**New England Association of
School and Colleges, Inc.**

Commission on Public Schools

Committee on Public Secondary Schools

Report of the Visiting Team for
Northwood School

Northwood, NH

October 25, 2020 - October 28, 2020

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

The prime concern of the visiting committee has been to assess the quality of the educational program at this 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.

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

The Committee on Public Secondary School's Standards for Accreditation serve as the foundation for the accreditation process and by which accreditation decisions are made. The seven Standards are qualitative, challenging, and reflect current research and best practice. The Standards, written and approved by the membership, establish the components of schools to ensure an effective and appropriate focus on teaching and learning and the support of teaching and learning.

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values and Beliefs About Learning

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Teaching and Learning Standard

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 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. Each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define 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.

CURRICULUM

Teaching and Learning Standard

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 specific and measurable criteria for success, 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.

INSTRUCTION

Teaching and Learning Standard

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.

ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Teaching and Learning Standard

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 to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics

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 specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.

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.

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Support Standard

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 and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

3. There is a formal, on-going program(s) or process(es) 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.

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Support Standard

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.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Support Standard

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 community 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.

School and Community Summary

School and Community Summary

Northwood School is located in Northwood, New Hampshire, a small town located in Rockingham County in the southeastern part of the state. The town is situated between the seacoast region and the state capital, Concord. Northwood is a rural town that has a major thoroughfare, Route 4, running through it and is lined with many small businesses. In 2018, the population there were 4,301 residents. Northwood is a middle-class community with a median household income of $89,663. The percentage of individuals below the poverty line is 4.3 percent.

The school district is part of a cooperative School Administrative Unit (SAU), but the district is comprised of one grades K-8 school with a population of 400 students. Enrollment stability during the 2018-2019 school year was 94 percent. The school employs 39 professional staff members, teachers and specialists, and five administrators or directors including the principal, assistant principal, curriculum director, technology director, and facilities director. The school employs 28 support staff, which includes paraprofessionals and clerical staff. The student to teacher ratio is 12:1, which is slightly higher than the state average. Of the professional staff, 29 percent have a Bachelor's degree and 71 percent have a Master's degree.The teacher attendance rate for the 2018-2019 school year was 95 percent.

The makeup of Northwood School students is 95.6 percent Caucasian, 3 percent Hispanic, and less than one percent Asian and multi-racial. The free and reduced lunch rate for the school during the 2018-2019 school year was 22.8 percent but decreased to 15 percent for the 2019-2020 school year. The student attendance rate for the 2018-2019 school year was 95.5 percent. Of students, 19 percent qualify for special education services and 5 percent of students have accommodations through Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

During the 2018-2019 school year, the per pupil cost was $15,354.64. The state average for elementary and middle schools was $16,346.45.

The percentage of local resources spent on public education in 2019 was 75.32 percent. The percentage of local taxation spent on the school in 2019 was 63.76 percent.

Students have access to learning opportunities through Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS). Northwood School coordinates with local businesses and groups such as Northwood Recreation, Chesley Memorial Library, and others to facilitate awareness of and participation in activities and organizations throughout the town, increase support for the school, and promote community use of the school facilities. Students are acknowledged and recognized through awards ceremonies, the publication of honors and high honors status in the local paper, and awards presented at graduation, including academic, athletic, and social achievements.

Upon graduation from eighth grade, Northwood students attend Coe-Brown Northwood Academy, a semi-private secondary school that is also located in Northwood. Northwood School staff works closely with Coe-Brown to prepare students for the transition to high school.

In March 2020, the governor of the state of New Hampshire required all schools to move to remote learning and that order was extended through the end of the school year. During the summer, the SAU and school engaged in collaborative planning to identify options for opening the new school year in one of three models: fully on-site, hybrid, or remote. The school board determined on August 11, 2020, that the school would open remotely due to logistical and staffing considerations. The school year began on September 8 with all students learning remotely while teachers and staff work from the building. Beginning on September 14, students who receive special education or reading intervention services were invited to come to the campus for in-person services two to five times a week for anywhere from thirty minutes to four and a half hours. Beginning on September 21, grade levels were invited to the campus one morning over a two week period to participate in Laker Day, a field day-like experience where students rotate through outdoor activities that promote social-emotional learning, teamwork, and cooperation. The school is currently planning a transition to hybrid instruction where students will attend in-

person two days a week and learn remotely three days a week beginning on November 16, 2020.

Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations

Core beliefs: We are all teachers of reading, writing, and problem solving. We are all responsible for the growth of every child. We all have high expectations for our students and ourselves. Our goal is for 100% of our students to be engaged and enthusiastic learners and 90+% of our students to be proficient in ELA and math.

Values:

- Social values: Respect, responsibility, safety
- Scholastic values: Inspiration, innovation, inquiry

Learning expectations:

- Domain specific standards (national, state, or local)
- Positive behaviors
- Habits of mind

Introduction

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 three Commissions: the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS); the Commission on Public Schools which is comprised of the Committee on Public Elementary, Middle, and High Schools (CPEMHS), and the Committee on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI); and the Commission on International Education (CIE).

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public-school member institutions, CPEMHS requires visiting teams to assess the degree to which the evaluated schools align with the qualitative Standards for Accreditation of the Committee. Those Standards are:

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

The accreditation program for public schools involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the Committee's visiting team, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study, the valid recommendations of the visiting team, and those identified by the Committee 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 Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of Northwood School's professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Northwood School, a committee of 10 members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included two parents, two community members, and a member of the central office administration.

The self-study of Northwood School extended over a period of 16 school months from September 2018 to

February 2020. The visiting team was pleased to note that parents and community members joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Elementary, Middle, and High Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their alignment with the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations (vision of the graduate), and unique student population. Northwood School used Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Committee, to reflect on 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 for 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 Team

A visiting team of six members was assigned by the Committee on Public Elementary, Middle, and High Schools to evaluate Northwood School. The visiting team members spent a four-day virtual visit in Northwood, New Hampshire, School Administrative Unit #44, reviewed the self-study documents, which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The members of the visiting team represented classroom teachers, guidance counselors, school administrators, and central office administrators, so diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Northwood School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials

- a total of 10 hours of classroom observation

- virtual tours of the facility

- individual meetings with 24 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning

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

Each conclusion in the report was agreed to by visiting team consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting team are included with each Indicator in the Standards sections of the report. The seven Standards for Accreditation reports include commendations and recommendations that, in the visiting team's judgment, will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better align with Committee Standards.

This report of the findings of the visiting team will be forwarded to the NEASC Commission on Public Schools (NEASC-CPS) and specifically to Committee on Public Elementary, Middle, and High Schools, which will make a decision on the initial accreditation of Northwood School.

Standard 1 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The Northwood School community has begun to engage in a collaborative and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and articulate its core values and beliefs about learning. However, it has just begun to be informed by research-based best practices to which the school's strategic plan clearly gives direction and purpose. Titled "Inspire. Innovate. Inquire.: A Strategic Plan for More, Better, and Different Ways to Engage Life-Long Learners," this document elaborates the skills, values, and vision that form a firm foundation on which Northwood School can build its as yet unwritten core values, beliefs about learning, and 21st century learning expectations document, with the learning expectations making the transition to the school's vision of the graduate. Additionally, a document labeled "Universal Document – School Principles Statements" includes school expectations, the school mission statement, the vision statement, school guiding principles, and a community compact, all of which provide some piece of the concepts naturally included under core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate. Persistent turnover in the School Administrative Unit (SAU) and building administrators led to inconsistent implementation of existing foundational beliefs documents still posted in the school when new administrators arrived at both levels in 2016. Under this new leadership, the school recognized that these statements no longer served as a guiding force, and the school community decided to remove many of them. Northwood School then committed to articulating a new set of core values, and beliefs about learning. During the 2016-2017 school year, the school board identified the need for a cohesive, long-range plan for the district and allocated funds to support engagement in a strategic-planning process. The board formed a strategic-planning committee that met monthly during the 2017-2018 school year. As part of this process, the school rewrote the vision statement to reflect the school's commitment to preparing students for life beyond Northwood School. During the following school year, school staff and school board members engaged in activities aligned with and in service to the goals stated in the strategic plan. It was determined that the existing mission statement – "The mission of Northwood School is to inspire students to be lifelong learners. As a community we are committed to providing a safe, challenging environment that encourages all students to aspire to excellence." – continues to carry significant relevance to the school's educational purpose. Thus, the mission statement appears prominently in the school and on school documents and it supports the unwritten core values and beliefs. During the 2016-2017 school year, faculty and staff recognized that they had not defined a unified set of values that would support the development of school-wide core values and beliefs about learning. Consequently, they began to reassess and revise values and beliefs in specific areas of their work together. They reaffirmed their commitment to the social values of respect, responsibility, and safety. This led to the Community Compact that serves to guide school community members in their interactions with one another. Staff set as a foundational principle that all students can achieve at high levels and should be active and eager participants in the learning process. To that end, Northwood School began to emphasize the three scholastic values identified in the title of the strategic plan including inspiration, innovation, and inquiry as to the focal qualities they would work to cultivate in all students. Northwood School has faced one significant challenge in recent years, that is, the high rate of turnover in the professional staff. About two-thirds of the 37 professional staff members are in their first four years. Having a relatively new staff provides opportunities for fresh ideas and new energy to invigorate discussions and future planning, but disrupted momentum and continuity as the school works to develop a cohesive and collaborative school identity and develop and implement core values, beliefs, and a vision of the graduate. When Northwood School successfully 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, students will experience success in achieving the school's vision of the graduate, when established.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- facility tour
- student work

- teacher interview
- parents
- school board
- school leadership
- school website

Standard 1 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Northwood School has begun to identify and develop a challenging and measurable set of 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) for all students which addresses academic and social competencies. The school has yet to identify specific academic, social, and civic competencies or to develop specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted levels of achievement. This content exists in several documents distributed among academic departments and programs; however, Northwood School has yet to consolidate those concepts into a unified document. During the 2017-2018 school year, the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics departments wrote curriculum documents for kindergarten through eighth grades and began to use those documents to plan and guide instruction during 2018-2019. A new curriculum director began work at the school and supported faculty in confirming that academic expectations in ELA and math are challenging and measurable, and will prepare students for the 21st century. However, the school has yet to identify the broader academic learning expectations that all students need to fulfill. For example, while the staff values technology as a learning tool and wishes that all students recognize the importance of using digital tools and media to communicate, collaborate, and create, it has yet to clarify how students will show the fulfillment of this expectation. As a result of the academic, social, and civic expectations remaining undeveloped, measurable criteria to assess student success with these expectations cannot be developed at this time. As a challenging and measurable vision of the graduate for all students is created and implemented and is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement, the school will fully prepare students to achieve the school's vision of the graduate.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview
- parents
- school board
- school leadership

Standard 1 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The developing core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) are reflected in the culture of the school, have begun to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the majority of classrooms, and offer informal guidance to school policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. These guiding principles exist in a variety of documents throughout the school but have yet to coalesce into a formal set of developed core values, beliefs, and a vision of the graduate. With the development of the strategic plan during the 2016-2017 school year, the staff reasserted its belief that all students have the capacity for significant academic success. The staff identified the scholastic values of inspiration, innovation, and inquiry as forming the essence of teaching and learning at the school and found three social values including respect, responsibility, and safety, as essential to an orderly and collegial environment that provides opportunities for all to learn and achieve success. The staff selected the skills of collaboration, healthy risk-taking, self-reflection, and goal setting as desirable for its own practice. As illustrative of the healthy social order valued at Northwood School, each day begins with students and staff standing in a voluntary recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. The school visibly displays the Community Compact in a hallway and includes it in handbooks published for staff, students, and parents. The school demonstrates its commitment to respect and responsibility through involvement with community programs and activities, such as The New England Center for Children Partner Program, Autism Awareness Month, the Kindness Challenge food drives, and Jump Rope for Heart. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) encourages students' positive behaviors. Staff use posters and verbal instructions to define and instruct students in understanding behavioral expectations. Positive reinforcement of successful compliance with these expectations acknowledges students' good behavioral choices. The strategic plan supports positive behaviors by identifying social-emotional learning (SEL) goals that offer targeted behaviors to meet the social and emotional needs of Northwood School's students. The school urges teachers to pursue meaningful professional development that supports their personal interests and assignments within the school. The school board has allocated funds from a variety of sources to support professional development. Board members voted to forego their salaries for the 2019-2020 school year to fund a project called the "Unique Impact Award" that encourages teachers to try new techniques and projects. They granted $6,000 to the physical education department to purchase a traverse rock-climbing wall. Funding field trips has promoted authentic and inquiry-based learning experiences outside the school campus. Budgeting and planning procedures demonstrate the school's devotion to supporting all students in performing at a high, academic level and encourage faculty and students alike to pursue the values expressed in the strategic plan. The budget supports full-day kindergarten, suggesting the school's high standards, although state statutes bind districts to offer only a half-day program. In fact, the state does not mandate kindergarten attendance. The budget supports a full-time curriculum director. These elements were added in the 2017-2018 school year. The school strives to hire teachers who will support and promote the principles of inspiration, innovation, and inquiry, thus supporting the values expressed in the strategic plan, and supporting students in achieving at high academic levels that prepare them for life after Northwood School. Interview committees include staff who will work with the hired candidate, the curriculum director, assistant principal, and principal. The interviewers create questions designed to assess not only the candidates' classroom skills but also their passion for education and their drive to become an integral part of the school community. When interviewing to fill administrative positions, committees strive to assess candidates' intentions to challenge and support students and staff in achieving the school's vision of the graduate. Many committees work to assess and apply academic results from student work and various tests to support the values of the school. The Leadership Team takes responsibility for growing efficient systems to achieve school goals. The Universal Team focuses on modeling and promoting a positive climate and developing goals to support faculty and students in accomplishing the social-emotional standards of the school. The Technology Committee strives to apply technology in support of personalized learning and high student achievement. The Literacy Committee plans experiences to promote school-wide literacy, such as book buddies, the spelling bee, Read Across America Week, and by hosting visiting authors. The staff seeks continuous growth in student engagement with their individual educational experiences. Staff select resources and activities that tend toward the practice of the values expressed in the strategic plan. Thus, when Northwood School's core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate are completed and 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; students will experience a greater likelihood of achieving the school's developing vision of the graduate.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- school board
- school leadership

Standard 1 Indicator 4

Conclusions

The school has yet to establish a cycle for review and revision of its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities. Because the school has yet to develop core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate, it is impossible to develop the review and revision process that assesses the achievement of the school's vision of the graduate. When the school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities, student achievement of the school's vision of the graduate will be more fully supported.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- school board
- school leadership

Standard 1 Commendations

Commendation

The use of strong, existing values and beliefs, especially as defined in Northwood School's strategic plan, to guide teaching and learning

Commendation

The strategic plan, which gives a clear foundation for future development of the school's core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate

Standard 1 Recommendations

Recommendation

Define and implement a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to core values and beliefs about learning

Recommendation

Develop and implement a challenging and measurable vision of the graduate for all students and ensures each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement

Recommendation

Ensure the school's core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate 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

Recommendation

Define and implement a process to review and revise regularly the school's core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities

Standard 2 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The school has begun to build a curriculum that is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve the school's developing 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate). It continues to build its core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate, using principles and values elaborated in the school's strategic plan and other philosophic documents, following a structure established to complete and review curriculum guides for all subjects taught at the school. The school's plan includes aligning the curriculum with the New Hampshire College and Career Ready Standards (NH CCRS), the knowledge, skills, and work-study practices that students need for success in post-secondary academics or a career, and Northwood's defined expectations of positive behaviors and habits of mind. Once the curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve the school's vision of the graduate, the school can support success for all students in achieving it.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- school board
- school leadership

Standard 2 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The curriculum is being written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate); instructional strategies; and assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics. The school uses the *Understanding by Design* (*UbD*) format to construct curriculum documents and has completed and begun to use curriculum guides for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. These documents include essential questions, essential understandings, and clearly identified 21st century learning outcomes in the form of knowledge and skills for subject areas. The ELA guide uses a scope and sequence structure that supports teachers' planning and instruction. However, the school has yet to determine its vision of the graduate; therefore, the school has not incorporated that vision into the curriculum guides. Curricular documents in those subjects that have been fully developed offer a range of instructional strategies that cross such basic methods as teacher-led discussions, lectures, use of PowerPoint presentations, group collaboration, and independent work on assigned topics. These documents also include learning goals, standards for ELA and math, especially from the Common Core State Standards, sample assignments, and planning suggestions for instruction.Assessments across the curriculum take on a variety of forms, both formative and summative. They range from the simplest hand gestures to show understanding to more complex work products designed to demonstrate student understanding of content and capacity to manipulate that content for deeper learning. The amount and complexity of the approaches listed depend on the completeness of curriculum documents. Clearly, however, teachers take a balanced approach to building assessments to measure the success of teaching and learning. Teachers developed course-specific rubrics for some courses, but they have not yet embedded them in the curriculum documents. While some degree of measurable criteria and tools for measuring achievement exists within departments, two significant elements of assessment remain undeveloped. No rubrics exist to assess student achievement of the school's vision of the graduate because that vision remains undefined. The school completed the English language arts and mathematics curricula during the 2017-2018 school year and used those documents to guide instruction during the 2018-2019 school year. Documents for other disciplines remain at various stages of development. The alignment of the science curriculum with the Next Generation Science Standards has begun, having started when the New Hampshire Department of Education adopted them in November 2016. In January 2018, the education department began the development of new standards for social studies and staff began revisions of the social studies curriculum during the 2019-2020 school year. Development of the social studies curriculum will continue as the state completes the New Hampshire Curriculum Framework for Social Studies Standards. Committees have begun a review of Spanish and the areas of the related arts of art, health, music, and physical education. Ultimately, the school decided to discontinue offering its own Spanish courses in order to increase the number of mathematics teaching slots. Two clear objectives exist for future work in writing the curriculum. First, the school will complete its move to a standards-based structure, with vertical alignment in all content areas, and the second includes plans to create specific, measurable criteria from which to design rubrics to measure student progress toward mastering the yet-to-be-created vision of the graduate. Once the curriculum is written in a common format for all content areas that include units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's vision of the graduate; instructional strategies; assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics; educators will work from common documents to provide students with equitable learning experiences.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- students

- parents
- school board
- school leadership

Standard 2 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, and some cross-disciplinary learning and authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, as well as the informed and ethical use of technology. The school applied Webb's Depth of Knowledge model to guide the design of the English language arts and mathematics curricula. In English language arts, the documents emphasize the analysis and production of written documents in varied formats, and the use of language to develop effective arguments that encourage higher order thinking. Language skills cross disciplinary boundaries in expecting students to apply their language abilities to solve problems and explain their problem-solving logic to teachers and peers. The mathematics documents emphasize students' ability to interpret problems, to persist in solving them, to construct logical and effective arguments to solve the problems which support other students in their efforts by offering sensible critiques of their work. Cross-disciplinary work is in the planning stages for science and social studies curricula. Science curriculum documents will emphasize the Standards of Scientific Practice. Social studies work will stress interaction with physical and cultural environments. The curriculum in these two disciplines will emphasize the skill of transference, learning to recognize how and when content and concepts apply in more than one discipline. As part of this process, teachers will place progressively greater emphasis on students' application of evidence to support their thinking as they help others to understand the logic applied to their problem-solving and analysis activities. The integration of technology has become more successful as Northwood school has achieved one-to-one access to devices throughout the school, with all disciplines using technology as appropriate. Faculty emphasize the appropriate, ethical use of technology, helping students to understand the risk-benefit relationship while emphasizing expectations for handling information appropriately. Students have some authentic learning experiences. They participate in field trips to the New Hampshire State House, museums, science centers, local theaters, the Merrovista Science Camp during the sixth grade, and Washington, D.C. in the eighth grade. Visitors to the school include docents from the University of New Hampshire Marine Lab, a local maple syrup producer and a cider maker, an entomologist, and an animal rescue expert. Grange members supply third graders with free dictionaries, and third graders had a visit from a meteorologist. Within the school and across departments, grade level teachers organize projects, making use of technology to encourage student investment in the work. Such projects encourage and allow students to practice collaboration and presentation skills. The full development and implementation of a curriculum that emphasizes the 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; and informed and ethical use of technology, will benefit all students' achievement of the school's vision of the graduate and enhance teaching and learning.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- student work
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school leadership

Standard 2 Indicator 4

Conclusions

In those areas in which a written curriculum exists, teachers work to create clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum. Teachers make increasing use of professional learning community (PLC) meetings to discuss and plan ways to clarify the goals and purposes of varied aspects of the curriculum to make connections. Discussions probe such aspects of the written curriculum as is the intent of the elements in the documents, and how staff can apply teaching practices to support student learning of the content and skills. Teachers share practices designed to ensure that what they teach in the classroom aligns with the written documents. Students make presentations about learned material, and comparison of student work products supports the alignment of the written and taught curricula. For example, different classes may study various Native American tribes and their cultures, but the principles, skills, and applications of learning remain consistent from class to class. The movement toward standards-based instructional practices that emphasize proficiency, supports the alignment of the written and taught curriculum through students meeting established proficiency targets. As content area departments develop new curricular documents, ensuring alignment between the written and taught curriculum is ongoing. The annual curriculum review cycle regarding implementation, revision, and monitoring progress in each part of a content area will support alignment, with an ultimate five-year cycle leading to the assessment of needed changes for the overall program. Once there is a clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum in all content areas, all students will have greater assurance of achieving the school's learning goals.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- student work
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- school leadership

Standard 2 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among most academic areas within the school as well as with the receiving school has begun to expand. The addition of a full-time curriculum director has enhanced the structure and coordination of curriculum work. Curriculum examination and revision happens consistently throughout the year. Curriculum committees meet regularly during the school year, and the budget and grants support summer curriculum work. Grade-connected groups and monthly professional learning communities then study and discuss the documents produced to generate feedback and updates. The curriculum director promotes vertical alignment within the school and with Coe-Brown Northwood Academy, the receiving high school for Northwood School students. The school uses detailed English language arts and mathematics documents to build connections among the various levels. Alignment of these curricular documents with the New Hampshire College and Career Ready Standards (NH CCRS) has strengthened Northwood School's vertical articulation with schools throughout the region and state. Several elements of the curriculum remain under development in other departments. When there are effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas, as well as with the receiving school, all students will have the opportunity for high-quality content experiences.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- student work
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school leadership

Standard 2 Indicator 6

Conclusions

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to implement fully the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. Class sizes range from 15 to 25 students among the twenty-four classroom teachers, five related-arts teachers, one reading interventionist, five special education case managers, and one speech pathologist, who support the curriculum. The school provides any professional services not available from full-time staff through contracts with outside agencies or providers. These services include additional speech pathology and special education, occupational therapy, physical therapy, school psychology, and behavioral consultation and support services. Twenty-eight paraprofessionals provide support for students to access the curriculum in general education, special education, Title I, reading intervention, and library services. The technology budget supports a variety of technical resources available to students, faculty, and staff to support the curriculum. The school issues laptops to all teachers and paraprofessionals. All classrooms have SMART Boards and many classrooms have document cameras. Students in grades three through eight have dedicated, one-to-one devices, while students in kindergarten through grade two have access to shared carts of laptops, Chromebooks, and iPads. Due to remote learning, all students currently have assigned devices, at least for the period during which remote learning will occur. The school subscribes to several software services to which students have access as they are age-appropriate and related to content areas to support the curriculum. Students and staff have sufficient materials and services to meet curricular and program needs. The facility provides adequate classroom and other program spaces to support the curriculum. Only health classes do not have a dedicated classroom. Thus, health teachers travel. Service providers such as counselors and interventionists have dedicated spaces that they share at times. The school's gymnasium houses physical education classes, after-school athletics, assemblies, and performances. There is a substantial variety of clubs, sports, and activities, most of which receive support in the operating budget including stipends for the club facilitators, as well as materials necessary for projects or activities. The athletics program offers soccer, cross-country, basketball, and baseball or softball. After-school clubs include Homework, Spanish Legos, Bananagrams, Drama and Glee clubs, Gardening, and a community-service club called Act Up! Act Out! A Title I grant funds the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) club. Sixth and eighth graders participate in overnight, experiential learning trips, with grade six attending Marrowvista, a science camp, and grade eight traveling to Washington, D.C. Students in other grades share day trips. In addition to field trips, visiting authors and artists offer experiential learning. Each year, the school hosts an artist-in-residence, supported through the budget, to work with one or more grade levels on a project. The literacy committee holds a Scholastic Book Fair fundraiser to support bringing a visiting author to the campus. Other educational opportunities have included Marine Docents from the University of New Hampshire visiting fourth-grade classes, two weeks of personal safety training by a local outreach organization, DARE instruction from the local police department, fire safety instruction from the local fire department, and occasional guest speakers on a variety of topics to support learning. Because staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient, the school can fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- student work
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school leadership

Standard 2 Indicator 7

Conclusions

The district provides the professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. The curriculum director holds a strong focus on standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment to develop a clear direction. She has the primary responsibility for providing instructional coaching, designing and delivering professional development, enhancing curriculum documents to reflect the standards-based focus, identifying resources for strengthening the curriculum, and administering grants that support the school's curricular goals. The curriculum director collaborates with teachers at all grade levels through professional learning communities (PLCs) that meet three times per month. During remote learning, PLCs meet fewer times but meeting lengths have increased. Two of those meetings bring together teachers within grade levels. The other PLC meeting blends teachers across grade levels. Each year, the operating budget contains funds to pay stipends for curriculum development. Teachers may collaborate during the summer months to review and revise curriculum documents or to study best practices for the delivery of instruction that supports the new standards-based focus for teaching and learning. At the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, the school calendar contained nine professional development days to adjust procedures to meet remote learning needs. The typical school year will contain six professional development days scheduled at various points during the year, often three to start the year and three days spread strategically. The budget supplies funds for professional development and three professional development days that teachers may use at their discretion to attend research-based workshops or graduate-level classes. Teachers participate in the Bridges program to ensure coordination of curriculum with other middle schools in the region, and vertical alignment with Coe-Brown Northwood Academy, the high school that Northwood School students attend. Because the district provides the professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources, there can be ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- student work
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school leadership

Standard 2 Commendations

Commendation

The clear standards-based focus for the development of curriculum documents

Commendation

The construction of a clear, purposeful, and common curricular format using *Understanding by Design*

Commendation

The use of tools such as Webb's Depth of Knowledge model to guide curriculum development

Commendation

The variety of out-of-school authentic learning experiences offered to students

Commendation

The school's participation in the Bridges program to ensure coordination of curriculum with other middle schools in the region, and vertical alignment with Coe-Brown Northwood Academy

Standard 2 Recommendations

Recommendation

Complete the design and implementation of a curriculum that is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve the school's vision of the graduate

Recommendation

Ensure all curricula in all content areas are written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's vision of the graduate; instructional strategies; and assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics

Recommendation

Ensure the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through cross-disciplinary learning and authentic learning opportunities in all subjects

Recommendation

Ensure alignment of the written and taught curriculum

Recommendation

N/A

Standard 3 Indicator 1

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices are examined to some extent to ensure consistency with the school's core values and beliefs; however, they have yet to be examined concerning the 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) as they have yet to be created. Administrators and teachers examine instructional practices for alignment to the curriculum standards and the school's formal supervision and evaluation process. They examine instructional practices for coherent design in Domain I, Preparation and Planning, and in Domain III, Instruction. Teachers can work directly with the curriculum director to hone instructional strategies and teachers sometimes discuss instructional practices during planning meetings and professional development. When the school's core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate are fully developed, teachers' instructional practices can be continuously examined for consistency with them.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- school leadership

Standard 3 Indicator 2

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices include personalizing instruction; sometimes 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; and integrating technology; however, because the school's 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) are not developed, they have yet to be supported through instructional practices.

Students receive personalized instruction in a variety of ways. For example, some students may use online resources such as IXL for math to target needs. Students receive targeted interventions based on data during the "What I Need" (WIN) block. Progress is reviewed and student groupings may change as needs change. In classes, sometimes students are grouped based on need so that instruction can be personalized for the small group.

Students engage in some formal and informal cross-disciplinary learning. Teachers incorporate various content areas into their own classes to enrich lessons, mostly by happenstance. Occasionally, teachers work together at the middle level. For example, the science teacher may work with the English teacher to have students create written pieces in English using science concepts or related arts teachers may collaborate in planning a unit. The fifth-grade teachers create cross-disciplinary lessons by the unit. As the curriculum is being written, the plan is to have science and social studies teachers engage in some cross-disciplinary work and as project-based learning is developed and integrated, more cross-disciplinary work may evolve.

Students are engaged as active and self-directed learners in several ways. In a first grade class, to hone organizational skills, the teacher instructs students to retrieve their own whiteboard, pen, and eraser. Independent activities are embedded within whole-group Google Meets instruction such as filling out a science graphic organizer or having independent reading time. In a physical education class, students have choices of physical activities on a bingo board. They complete their physical activities asynchronously/independently from Google Meet. In a seventh-grade math class, the teacher directs students to complete a set of problems on division of fractions and then to email the solutions to the teacher when completed, so she can respond with feedback. Teachers record some lessons so that students can watch them asynchronously and use them for review as necessary before discussing them with the class as a whole. In a second grade assignment, learners brainstorm writing ideas using a graphic organizer, then choose their topics.

Teachers emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking to varying degrees. Casual student discourse circles back to ideas of metacognition. For example, one learner discusses checking out a new video-game on YouTube and does research. Another who says she is good at gymnastics is encouraged to recognize that she practices and learns new skills to achieve excellence. In a seventh grade ELA class, the educator asks students to list the details they understand or recall about Greek myths to activate prior knowledge. Second graders extend their thinking by selecting one of two choices and justifying the reasoning for their choice. In a fourth-grade science project, the teacher challenges students to invent an animal and extend their thinking to explain all facets of the animal in detail, including how structural features would help the animal find food and survive in the animal's biome.

Students have opportunities to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. Teachers are beginning to incorporate more project-based activities into the curriculum to develop the application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. In a fifth grade cross-disciplinary unit, students combine research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills with the authentic task of creating solutions for a real-world environmental problem. Learners display and explain some projects for parents and other audiences, such as a fourth-grade exhibit with artifacts and another on habitats. In an information technology unit, the students create a professional resume on Google Docs and then tailor it to highlight individual skills and strengths. As a culminating activity, each student sits for a mock interview administered by staff members who act as prospective employers. In a first-grade math lesson,

students create a number sentence that adds to 12, then write a story to prove the number sentence to a partner. When completed, learners paint a picture to match their story.

Students sometimes engage in self-assessment and reflection. Most teachers use rubrics and many times teachers ask students to complete a self-assessment or reflection on their work by using the rubric or comparing their work against it. Students in a science class use a self-assessment tool that directs them to remedial resources for concepts they missed. In a physical education class, learners complete a reflection about their physical activity choices. In an art class, students choose whether to draw a gem, crystal, or geode. At the end of the multi-day lesson, students complete a self-reflection. All students put projects into a slide show, and peers choose one project to critique. In a guidance assignment, students self-reflect and complete research options for college and career choices. In a social studies assignment, students use a rubric to help them self-assess when writing an opinion about a leader in the civil rights movement.

All teachers integrate technology. Northwood is a 1:1 school with grades 3-8 students using Chromebooks and lower grades students using iPads. During fully remote learning, all students are connected and use synchronous and asynchronous learning during the school day. Students and staff continually explore methods of using technology to enhance learning. During one class, without being prompted, some students find supporting information on Google that they find personally fascinating and share it with the class. In a math class, students engage in a review for a test by playing Jeopardy and using Pear Deck. In a science assignment, students create a video showing their understanding of the lunar phases in relation to the earth and present it to peers.

Because teachers' instructional practices include personalizing instruction; 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, and integrating technology; further engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning will enhance students' educational experiences and broaden their scope of knowledge.

Sources of Evidence
- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- school leadership

Standard 3 Indicator 3

Conclusions

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, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Most teachers use formative assessment, especially during instructional time, to meet the needs of each student by adjusting instruction through the use of a mini-lesson or helping students individually or in small groups. If necessary, the entire class receives additional instruction. Some formative assessments include teacher observations, exit tickets, assessments from purchased programs in English and math, surveys on Google Forms, Freckle, Kahoot, cold calling, and think-pair-share. In a kindergarten class, students use whiteboards that they can hold up for the teacher to do a quick scan of understanding on Google Meet. Strategically differentiating is a common practice across grade levels. Teachers use choice for students as a simple level of differentiation and to generate interest. Learners may use texts or books at various reading levels on the same topic, present or receive information with auditory and visual media, listen to books on tape, use reading buddies, meet in small groups or as individuals for reteaching or support, or meet in small groups or as individuals to extend thinking when students need enrichment. Most teachers purposefully organize group learning activities to complete projects, assignments, performances, or other activities, grouping students in a variety of ways. Sometimes teachers group students heterogeneously to ensure a mix of instructional levels. At times, they group students according to need. Other times, students may choose their own groups to develop responsibility for actions with their peers and increase agency. Many teachers provide additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. For example, if students struggle, the teacher may form a small group to reteach a portion of the lesson or provide additional help while other students work on an activity. Sometimes teachers provide a tool to help students, such as a graphic organizer or a differentiated activity like a different level reader. During remote learning, teachers also use the asynchronous time to meet with students and help them. Thus, teachers adjust their instructional practices by using formative assessment, especially during instructional time, strategically differentiating, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom to help them in meeting the needs of each student.

Sources of Evidence
- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- school leadership

Standard 3 Indicator 4

Conclusions

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 teachers and supervisors and less so from students and parents; examining current research; and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Teachers use student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments including but not limited to Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) in reading and math, Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) reading and math, running records, observations, do nows, exit tickets, quizzes, tests, written prompts, projects, and IXL. By looking at the results, teachers adjust instruction by reteaching, grouping students who need additional work, and/or working with individual students to name a few. In kindergarten, teachers administer the NWEA three times per year to compare student results, determine progress, and adjust instruction for learners. Teachers regularly examine student work, although a formal protocol is not in place. Individual teachers review student work to determine progress and the support that individuals or groups of students may need. During PLCs, teachers may work collaboratively to review a piece of student work. For example, fourth-grade teachers review a piece of writing to grade as a baseline while looking for the concepts that students used to show understanding. Teachers use feedback from other teachers and supervisors and less so from students and parents. Teachers confer with each other regularly to discuss students, curriculum, and instruction and overcoming challenges, particularly during remote learning. Teachers confer with students and some teachers have surveyed students in the past to collect information about instruction, learning styles, and the classroom environment. Individually, teachers can request working with the curriculum director to improve instructional practices. Teachers receive feedback through the teacher evaluation process to improve instructional practices. Teachers graciously welcome others into their classrooms to generate discussions about instruction or lessons. A formal peer observation program exists; however, the frequency of its use varies. Some teachers administer surveys or confer with students and parents and ask for feedback on a variety of topics that may not always be related to improving instruction. Teachers sometimes examine current research. Staff may suggest books of possible interest to colleagues or administrators will offer suggestions based on current situations or challenges for staff to read individually or as a group. For example, the staff is currently reading and discussing *The Distance Learning Playbook*. In the past, staff in a book group discussed research-based instructional practices. The library media center houses a professional library and adds books fairly frequently. The principal's weekly newsletter provides links to professional articles that administrators or staff have recommended. Teachers engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Professional learning community groups meet three times per month, either by grade level or vertically, and have discussions of how to enhance and provide a variety of instructional methods connected to student learning styles. Teachers meet during common planning time by grade levels or grade level spans and may discuss curriculum and instructional practices and plan units or activities. Related arts teachers have some common planning time, but less than grade level teachers due to scheduling constraints. To extend the work done at Northwood, seventh and eighth-grade teachers meet with Coe-Brown Northwood Academy teachers during the school year to discuss several topics including curriculum and instructional practices for articulation and easing the transition for students. Although teachers, individually and collaboratively, use student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments; examine student work; use feedback from a variety of sources, including teachers and supervisors; examine current research; and engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, feedback from parents and students will further enhance improving instructional practices.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- central office personnel

- school leadership

Standard 3 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices through multiple means. The state requires teachers to complete 75 hours of professional development every three years for recertification. However, many teachers want to maintain their expertise and look for content to expand their knowledge. Within the school and district, teachers have multiple ways to access formal professional development. The school calendar typically contains six professional-development days. Teachers can use days for any type of professional practice, mandated training, curriculum work, or areas of interest. The district offers multiple activities in which teachers can participate outside of the designated professional days. Teachers also have access to $300 per year for professional development workshops or memberships, and three professional days and tuition reimbursement for up to two graduate courses per year. Sometimes teachers can access grant funds for professional development or resources. The SAU sponsors a mentoring program for teachers who are new to the district for the purpose of improving instruction, classroom management, and knowledge of procedures and processes. The district requires mentees to observe the mentor. The principal's weekly newsletter has various resources, people to approach, links, articles, and webinars that she or others want to share, and that staff can access. As a result, teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- central office personnel
- school leadership

Standard 3 Commendations

Commendation

The personalized instruction provided to students in a variety of ways

Commendation

The efforts of the staff and students to ensure the successful integration of technology to promote learning for all students during the Covid 19 pandemic and fully remote learning

Commendation

The use of formative assessment, especially during instructional time, to adjust instruction and meet the needs of students

Commendation

The opportunities to engage in professional discourse to improve instruction

Commendation

The use of data from formative and summative assessments to improve instructional practices

Commendation

The variety of options provided to teachers to maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices

Standard 3 Recommendations

Recommendation

Develop and implement cross-disciplinary learning at all grade levels

Recommendation

Increase the use of parent and student feedback for improving instructional practices

Standard 4 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The professional staff has yet to employ continuously a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics. The school has several identified sources from which to develop their vision of the graduate but has yet to identify and establish formal, specific school-wide academic, social, and civic competencies and corresponding measurements. Once the vision of the graduate and specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics are established, the professional staff can employ a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school's professional staff has yet to communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) to students and their families, or the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) to the school community. The school has yet to establish a school-wide vision of the graduate and corresponding measurements. Therefore, the staff has yet to be able to communicate students' progress. Once the learning expectations and corresponding measurements are developed and implemented, the school's professional staff can communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's vision of the graduate to students and their families, and the school's progress in achieving the school's vision of the graduate to the school community.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Sometimesprofessional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify respond to inequities in student achievement in some content areas. Teachers use a number of commercial and standardized tests to assess student achievement in some academic areas, primarily English language arts and mathematics. Test data includes results from Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) in reading and math, Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) data in reading and math, and New Hampshire State Assessment System (NH SAS) testing data, which places a dominant emphasis on English language arts and mathematics. The NH SAS program has begun to assess student work in science but, as yet, data is limited. Other academic areas often go unexamined due to a lack of available examinations. Professional staff, including teachers and relevant support staff, use data gleaned from unit assessments that academic departments create to identify trends in data, to discuss achievement of individual students for placement purposes, and to make instructional decisions about how to modify curriculum and how to change instruction. Teachers collect little information to make such assessments in the other academic areas, although teachers have begun to develop some assessments at the local level for these other academic areas. When professional staff collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify inequities in student achievement, all staff will be better able to create plans to support student learning and ensure that all students receive a balanced educational program.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate unit-specific learning goals to students but have yet to relate 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) on which to examine student learning. Administrators provide teachers with training in writing rigorous, measurable learning goals that teachers are expected to post, to use to guide instruction and to use in the assessment of student achievement of curricular goals. Teachers write goals in age-appropriate formats. Administrators expect teachers to match formative and summative assessments to the appropriate learning goals. Teachers and administrators discuss the presence and quality of posted goals, how teachers assess student achievement of the goals, and whether students succeed in achieving these goals. Because the school has yet to create and implement its vision of the graduate, teachers cannot post and provide instruction on how students can achieve the school's vision of the graduate. Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate the related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed; therefore, when teachers communicate the vision of the graduate goals to be assessed, students will have opportunities to achieve them.

Sources of Evidence
- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 5

Conclusions

Before summative assessments, most teachers provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement. At the end of units, many teachers develop rubrics specific to the summative assessment. Individual teachers may develop a rubric for the summative assessment, such as in a month-long science unit in which students create an imaginary animal and its biome to demonstrate content knowledge. All fifth graders participate in a project that includes a rubric for the summative assessment. In most cases, students use the rubric as a guide for their performance, and in many cases, as a self-assessment of their work. Teachers have begun to develop content-specific rubrics, but have yet to create school-wide rubrics such as a writing rubric for use across the curriculum. Some teachers have adapted course-specific rubrics to fill this need. For example, during professional learning community meetings (PLCs) conversations have begun about the use and adaptation of rubrics developed in other disciplines for similar tasks among disciplines. Some teachers have begun to use assessment devices shared in open resources. Many teachers have begun to provide students with checklists and exemplars to support students with their work, especially with writing assignments. When, before summative assessments, all teachers provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement, students will understand better how to achieve successful performances on summative assessments.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 6

Conclusions

In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Teachers use formative assessments such as do-nows, entrance and exit tickets, individual slate responses, observation during small group or partner discussions, student conferencing, brief quizzes, and review of student work to determine students' understanding of skills and concepts. The use of other tools and strategies for formative assessment varies depending on teachers' grade levels and content areas. Many teachers use data collected by online practice programs for formative assessments of students' learning. Examples of these programs include Freckle Education, IXL, and Xtra Math. Teachers use the data gained from these formative assessments to respond to student needs at the moment, to plan future instruction, to group students by instructional levels, and to identify concepts with which students require reteaching or additional practice. Summative assessments vary by teacher and grade level. Examples of summative assessments include chapter tests, essays, projects, presentations, videos, and various performance tasks. Teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments in most units of study, enabling them to adjust instruction as needed.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including some common assessments. Teachers and relevant support staff meet during bimonthly professional learning communities (PLCs) and in scheduled team meetings. At times, the agenda includes a review and discussion of formative and summative assessments. Content area teachers use the same types of formative and summative assessments. Some of the assessments are teacher-created; others are materials from content area programs or software assessments. Some teams have worked on interrater reliability through collaborative or blind scoring of student work for consistency in understanding the results of formative and summative assessments. Vertical PLC groups sometimes include discussion of common reporting practices across grade levels on their agendas and are creating a common writing rubric. Because the school is small and sometimes only one teacher is responsible for a certain subject, creating common assessments varies by subject and grade level. Some common assessments exist but have yet to be developed in all content areas possible and appear infrequently in curriculum documents. Teachers collaborate in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments; therefore, the creation of common assessments where possible will assist in measuring student progress and achievement.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 8

Conclusions

Many teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. Learners receive feedback in a variety of ways including verbal or written comments from teachers or peers, conferences, whole-class discussion, or feedback from software programs. For example, in one class, students use a peer-to-peer evaluation of a task. In a first grade class, the teacher uses a substantial number of different formative assessments to reinforce correct answers such as kissing her hand and patting the side of her head, telling students to give themselves a hug for a correct answer. As part of a fifth-grade project, students practice a presentation in front of their cooperative learning group, a different group of peers, and the teacher to receive immediate feedback from three sources before revising drafts. In an art class, students build slide shows to display their work and receive peer critiques of their pieces. A writing framework, Sensory Regulation Strategy Development (SRSD), is used in grades 4-8, mainly in English language arts but sometimes in math, science, and social studies. Students engage in 1:1 conversations with teachers about their progress and improvement of specific writing skills using a skills-based rubric designed to highlight student strengths and areas for improvement before students revise their drafts. However, it is sometimes difficult for teachers to give the usual types of immediate, meaningful feedback to students during remote learning as teachers cannot circulate to watch students working or to offer timely feedback for written work that goes back and forth in packets. For example, some math papers turned in at the end of the week do not return to students for a few days and the meaning of the feedback may be lost. As a result, teachers do as much as possible with synchronous learning sessions or meetings with individual students.At times, teachers provide students with feedback, then allow students to reassess later on the same skills so students have an opportunity to improve their understanding and performance; however, this is not used school-wide or consistently. Because teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback, many students can revise and improve their work.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students

Standard 4 Indicator 9

Conclusions

Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction to improve student learning. Teachers use formative assessments including but not limited to do nows, entrance and exit tickets, individual slate responses, observation during small group or partner discussions, student conferencing, brief quizzes, whiteboards, and review of student work to determine students' understanding of skills and concepts. Many teachers use data from Freckle Education, IXL, and Xtra Math to assess student progress and adjust instruction. Physical education teachers use formative assessment when observing learners perform a task or movement using a specific skill. The music teacher observes students performing musical pieces and reviews their compositions to monitor their understanding and application of taught skills. In a second grade class, the teacher calls on random students to check for understanding about the type and value of coins. The teacher polls the group as a whole by asking for a show of hands to determine answers to various questions. In kindergarten, the students have whiteboards at home to show on their iPad screens for a quick formative assessment, so the teacher can gauge the class's understanding and determine the next steps for instruction. In a kindergarten class, 1:1 meetings with students provide valuable assessments of student progress on letter sounds. In each case, teachers determine how to assist students with concepts or if they can move on with the lesson. In a special needs class, students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate an understanding of sound patterns through two separate written tasks and multiple oral tasks throughout a week, and the teacher uses running records to monitor proficiency and assist students. Because teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction, student learning can be improved.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 10

Conclusions

To some degree, teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning more to calibrate grading than for revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including student work; some course and grade-level assessments and few common assessments; standardized assessments; data from sending and receiving schools; and survey data from current students and alumni; however, staff have yet to examine individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate).At times, staff review student work at meetings more so to calibrate grading practices than revise curriculum and improve instructional practice. During the professional learning community (PLC) meetings, teachers sometimes present and compare sets of student work on assignments shared across a grade level to develop a shared set of criteria for evaluating assignments. During grade-level meetings, teachers compare sets of student work to assess how well students achieve proficiency standards using benchmark pieces of work identified with performance indicators as the school moves toward proficiency-based grading.Because of the school's small size, a single teacher often bears responsibility for a subject, development, and use of common assessments varies among subjects and grades. Few common assessments exist in some content areas. Development of common assessments is written into the strategic plan.Individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's vision of the graduate has yet to be analyzed as the vision of the graduate has not been created.Teachers administer many assessments, developed by the faculty or state and national sources, to collect data used in the assessment of student growth and learning of targeted goals, and to determine areas in which students need support in building knowledge and skills. After examining the data, teachers adjust their teaching strategies to meet student needs. As one response, teachers assign students to small groups with shared needs for reteaching and support. At the professional learning community (PLC) meetings, teachers sometimes discuss readings about teaching and learning and how to apply the new information to meet student needs. In the fall, Northwood School teachers and administrators review and analyze benchmark assessments and the previous year's state assessment results during data meetings for grouping students for targeted support to close learning gaps, adjusting curriculum to address identified areas of weakness, and consistently using successful instructional strategies connected to areas of strength.Northwood School surveys freshmen at Coe-Brown Northwood Academy (CBNA) and collects quantitative data on the percent of students who enroll successfully in each level of ninth-grade courses. Curriculum and instruction adjustments to facilitate a more effective transition to the high school are made by looking at historical trends suggested by data, and conversations among teachers and administrators during CBNA departmental "Bridges" meetings. One specific example of a data-driven change resulted after analysis of test data and feedback from alumni that showed inadequate preparation for high school math and Spanish. The school decided to drop Spanish but provide access through the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS), a respected leader in customized learning, for students who wanted to continue with language studies at Northwood. The school shifted the funding from the Spanish position to add a math teacher, hoping to address the gap in math preparation. However, no other data from high school is examined. Because the school is comprised of grades K-8, there is no data collection from post-secondary institutions reviewed.Once teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine regularly a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including student work at all grade levels and in all courses; course and grade-level assessments and common assessments in all courses; individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's vision of the graduate; standardized assessments; data from sending schools, and receiving schools; and survey data from current students and alumni, students will receive even more consistent, focused, and personalized support.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview

- teachers

Standard 4 Indicator 11

Conclusions

Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised; however, have yet to align with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. During the 2017-2018 school year, the transition to a standards-based teaching and learning system began and the school considered a transition to a standards-based report card. Teacher teams created statements about desirable student behaviors, such as habits of mind and positive behaviors, and formed statements about academics. Although the core values and beliefs may have been in the minds of staff, they were not explicitly considered. Teachers used traditional numerical percent scores for all academic and related arts content areas during the 2017-2018 school year for quarterly reports. During the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years, the school provided parents and families information about how the new report card communicates student progress toward selected standards. Teachers used performance indicators to report student progress in some academic and related arts standards during the 2018-2019 school year. In all grades, teachers use performance indicators for English language arts and mathematics. For grades K-4 in science and social studies, teachers record satisfactory and unsatisfactory ratings. All other academic areas in grades 5-8 use traditional numerical percent scores for each content area. Grade-level teams of teachers report on each student's habits of mind and positive behaviors by frequency of use. However, some parents and students profess confusion about the meaning of performance-indicator grades. Following the first-trimester report card in 2019-2020, teachers shared their feedback on the process and reporting through a survey. The results will inform the next steps in the transition to competency-based learning. Once grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, the school community will have a better understanding of the new grading procedures.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- students

Standard 4 Commendations

Commendation

The variety of specific and timely feedback provided to students

Commendation

The wide variety of formative assessments used to inform and adapt instruction

Standard 4 Recommendations

Recommendation

Create and employ a formal process, based on specific and measurable criteria for success, to assess whole-school and individual student progress toward achieving the school's vision of the graduate

Recommendation

Communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's vision of the graduate to students and their families and the school's progress in achieving the school's vision of the graduate to the school community

Recommendation

Develop techniques and procedures to collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement

Recommendation

Provide students with measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, before all summative assessments

Recommendation

Ensure teachers collaborate in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, especially common assessments

Recommendation

Ensure regular review and revision of grading and reporting practices to align with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

Standard 5 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. The strategic plan emphasizes meeting students' social/emotional needs and empowering learning. It substantively guides the priorities of the school board, principals' reports and initiatives, and teachers' committee activities. In 2016, Northwood adopted and implemented Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a system that, when implemented well, supports student achievement of improved social and academic outcomes, reduces exclusionary discipline practices, and helps school personnel feel more effective. The creation and adoption of the strategic plan resulted in stronger support for PBIS. This strengthened emphasis resulted in enhanced professional development training for teachers and administrators, the addition of a contracted PBIS coach, and the use of the School-Wide Information System (SWIS) to support the recording and analysis of student data. A Universal Team comprised of administrators and faculty provides ongoing direction and support for the PBIS program. Progress in the use of PBIS strategies includes morning meetings, within established classroom routines. Students and staff know and discuss the behavior expectations of being safe, responsible, and respectful. PBIS informs school-wide initiatives, such as the Shout-Out Board, a responsive disciplinary philosophy, a PBIS support professional, and whole-school assemblies. There is a plan to administer a climate survey and create a climate and culture review cycle that will build upon the current progress. Students consistently treat each other with respect; teachers support all students; staff develops strong collegial and supportive relationships characterized as like a family. As the school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning, students will develop an increased sense of ownership and pride, empowering each student to achieve high expectations.

Sources of Evidence
- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- school board
- school website

Standard 5 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school is equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body and fostering heterogeneity. However, the school's lack of 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate) prevents the achievement of them. With the exception of accelerated math, the school composes all classes with attention to the diversity of demographics, learning styles, and skill levels. Administrators work together with faculty through a careful, formalized process before each school year, with consideration of parent input about students' learning preferences. When special education students receive services from support staff, non-identified peers receive invitations to participate in these small groups as teachers' caseloads permit. Recent responsive staffing decisions have enabled accelerated math students to access math instruction during a regular instructional core, increasing equity for this population while preserving What I Need (WIN) time and other core periods for interaction with a heterogeneous peer group. Many extracurricular activities and special programs, such as Book Buddies, provide opportunities for students to interact within mixed-age groupings. Within the heterogeneous learning contexts, teachers challenge all students with appropriate academic rigor. Teachers receive feedback and coaching about differentiation during the teacher evaluation process, through the curriculum coordinator, and through teacher-leaders in curricular committees. In many classrooms teachers group students strategically in a workshop model, and frequently offer students choices that present appropriate interventions and challenges for each student. The "What I Need" (WIN) block provides a flexible time for teachers to offer data-driven enrichment and interventions from classroom teachers, specialists, and other support staff. The school partners with external entities, such as the New England Center for Children (NECC) and the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS), to provide differentiated services beyond the capacities of the staff. Because the school is equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body and fostering heterogeneity, students will be supported to achieve the school's vision of the graduate once it is articulated.

Sources of Evidence
- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- students
- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 3

Conclusions

There are no formal, on-going programs or processes 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 (vision of the graduate). Though Northwood lacks formal programs, several structural characteristics fill similar cultural functions within the school. For example, the elementary grades work closely with one classroom teacher, supporting primary bonds between students and their teacher. Morning Meeting routines strengthen these bonds, as many classrooms employ unique, prosocial traditions. In the upper grades, students receive assignments from homeroom teachers with small class sizes. Some middle-grade teachers approach the allotted 15 homeroom minutes as an advisory and use this time to help students set and monitor SMART goals, facilitate interpersonal connections, and open communication with students about their lives. Moreover, students form relationships with adults in smaller group contexts through behavioral and academic support programs, extracurricular activities, and other targeted services. Many teachers deepen relationships with students through extracurricular and community engagement, as they fill roles in their community beyond the classroom. The school's small size creates a culture in which students and teachers grow to know each other well, and students generally feel comfortable approaching administrators or faculty for support. Though Northwood lacks a formalized program, students already enjoy many of the social-emotional benefits that such a program would provide. When the school formalizes a program or process to ensure every student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well, adults will more effectively support students in achieving the school's vision of the graduate.

Sources of Evidence
- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- students
- school board

Standard 5 Indicator 4

Conclusions

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; and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The administrators engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning through ongoing work with a consultant. They use resources outside of the school by researching other districts' approaches to common issues and by acquiring new books and professional development experiences to share with their staff. The administrators ascribe to a distributed model of leadership; through this model, they gather inputs from representatives from each grade level on the leadership team and seek specific perspectives from committees focused on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), curricula, and the like. Through these collaborative relationships, the administrators encourage the application of professional development topics to improve the school. The faculty, likewise, engage in ongoing professional discourse. The schedule reserves school-day time for faculty to meet in grade-level professional learning communities (PLCs) twice monthly, and vertical PLCs monthly. Specific essential questions guide PLC work, centered on the topics of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and guided by student data. As teachers explore these essential questions, they define the most pertinent areas for professional learning. The curriculum director facilitates the work of the PLCs, including curating and offering resources that will inform the PLC's stated priorities. Professional development is being broadened through peer observation with the recent implementation of pineapple charts, a system by which teachers invite one another into their classrooms for informal observations. The SAU outlines a mentorship program for new teachers, that the curriculum director facilitates. New teachers partner with experienced colleagues for semi-structured, flexible support through a one-year individual mentorship, followed by a one-year small-group mentorship. Several days for school-wide professional development are built into the calendar annually; this professional development focuses on immediately salient school-wide goals, and teachers learn skills they will implement in their classrooms. Recently, specialists presented writing strategies, assessment tools, and classroom management topics to the faculty. Each teacher receives funding and additional release time to pursue independent professional development through graduate credits, workshops, or similar opportunities. The SAU's master professional development plan facilitates teachers' access to professional development opportunities. When teachers enjoy valuable professional development, they often share their experience with faculty through newsletters, faculty meetings, or in smaller collegial working groups such as PLCs or committees. Many teachers voluntarily seek professional development experiences outside contracted hours. Teachers have the option to participate in at least one book club annually, often funded through grants. Many teachers volunteer to serve on committees, deepening their understanding of the committee's focus, and later sharing these developments with the rest of the faculty to impact the instructional practices of the whole school. For example, the science committee unpacked the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), embedded them in science curricula. They share materials with colleagues and provide ongoing coaching support. Another committee investigated, designed, and supported the transition to a standards-based report card. Because 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; and apply the skills practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment, the staff continually grows in its capacity to effectively serve students.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview

- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 5

Conclusions

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. The teacher evaluation process is based on the Danielson model, with an added area of focus on student achievement. This aligns with current research and the district strategic plan. Administrators seek continued growth as evaluators through professional development and periodically work with a consultant. The evaluation and supervision process echoes the principal's stated goal of providing voice and choice to teachers. Teachers may choose between two models of observation. Administrators ask teachers to suggest areas for special attention during observations, inviting highly relevant post-observation feedback and dialog. In this way, teachers and administrators can track themes from teachers' annual goals and observations longitudinally throughout the year to reflect growth. Teachers cite improvements in differentiation, engagement, questioning, and articulating learning goals as instructional outcomes that have resulted from the teacher evaluation process. Teachers have a high level of comfort with the evaluation process, and the administrators' frequent, welcome presence in classrooms normalizes observation visits. Because school leaders use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning, teachers are empowered to identify and achieve instructional goals to serve students.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 6

Conclusions

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. The organization of the student day reflects a balanced approach to various academic subjects while maintaining a strong focus on math and English language arts (ELA) outcomes as prioritized in the strategic plan. The typical elementary model allows flexibility for teachers to combine instructional time for subjects into cross-curricular learning opportunities. The "What I Need" (WIN) block provides built-in time for data-driven intervention and enrichment, and the integration of Title I support time into each grade's math block adds further support within the academic schedule. The daily student schedule offers diverse opportunities for learning engagement while providing targeted supports to meet the learning needs of all. The organization of the school day reflects the prioritization of collaboration to analyze data and plan instruction to meet student learning needs. Teachers engage in two grade-level professional learning communities (PLCs) meetings per month and one vertically-aligned PLC. These meetings are built into the school day, supported by administrators, and guided by four essential questions. In PLC meetings, teachers analyze data to identify student needs and collaborate with other faculty and support staff to develop plans to meet these needs. They interpret and develop curricular resources, including the ongoing work of developing rubrics, some of which have begun to carry a school-wide focus, such as the newly developed writing rubric. When students attend related arts classes, grade-level teachers have common planning time. Outside the regular school day, teachers exhibit strong rates of volunteerism on committees that support student learning. The school calendar provides six professional development days, and teachers have additional days and funding to seek independent professional development opportunities, including opportunities supported by the SAU's master professional development plan. As the organization of time continues to support research-based instruction, and professional collaboration among teachers, the school's attention to time will serve the learning needs of all students with greater efficacy.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. Most class sizes are under 20 students, and all are below 25. The administrators and school board implemented responsive staffing solutions to meet the changing needs of the school, prompted by a changing population, the priorities of the strategic plan, and most recently the unique demands of the Covid-19 pandemic. Teachers provide input on staffing needs annually, and grade levels often fluctuate between two and three teachers, depending on the population of each grade level. By flexibly meeting staffing needs to keep student load and class sizes manageable, the school effectively responds to the ever-changing needs of individual students.

Sources of Evidence
- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- school board

Standard 5 Indicator 8

Conclusions

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's emerging core values, beliefs, and learning expectations (vision of the graduate). Currently, the strategic plan frames the principal's leadership as she works with the assistant principal, curriculum director, and leadership team. This framework contextualizes monthly reports to the school board, including budgetary and policy decisions. It guides the supervision and evaluation of staff, the institution and function of various committees, professional learning communities (PLCs), teams, and operational functions such as scheduling and behavior support. Because the leadership makes decisions with fidelity to the strategic plan, they guide instruction in a consistent direction. Resultant instructional results include supporting the staff in the use of innovative, research-driven instructional strategies; the use of consistent academic programs in English language arts (ELA) and math across grade levels; the continuing development of consistent curriculum; and the institution of intervention and enrichment programs. As the school clarifies and articulates its vision of the graduate, leadership decisions will become even more focused upon the priorities and needs of the school community. When the principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and vision of the graduate, then the school will be increasingly equipped to guide students toward achievement of the school's vision of the graduate.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- school board
- school leadership

Standard 5 Indicator 9

Conclusions

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in some roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. In 2017, a broad coalition of stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, students, and parents developed the strategic plan which consistently guides the decisions of the school board and administrators. The faculty participate in a variety of ongoing committees that directly influence administrative, curricular, and cultural decisions. The faculty is frequently polled about decisions, and teachers feel welcome to express informally their perspectives to administrators. Several committees include non-faculty staff members and parents. The parent-teacher association (PTA) and the student council, avenues for parent and student involvement respectively, have been discontinued in the recent past due to lack of interest. Northwood's clear communication with the community opens additional avenues for stakeholder input, including through newsletters and data collection surveys; a planned school climate survey will deepen this data, although the school delayed its implementation due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Students and parents feel comfortable providing their perspective through informal avenues, often through an open, accessible relationship with the principal and other school leaders. As active roles for decision-making become more formalized for parents and students, the learning community will develop an increased sense of responsibility and ownership for learning.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- students
- parents
- school board

Standard 5 Indicator 10

Conclusions

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. A diverse array of teams and committees work on improving school leadership, climate, discipline, safety, academic achievement, curriculum, community relations, and more. Moreover, changing school needs and priorities often prompt the formation of additional, flexible committees. Though the demands of remote teaching recently impacted teacher time, the faculty typically exhibit consistently high rates of volunteerism on such committees. Committees' past accomplishments have improved the school by developing a new curriculum, clarifying policies, revising grading procedures, and guiding school culture. Teachers demonstrate initiative in their committee work by developing assemblies, student events such as the spelling bee and field day, and community outreach events. Committees have increased student engagement by diversifying student instructional experiences. Additionally, Northwood School offers diverse extracurricular opportunities to engage students, facilitated by stipended faculty and support staff. The school board chose to incentivize teachers' innovative initiatives through the creation of the Unique Impact Award when they decided to forego their board salaries in order to finance the award. Many teachers voluntarily attend several outside activities to support the school and students. Because teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning, students' educational experience is enriched.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation

Standard 5 Indicator 11

Conclusions

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive and must now work to establish and then achieve the school's vision of the graduate. Collaboratively, the principal, superintendent, and school board worked alongside other community stakeholders to articulate the strategic plan in 2017. This constructive process will enable the school to articulate its vision of the graduate. The strategic plan effectively directs the school board's areas of focus and the principal's reports. The high turnover rate in the superintendent's position, resulting in the present interim superintendent, requires ongoing renegotiations of leadership relationships with the school board and principal. This instability has led to a high level of freedom and trust for the principal and school board. The ability of the principal and school board to function relatively independently has insulated the school from some of the instability in SAU leadership. The current superintendent recognizes the unique identities of each SAU school and is working to establish expectations of communication and authority. Communication is weekly via email with school board members. The principal successfully keeps the school board apprised of data, initiatives, and needs within the school framed within the collaboratively-developed strategic plan. The school board consistently establishes policies and funding aligned with the strategic plan, while continually balancing the interests of voters. As the school board, superintendent, and principal continue to work collaboratively, reflectively, and constructively, they will establish, and equip students to achieve, the school's vision of the graduate.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school website

Standard 5 Indicator 12

Conclusions

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. Guided by the collaborative strategic plan, the principal implements teacher supervision and curricular and operational initiatives to improve student success through a collaborative, distributive model of leadership, working with the administrative team and faculty leaders. She makes staffing choices to respond flexibly to changing school demands, including a well-rounded administrative leadership team. The school board speaks highly of the principal's effect on the school; multiple rising measures of quality, including test scores and positive behaviors, validate their trust in judgments. Likewise, the superintendent regularly meets and communicates with the principal but provides a great deal of decision-making authority. Because the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school, she can respond effectively to changing school needs with agility.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- school board
- school leadership

Standard 5 Commendations

Commendation

The flexibility of WIN block to provide data-driven, flexible learning experiences for all students, achieved through high levels of collaboration among various staff roles

Commendation

The autonomy of the various professional committees, which enable teachers to define and pursue professional learning that they find most relevant

Commendation

The flexibility of the teacher evaluation process, which enables it to address diverse teacher needs within a positive supervisory context

Commendation

The high levels of participation on a diverse array of committees and teams

Standard 5 Recommendations

Recommendation

Establish a formal program or process to ensure every student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and can provide support toward achieving the school's vision of the graduate

Recommendation

Involve students and parents in decision-making roles that promote responsibility and ownership

Standard 6 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The Northwood 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 yet to be developed 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate). Interventions and supports for students cover both academics and behaviors. Students in kindergarten through grade eight take The Measures of Academic Progress assessment for reading and math. The school uses Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) to assess kindergarten and first graders' foundational literacy and numeracy skills, while students in first grade through sixth grade take assessments of their reading fluency and mathematical computation and concepts applications. Teachers collect scores from benchmark administrations during January, September, and May to analyze and discuss at data team meetings, and then place students in intervention groups that provide additional support for basic skills. Teachers monitor identified students every two to four weeks for their progress with the given interventions. Such data is used to determine Title 1 support eligibility for students in Kindergarten through grade 5. Teachers and paraprofessionals use the "What I Need" (WIN) block to review key concepts and ensure students that students have adequate support in all aspects of the curriculum. There is a variety of support teams to coordinate services and ensure effective interventions. The Student Intervention Filtering Team (SIFT) which consists of the principal, assistant principal, special education case manager, special education coordinator, school counselor, school psychologist, classroom teacher, and the reading specialist review data of general education students who show the need for support in behavior, emotional functioning, or academics as referred to them, and makes relevant recommendations for interventions or referrals to special education or outside agencies. A Student Support Team meets biweekly and discusses students who may need monitoring, evaluation, or additional referrals. Students who receive interventions and specialized instruction based on their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) may receive support from a special education teacher, paraprofessional, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, or their general education teacher. Continuous consultation between the general education teacher and special education teachers, school counselors, occupational therapist, physical therapist, and paraprofessionals, helps teachers to reflect on and improve current support of student needs. The Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework is employed school-wide to promote positive behaviors and student-centered culture. The School-Wide Information System (SWIS) is used to identify students who may need additional support such as small group interventions or lunch/social skills groups. During the 2019-2020 school year, a Student Support Room model to support students who do not respond well to the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system and who display more challenging behaviors. School personnel refers students to the SIFT team for further discussion of needed interventions. The timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, ensure that all students' achieve the school's vision of the graduate once implemented.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- parents
- school support staff

Standard 6 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. A student and family handbook is sent home every year. Additional information regarding free and reduced lunch and End 68 Hours of Hunger can be found on the schools' website for current or incoming families. The principal sends home a weekly newsletter that provides updates for families and local events or highlights. Counselors and teachers both manage and maintain websites with information for families and students who need to access services, to keep up on assignments and upcoming events. Parent-teacher conferences serve as great opportunities for families to touch base with their child's teacher on their student's current progress, and then their counselors perform follow up on recommendations, discuss life events, or ask additional questions. School counselors are available by phone, email, or in-person by visiting the school to discuss services and available resources. Counselors maintain a community bulletin board with local state resources. Seacoast Mental Health, a local community mental-health agency, partners with the school and counselors to refer families or students needing additional mental health support. Counselors reach out to individual families identified as in need of services, and coordinate meals through the End 68 Hours of Hunger. Teachers use a variety of platforms to communicate with families such as homework folders, Alma, Class Dojo, Classtag, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Once the school ensures that all families, especially those most in need, receive information about available student support services, the school will enhance families' access to services.

Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- parents
- school support staff
- school website

Standard 6 Indicator 3

Conclusions

Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. The school assigns laptops to most teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals to assist with instruction; and all classrooms and common areas such as the library and conference rooms have SmartBoards. Students at all grade levels have access to technology during the school day. Students in grades 7 and 8 may bring home devices for homework with their parents' permission. At this time, as the school is fully remote, all students have one-to-one access to a laptop or iPad to complete classes and assignments from home. Students and staff use Google Suite; grades 4-8 have full access; grades K-3 use Google Docs and Google Drive. For data management, the school uses ALMA to track grades and attendance, as well as all student records to which all teachers have access, and an online database to track discipline. Teachers can enter referrals directly into the system, streamlining the process. Educators maintain individualized Education Programs and associated documents, minutes, progress monitoring reports, and 504 documents in an online software system that is available to authorized staff. Students with the appropriate accommodations have access to assistive technology such as iPads and frequency modulation (FM) systems. The nurse has a secure online platform to maintain confidential, individual health records. Should the school lose power or need to be off-site, there is an iPad with cellular service. As a result, support services staff use a variety of technology that ensures an effective range of services for students and families.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- school support staff

Standard 6 Indicator 4

Conclusions

School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and 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, and deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social work providers; however, counselors have yet to use ongoing assessment data to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's developing 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate). There are two full-time counselors; one serving grades K-4, and the other serving students in grades 5-8, in a school of 344 students. Each counselor has a caseload of less than 200 students. Counselors serve as the 504 coordinators, homeless liaisons, members of the Student Support Team (SST), and help coordinate the transition into kindergarten, and out of eighth grade into Coe-Brown Northwood Academy (CBNA), the high school serving Northwood School's graduates. Counselors coordinate and teach whole class lessons including academics, social skills, emotional regulation, personal safety, character development, career, and college counseling. The Zones of Regulation frameworks and the Social Thinking framework provide a foundation for the counseling curriculum and can be extended into individual and group counseling sessions. Teachers and counselors have been trained in "Year at a Glance," a social thinking curriculum written by Michelle Garcia Winner. In grades 5-8, the focus is on planning for life after Northwood and the transition plan to CBNA. Students have access to individual and group counseling. Students can be referred by a teacher, the SST team, a parent, or anyone else who notices a concern. Students can schedule appointments when they need a break, or during lunch/free time groups to address any health, mental health, family, or academic concerns. The counselors thrive on their communication and constant feedback and collaboration with students, staff, families, and agencies in the community. Seacoast Mental Health provides mental health counseling to students in the school, allowing convenience for families and students. Counselors have signed releases to communicate with the agency to be able to generalize the skills and recommendations for the student in school, and communicate with families transparently. Counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and 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, and deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies; therefore, when counselors use ongoing assessment data to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's developing vision of the graduate, the counseling program will more fully support all students.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- department leaders
- school support staff

Standard 6 Indicator 5

Conclusions

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel who provide preventative health services and direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, conduct ongoing student health assessments; however, has yet to use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's developing 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate). The school has one full-time, registered nurse, and many staff members certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and Stop the Bleed. Students and staff alike have training in a variety of first aid skills. The school is working on a CPR SAFE designation, which requires professional development, certifications in adult, child, and infant CPR, and training for the use of an automatic external defibrillator (AED), which is easily accessible in the school. Eighth grade students learn CPR and proper AED use through the American Heart Association Heartsaver program. Middle school students learn how to save lives through the Stop the Bleed Program. Elementary students learn about germs through a Glo Germ simulator using a blacklight display. Students and staff have access to yearly preventative screenings and exams. Routine hearing exams and vision screenings through a local optometrist, and a partnership with a local health organization, Lamprey Health Care, provides dental screenings and fluoride treatments/sealants at school. The school nurse coordinates services with students' primary care providers such as dentists, doctors, optometrists, and other providers to assist in ensuring that the school meets all student needs at school, including procedures, insulin administration, and asthma management. The nurse maintains student records, documents, screenings, immunizations, and health plans in the electronic system SNAP Health Portal, a secure, web-based software suite that simplifies recordkeeping for the school health clinic, enhances student outcomes, and improves communication with parents. The nurse serves as a member of the Student Support Team (SST), Safety Committee, and Wellness Committee. Through work with town officials, students, and teachers, the nurse can advocate for a budget to acquire necessary equipment and supplies, attend IEP and 504 meetings when relevant, and communicate with the school community regularly to promote health. The nurse has yet to collect and use ongoing assessment data to improve services; and because the school's developing 21st century learning expectations remain undeveloped, cannot ensure each student achieves the school's vision of the graduate. The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel who provide preventative health services and direct interventions, use an appropriate referral process, conduct ongoing student health assessments; therefore, when the health services use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student works to achieve the school's vision of the graduate, the health services program will more fully support students.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- facility tour
- school support staff

Standard 6 Indicator 6

Conclusions

Library/media services are integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who: engage adequately in the implementation of the school's curriculum; provide a wide range of materials, digital resources, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum; ensure the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers during and after school; and are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning. However, library personnel has yet to conduct ongoing assessments using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's developing 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate). The library is staffed by a full-time library media specialist/educational technology integrator, and a part-time library assistant. Library media services are integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices through library/information technology lessons, maintaining and expanding the physical and digital resources, and providing resources for collaboration through technology. When teachers focus on a certain topic, the library staff ensures the availability of books and other resources on that topic to assist students with deeper investigation and connection. The library is open to students and teachers throughout the day, other than when the specialists are teaching classes. Otherwise, students may visit the library for resources, request help from a library media specialist, or visit during lunch/recess. Teachers can request help with materials or teaching for one of their classes. When the library is not available in the morning, the staff station a reading express book cart outside the library. Students and teachers can borrow books without needing to check them out. Students have 1:1 devices so they can access the online database EBSCOhost. Any book not in the school's physical library can be ordered through connected schools and delivered to Northwood for the student. The library hosts many events throughout the year, such as the Scholastic Book Fair and curriculum nights. When in a technology class or visiting the library, students may use their own devices or any of the materials located in the library. Because all students have their own devices, the library personnel can use the library space for more books and flexible seating. Students in grades K-5 have library class on a rotating schedule and focus on types of books, read alouds, and library-system skills once a week. Students in grades 6-8 take an information technology class to learn skills like reliable media, features of Google Suite, and transitional life skills like building a resume. The library media specialist has improved the selection of books available through a grant and she reaches out to the school community to elicit feedback to inform her book genre purchasing decisions. The library media specialist generates support for materials through continuous grant applications and community outreach to ensure that the materials include all types of subjects, genres, and age levels. Library/media services are integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who engage adequately 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 the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers during and after school; and are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning. Therefore, when library personnel conducts further ongoing assessments using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's developing vision of the graduate, student learning will be further enhanced.

Sources of Evidence
- classroom observations
- self-study
- school support staff

Standard 6 Indicator 7

Conclusions

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and English language learners, have a nearly adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff, provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students, and perform some ongoing assessment using relevant data, including some feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's developing 21st century learning expectations (vision of the graduate). Identified students, approximately 19 percent of the school's population, receive a variety of services delivered by four special education teachers, twenty-one paraprofessionals, two speech pathologists, a part-time occupational therapist, a part-time service coordinator, and two school counselors. These students may receive services directly with a special education teacher one-on-one, in a general education classroom supported by a paraprofessional, in small groups using the school's When in Need (WIN) block, with an outside service provider during the day, or in partnership with the New England Center for Children (NECC), which offers a partner program for students with higher needs. The school contracts and consults with Constellations, William J. White Educational/Behavioral Consulting Services, and Southeastern Regional Education Service Center to support students in need of behavioral support. Current enrollment is low due to this year's remote learning related to Covid 19, but a need for additional paraprofessional support is anticipated by staff as students re-enroll and return to school. Special education teachers and all other support personnel assess students and programs both formally and informally. All related specialists hold annual meetings for all students and can meet more frequently if the team or family requests it. Staff administers a parent involvement survey bi-annually to assess how better to support families on an ongoing basis. Service providers and teachers meet weekly and paraprofessionals and teachers have time built into their schedules to collaborate and discuss the effectiveness of identified interventions. The Student Support Team (SST) meets biweekly, and special education teachers, general education teachers, and school counselors meet monthly to review progress and create plans going forward. Due to Executive Order Number 48 in New Hampshire, special education teachers and their coordinators meet with students on IEPs more often to make the necessary accommodations during this time of fully remote learning. Some special needs students receive services on campus according to need. The school counselors serve as the designated 504 coordinators, with the student services director providing support and oversight. Students on 504 plans may have been referred by the IEP team, SIFT team, or referred by a teacher or parent, and have their plans reviewed annually but may also have plans revisited and revised at any time, as needed. Classroom teachers or providers listed in the plan deliver defined services. Currently, no students require ELL services. Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (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, and provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; therefore when further ongoing assessments using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, are used to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's developing vision of the graduate, programs, services, and student learning will be enhanced.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- department leaders
- school support staff

Standard 6 Commendations

Commendation

The proactive approach and responsiveness of school counselors, administrators, special educators, and the nurse to the needs of individual students and families

Standard 6 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure support services including counseling services, health services, library personnel, and special needs conduct formal ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's developing vision of the graduate

Recommendation

N/A

Standard 7 Indicator 1

Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for a range of school programs and services; sufficient professional and support staff; ongoing professional development and curriculum revision; a full range of technology support; sufficient equipment; and sufficient instructional materials and supplies.
The annual budget maintains and supports the delivery of foundational school programs and services, as well as enrichment opportunities, behavioral consultation services, mental health services, intervention, and remediation programs. Funds are available to bring in an artist in residence, a visiting author, and a marine docent each year to work with individual classes or the school as a whole. The community provides funding for after school clubs and athletic programs. In addition to budgeted funds, staff use grant allocations effectively to provide services such as the employment of two full-time math tutors to work with eligible students in grades K-5. Administrators and staff work within the budget to address unexpected needs. For example, the school found the resources to invite small groups of students back on campus during remote learning for Laker Day to work on students' social-emotional skills. The community provides dependable funding to provide sufficient professional and support staff. Sufficient staff to teach and supervise students and to operate the facility are employed.The school community recognizes that to ensure the school attracts and retains high-quality teachers, administrators, and staff, it needs to commit to providing a competitive compensation plan and have made adjustments to the wages and benefits packages.The administrators monitor and respond to changes in enrollment trends. The budget provides funds for two full-time school counselors. As a result of increased student enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year, two classroom teachers were added. The annual budget includes sufficient funding to staff full-day kindergarten. In response to the pandemic, the custodial staff was increased in 2020.Teachers receive sufficient funds to participate in professional development and curriculum revision days. The school calendar includes professional development days, and the school supports teacher-added learning through summer institutes. The contracts for professional and paraprofessional staff entitle staff members to professional development funds, release time, and tuition reimbursement. Thetechnology plan provides for a systematic replacement of devices each year. As a result, in the spring of 2020, there were available resources to move to remote learning. All grades K-8 students were issued school devices to use at home. On the campus, teachers and students have access to educational technology such as SmartBoards and document cameras. The technology director provides technical support, resources, and professional development to staff, students, and parents. Funds support the maintenance of sufficient equipment to support the student learning environment. The school follows a ten-year capital improvement plan to project upcoming needs. The annual school budget includes funds for new and replacement furniture and equipment. Faculty, building administrators, and support services have processes in place to monitor and maintain an adequately equipped facility. The school board provides adequate funding for instructional materials and supplies. The school has invested in learning software such as Go Math, Wonders, and STEMScope to enhance the delivery of the curriculum. Requisition of supplies and materials is part of the annual budget and implementation process. By providing dependable funding for a range of school programs and services; sufficient professional and support staff; ongoing professional development and curriculum revision; a full range of technology support; sufficient equipment; and sufficient instructional materials and supplies, the community and the district's governing body demonstrates their commitment to offering a quality educational experience for all students and a supportive work environment for staff.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- school board
- school leadership

- school website

Standard 7 Indicator 2

Conclusions

The school develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant; to properly maintain, catalog, and replace equipment; and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. Members of the school community develop and implement a rolling ten-year capital improvement plan that projects and preemptively addresses maintenance and repair needs. To ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, the school employs a full-time facilities director and custodial staff. In 2020, the school increased the custodial staff to reflect higher demand in response to the pandemic. The facilities director is housed on campus and consequently has daily knowledge of the state of the building and school plant. The staff has input on identifying maintenance and repair needs. The school has a facilities maintenance plan that outlines maintenance, repair, and replacement protocols. Upgrades to the building's lighting to more energy-efficient models have begun as supported in the capital improvement plan. The school's maintenance plan includes an equipment inventory list and the location, manufacturer, model details, and installation dates of all equipment. The facility's maintenance plan includes a custodial service plan, which details practices and procedures to keep the facility clean on a daily basis. Food services keep up-to-date documentation that outside agencies routinely inspect to ensure food safety and cleanliness of the facility. By developing, planning, and funding programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant; to properly maintain, catalog, and replace equipment; and to keep the school clean on a daily basis, the school takes a proactive approach to ensuring a safe working and learning environment.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel

Standard 7 Indicator 3

Conclusions

The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. The school community's three long-range plans guide many decisions and include a ten-year capital improvement plan, a five-year strategic plan, and a technology plan. These plans were developed collaboratively with school, district, school board, and community representation. The capital improvement plan includes items for immediate and future budgets. The school's five-year strategic plan contains eight goals used to guide long-range plans pertaining to programs and services; staffing and facility needs; and technology and capital improvements. The technology plan addresses inventory, development and maintenance of technology infrastructure, and professional development focused on the best use of technology in the classroom. The annual budget supports funding for initiatives that align with these plans. For example, salaries for the addition of a curriculum director and two school counselors are supported by the strategic plan and the annual budget funded the positions. In support of the technology plan, the school community funds a 1:1 technology program, purchase of classroom devices such as SmartBoards, and a replacement cycle that replaces 20 percent of devices each year. The school board and administrators study enrollment trends and their ramifications and act on their findings. The school has budgeted funds for a study of enrollment projections to help with long-range planning. By funding and implementing a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements, the community and school demonstrate their commitment consistently to providing a high-quality educational experience for all students.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- school board
- department leaders
- school leadership

Standard 7 Indicator 4

Conclusions

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. The annual budget process begins in the fall with staff input. The principal asks for projected needs from staff that include supplies, materials, and new or replacement equipment. The budget includes funding for the food services, technology, and facilities departments. The principal submits a proposed school budget to the SAU administrators and school board. Building and district administrators, school board members, and budget committee members bring a proposed budget to the community for a final vote. Once the annual budget is determined, the process returns to staff and building administrators to begin the purchasing process. School and SAU administrators conduct financial reviews throughout the year to monitor the implementation of the budget. By actively involving faculty and building administrators in the development and implementation of the budget, the stakeholders have a useful voice in decision making.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- central office personnel
- school leadership

Standard 7 Indicator 5

Conclusions

The school site and plant support the delivery of high-quality school programs and services. The school has sufficient space to offer programs and services within the school building and on the school grounds. All classes, except health, have their own classrooms. Kindergarten classrooms have self-contained bathrooms and sinks. Grades 7 and 8 teachers and students share one science lab. Physical education classes meet in the gymnasium, and students change in nearby bathrooms. Staff offices and workspaces provide space and privacy. Lunches are prepared and served in the school's cafeteria. The school maintains two playgrounds, two athletic fields, and a running trail. The community has access to the building and grounds in the evenings and on weekends. The school's location on a busy highway causes traffic issues and parking restraints. The facility is prepared to support Covid 19 onsite operational considerations, such as the use of school spaces and mitigation strategies. The food service department has continued to provide lunches to students and families during remote learning via a drive-up system that operates two times each day. By maintaining the school site and plant, the delivery of high-quality school programs and services is supported.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- parents
- department leaders
- school leadership

Standard 7 Indicator 6

Conclusions

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. All required inspections of the physical plant and facilities have been conducted. Current documentation is secured on-site. Both the facilities and food service directors ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations for fire, health, and safety. Each maintains up-to-date documentation of site visits. By maintaining documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations, the school demonstrates it is a safe learning environment.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- department leaders
- school leadership

Standard 7 Indicator 7

Conclusions

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. The school uses a variety of ways to connect with parents and the community. Teachers are required to maintain a current webpage presence on which they post information pertinent to their classes. They may also use the school's social media platforms, Twitter and Facebook, to reach out. The newsletter, The Laker, is emailed to parents and staff. Parents who have limited internet access can pick up printed bulletins from the school. The school hosts events such as meet the teacher, parent conferences, and curriculum nights to inform parents of school programs and communicate about students' opportunities and needs. The school uses the student information management software, ALMA, to enter student grades, monitor absences, and communicate with parents. Teachers and administrators reach out to parents via email and telephone as the need arises. Each spring, the school collects parent feedback regarding the school and the leadership team uses the data to inform decisions. The technology director is available to assist families with issues with school devices. Because all professional staff attempt actively to engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school, the school establishes a caring environment.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- school leadership
- school support staff

Standard 7 Indicator 8

Conclusions

The school develops some productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. Parent volunteers serve in several capacities. They help prepare classroom materials, volunteer at sporting and after-school activities, and chaperone field trips. Parents serve on the school's leadership team and calendar committee. Parents and community businesses donate raffle prizes for school events. Businesses and civic organizations work with the school on various initiatives. The school has a relationship with a local senior housing facility that benefits students and residents. The school collaborates with the local fire and police departments on safety education. Members of the fire department visit during fire safety month to teach lessons. Officers from the town police department teach a six-week DARE course to sixth-grade students. Members of both departments volunteer their time during the open house. Northwood teachers and school counselors collaborate with Coe-Brown Northwood Academy staff to ensure students a smooth transition from middle to high school. Counselors arrange visits for middle school students to spend part of a day at the high school. School counselors coordinate visits from high school administrators and former Northwood School students to speak to rising eighth-graders and answer their questions. Throughout the school year, middle and high school teachers meet periodically to monitor the vertical alignment of the curriculum. Productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning are developed and the school can expand and diversify students' educational experiences as more are developed.

Sources of Evidence
- self-study
- teacher interview
- school leadership
- school website

Standard 7 Commendations

Commendation

The effective use of budgetary and grant monies to expand programs and services

Commendation

The successful use of long-range planning for making coordinated, informed decisions

Commendation

The constructive use of a variety of formats to reach out to and inform parents and community members about the school

Standard 7 Recommendations

Recommendation

Ensure sufficient funding to retain high-quality teachers, administrators, and staff

Recommendation

Increase parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

This comprehensive evaluation report reflects the findings of the school's self-study and those of the visiting team. 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 this school. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting team 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 Team Report.

A school's initial/continued accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing valid recommendations of the visiting team 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 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 team 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 on the next page. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Commission office has current statistical data on the school.

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

The visiting team would like to express thanks to the community for the hospitality and welcome. The school community completed an exemplary self-study that clearly identified the school's strengths and areas of need. The time and effort dedicated to the self-study and preparation for the visit ensured a successful accreditation visit.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES
Commission on Public Secondary Schools

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

Roster of Team Members

Chair(s)

Chair: Edward Wilkins - New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.

Assistant Chair: Cynthia Freyberger - New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.

Team Members

Marie Bahlert - Rochester Middle School

Carolyn Bennett - Wheeler High School/Middle School

Dr. Kathleen Montagano - New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.

Sara Moore - East Bridgewater Junior-Senior High School