative. Some staff members are concerned that the reduction in hours of the

director of professional development position will have an impact on the quantity and quality of the professional development offerings within the school. The availability of professional development opportunities provides staff members with skills, practices, and ideas to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. *(school leadership, teachers, teacher interview, self-study, district administrators)*

While there is a clear, research-based evaluation and supervision process, it is used inconsistently. All administrators have participated in a course under the auspices of Research for Better Teaching called 'Observing and Analyzing Teaching'. Additionally, in the 2010-2011 school year, a voluntary district alternative evaluation process was initiated although no one from the high school has yet opted for this route. Autonomy is freely given to teachers and school leaders at Brookline High School, allowing for a bottom-up, entrepreneurial spirit to surround best practices, and, as a result, there is little consistency across departments in the application of the current evaluation process. For instance, a science teacher claims not to have been evaluated for three years whereas a math teacher maintains that his department chair has observed him for three days in a row. Moreover, there is ambiguity surrounding the process used for evaluation of department chairs. Although there is some evidence to substantiate the claim that faculty and staff members convene regularly, share openly, and find areas of common and best practice to improve student outcomes, there is also a clear sense among teachers that more attention needs to be paid to the timelines and consistency of the supervision and evaluation process. Until there is consistent and timely application of research-based supervision and evaluation processes, the school will have little impact on purposeful improvement of student learning. *(self-study, teacher interview, teachers, central office personnel*)

Students benefit educationally from a late start to the school day. Formal classes begin at the school at 8:20 AM. As a result, students have the opportunity to establish a sleep schedule more in-line with the educational research on the teenage brain. Recently, the school also changed from a more traditional block schedule to one that incorporates one 20-minute block into the schedule for each course. There is a creative use of a "Z" and "X" block in the school. The purpose of Z block is to allow students access to academic support. Students interested in supplementing their schedule with an additional class may also use it for that; X block is a time set aside for clubs, activities, and homework support. Teachers report having time to meet and collaborate professionally as a department but not inter-departmentally. Although the department meets only twelve times a year. The assistant housemaster develops the master schedule with assistance from the department leaders in the building. It is not clear that a review of the master schedule has taken place using the lens of how the current schedule supports the school's core values and learning beliefs. By design, the programs Opportunity for Change and EXCEL provide opportunities for students who were better served by a school program offering an alternative schedule. The current organization of time supports instruction and limited collaboration among teachers. (*teachers, administrators, self-study, students, school documents, observations*)

The class sizes at Brookline High School optimize the ability of teachers to personalize the educational experience of students in their classroom. The average teacher has 73.9 students on their caseload each year. The visual and performing art departments' caseloads are higher due to the nature of their courses. Most students are engaged and feel supported by their teachers. A reason for the success in maintaining these caseloads is the "Four Plus One" program in the areas of math, science, social studies, and world language, where academic teachers teach four classes and are assigned one academic duty. (*self-study, teacher interview, student shadowing*)

The principal, who recently vacated this position after a 19-year tenure, provided instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. In the Endicott Survey, 80% of staff members agrees with this statement, and 76% of students maintains that the principal is clear about what he wanted the school to accomplish for all students. Brookline High School is currently in an interim phase, having lost a vibrant and well-respected principal who avoided the title of instructional leader, opting instead to describe his job as hiring great teachers and getting obstacles out of their way. He preferred to think of all teachers as instructional leaders, giving them autonomy while holding them accountable. This philosophy, with its accompanying well-known mantras of *freedom and responsibility* and *hard work over time*, is deeply woven into the fabric of the culture of the school for staff and students alike. Through the formal vehicles of BHS Faculty Council and a 22-member administrative council, a shared decision-making process enables staff members and building based leaders to shape policy. Their input relates to several issues, such as the possible formation of a senior portfolio project, scheduling, and elective requirements. Additionally, the following programs point to an intentional alignment with the core value of high achievement for all: the African-American Scholars Program, whose improved MCAS scores support its efficacy, the BHS Tutorial Program, the elimination of the basic level of classes that raises academic rigor for all, and the Four Plus One initiative, relieving core subject area teachers of a class and allowing them further flexibility to support students. Thus, the principal has incorporated the best thoughts of many to provide a shared instructional leadership. Further, as an example of shared informal leadership and a decision made with 21st century learning expectations in mind is the case in which a dance instructor fashioned a technology survey and used the results to effect change in operating procedures. Thus, the model of strong principal leadership and both formal and informal shared instructional leadership rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations allows for the intentional support of these driving forces. (*self-study, teachers, teacher interview, central office personnel, school leadership, self-study survey*)

The principal uses the PTO and other stakeholder bodies as sounding boards for ideas and also to receive feedback on questions and concern from the community. In a PTO meeting, the principal, acknowledged that this body assists in tangibly addressing challenges that face the school. Members of the PTO have acted as members of the hiring committees in recent years. Teachers are invited to submit questions to their department leader that they would like asked of teacher applicants. The BHS Judicial Council, BHS Legislature, student council, faculty council, administrative council, and support staff council, all provide a significant number of opportunities for students, and faculty and

staff members to have a voice in the school. During the 2009-2010 academic year, the school legislature was instrumental in the development of a BHS Homework Policy over Vacation and Holidays and in the addition of plus and minus grades (A+/A-) to the grading scale. Teachers, students, and parents have an opportunity to be involved in some meaningful decision-making that promotes responsibility and ownership. (*PTO minutes, BHS Handbook, Endicott Survey, administrators, department chairs*)

At Brookline High School teachers initiate, lead, and advocate for the support of a plethora of programs that improve the school and increase student engagement in learning. The 21st Century Fund provides opportunities to high school staff members to pilot projects and to receive seed money to explore them. Some of these projects that have been actualized are: the African-American Scholars Program, which elevates and supports students of color to achieve academic success; the Teachers Mentoring Teachers Program, which supports and retains a world-class faculty at BHS; the Good Citizen in a Good Society Senior Seminar, a cross-curricular class which promotes greater awareness of social justice and of the responsibilities of democratic citizenship; the BHS Enhanced Tutorial, which provides a more comprehensive academic network to support an even broader spectrum of students with diverse learning challenges; the Engineering by Design course, which inspires student interest in the field of engineering through a hands-on, project-based curriculum; the Arts Infusion, which builds confidence and expressive capacity in under-involved students through art activities. Of 16 model programs initiated by teachers through this fund, eight have been wholly or largely absorbed into the school's operating budget. The district Brookline Education Fund also affords many opportunities for teachers to develop innovative projects and receive grant money to implement them. Teacher initiative and leadership are manifest in such recent projects as: Social Studies Wiki, Visual Journaling: A Guide to Creative Thinking, Year Two: creating a Learning Community in the Brookline-Lesley Internship Program, the middle school transitions program, implementing effective professional development, and the EmPower Approach: A Strategy for Teaching Expository Writing. Additionally, there are many examples of teachers who have submitted proposals for school improvement, such as the solution to the adjustment of the school day to accommodate twenty extra minutes of instructional time by incorporating a daily 70 minute long block and the institution of the Green Team, a group created and run by BHS teachers that leads and encourages the school's recycling program and disseminates information about reducing use and conserving energy. Because teachers feel empowered to initiate, lead, and advocate for their externally funded programs, several important programs are in place to support students and to enhance their engagement in their own learning. (*self-study, teacher interview, teachers, student work, students, school board*)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are starting to collaborate, reflect, and engage in constructive intentional conversation in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. Although they have been identified as learning expectations for all students, teachers maintain that much discussion is needed to further define and fully embed 21st century learning expectations in all academic, civic, and social competencies. Only 53% of staff responded on the Endicott Survey that sufficient work has been done to implement and make intentional the achievement of the school's

21st century learning expectations. The agendas of the school committee and curriculum subcommittee meetings from the 2009-2010 school year reveal many items that demonstrate the district's commitment to involving stakeholders in the process of data analysis and reflection to improve academic programs and departments; some of these are a review of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), program reviews, course catalogue changes, and considerations of the implications of National Education Standards for Massachusetts and for Brookline, Yet there is little evidence that these conversations explicitly connect to implementing and ensuring that students achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. However, the current district K-12 Strategic Plan, which connects the sending elementary schools with the high school, contains as one of its four goals – Thriving in a Complex Global Society, whose intent is to prepare students with the intellectual, interpersonal, and reflective skills needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and diverse global society. It would be good for the district to be specific and name the school's 21st century expectations as part of the goals. Moreover, the deputy superintendent for teaching and learning has recently presented a draft document entitled *The Brookline Learner Learning Expectations*, which creates explicit ways for students to be active learners across all content areas and to develop the skills of creativity, innovation, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication. This document has been checked by high school coordinators, who underscore the challenges of having explicitly stated 21st century learning expectations across all content areas. The level of teacher autonomy has often been contradictory to uniformity of expectations across curriculum areas. Thus the district is trying to avoid specifying the high school learning expectations. Autonomy has been the hallmark of BHS, but the charge of the deputy superintendent for teaching and learning has been defined as one of honoring the good work that goes on at the high school while underscoring the fact that this alone does not necessarily mean that all students are well served across the board. As a result, while the school board, superintendent, deputy superintendent of teaching and learning, and principal have collaborated and reflected on how students can achieve 21st century learning expectations, this discussion has been implicit, and the school has yet to explicitly list these expectations at the high school level. (*self-study, student work, teachers, school board, central office personnel, school leadership, self-study survey*)

The impact of the principal of 19 years on the culture and learning at Brookline High School remains pervasive. Despite the lack of a formal job description for the principal, the BHS community has often articulated that the principal made a priority of teaching and learning and upholding the school's core values. His colleagues at the elementary level best describe him as a vibrant, powerful, and intellectual presence in the school. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, the principal exercised his authority to make final personnel decisions. As a result, the quality of the teachers on staff has been extremely high and the retention rate within the building is above average. The principal also worked in collaboration with the school committee and superintendent throughout the budget process and felt that once the parameters have been established he had a significant amount of autonomy about how to best allocate those resources for the next academic year. While initiatives such as Critical Friends Groups (CFG) have been cut from the program, the principal has been resourceful in supporting programs that focus on the school's learning expectations, such as the before and after-school

homework center. The principal has had adequate decision-making authority in regard to upholding and implementing the core values and beliefs of the school as these pertain to student learning. As a result, all stakeholders support the decisions made to advance the school initiatives. (*self-study, teachers, administrators, central office personnel*)

Commendations

1. The highly safe, positive, respectful culture of the school

2. The staff and students who are deliberatively highly thoughtful and reflective

3. The balance of freedom and responsibility that pervades the school

4. The student support programs that complement the connection with the counselor and advisory programs

5. The high quality professional development opportunities that are available for staff members

6. The clear process of evaluation including a voluntary alternative evaluation process

7. The starting times that are in accordance with the research-based needs of teenagers

8. The caseload and class size that meet the individual learning needs of students

9. The pervasive energetic leadership that supports innovation and that has set and advocates for high academic and social standards for all students

10. The wide variety of teacher-initiated programs that address very specific core values and learning expectations

11. A strong district strategic plan that connects the sending elementary schools with the high school and that explicitly sets the goal of thriving in a complex global society, with embedded 21st century learning expectations

Recommendations

1. Create opportunities at BHS for faculty members to explicitly discuss and implement 21st century learning expectations in a collaborative, reflective, and constructive way

2. Develop a formal job description for the principal, which clearly articulates the responsibilities as they pertain to upholding the core values and learning expectations of the school

3. Ensure that all students have the opportunity over the four years of high school to enroll in core academic classes in their high school career that are heterogeneously grouped, not simply mixed levels

4. Assess the success of the advisory program in assisting students to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations

5. Provide time in the academic calendar for inter-departmental collaboration around learning expectations and grading standards

6. Gather evidence to support how the skills acquired through professional development opportunities are applied to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment

7. Ensure the consistent use of the current process of supervision and evaluation, adhering to timelines and providing valuable descriptive feedback from research-based trained administrators for improved student learning

8. Develop a clear process of supervision and evaluation for department chairs

9. Ensure that decision-making processes are inclusive and transparent as the school moves forward and a new instructional leader is chosen

Support Standard

6 School Resources for Learning

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:

- are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum
- provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum
- ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school
- are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
- conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

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

Conclusions

The school has well-established programs that are designed to meet the unique needs of specific populations. These programs include Brookline Resilient Youth Team (BRYT), a program that transitions students with extended absences including hospitalization back into mainstream classes; Opportunity for Change (OFC), a program for regular and special needs students; African American Scholars Program (AASP), part of the initiative to close the achievement gap for African American and Latino students; Community Based Classroom (CBC), a program for the most physically disabled students; Excellence in Community Education of Learning (EXCEL), a program for special needs students in need of a more structured environment; Winthrop House, a program for emotionally fragile learners; School Within the School (SWS), an alternative program that highlights student democratic participation; and Steps to Success (STS), a comprehensive achievement program for low income students. In addition, all incoming freshmen are assigned to a guidance counselor, a dean, and a weekly advisory team that includes an advisory teacher and three 11th grade students as mentors. International students are also assigned an international advisor. BHS also communicates with Brookline elementary schools to ensure that students, especially those identified as at-risk, can be fully supported in their transition to BHS. Special education, social workers, deans, guidance counselors, and ELL high school staff members visit the elementary schools and dedicate a full day in June to review case studies and assign students to the most appropriate support systems. During the past three years, the 9th Grade Advisory

Curriculum has been improved to help ease freshmen into the school. Twice each year, students are surveyed and nearly all say they have an adult support within the school. Multiple school teams including the dean's team, special education team, ELL staff, guidance staff, and health services staff members meet regularly to discuss students of concern. Less formal discussions also take place between and among colleagues regarding such students potentially at-risk. Students deemed in need of academic support for homework completion and organizational skills are referred to the Tutorial Program. According to the Endicott Survey, 82% of the student body can identify whom they can ask for help at the school. Because Brookline High School provides a variety of intervention strategies and programs, it ensures that all students have substantial opportunities for success. (*BHS self-study; teachers; program brochures; Endicott Survey; guidance counselors; nurse; social worker; school psychologist; SPED personnel*)

Brookline High School supplies parents with information regarding the available student support services. According to the Endicott Survey, 74.3% of responding parents agrees that they are given information regarding available student support services. Every incoming freshman parent receives a phone call from their student's guidance counselor as well as the availability of an on-line website for the guidance department. In addition, there are quarterly breakfasts with parents and guidance personnel, junior class parent meetings, and a formal letter as regularly scheduled means to inform parents. There is also a night college meeting for the senior class parents. This is in addition to extensive email communication between guidance counselors and parents. The health professionals send a school health brochure to the parents, in addition to individual health care plans and family consultations. As well, they post pertinent information and forms on the health page of the school website. There are quarterly reports updating progress on IEP goals, annual review meetings with parents, and comprehensive academic and psychological evaluations every three years, which inform parents of their students' current status. Because Brookline High School parents are well informed regarding the available student support services, there is equity of opportunity to access these services. (*self-study, guidance counselors, nurses, special education personnel, quarterly report*)

Support service personnel at Brookline High School utilize technology tools to deliver a range of services. Most of these tools are utilized for reporting and tracking purposes. There is, however, an obvious need for adaptive technology for instructional use. The reporting and management tools include the use of Aspen X2 both as a school-wide reporting tool for individual education plans and 504 plans as well as providing a means to communicate with parents. In addition, guidance counselors make extensive use of the Naviance Succeed software program to assist students with career and college planning. The health clinic utilizes a software program "Health Office" to document, report, and organize clinic visit data and medication administration. The software program also maintains electronic student records to ensure safe and accurate care and practice. In addition, the Clinic utilizes X2 to provide key medical information to school personnel. The library at the school provides around-the-clock access for all students and parents via the library's webpage. Students can access the library catalog and the school's database subscriptions, as well as school-developed resources using the

library's web-page. The library provides 33 computers for student use, but demand for these computers often exceeds the capacity. There are adaptive technologies in use for speech-related support, but the staff has indicated that additional technologies are needed. Some staff members have won grants to implement adaptive technologies within their classroom, and training has taken place for future adoption of Kindles and Ipads. The special education coordinator has discussed future plans, and has details of the technology standard designed for the high school, but this has not been fully communicated or implemented. Student special needs data is accessible to all school personnel because of the commonality of X2 usage. With the utilization of "Health Office", the clinic-related data is also well managed and tracked. In addition, the library has made access to its resources equitable and extensive because of the use of the Internet and on-site computers. The school's adaptive technologies for special needs instruction is not comprehensive, however, and this could be improved with an enhanced and more comprehensive technology plan. (*self-study, special education personnel, library, guidance, and health services personnel, "Designing a Technology Standard" document from the special education department*)

School counseling services and support staff personnel meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling. Through both group and individual encounters, counselors are able to provide students with services they need to be successful 21st century learners. Counselors meet with individual students on an as-needed basis as well as through two counselor-initiated appointments each year. Budget constraints have changed the counseling department staffing, including the loss of a social worker, two guidance counselors, the coordinator of pupil support services, and a half-time psychologist as well as a secretary and the director of career counseling. The coordinator was replaced by a lead guidance counselor who is expected not only to perform administrative tasks formerly undertaken by the coordinator but is also expected to carry a caseload of students. In addition, without a coordinator, the department is now under the auspices of two deans, reducing the ability to have a single voice. This division of responsibility has impacted collaboration among department members as well as coordination of services. According to counselors, for example, each dean's office has a different protocol in place for generating 504 plans. Such differences, along with staff reductions, raise concerns that counselors will not be able to provide students with the level of service they need to be successful. Currently, counselors' caseloads of approximately 200 students include 9th and 11th graders or 10th and 12th graders. Students are assigned to the same counselor for all four years, allowing the counselor and the student to develop a solid working relationship. The school has an implemented written developmental guidance curriculum. This curriculum is disseminated to all grade levels during guidance seminars. Conducted by counselors during homeroom, this material is given in written, electronic, and verbal formats and provides educational, college, and career counseling. During these seminars, counselors introduce students to Naviance, a web-based college and career planning program. Counselors regularly communicate with students via this program in order to provide them with information regarding college, career, and post-graduation plans. Each year, the curriculum is updated to accommodate the changing needs of students and the school.When appropriate, guidance counselors refer students to school social workers based on discussions at

meetings, with parents, other counselors, or concerned faculty members. Students who are transitioning back into school after an extended absence may be referred to the Brookline Resilient Youth Team. All members of the counseling team are involved in the referral of students to community and area mental health agencies and to social service providers in and out of school. School counseling services use relevant assessment data, including the senior survey and feedback from the parents and students, to improve services. Feedback has resulted in the creation of morning coffees with representatives from various college admissions staffs, the purchase of a subscription to Naviance so that families could access information regarding the college process, quarterly parent breakfasts, and more frequent guidance presentations at PTO meetings. Because of regular contact with students and outreach to parents, the school counseling services department provides students with the tools they need to be successful in the 21st century. (*self-study; counselors; students, parents; developmental curriculum document*)

The school provides preventative health services as well as direct intervention services to the school community. The health clinic is staffed by 1.8 certified/licensed nurses. Services provided include hospital referrals, medical and psychiatric re-entry meetings, Epi-pen trainings, monthly clinical/crisis team meetings, and baseline concussion responses. The multi-building campus and the programs offered by the school does result, at times, in leaving the clinic unattended, limiting the services of a nurse for the entire population. Often the nurses are called upon to take care of the needs of students with severe physical disabilities throughout the campus. This population has increased in number over the past two years and so has the amount of time necessary for this care. In addition, nurses serve as members of clinical teams and are out of the clinic during meeting times. The clinic is adequate for privacy and confidential meetings in which to provide services. There is a private consultation room as well as other space for students to rest if necessary. All medicines and supplies are in locked cabinets. The nurses have documented processes in place for referrals to outside agencies. These vary from place to place. Students may be referred to various state and local health institutions including Children's Hospital Medical Center Adolescent Unit, Brookline Mental Health Center, Bournewood Hospital, and the Boston Emergency Services Team (BEST). The nurses also collaborate with the athletic department regarding athletic injuries, particularly head injury and/or trauma. The health services department conducts formal and informal assessments. Every person who comes to the clinic for service is assessed informally. Mandatory assessments including hearing, vision, scoliosis, height, weight, and BMI screenings are conducted. BMI data is shared with families in order to enable them to make appropriate decisions regarding their children's health. Health services advertises its various services to parents and staff through a brochure and its webpage. Services beyond assessment and critical care include consultation with families and individual health care plans. As a result, there is a wide range of supports put in place, but staffing limits full and timely access to all personnel at the high school. (*self-study; nurses; visit to clinic report*)

Library/media services are integrated into the school's curriculum and instructional practices and support independent learning. Librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure that 21st century information literacy skills (MSLA

standards) are taught across the curriculum. Currently, social studies, English, science, dance, and other classes come to the library for instruction in skills by certified school librarians. Through outreach to classroom teachers, the number of departments participating in the library program is constantly expanding. As evidenced by the 700 students visiting the library each day, it is a welcoming environment in which to pursue 21st century learning. The physical space and current staffing impact the library program negatively, however. Sightlines are poor, and there is not adequate seating for the number of students who would like to use the library at any given time. The physical space is not conducive to two classes visiting at a time, and classes sometimes must be turned away. The library support staff position has been eliminated. Tasks typically performed by support staff members, such as shelving, book processing, and checking out materials, now must be done by certified personnel, taking them away from direct instruction to students, reference services, and collaboration with teachers. The library budget is sufficient for collection development that supports the needs of students and faculty members. In order to support the independent learning needs of students, the collection includes print materials as well as an array of databases, e-books, periodicals, audio books, videos, and other items. In addition, materials to accommodate the needs of ELL and SPED students are purchased. The collection is also supplemented by borrowing materials from Brookline Public Library. Students access information from 33 desktop computers in the library. These computers are in constant use, and students must wait their turn to use them. Ten laptop computers were stolen from the library in 2011 and have yet to be replaced. Through its webpage, the library, including databases, pathfinders, and the online catalog, is available to students and parents 24/7. Librarians offer instruction in the integration of Web 2.0 tools including NoodleTools, Glogster, Google Docs, webpage construction, blogs, wikis, and VoiceThread. The library uses data to evaluate and improve services including: circulation statistics, database use, and patron visits as well as suggestion box submissions and in person patron comments and recommendations. Staff members also consult with teachers before and after their assignments in order to assess and evaluate information skills lessons and student work. The regular gathering of informal and formal assessment data allows the librarians to continually improve the program and instruction. To accommodate student demand, for example, the library increased its hours of operation by four hours a week and is open before, during, and after school. Collaboration across the curriculum and access to an extensive collection of materials in all formats help to foster the development of 21st century independent learners familiar with MSLA standards. (*self-study; librarians; technology specialist; director of technology; student work, library webpage, library statistics)*

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504, and English Language Learners (ELL) at Brookline High School are adequately supported by the special education department, guidance counselors, and the ELL department. The ELL department includes 2.5 certified ELL teachers, a .4 international student advisor, and a K-12 coordinator. Section 504 plans are written by the guidance counselors, but lack of an overall coordinator results in inconsistencies between plans of similar students. The Tutorial program has been developed to assist all students identified as having learning challenges. As reported in the self-study, the special

education department consists of a building coordinator, 21.5 licensed and certified staff members, and 31 paraprofessionals. This includes liaisons who are responsible for coordinating communication between teachers, parents, and students in reference to service delivery as well as resource availability. Team facilitators are the main contact for referrals from parents, staff members, and external sources and are responsible for chairing individual education plan (IEP) meetings, as well as writing the IEP. There is a wide variety of services for identified students including both classes and programs. The classes available are both inclusive and sub-separate models. With the inclusive model, special education co-teachers work with regular education teachers to support both special need and regular education students. Collaboration planning time between all co-teachers and their respective regular education teachers is not consistently possible due to scheduling constraints, however. There was a movement toward more inclusion models for the current school year, but continued assessment of quarterly reports and on-going discussions between faculty members and special education teachers have identified some success and some less successful efforts. Thus, the special education department is re-evaluating how to better address all students next year in regard to inclusion. The sub-separate programs provide a safe haven for identified students. As a faculty member stated, it allows them to "wrap their arms around the students" – giving the students a safe homebase which allows them to be successful. There is a concern that these programs have been stripped of key resources and have lost resources that provided career and job coaching connections as a result of the loss of staff positions. Because of the range and amount of programming, there needs to be a more cohesive connection between and among the various programs and classes. There are five specific programs (Winthrop House, ExCEL, Learning Centers, Community Based Classroom, and Pathways) in addition to the inclusive classrooms, putting a large demand on the special education staff. Special education staff members do not have an opportunity to meet regularly just among themselves as co-teachers feel it is important to participate in their content area department meetings This makes having a cohesive department identity difficult, and due to individual ideas that have developed into separate programs that are not coordinated with other departmental practices and initiatives. As a result of the wide variety of student support programs at Brookline High School, inclusive learning opportunities are available for all students. Scheduling conflicts make collaboration difficult among all co-teachers and regular education teachers, hindering their ability to deliver 21st century learning expectations. (*self-study, special education coordinator, special education personnel, ELL and guidance personnel, documented listing of service offerings*)

Commendations

1. The wide variety of intervention strategies and programs that ensures a place for all students in need

2. Communication with parents of incoming freshmen that initiates a strong connection between the school and parents

3. School-wide use of X2 software ensures that all appropriate school personnel have consistent access to IEP and 504 plans

4. The wide array of digital resources the library provides to support student learning

5. Integration of information literacy skills across the curriculum through outreach to teachers

6. The multiple avenues that communicate health clinic services to parents, staff, and students

7. The outstanding variety of separate programs in addition to effective inclusion models for special education students that allows them to successfully achieve 21st century learning expectations

8. The tutorial program that provides non-special education students with a supported environment at Brookline High School to ensure their success

Recommendations

1. Assess the current level of health staffing and its impact on service to the school community and make adjustments as indicated

2. Communicate and implement the department-wide technology plan for special education

3. Provide more computers and other technologies in the library to meet demand

4. Assess the level of staffing in guidance, guidance leadership, and related services and develop and implement plans to correct any areas of deficiency

5. Assess the staffing in the library to ensure that staff and students have appropriate access to library resources and information literacy skills instruction

6. Develop, communicate, and implement a school-wide comprehensive plan for special education needs

7. Assess the level of special education resources to assist with career and job-coaching and make adjustments as appropriate to ensure that all students are prepared for the 21st century

8. Provide sufficient formal, collaborative planning time between co-teachers and regular education teachers for inclusion programs as well as for ELL teachers and content teachers

9. Assess the level of health staffing and its impact on service to the school community and make adjustments as indicated

10. Provide adequate space in the library to accommodate the demand from class groups as well as individual use.

Support Standard

7 Community Resources for Learning

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. All professional staff actively 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 the district's governing body collectively provide dependable and sufficient funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. The budgets of the school years from 2009 to 2012 clearly indicate the sufficient funding that provides programs, services, supplies, and equipment that are paramount to the educational needs of all students and faculty members. Technology is an area in which funding needs to be appropriated in order to facilitate growth and expansion. Teachers interviewed also report that they have sufficient amounts of the instructional supplies they need to create a successful educational environment. Different foundations and parent fundraisers for programs and services, sufficient equipment, and materials and supplies regularly fund additional initiatives within the school. The school budget process is clearly defined on the Brookline Public Schools website. The school is committed to setting aside funds and planning for professional development for teachers and support staff members and it works closely with professional technology staff members to fill the needs of ever-changing technology and equipment. A full-time professional development coordinator position has now been reduced to half-time, and effective communication of opportunities is sometimes a challenge. However, there are teacher days reserved for professional development programming which is often provided by district and school staff members. As a result of town commitment and involvement and the work of numerous foundations, Brookline High School is able to sufficiently develop and fund all of the needed programs, services, staffing, professional development, equipment, and materials. (*Brookline Public School Website, self-study, teacher interview, teachers, parents, school board, department leaders, central office personnel, school leadership, Brookline School Budget, facility tour, At School in Brookline, 21st Century Fund chairperson*)

According to the pamphlet, *At School in Brookline 2011*, the 21st Century Fund is described as "…a non-profit organization founded in 1998 at Brookline High School that implements effective local solutions to national challenges facing public high schools. Parents, alumni, and philanthropists raise funds for educators at Brookline High School who imagine, design, implement, test, and share original, innovative academic programs (31)." The fund currently allocates three hundred thousand dollars per year to support the development of innovative practices. Teachers are encouraged to design curriculum and present new ways of teaching students. The chairpersons of the fund decide how the funding is allocated and collaborate with school and district leaders to align their goals. (*At School in Brookline*, teachers, school board members, 21st Century Fund chairperson)

In collaboration with the town of Brookline, the school adequately develops and funds formal and informal programs that ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, properly maintaining, cataloguing, and replacing equipment, and keeping the school clean on a daily basis. To ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, teachers are able to use a Google application where they can fill out a work order. This work order is sent to the assistant headmaster who decides if the town of Brookline or the school will deal with the issue at hand. The town of Brookline and the school divide the care of certain sections of the school and work well together. Department heads are responsible for cataloguing equipment in need of repair, and the teachers inform the department heads about equipment and needs within the department. The department heads, administrators, and facilities personnel work in tandem to decide what needs to be replaced and maintained. The custodial staff has adequate personnel, but there are no temporary staff members who can be replacements or plans to substitute for staff members for extended periods of absence. The cleaning of the school after hours is outsourced to a contracted cleaning company. Some teachers are concerned that the building's cleanliness is not optimal because of heavy use by many different community and school groups. As a result, adequate funding and cooperation between town and school departments provide facilities that support the school's instructional and co-curricular programs (*teachers, self-study, school committee members, school department budgets, school leadership, facility tour, students, parents, department leaders, Endicott Survey*)

The community frequently funds long-range plans, and the school is creating long-range plans that address program and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facilities, and capital improvements. The community is heavily involved in Brookline High School. Community members understand the challenges and needs of the school. Brookline High School anticipates a surge in enrollment and the concomitant needs for expanding technologies and reconfiguring spaces to accommodate an expected increase in the student population. Specific and comprehensive planning will be required to meet the demand. The school is fully aware of its needs, and the topics are discussed on all levels including school board members, administrators, teachers, and support staff members. Brookline High School is beginning to take steps to make the school completely wireless and have an LCD projector in every classroom. Significant additional funding will be required to implement this plan and to continue to expand the replacement of technology that is already in place. They are also looking at the physical plant of the building to see where space is available. The district has budgeted sixty thousand dollars to conduct a facilities study that will impact this planning process. When combined with sufficient funding to ensure implementation, these plans continue to drive support for teaching and learning. (*teachers, self-study, school committee members, school department budgets, school leadership, central office administrators, facility tour, students, parents, department leaders, school leadership, Endicott Survey*)

At Brookline High School the headmaster, assistant headmaster, and superintendent are actively involved in the budget process; however, a majority of department area leaders feel that they are not involved in the final decisions regarding the budget. This extends to faculty members who feel that the process is confusing and are

dissatisfied with the results. Many faculty members report being disenchanted with the paucity of opportunity for faculty input. There is a communication issue within the budget process. Faculty members are involved in the initial stages of the budget process, but its members are not updated on the status of the budget on a regular basis. Department leaders are more involved in the implementation of the budget once it is approved. There is a clear standard budget procedure. With direction from the superintendent and based on enrollment, available funds, and needs as indicated by the department heads derived from data collected from teachers, the headmaster prepares a budget. The headmaster then presents the budget to building administrators for review, and he then makes adjustments to the budget based on building administrators input. Building administrators are actively involved with implementation of the budget that is allocated to them. As a result, building administrators and the superintendent are actively involved with the budget process, and faculty members need to be extremely vocal to feel involved in the process as well. (*teachers, self-study, school committee members, school department budgets, school leadership, central office administrators, facility tour, students, parents, community members, department leaders, Endicott Survey, and Brookline Public School Department Website*)

The school site and plant are generally adequate to support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. An anticipated surge in enrollment will outstrip the capacity of existing facilities, however. First among concerns is adjusting lunches to accommodate the expected increase. Space in the library is also limited and does not accommodate the demand for classes as well as individual use. This along with additional classroom space and sufficient office and meeting space are challenges that are currently being addressed. The school itself has many spaces for non-traditional classes, extra-curricular activities, and space for students to congregate. The open space allows students ample freedom to move about while taking responsibility to be at the appointed place at the appointed time. What is now adequate may become inadequate without continued planning and reconfiguration. Current facilities support students' educational needs but continued attention to demographic changes will be critical to continue this level of support. (*teachers, self-study, school leadership, facility tour, students, parents, community members, department leaders, Endicott Survey, Brookline High School handbook, At School in Brookline*)

The school consistently maintains documentations and remains in compliance with federal, state, and local fire, health, and safety regulations. All appropriate documentation is kept in the office of the assistant headmaster, who is confident that the Town of Brookline is dedicated to keeping the school in compliance with state and federal laws. Documentation for buildings and equipment maintained by the town is located at Brookline Town Hall. A physical tour of the building reveals that equipment is in working order and is in compliance with codes. The physical education department reports the school's locker rooms need to be upgraded to ensure the health of students using them. The visual arts department, based in the unified arts building, which is one of the oldest buildings on campus, has expressed concerns with dust and mold problems, specifically in the sculpture and jewelry studios. This department also cites a problem with acoustics in the jewelry studio. While these problems might not rise up to the level

of code violations, they are health concerns that the staff would like addressed. As a result, Brookline High School maintains a physical plant in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. (*teachers, self-study, school leadership, facility tour, students, parents, community members, department leaders, school leadership, Endicott Survey, Interviews with Facilities Managers*)

The programs, services, and professional staff members always actively engage parents, connected families, and less connected families with the school. Student and teacher relationships are fundamental at Brookline High School. While more traditional methods of communicating (phone calls, for example) still are effective in putting teachers in touch with parents and guardians, emails to and from houses have helped keep lines of communication open. Teachers are actively encouraging students to be involved and keep open communication with other professionals and parents to facilitate academic success. In addition, many programs such as Tutorial, METCO, Steps to Success, School within a School, EXCEL, and Opportunity for Change improve a student's chance for a successful academic career. These programs begin with an intake interview that involves school personnel and parents. Home visits are also an integral part of checking in with students who are not being successful in school. The school uses the AspenX2 software system to communicate current academic achievement to parents and employs the ConnectEd system for mass messaging. The school and district websites also provide up-to-date information for parents. As a result, families are able to maintain close contact with the school personnel regarding their student's academic success and personal growth. (*teachers, self-study, school committee members, school department budgets, school leadership, central office administrators, facility tour, students, parents, community members, department leaders, school leadership, Endicott Survey*)

The school has extensive community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. Many programs are in place to facilitate real world experiences through community, business, and higher education partnerships. These partnerships include, but are not limited to, Harvard Medical School, translators in local hospitals, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, local auto repair shops, Bunker Hill Community College, Bay State College, Simmons College, and Boston College. Also, many area colleges and institutions also have partnerships within the school for mentoring student teachers. Colleges such as Lesley College, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston University, Tufts University, and The Museum School of Fine Arts have prospective teachers interning at the high school. This allows for collaborative work with the latest in educational theory as well as collaborative opportunities and field trips supported by these institutions. These partnerships allow students to use the knowledge that they learn in the classroom and find different paths to their future. In the career and technology education department each program, from auto technology to medical careers, has an advisory committee made up of local representatives from related industries or businesses. These committees assist teachers and instructors in reviewing current curriculum and equipment to assess their needs and usefulness with the goal of improving existing programs. Brookline Access Television, located in the united arts building, has partnered with Brookline High School. Teachers and students use the state-of the-art computer and television production studios to create classes in film, video, graphic

design, animation, and digital photography. Finally the role of parent groups, parent teacher organization, is integral in creating educational opportunities. Fundraising groups such as the Brookline Education Fund will give funding to educational projects that will also give students educational experiences. As a result, students at Brookline High School have rich experiences that expose them to a plethora of opportunities to work, learn, and perform outside the confines of Brookline High School. (*teachers, self-study, school committee members, students, parents, community members, department leaders, school leadership, Endicott Survey*)

Commendations

1. The high degree of cooperation between school and town departments to care for the Brookline High School facilities

2. Various community and parental involvement and business and higher education partnerships, which provide on and off campus educational experiences

3. The attention given to planning to address current and future issues regarding the infrastructure that supports teaching and learning

4. The wide-ranging outreach with the parents of the high school students

5. The relationship with BATV, which provides state-of the art computer and television studios

6. The use of multiple buildings to create educational opportunities

7. The students respect for the Brookline High School campus and the responsibility the take for the cleanliness of the school

8. The professional level of facilities and equipment in the performing and visual arts departments

Recommendations

1. Develop a plan to cover custodial positions when long-term absences impact staffing

2. Assess and appropriately address the concerns for health and safety issues in gymnasium and visual arts areas

3. Clearly communicate the status of the budget and associated developments throughout the entire budgeting process

4. Formally develop and implement a comprehensive facilities plan that will address projected increases in enrollment

5. Increase funding to support classroom level technology expansion and maintain and expand the current replacement cycle

6. Provide sufficient library facilities to meet the demands of students and teachers.

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 Brookline 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 Brookline High School submit routine Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports documenting the current status of all evaluation report recommendations, with particular detail provided for any recommendation which may have been rejected or those items on which no action has been taken. In addition, responses must be detailed on all recommendations highlighted by the Commission in its notification letters to the school. School officials are expected to have completed or be in the final stages of completion of all valid visiting committee recommendations by the time the Five-Year Progress Report is submitted. The Commission may request additional Special Progress Reports if one or more of the Standards are not being met in a satisfactory manner or if additional information is needed on matters relating to evaluation report recommendations or substantive changes in the school.

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

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

requirements is provided at Follow-Up Seminars offered by Commission staff following the on-site visit.

The members of the visiting committee were most appreciative of the hospitality extended to them and appreciate the assistance and candor of the entire school community as they conducted interviews, asked questions, and observed teaching and learning at Brookline High School.

Brookline High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
November 13-16, 2011

Visiting Committee

Robert Hale, Chair
Westbrook High School
Westbrook CT 06498

Richard Pearson, Asst. Chair
Medway High School
Medway MA 02053

Peter Badalament, Asst. Chair
Concord-Carlisle High School
Concord MA 01742

Meggin Ball
Dedham High School
Dedham MA 02026

Lauren Coffey
Westford Academy
Westford MA 01886

Wendell Bourne, Jr.
Cambridge Public Schools
Cambridge MA 02141

Peter Brash
Woburn High School
Woburn MA 01801

Joan Carroll
Braintree Public Schools
Braintree MA 02184

Paul Conroy
Bridgewater-Raynham Regional
Bridgewater MA 02324

Lester Eggleston
Lexington High School
Lexington, MA 02421

Johana Fawcett
Methuen High School
Methuen MA 01844

Maureen Greulich
Marlborough Public Schools
Marlborough MA 01752

Michelle Li
Somerville High School
Somerville MA 02143

James Philip
Boston Public Schools
Brighton MA 02135

Carolyn Piwowar
Billerica Public Schools
Billerica MA 01821

Minda Reidy
Andover High School
Andover MA 01810

Harriet Wallen
Lexington High School
Lexington, MA 02421

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