

New England Association of Schools and Colleges



Commission on Public Secondary Schools

Report of the Visiting Committee for Wareham High School

Wareham, Massachusetts

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

Teaching and Learning Standards

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

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

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

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

Preparation for the Evaluation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Wareham High School, a committee of 7 members, including the assistant principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for

young people. In addition to faculty members, parents, central office personnel, and school committee members were included in various aspects of the self-study. The self-study of Wareham High School extended over a period of 15 school months during this process from the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2011.

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

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

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

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 56 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day
- a total of 24 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility

- individual meetings with 32 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers
- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

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

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

Overview of Findings

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

Teaching and Learning at Wareham High School

Wareham High School's statement of core values, and beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations capture and convey the school community's beliefs and values about student learning and the purpose of the school. The core values permeate the culture of this school. The core values and beliefs statement and the 21st century learning expectations were developed in a thoughtful deliberate process with input from a wide variety of constituents representative of the greater school community. The school-wide expectations are easy for students, staff, parents, and the community to understand and remember, and the rubrics measuring them are perceived as challenging, are widely used throughout the school, are used extensively to guide decision-making, and have identified high levels of achievement for the students. The Viking Ships (scholarship, craftsmanship, citizenship, and sportsmanship) truly represent the core values and beliefs of the school, staff, students, and the community. The school will need to involve parents and community members in the annual review process of the statement of core values and beliefs and 21st century learning expectations.

Teachers at Wareham use school-wide rubrics and align each course in each department with the 21st century learning expectations. The written curriculum emphasizes depth of

understanding, authentic learning, and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving activities and projects. Curriculum documents are in various stages of completion, but all courses have a written document to guide teaching and learning. The school needs to use a common template in all disciplines to organize the curriculum work to revise the curriculum documents to include all the essential elements of a good written curriculum. The school should re-initiate communication and collaboration with sending schools to renew vertical alignment and articulation as their absence has affected curricular offerings and students' preparation for success. The school tries to do more with less and teachers provide their own classroom materials and supplies to support the implementation of curriculum. However, this should not be the hallmark of a caring community in preparing its children for the 21st century's challenges.

Teachers at WHS employ a wide variety of instructional strategies to personalize instruction, apply skills to authentic tasks, and engage students in self-reflection. Teachers have committed to improve their instruction through the use of effective student feedback and the analysis of a wide variety of data on the District Data Days to inform effective curricula and instruction practices. Teaching and learning will continue to improve when opportunities are provided for teachers to increase their expertise in differentiating instruction, using technology, and using formative assessments. Teachers need formal time for conversations about best practice.

While rubrics are used consistently in the school to provide students with feedback about their learning, teachers should increase the use and deepen their understanding of the rubrics that measure the school-wide learning expectations as well as course-specific and departmental rubrics to increase student learning.

Teachers use a variety of assessment strategies to measure student knowledge, skills, and competencies. School-wide rubrics have been developed and disseminated to all teachers to measure the school-wide expectations, but they are used inconsistently to measure both student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations and mastery of content at the same time. The student portfolio and senior exit interview project are outstanding examples of student self-assessment and reflection and should serve as a model for other schools. This project is the culmination of many years of a student's educational career – a capstone.

The school has effectively implemented PowerSchool, the school-wide grading portal, and the staff has made efforts to keep student assessment data current for parents and students to access. However, while students are aware of their progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations through the portfolio process, their parents are not adequately informed of their achievement. The staff must assess the overall achievement of the 21st century learning expectations and determine how information of that progress will be communicated to the greater school community, in order to help justify requests for funding for student educational needs.

Many teachers not only provide feedback to students but allow and encourage students to revise their work to demonstrate deeper understanding. Although teachers often informally

share and discuss assessments with colleagues, the school needs to provide opportunity for all teachers to collaborate formally regarding the creation, analysis, and revision of both formative and summative assessment and to look at student work to discover their specific needs so they may be best served.

Support of Teaching and Learning at Wareham High School

The school's strong sense of pride and the dedicated and student-centered staff characterize a safe, positive, supportive, respectful, and truly caring school culture. Students are happy to be at WHS and feel they are members of the school family. There is wide recognition and celebration of student achievement throughout the school. Every student has the opportunity to take a minimum of two heterogeneously grouped courses, promoting equity and inclusiveness throughout the school.

The principal and the other building leaders provide a focus on teaching and learning that is rooted in the school's core values and beliefs about teaching and learning. The principal's autonomy allows the school to meet its needs according to self-determined priorities, whether it is dealing with facilities, the schedule, or the implementation of the curriculum. The student advisory period provides all students with an adult to connect with daily. Now, the school must prescribe a curriculum or strategy to ensure that the advisor is personalizing and supporting every aspect of the student's educational experience. While recent professional development time has been focused on an examination of practices against the Standards for Accreditation via the self-study, teachers and administrators should now collaboratively determine the needs of the professional staff and design professional development to meet those needs.

The student support services offered by the school serve all students although the programs are more re-active than pro-active. The TAC and SASS teams, the adjustment counselor, the four deans, and the health referrals to outside services all provide students the support they may need to equitably and effectively access their education, and the school needs inform all families about the work it is doing to support students. Teachers and students need to have adequate, consistent access to reliable computers and other technology. Technology is essential to effective teaching and learning in the 21st century, and funding for technology and training teachers must be provided. This report covers suggestions for improvement in several aspects of the delivery of special education services. The library media center needs general updating as well. As adequate funding is a major issue for WHS, the staff exerts a remarkable effort collaboratively and creatively to ensure that most programs and services remain intact despite the limited funding. The school has lost staffing which has increased class size in some areas and limited course offerings for students, and the principal has been able only to patch the leaking roof and cannot repair or replace it completely. However, the school is attractive, clean, and well-maintained – the mark of a building filled with pride. The community needs to find the means to fund teaching and learning for its high school students. Despite the lack of funding, the community is a great supporter of the school. There are many partnerships with parents, the community, business, and higher education that strengthen learning and provide all students with the opportunity to apply their learning

beyond the classroom and to explore their future. However, approximately 30% of families do not have access to technology and so has no access to the PowerSchool communication system that makes families immediate participants in their children's school life. The school must communicate with these families so that they can be a part of their child's education and do not remain disconnected from the school.

The Viking Ships (scholarship, craftsmanship, citizenship, and sportsmanship) will carry these students far and serve them well.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SUMMARY

Wareham High School, located in Wareham, Massachusetts, serves the town of Wareham and its villages of Onset, West Wareham and East Wareham. Located an hour from Boston and Providence, Wareham is a middle class coastal town where cranberry growing and tourism are the primary industries.

With a population of 21,154, the villages are economically, racially, culturally and ethnically similar. Since 2000, the population has increased 4.6%, with minority groups totaling 13% of the population. English is the primary language spoken by the student population. The household family income is \$40,422.

The majority of the population has historically and continues to be employed in the cranberry industry, tourism, services and trade occupations. The town recently established a shopping plaza which now employs many residents of Wareham. Two industrial parks also provide residents with a substantial number of jobs. In 2009 the unemployment rate was 10.8%. In the summer, the population of the town approximately doubles due to the many miles of picturesque coastline. Year round population has stabilized after an influx from 2000-2005.

Enrollment in the PreK-12 Wareham School District is 3,203 (1,679 male and 1,524 female). In addition to Wareham High School (enrollment 846), the district also includes the Wareham Middle School (enrollment 733), three elementary schools (enrollment 1,524), the Wareham Cooperative Jr/Sr High School (enrollment 50 in the a.m. program and 72 in the p.m. program) and the recently established West Wareham Academy (enrollment 15). Wareham High School has a low income population of 41%, while the district low income population is 44.3%. Free and reduced lunch students at Wareham High are 41.4% of the student population and in the district 44.3%. The special education population is 16% of the student population at Wareham High and 17.8% of the district.

Wareham is ranked 290 of 351 in income in the state. The Wareham School District is ranked in the bottom 1/3rd percent of district in the state in terms of per pupil expenditures, spending \$11,211 per pupil as compared to a state average per pupil of \$12,448.78. In FY2008, state, federal and other resources accounted for 82.3% of all funds received in the district, while 17.7% funds were obtained through local resources.

Wareham High School incorporates grades 9-12 with an enrollment of 846 (425 males and 421 females). After experiencing several years of increased student growth, the school's population appears to have stabilized. The ethnic, racial, and cultural composition has remained constant with 11.6% African-American, 1.2% Asian, 5% Hispanic, 1.4% Native American and other (multi-racial, Cape Verdean) 8.2%. The average dropout rate for the past two years is 2.05%, as compared to the state average of 3.4%. The average daily student

attendance is 94.3% with a state average of 94.69%. The average attendance rate among teachers is 96%, with 100% highly qualified.

There are 59.5 teachers at Wareham High School, creating student-teacher ratio of 15:1 with the state average 14:1. Individual teachers teach on average 100 students, with the average class size 20. Students attend school for 180 days and 990 hours.

Wareham High School offers college preparatory, honors, and Advanced Placement courses. Students are required to take four years of English, three years of mathematics, social studies and health/physical education, and two years of science. Students may also choose from many electives which include business, fine and applied arts, and two world languages. Twenty-seven clubs are available to students with more than 400 students participating. There are 22 sports offered with more than 1/3rd of the student population involved.

In the class of 2009, 51% enrolled in a four year college, 26% enrolled in a two year college, 13% in business and technical schools, and 3% entered the military. The remaining 7% transitioned into the work force. Students enroll in a variety of private, state and community colleges, many within an hour's drive of Wareham.

Working with the Greater New Bedford Connecting Activities Partnership, more than 100 students were provided summer jobs. Hosting a job fair in the fall of 2009, juniors and seniors spoke with 50 local business representatives of varied careers and experience. The School-to-Career program during 09-10 placed 53 junior and senior students with local businesses. The College Visitation Program enables all sophomore students to visit college campuses to get a better understanding of the expectations, opportunities and aspects of the college community. The school's the many diverse clubs and activities participate in community service such as coat drives, food drives, blood drives, and benefit walks. There are also art fairs, drama performances, concerts and many other stimulating cultural experiences for student and community involvement.

Each year, four awards nights, acknowledging the accomplishments of seniors and underclassmen are held. Students are recognized for academic achievement, attendance and their positive impact on the school community. Superintendent, Principal, Dean of Students, and Housemaster's awards are presented to students who act as role models in their community. Each year more than 450 students are recognized for their achievement, service and involvement in Wareham High School. Senior and Junior scholarships for '07 and '08 grant students over \$250,000 each year.

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Wareham High School Core Values and Beliefs Statement

The mission of Wareham Public Schools is to educate all students for life's responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities.

We believe...

- All children can achieve
- Education is key to a successful life
- Education sets high expectations for each individual in the school community
- Education requires respect for one another, the community, and ourselves
- Education requires a commitment to life-long learning
- Education requires diligent effort and responsibility
- Education is a partnership among home, school, and community
- Communication is a cornerstone to fulfilling our vision

Wareham High School will prepare its students for further academic and occupational opportunities, social responsibility, and commitment to community. By maintaining high academic standards through a rigorous course of study, students will be expected to apply effective effort in order to master skills and to value scholarship, citizenship, craftsmanship, and sportsmanship. Students will demonstrate that they are independent and critical thinkers who can make sound judgments and decisions as citizens, consumers, and life-long learners.

Wareham High School 21st Century Learning Expectations

Academic Learning Expectations:

Wareham Students Will *ACQUIRE* Information in a Variety of Ways

- A.1 By actively and critically reading, listening, discussing, observing, and participating
- A.2 By questioning appropriately
- A.3 By researching independently
- A.4 By locating and retrieving information through appropriate use of technology

Wareham Students Will *INTERPRET* Information in a Variety of Ways

- I.1 By employing critical thinking and problem solving skills
- I.2 By evaluating for trends, patterns, comparisons, and relationships

I.3 By making inferences and drawing conclusions

Wareham Students Will *COMMUNICATE* Information in a Variety of Ways

- C.1 By writing and speaking clearly
- C.2 By selecting and applying effective techniques in performance tasks and demonstrating proficiency
- C.3 By presenting creatively in a variety of media, including Technology

Civic/Social Learning Expectations:

Wareham Students Will *ACT RESPONSIBLY AND RESPECTFULLY* in a Variety of Ways

- R.1 By demonstrating academic integrity
- R.2 By participating and working cooperatively in school groups
- R.3 By demonstrating the correlation between effort and achievement by meeting or exceeding academic expectations
- R.4 By understanding the achievements and traditions of a multicultural and global society
- R.5 By engaging in the democratic process

Wareham High School's 21st Century Expectations for Student Learning are demonstrated in the Comprehensive Student Portfolio.

Teaching and Learning Standard

1

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

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

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Conclusions

Wareham High School developed a set of core values and beliefs about learning with input from the school's stakeholders including administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members. The school used a variety of educational resources, research, and surveys submitted by stakeholders. Initially developed in 2005, the Wareham High School's core values and beliefs about learning underwent a process of review and revision in June of 2009. The school held many meetings, in which the core values and beliefs were discussed by various stakeholders. Initially, department chairs reviewed the previous mission statement and mission statements from surrounding schools with the help of teachers, parents, and community members. A parent survey was also conducted although only a relatively small percentage of parents responded. Students on the school council, leadership council and principal's roundtable also engaged in the review process and participated in a student survey. As a result of this process and the school's commitment to the core values and beliefs, the "Viking Ships" (scholarship, craftsmanship, citizenship, and sportsmanship) are most identifiable as part of the school's core values and are prominently displayed at the school's entrance, in the lobby outside of the gymnasium, and on all school stationery. The expressed belief that education requires respect for one another, the community, and ourselves is evidenced by the repeated references by students to "family" and "acceptance". According to the Endicott Survey, nearly 99% of staff, 71% of students, and 82% of parents report being familiar with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The engagement of a variety of stakeholders in the process has engendered a sense of awareness and ownership in the school's core values and belief statement and has enabled the statement to reflect the school community's core values and beliefs meaningfully. (self-study, meeting agendas, school leadership, teachers, students, parents)

The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students that address academic, civic, and social competencies; and the majority of these is defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement, described as advanced, proficient, needs improvement, and failing. The 21st century learning expectations state that students will acquire, interpret, and communicate information in a variety of ways and that they will act responsibly and respectfully. These learning expectations are measured with seven rubrics that assess reading comprehension, problem-solving, group presentation, oral presentation, learning behaviors, research, and writing. Students must meet at least the proficient level on all rubrics to graduate. However, learning expectation "R.4- Students will act responsibly and respectfully by understanding the achievements and traditions of a multicultural and global society," does not yet have a school rubric to assess it. In addition, there is no rubric to address student proficiency in using technology specifically although references to technology exist in both the "research" and "oral presentation" rubrics. According to the Endicott Survey, these rubrics are recognized by nearly 70% of teachers and parents as being challenging, whereas, by contrast, only 46% of the students believe they are challenged by these learning expectations. By design, the school's learning expectations are intended to be challenging and measurable, and as they are put into practice with consistency,

they will enable students to be successful in the 21st century. (self-study, Endicott Survey, school leadership, teachers, students, parents)

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations document pervades the school's culture. The document often drives decisions regarding the curriculum, instruction, and assessment and has guided policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocation. In order to better prepare students for 21st century challenges and the newly adopted Common Core State Standards, the school has recently modified the daily schedule, instituting an A/B block schedule with 83-minute periods. Teachers now teach six sections compared to five in the previous schedule, thus giving students more course options. New courses were added to the 2011-2012 program of studies in the fine arts, foreign language, business technology, English, social studies, science, and mathematics departments. Additionally, graduation requirements increased from 115 credits to 130 credits for the class of 2014 and beyond. The school requires all students to compile a portfolio of work relevant to the learning expectations and to complete a senior exit interview prior to graduation. The school recently invested more than \$35,000 acquired from grants and the reallocation of budget savings to purchase textbooks and other materials to establish an important new Introduction to the Physical World course, which will give freshmen the opportunity to acquire, interpret, and communicate information through the lab experience and integration of mathematics literacy. Using technology through the school's iPad pilot project, students will be able to locate and retrieve information in their physics, English, and special education classes. The belief statement that all children can achieve is evidenced by the annual "WHS Student Success Rate" report, which she shares with department chairs and teachers to review student achievement in each content area. Common summative assessments are used for midterm and final exams to measure student learning. The Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs are sources of pride for the school as an indicator of student engagement and the school's culture. Another way in which the school has integrated the 21st century learning expectations into its culture has been through a poster competition in which each advisory collaboratively designed a poster that illustrates one of the learning expectations. The winning posters are prominently displayed outside of the media center. The school promotes global education through its sister school program in Santa Cruz, Cape Verde that includes inter-student Skype communication and teacher/administrator exchanges. According to the Endicott Survey, a majority of stakeholders (staff, students, and parents) reports that they are familiar with the learning expectations and that they are part of the school's culture and drive decision-making. However, only 45% of parents reports that the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are referenced at parent conferences. The school uses its statement of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to guide all decision-making, especially in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, enabling students to acquire the skills needed to succeed. (school committee presentations, 2010-2011 School Improvement Plan, self-study, school leadership, teachers, central office personnel)

While the school regularly reviews and revises the statement of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations based on data collection, research, and district and school priorities, parent and community priorities are not always addressed. The school's core values, beliefs,

and learning expectations are reviewed and revised annually with the input of department heads, teachers, student council members, the student leadership team, and the principal's roundtable; however, parent and community involvement is not clear in the future revision process. The DECA program routinely utilizes feedback from local business leaders to better prepare students for real world application. The assistant principal and department heads examine standardized test and grading data on a regular basis to monitor effective student learning. The district-wide Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), the Global Education Team (GET), and content-specific departments meet as Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to analyze data to determine achievement gaps, resulting in specific changes to curricula and instruction: the district's mathematics and ELA programs have been modified; 21st century anchor skills have been implemented in the elementary schools; the learning behaviors rubric was written to illustrate the correlation between effort and achievement; and the portfolio and required senior exit interview were implemented to demonstrate proficiency in all of the learning expectations. The school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are aligned with the district strategic plan, which is reviewed annually. Regular review of the core values and beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations provides a living document that is consistent with the culture of the school and the district. (self-study, district strategic plan, school leadership, teachers)

Commendations

1. The wide variety of stakeholders involved in the process of developing the statement of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
2. Memorable and effective illustration of core values through the "Viking Ships" icon
3. The development of school-wide analytic rubrics that identify high levels of achievement
4. The core values and belief statement as a guideline for implementing positive programs and changes
5. The annual review and revision of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations using various data sources
6. Integration of the 21st century learning expectations into the culture of the school through a poster competition among advisories

Recommendations

1. Develop an analytic rubric to measure student proficiency in meeting learning expectation "R.4- Students will act responsibly and respectfully by understanding the achievements and traditions of a multicultural and global society."
2. Ensure more parent involvement in the review and revision of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations document

2**Curriculum**

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

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

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

Curriculum

Conclusions

Wareham High School's curriculum ensures that all students have multiple opportunities across many disciplines to practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Students develop skills for acquiring information through critical reading and questioning of the Odyssey in English and students research independently to produce marketing data in the DECA program. Students acquire interpretation skills through critical thinking and problem-solving in physics and algebra. In English, students develop the ability to evaluate patterns and comparisons in poetry and literature, and they become aware of the power of effective communication. Students learn to make inferences and draw conclusions in assignments such as predicting the trajectory of an arrow in physics class. Students acquire communication skills through oral presentations in Spanish class and using a variety of media in classes such as TV production and art. An example of this creativity is the NEASC Welcoming video. All students demonstrate the correlation between effort and achievement through the development of a comprehensive student portfolio. Across the curriculum, teachers use school-wide rubrics to provide feedback as students develop 21st century learning skills. As a result of having multiple opportunities to practice 21st century learning skills, students will acquire those skills necessary for future success. (teachers, school leadership, central office personnel, 21st century learning expectations)

There is written curriculum in all content areas, and many units of study are described in syllabi and course descriptions provided to students at the beginning of each course. However, the school's curriculum is not written using a common template although many curriculum documents are comprehensive and thorough. While most departments articulate objectives, essential questions, concepts, content, and skills, the format varies from department to department, and although curriculum development has been a part of the district curriculum coordinator's responsibilities, there is no systemic, systematic process for writing, assessing, and revising curriculum. The 21st century learning expectations are aligned with course offerings in the program of studies, but some elements of a well-designed curriculum are missing in many curriculum documents. Without a well-articulated curriculum in all content areas, there is limited accountability for equitable delivery of a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all students. (self-study, curriculum documents, teachers)

The curriculum frequently emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving activities and projects. All students maintain a portfolio of projects and other assignments throughout their high school career that demonstrates mastery and achievement of 21st century goals and expectations. The WHS Senior Exit Interview is particularly relevant to real world application. Although examples of higher order thinking skills are evident in all content areas, such as algebra, English, physics, business technology, DECA, physical education, and biology, there are some classes in mathematics, science, and music where these skills are not featured. Cross-disciplinary learning activities are found in only a few courses, and there is no formal process for developing and implementing cross-disciplinary curriculum. Wareham High School offers a variety of

authentic learning opportunities in and out of school such as the school-to-career program, job shadowing, and internships at local businesses and health care facilities. Additionally, students may choose from a varied array of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, such as the annual WHS Art Fair, college career fairs, DECA Career Development Conference, and Rachel's Challenge. Students may also participate in a wide variety of athletic offerings where every team performs a community service project. The partnership with Wareham's sister city in Cape Verde demonstrates global awareness in an ever-changing world. Although many of the 21st century learning expectations are evident in school activities, there is insufficient use of technology in classrooms to reinforce the skill of acquiring, locating, and retrieving information through the appropriate use of technology. In addition, there is limited opportunity to communicate information by presenting it creatively in a variety of media, including technology. Integrating technology into instructional strategies is also limited by inadequate access to working computers, LCD projectors, science probes, scientific calculators, and other multimedia resources. Curricular emphasis on depth of understanding and application of knowledge makes the curriculum more accessible and relevant to students and promotes the development of 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, central office personnel, teachers)

There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum. Department heads and principals formally observe classes through scheduled classroom observations using a pre-conference form highlighting the objectives, strategies, essential questions, and assessments of the lesson from the written curriculum. Post-conferences serve to align the written and taught curriculum. Furthermore, administrators informally monitor curriculum alignment via walk-throughs and conversations. Although there is no formal system for reviewing lesson plans, discussions about alignment frequently take place during common preparation time or after school meetings. Additionally, teachers have some opportunity to revisit and revise the curriculum at monthly afterschool departmental meetings. Clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum ensures equity of access to the curriculum for all students. (teachers, evaluation document, department heads)

There is departmental curricular coordination and vertical alignment within the school, and with the sending school. However, communication between the high school and the sending school are limited. Regular meetings are scheduled between the high school department chairs (English, mathematics, science, and social studies) and the middle school teachers. However, not all curriculum decisions are made by this team nor communicated to this team. As the result of lack of communication, the foreign language department was completely unaware of curriculum changes at the middle school that directly affect the continuity of programs at the high school. Similarly, the history department offers World History II in 9th grade, but World History I is no longer offered in 8th grade because of the elimination of the history department in the middle school, impacting continuity and content in instruction. The mathematics curriculum also changed at the middle school, resulting in students unprepared for freshman mathematics classes. A district curriculum alignment and articulation committee no longer has a member representing the high school. As a result of the lack of coordination, students are less prepared to meet learning expectations at the high school. (teachers, self-study, department leaders)

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/ media center are insufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. Prior to the 2011-2012 school year, five teachers were laid off raising the class sizes in elective courses. The principal's 7-year plan calls for the hiring of 1.5 additional teachers to provide sufficient staff, but as a result of limited financial resources, the school has been unable to purchase new books and materials. In Algebra II, a common set of book is used for several classes. Many teachers have had to purchase classroom materials such as LCD projectors, DVD players, and books on their own. Supportive technology is severely limited or in need of ongoing maintenance, repair, or replacement. Equipment and supplies are minimal, with even the zoology teacher funding the purchase of lab animals for the course. The library/ media center is inadequately funded although the media specialist succeeded in soliciting donations totaling \$15,000 for the purchase of additional computers, providing access to technology in school for the 30% of students who do not have computer access outside of school. According to the staff response on the Endicott Survey, only 9.4% agrees that co-curricular programs are adequately funded, and 21.6% of parents agree with those staff members' opinion. Thus, a lack of resources compromises the implementation of the curriculum including the co-curricular program and other learning opportunities for the students. (self-study, teachers, Endicott Survey)

The district does not provide sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. Although there is a director of curriculum who is responsible for development of district-wide curriculum coordination and articulation, insufficient time is devoted to this task. Only one meeting per month is dedicated to creating and revising curriculum, and, while one day is used annually to analyze MCAS, SAT, and WCAS data, there is no allocated time for analyzing data in other areas. Thus, there is insufficient time to write and revise curriculum hindering the instructional staff from providing an effective, up-to-date curriculum that serves 21st century learning standards. (self-study, teachers, classroom observation)

Commendations

1. School-wide use of rubrics and portfolio assessment as a capstone
2. Multiple opportunities to practice 21st century learning skills in the curriculum
3. Curricular depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving activities and projects
4. Alignment of 21st century learning expectations with courses in the program of studies
5. Clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum that ensures student equity of access to the curriculum

6. Dedicated and committed staff members who provide resources for students
7. Authentic learning opportunities for students both in and out of school

Recommendations

1. Establish a short and long-term plan for curriculum development and revision
2. Develop and implement the use of a common template for the writing of curriculum
3. Provide 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
4. Establish a protocol to ensure ongoing two-way communication regarding curriculum between and among all academic areas and sending schools
5. Secure sufficient funding to upgrade technology, equipment, instructional materials, and supplies to support effective delivery of the curriculum

3 Instruction

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

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

Instruction

Conclusions

Although some individual teachers' instructional practices are examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, the overall process of examining practices is limited and inconsistent. During formal evaluations, department heads and administrators look for class learning goals and high standards of student expectations that are in line with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations although they are not required to evaluate all teachers' practices using these criteria. According to the Endicott Survey, 98.6% of teachers state they are familiar with the school's core values and beliefs. The seven school-wide rubrics are aligned with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations and all teachers are required to use the school-wide rubrics to assess work that is part of the comprehensive portfolio completed by all students. However, not all teachers are conversant enough with them to apply them in a meaningful way to their daily instructional practices. Some teachers' instructional practices in the classroom exhibit high expectations for all students as indicated in the WHS core values and beliefs. Informal conversations with their department heads and peers allow some teachers to engage in reflective practices although there is no formal system for all teachers to reflect on the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations outside of the evaluation process. Some teachers examine their practices through collaboration, especially with special education teachers, but most do not have a consistent or meaningful opportunity to examine their work against best practices. Although the school has identified challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations, feedback from a variety of sources is not often used to ensure consistency between practice and beliefs. Instructional practices that are not continually examined to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs and 21st century learning expectations do not fully challenge students and prepare them for the 21st century nor encourage teachers to grow in their profession.

(self-study, classroom observations, student shadowing, teacher interviews, teacher evaluation process, Endicott Survey)

Some teachers, in some disciplines and to a varying degree, use instructional practices that support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, applying skills to authentic tasks, and engaging students in self-assessment and reflection. Individual teachers include connections between topics of study in courses such as English and social studies, history and the arts, and the more common connections between skills needed in mathematics and science. Teachers' instructional practices engage students as self-directed learners in some elective courses such as Photoshop and, to a varying degree, in core courses such as English, where some classes start every class with a journal opener. Some teachers consistently ask students to try for deeper understanding and critical thinking. There is some use of essential questions in social studies, English, and mathematics as well as inquiry-based labs in science. Only half of the students believe that the 21st century learning expectations are challenging, and only 69.1% of staff members believe that the 21st century learning expectations are both challenging and measurable for all students. Students are asked to apply concepts to real life in some areas, including the school-to-career program, the Distributive Education Club of America (DECA), and the senior exit interview. The adaptation of reflection sheets as part of the comprehensive portfolio has allowed many

students to engage in self-assessment and reflection in most courses, including physical education. Thus, the increased use and adaptation of school-wide common rubrics is increasing self-assessment. Although, overall, there is a no school policy on the revision of assignments, some teachers allow students to rework assignments and retake exams, especially students on IEPs and in core academic classes. As a result of limited funds for technology access, support, and professional development, few teachers are able to use technology to enhance instruction although business teachers require students to use PowerPoint as a presentation tool and require students to complete projects on computers. In other classes, teachers involve students in the use of technology like Adobe Photoshop, blogs and wikis, and iPads to enhance their learning. Teaching practices based on differentiated strategies such as student interest and learning style are limited in most cases. Only 46.7% of students believe that teachers allow them to choose topics for some assignments. Teachers do adjust their instructional practices in collaboration with special educators to meet the requirements of IEPs, however. The variety of instructional practices used at WHS enables many students to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, student shadowing, classroom observations, teachers, parents, Endicott Survey)

Although most teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by providing additional support and purposefully organizing group learning activities, strategic differentiation during instructional time is infrequent. Many teachers use formative assessments such as dip-sticking, tickets to leave, and openers during instructional time in English, history, and some mathematics classes although the use is infrequent and not widespread. Teachers in English differentiate assignments and assessment to help students learn skills. For example, a teacher allows students to show understanding of a novel and interpret its relationship to themselves through the use of song lyrics and poetry. Teachers in English, history, science, physical education, and some electives allow for different media of presentations including oral presentations, wikispaces, pamphlets, PowerPoint presentations, and videos. However, in the Endicott Survey, nearly three-quarters of faculty members believes that teachers use differentiated instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. Group learning is utilized in most content areas, but is most evident in DECA courses to an exceptional degree. According to the Endicott Survey, 65.6% of students agree that their teachers use group activities in their classes. All teachers provide additional support at both required biweekly after-school extra-help sessions and other non-mandated help sessions. Because of the limited use of formative assessment data, strategic differentiation, purposeful group learning, and additional support, teachers are not fully meeting the needs of all students and ensuring that they are able to fulfill the school's 21st century learning expectations. (classroom observations, self-study, student shadowing, student work, teachers, Endicott Survey)

To a limited extent, teachers individually and collaboratively improve their instructional practices through the examination of summative assessments and current research and use feedback from a variety of sources. While all teachers collaborate on in-service days to examine MCAS data for mathematics, science, and English in order to improve instructional practices and English teachers examine Wareham Comprehensive Assessment System data and use it to improve instruction, the examination of summative assessment data to improve

instruction is limited elsewhere. Mathematics and English teachers examine student work as part of their midterm exam analysis, but additional collaboration is sporadic. Some teachers individually examine student work to improve their instructional practices, but teacher collaboration is limited outside of department meetings and special education as a result of a lack of formal collaboration time. A district-wide annual survey provides feedback from a variety of sources including parents/guardians, students, and staff members and is used by some teachers during department meetings to improve instructional practices. Additionally, some teachers make it a regular practice to seek end-of-course written feedback on their practice and the course content. Through the mentor-protégé program, all new teachers work collaboratively with experienced teachers to improve their instructional practices through the examination of current research. A few teachers provide additional resources through the shared computer drive. Some teachers pursue individual professional development opportunities that examine current research and enable them to improve their instructional practices. Department meetings, walk-through observations, and teacher evaluations by department heads and administrators provide a means for all teachers to collaboratively engage in professional discourse that is focused on instructional practice. Teachers do, however have time set aside by department every other day to pursue these conversations. The limited examination of assessment data, student work, current research, and feedback from a variety of sources hinders teachers' ability to engage in professional discourse and improve their instructional practices in order to improve student learning and achievement. (self-study, teachers, central office personnel, department leaders)

As adult learners and reflective practitioners, many teachers maintain their expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices through graduate course work, professional conference and workshop materials, and subscriptions to professional journals and organizations. Most teachers read and reflect on content-specific literature related to their subject area and designed to improve their instruction, but they lack formal opportunities to use current readings to improve their best practices in teaching in their subject areas. Teachers who regularly reflect on content-specific literature and incorporate this into their teaching practices include new teachers, their mentors in the mentor-protégé program, and those pursuing higher education degrees. With the exception of department meetings, there is insufficient formal in-school time allotted for teachers to reflect and engage in discussions with their peers on instructional practices related to their specific subject. Teachers who teach "singleton" courses do not regularly have peers with whom to converse and reflect on instructional practices. During evaluations by their department heads, teachers have a formal process to reflect on and discuss feedback on their instructional practices. Some teachers utilize student course surveys to reflect on their content-specific instruction and to modify and improve teaching strategies. In department meetings and with peers within their content area, teachers examine lesson plans, formative and summative assessments, and current research, producing discussions that improve student achievement. The school has provided for a few teachers to attend conferences and workshops, including some school-based specialists who meet with experts and peers in their content area in order to engage in discussions of research-based strategies that improve teaching and learning. For example, the media specialist has attended the All-Cape conference every year, and ELL specialists attend the ELL Training - Category I workshop through the Cape Cod Collaborative. The maintenance of expertise in

content areas and in instructional practices allows teachers to remain up-to-date in their teaching practices, providing students with current curriculum and best practices in instruction in specific content areas. Thus the school will benefit from providing a faculty-driven process to select professional development in content-specific instructional practices that faculty members need. (self-study, teachers, department leaders)

Commendations

1. The variety of instructional practices used at WHS that enables many students to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. The participation of all teachers in an in-service day analysis of MCAS data, allowing them to improve their instruction through the use of summative assessment data
3. The use of in-class student feedback by some teachers in order to improve their instructional practices
4. The many teachers who independently seek out opportunities to stay current in their content-specific instructional practices

Recommendations

1. Provide a process through which all teachers routinely examine instructional practices to ensure adherence to the school's core values and beliefs and 21st learning expectations in relation to their instructional practices
2. Provide common time for the formal discussion of strategies that include increased use of essential questions that require students to think critically
3. Provide and implement professional development in strategies to personalize instruction, enhancing instruction with the use of technology, differentiate instruction, and the use of multiple types of formative assessments
4. Set aside scheduled formal time to examine summative and end-of unit exams as well as formative assessment data to inform instruction
5. Provide a faculty-driven process to select professional development in content- specific instructional practice



Assessment of and for Student Learning

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

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

- common course and common grade-level assessments
 - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
 - standardized assessments
 - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
 - survey data from current students and alumni.
11. Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Conclusions

The professional staff employs a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Wareham High School assesses its achievement of 21st century learning expectations through the use of school-wide rubrics. All students compile and update personal, comprehensive portfolios that reflect all learning disciplines in each grade level. There are rubrics in all pieces of work included in the portfolios. There is a rubrics committee for yearly revision that utilizes staff input for necessary changes. As a result of the use of the school-wide rubrics with the portfolio system, students are aware of the learning expectations and know that they are required to show proficiency through the use of the portfolio system and exit interview. (students, department heads, teachers, central administrators, self-study, sample portfolio)

The school's professional staff communicates individual student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations to students frequently, but there is no formal method of communication with parents regarding their child's progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. Wareham High School communicates information about the school's 21st century learning expectations through the student handbook, on the district's and school's website, and on posters in each classroom; and the expectations are also listed with the school-wide rubrics. Through portfolio assignments and common assessments, students are able to self-assess their progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. The school's student advisory period is a designated time for the advisor to review the 21st century learning expectations with those students. Parents and the school community are able to access a list of the 21st century learning expectations through PowerSchool, and the district's and school's websites. Student awareness of their progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations enhances achievement. (self-study, teachers, department heads, parents)

The WHS Instructional Leadership Team collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data monthly to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. The district-wide team consists of teachers, department heads, the curriculum director, and principals. The data reviewed is primarily the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and advanced placement (AP) test scores. According to central office personnel, this data leads directly to the systemic curriculum changes that respond to the deficits in student achievement. The curriculum director also facilitates a system-wide "Data Day", which is held in the fall and includes all teachers, department heads, and principals. Items from the MCAS tests are analyzed and systemic curriculum improvements are suggested. Five additional professional development half-days are used to continue the review of assessment information. At the high school, there is a review of data that includes MCAS and AP scores, mid-term and final exams, SAT results, and classroom assessments. The staff utilizes this information at department meetings and uses it to fuel changes in curriculum and instruction. As a result of these meetings, a co-taught SAT course has been instituted by the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics departments (although only taught by the ELA department). Another district program, students after school for success (SASS), was established to provide students an

opportunity to receive after school skills-based tutoring to target deficits in the learning of 8th and 10th grade students. The English department administers an MCAS- like test called “WCAS” to 9th and 10th grade students. An item analysis of the results of this test encourages the implementation of new instructional strategies based upon gaps in student achievement. As a result of the extensive collection, disaggregation, and an analysis of assessment data, improvements have been made to address inequities in student achievement. (self-study, central office personnel, department heads, teachers)

Prior to each unit of study, some teachers communicate to students the school’s applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. At the beginning of the academic year, teachers give students a syllabus, which outlines the class expectations. In some cases, each unit is listed with specific goals, grading requirements, and assessment practices. School-wide rubrics that articulate 21st century learning expectations are used occasionally in the classroom to assess various assignments. All departments have created essential questions for each course that are used to help students understand the overarching goals for the course and to help plan instruction and assessment. The review of the course syllabus and communication of the 21st century learning expectations and essential questions provides an enhanced understanding of the learning expectations and course and unit specific goals, aiding students to meet the expectations. (course syllabi, Wareham High School Program of Studies, teachers, classroom observation)

Prior to summative assessments, many teachers provide students with corresponding rubrics. Use of rubrics is required in all disciplines to assess individual student learning. School-wide rubrics and a variety of course-specific rubrics are used to assess all portfolio entries, assignments, projects, and exams. Providing corresponding rubrics prior to assessment aids students in understanding and attaining expectations. (department heads, teachers, self-study)

Teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies including formative and summative assessment in various units of study. Each department utilizes different assessment strategies, including problems of the day, worksheets to enforce concepts and theories, notebook checks, vocabulary checks, quizzes, exams, portfolio assignments, and comprehension questions. Some teachers frequently use formative assessments to check for comprehension and understanding. Summative assessments, including common assessment in core subjects and end of each unit assessment, mid-terms, and final exams are also used to measure student understanding. In the ELA department, when students are reading a novel, most teachers provide students with comprehensive questions to which they can respond after each chapter. In the mathematics department, students use “exit tickets” to demonstrate their understanding of the latest assignments and/or concepts. The science department uses formative assessments to help bridge the connection of the concept learned to actual real life applications. The use of both summative and formative assessments by teachers at WHS provides data to adjust instructional strategies needed to aid student academic growth. (assessment documents, classroom observations, teachers department heads, self-study)

While teachers collaborate regularly during department meetings and professional development days on the creation, analysis, and revision of common assessments, portfolio

assignments, and departmental exams, there is insufficient time for collaboration on formative and summative assessments used in unit plans. The ELA department has developed an exam, WCAS, that mirrors the MCAS test and is administered to 9th and 10th grade students, and analyzed results are used to improve instruction, remediate individual learners, and predict student success. The business department has partnered with DECA to develop and assess oral presentations. All departments have developed and use common mid-term and final examinations and eight common assessments for use in student portfolios. However, teachers in core departments have had to develop and collaborate informally on the creation and revision of formative and summative assessments. The lack of formal opportunity to collaborate on the employment of a range of assessments limits the variety of assessment offered students and teacher adjustment of instruction for improved student learning. (self-study, teachers, department chairs)

Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure that students revise and improve their work. Teachers in all academic disciplines routinely provide the students with timely feedback on a variety of assessments such as presentations, projects, portfolios, and research papers so students may improve or revise their work. Wareham High School teachers are encouraged to update the electronic grading system once per cycle or every six days to inform students of their ongoing progress in each class. In ELA, students are encouraged to revise writing assignments using feedback based on rubrics and personal teacher comments. In the foreign language department, students are required to submit drafts of their writing assignments so teachers can provide feedback for student revision. In the mathematics department, geometry students complete several portfolio assignments that are examined and returned to the student for modification. Across all disciplines, students complete reflection sheets on all portfolio assignments, and students are then asked to identify areas of improvement. As a result of this self-assessment and the timely, specific, and corrective feedback, students are enabled to reflect and learn. (self-study, students, teachers, evidence bin)

A number of teachers use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning and encouraging academic growth. Many teachers review students' notes, provide frequent quizzes, utilize questions of the day, and use check-ins and exit tickets to ensure student learning. While many teachers adapt their strategies based on the feedback from formative assessments and re-teach concepts and skills that students have not mastered, these practices are not evident in every classroom. Students are able to better achieve mastery of skills and concepts when formative assessments are utilized on a daily basis to guide teaching and instruction. (classroom observation, self-study, teachers)

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 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, and survey data from current students. The Wareham school system has initiated a "Data Day", which is held each

fall with the intent of reviewing and analyzing the data from the MCAS. This analysis is then synthesized in order to improve curriculum. The English department has developed a mock MCAS test, WCAS, which is given to 9th and 10th graders to help them prepare for the MCAS. After examining student data, the curriculum was revised to include algebra in grade 8, integrated mathematics classes at the high school, and an introduction to physics at the freshman level. PSAT and SAT scores have resulted in a SAT Preparation course. The evaluation of student work and classroom assessments has led to common course and common grade level assessments and changes in the scope and sequence at the high school. Data from the sending schools used for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practices include MCAS results, GRADE assessments, and report cards. The evaluation of advanced placement (AP) test results has led to pre-AP training for middle school teachers and the provision of professional development for teachers of AP courses. The examination of a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practices ensures that curriculum and instruction are informed by student achievement and by student needs. (self-study, central administrators, and assessment committee)

Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The instructional leadership team that includes the superintendent, curriculum director, principals, and department heads, yearly reviews the district's grading policies and revises them if necessary. Wareham High School has made a priority the practice of reporting grades in a timely manner to ensure that students can react and respond to their achievement. Teachers communicate grades and progress to students and parents by way of PowerSchool, emails, phone calls, and conferences. Teachers are encouraged to input grades on PowerSchool every six days for student and parent review. Wareham High School has instituted a grading policy in which a grading scale is utilized for students who fail in the first three terms so that students are provided an opportunity to improve their grades for the year with increased effort in subsequent terms. Students who fail classes are given a scaled grade to encourage them to work for a passing grade. Students also have an opportunity to make-up the failed class in summer school by averaging their yearly grade with their summer school grade. Allowing the students to remediate classes directly corresponds to WHS Core Values and Beliefs, specifically, "education requires diligent effort and responsibility" and "all students can achieve" are accomplished by this policy. The regular review of the grading and reporting policies which reflect the school's core values and beliefs about learning provides students with direction on how they can achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (core values and beliefs document, self-study, central administrators, and assessment committee)

Commendations

1. Revised common assessments and portfolio assignments to augment teaching and learning
2. A variety of assessment strategies across disciplines

3. Required rubrics for all portfolio entries, assignments, projects, and examinations
4. Some models of course syllabi and essential questions
5. The portfolio system as an exit requirement
6. Scaled grading policy including summer school
7. Timely student assessment feedback
8. Consistent school-wide use of school-wide rubrics
9. Use of PowerSchool to communicate with parents
10. The portfolio requirement which makes the students' 21st century learning expectations real and relevant

Recommendations

1. Improve vertical curriculum articulation in all disciplines
2. Provide teachers regular formal dedicated time to discuss all forms of student assessment
3. Increase the use of both formative and summative assessments to improve instruction in all classes
4. Ensure that all teachers provide all students with corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments
5. Formally communicate the 21st century learning goals and the related specific learning goals prior to the unit of study
6. Implement a process to communicate individual achievement of the school's learning expectations to students and their families
7. Communicate school-wide achievement of the school's learning expectations to the school community
8. Develop and implement a method to measure and communicate individual student progress relevant to the school's learning expectations regularly to parents

5

School Culture and Leadership

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

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

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

School Culture and Leadership

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. Student and staff pride is evident in the classrooms and corridors of the high school through the display of student work as well as athletic, academic, and extracurricular awards. Over 400 students participate in extracurricular activities and athletics; student involvement is so consistent that regular after school buses are almost empty leaving the parking lot as many students extend their day in commitment to their respective activities. Deans have been established to maintain positive student behavior for each grade level; they remain with the class over the four years for continuity and support. The core values and beliefs, along with 21st century learning expectations, which promote high standards for each individual student, are posted in each room throughout the building. Wareham High School fosters a positive environment which results in a sense of belonging and community for both students and adults within the building. (self-study, facility tour, panel presentation)

The school is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of two heterogeneously grouped core courses. All students must enroll in and pass World History in order to graduate. This course is thus inclusive and is currently unleveled. In addition, the high school offers several unleveled elective courses in the core content areas (e.g. sociology, zoology, and Personal Finance Literacy) where students can be enrolled in order to meet the graduation credit requirements. The establishment of heterogeneous courses in the core subjects allows all students to participate in equitable access to the curriculum. (self-study, program of studies, students)

While the school has a formal, ongoing program which meets daily for twenty minutes 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 21st century learning expectations, the current program lacks a formal curriculum. This advisory period has been established as a part of the daily schedule, and each Wareham High School student must attend the advisory period daily and each staff member must serve as an advisor. The program lacks formality and focus as there is no established curriculum although a monthly calendar of topics to discuss is supplied to the advisor as a guideline. The program establishes the minimum of a contact person but does not necessarily provide an advocate in addition to the guidance counselor to advise the student over the course of the four years of high school. The development of a strong relationship between the two is not guaranteed given the lack of planning in activities and groupings. Lack of a formal curriculum for the advisory period limits the opportunity for a purposeful program that can promote student understanding and achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. (student shadowing, teachers, classroom observations)

In order to improve student learning through faculty professional development, the principal and professional staff sometimes 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. Some departments use shared preparation time to discuss content curriculum and instruction. When available, teachers attend outside professional development opportunities and use resources such as the Internet to maintain currency with best practices. Generally, these opportunities are content-specific, and there is less opportunity for a school-wide focus. Limited formal time is dedicated to implement building-based professional development within the school calendar, and there is no process by which teachers have input in the planning of professional development. The inconsistency of offerings and lack of formal opportunities for professional discourse between the principal and professional staff in all areas of professional development and best practice resources may greatly inhibit the application of skills, practices, and ideas to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. (school culture and leadership committee, school leadership, principal)

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. School leaders, including department chairs, received 20 hours of evaluator training through the course "Observing and Analyzing Teaching". This now allows department heads to conduct observations and evaluations within their own departments. Not only are administrators trained, teachers are also trained in Research for Better Teaching (RBT) to provide a common language between teacher and evaluator. According to teachers, observations and evaluations conducted by direct supervisors who have mastery in the same content area are prime sources for continued growth as teachers and improved student learning. Because department heads now have the opportunity to observe and evaluate teachers in their own content areas, department improvement plans are being directly and positively affected by these evaluations, as their content directly and effectively impacts future instruction. (self-study, standard evidence, school leadership committee)

The organization of time allows for research-based instruction to meet the learning needs of all students but limits professional collaboration among teachers. The institution of longer blocks of time allows for student engagement, in-depth exploration of topics, and cross-curricular learning. There are also opportunities for teachers to utilize collaborative learning and inquiry-based instruction with their students. However, formal common planning time to review student work and analyze data is not provided. Not only does this limit communication within departments, it limits cross-curricular collaboration. The lack of time for professional collaboration among teachers may inhibit teachers' continued ability to meet the learning needs of all students. (school schedule, teachers, school leadership committee)

In some areas, student loads and class sizes enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. The average class size at Wareham High School is twenty students, but many elective courses boast numbers much greater than the average, some close to or exceeding thirty students. While recent schedule changes have resulted in decreased class sizes in core courses, class sizes in elective courses have increased. Large class sizes have resulted in a shortage of needed instructional materials (e.g. textbooks in a particular mathematics course and lack of supplies in mechanical drawing), hindered the ability of

teachers to provide individualized instruction for students, and prevented teachers from personalizing instruction. (self-study, school and community summary, teachers)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. Each year, the principal encourages departmental improvement plans focused on teaching and learning that reflect the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The school leadership team, led by the principal, continuously looks at the school-wide rubrics in order to ensure their alignment with the school's core values. The principal instituted a guidance department head position as well as deans of discipline, and this has provided time for the assistant principal to focus more on teaching and learning. The school principal has exhibited instructional leadership through the identification and provision of content-specific professional development opportunities as well as his involvement in the evaluation and supervision process. Instructional leadership rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations by the principal and other building leaders provides a positive school culture and cultivates shared leadership. (principal, teachers, school leadership team)

Teachers, students, and parents are somewhat involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Teachers, parents, and students have the opportunity to participate in the WHS School Council to discuss issues that involve improvement in the school. Students have the opportunity to voice their opinion to the school principal in the monthly "WHS Student Roundtable" comprised of a different group of twenty randomly chosen students each month. Student council members and athletic leaders are also given an opportunity to discuss school issues with administrators on a monthly basis. Parents have the opportunity to communicate with teachers and administrators through PowerSchool. Parents are invited to participate on hiring committees and to attend special education meetings, 504 meetings, and may request parent-teacher conferences at any time through the guidance department. Teachers have the opportunity to sit on a variety of committees, including a scheduling committee and the advisory committee. However, while these opportunities exist, not all stakeholders either have the opportunity to or have chosen to participate. According to the Endicott Survey, only 37.9% of staff members reports that teachers, students, and parents are meaningfully involved in decision-making to promote an atmosphere of responsibility and ownership. The limited involvement of some stakeholder groups hinders the shared decision-making process as well as shared ownership and responsibility. (Endicott Survey, standards interview, parents)

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. Teachers have the opportunity to lead their colleagues as department heads. The recent establishment of four teacher deans is another example of a teacher leadership role. Teachers also serve on a variety of committees including school council, advisory committee, and the teacher advisory council (TAC). Many teachers develop student relationships by leading school clubs and activities outside of the classroom. Activities include the DECA program, the partnership with Wareham High School's sister school in Cape Verde, a continued relationship with UMass Dartmouth through a grant which allows technology to be infused within mathematics classrooms, and the SASS program.

Teachers are often available beyond the contractual day to support student and school achievement. The dedication of teachers focused in supporting students through their own leadership and initiatives promotes a positive school culture and leads to the increased engagement of students in the learning process. (student shadowing, teachers, classroom observations)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. There is a collaborative relationship between the school board, superintendent, and principal, which is demonstrated in a variety of ways. Monthly meetings are scheduled which allow for the district leaders, including the superintendent and the principal, to meet and discuss topics on curriculum and instruction. The same team meets monthly to discuss the budget and other business. All three directing parties attend and participate in monthly school committee meetings, including various subcommittee meetings. Collaborative, reflective, and constructive relationships among the school board, superintendent, and principal allow for the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (meeting agendas, principal, school board members)

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. During the 2010-2011 school year, the principal instituted deans at each grade level to alleviate the disciplinary responsibilities of the assistant principal. This idea and the consequent institution were developed by the principal with support from the superintendent and school board. Over the past two years, at the request of the principal, the superintendent has allowed the hiring of experienced teaching candidates despite the impact of their salaries on the limited school budget. The principal advocated for an increase in professional development time without taking teachers out of the classroom and was supported by the inclusion of five student early release days in the school calendar for that purpose. Policy manuals reflect the discretion of the principal in making decisions with respect to student learning and behavior. The budget process also reflects one of the authorities of the principal. The decision-making authority given to the principal by the district leadership provides an unobstructed environment in which to improve teaching and learning. (policy manuals, principal, school leadership)

Commendations

1. The spirit, pride, and respectful culture throughout Wareham High School that results in a sense of community for both students and adults
2. The inclusion of world history as a heterogeneous core course and a graduation requirement
3. The institution of a formal, ongoing, advisory program
4. The provision of content-specific observations and evaluations to improve student learning

5. The significant efforts of the principal and other building leaders to provide a focus on teaching and learning which is rooted in the school's core values and beliefs about learning
6. The dedication of teachers in promoting a positive school culture
7. The collaboration of school and district leaders in assisting students to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
8. The ability of the principal to make school-based decisions without concern for barriers from district leaders

Recommendations

1. Ensure the establishment of a more formal advisory curriculum that focuses on building strong student-teacher relationships
2. Provide increased formal time separate from individual preparation time for teachers to collaborate on topics involving teaching and learning both within their content areas and across content areas
3. Involve teachers in the planning and implementation of their professional development
4. Ensure that student load and class size enable all teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students in all courses
5. Ensure that teachers, in addition to students and parents, have meaningful input into the decision-making process

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School Resources for Learning

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

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

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

7. Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learner^s, 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.

School Resources for Learning

Conclusions

Wareham High School has 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. The school provides all students with a variety of support services, including WHS Students After-School for Success (SASS), freshman seminar, the South Coast Mobile Health Van, and the development of educational proficiency plans (EPPs). The teacher's assistance council (TAC), a pre-referral program to determine qualification of a student for special education services, meets as the result of staff-referral, self-referral, or parent request. However, these meetings are held upon request, not on a regular basis. The school psychologist, in conjunction with the school adjustment counselor and guidance staff member, provides psychological, behavioral, and substance abuse intervention for those in need. The addition of four deans who handle disciplinary issues and the writing of 504 Plans help to personalize behavioral and academic interventions. English language education services (ELE) are provided for identified students. As the result of the implementation of intervention programs and the appropriate use of support personnel, all students have access to directive intervention strategies that support student achievement. (school support staff, school leadership team, self-study)

WHS attempts to provide information to families about available student support services, including those who are most in need. Student support staff members provide information on student grades and attendance through PowerSchool. Some information is also available on the district and school webpages, including general guidance and college preparation information as well as community resources. The local cable station, WCTV, is also used to provide families with information about guidance services. The library webpage provides links to online reference materials and general library information. Mailings eliminated by budget cuts and replaced by paper handouts to students may not reach their intended destination. Global Connect, an automated telephone messaging system, is used monthly to inform families of important events. All support services contribute to the school newsletter, which is sent home quarterly with report cards. The school nurse contacts parents by phone to follow up on student health issues. There is no process or data to ensure that these services are meeting the needs of all students and families. Unfortunately, approximately one third of the school's families do not have Internet access at home, so information provided through PowerSchool and the district and school webpages is not accessible to all, particularly those most in need. The school utilizes a voicemail and newsletter system to provide information to these families. Access to information about student support services, especially to families most in need, provides students the support necessary for success in school. (support staff members, panel presentations, self-study, school newsletter sample)

Support services staff members use limited, often unreliable, technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. PowerSchool provides information to staff members, parents, and students by showing grades and attendance as well as accommodation alerts for students on IEPs and 504 Plans, health issues, and discipline logs. The special education department uses ESPED, a software program, to develop and maintain Individual

Education Plans (IEPs). The guidance office continues to use Bridges/Choices for career development. The Naviance College/Career Research System has been purchased, but unfortunately, necessary technology updates and training have not taken place to support its implementation so the new system is not being utilized. The media center uses an outdated circulation and cataloging system accessible to students only via the circulation desk terminal. While student support staff members attempt to utilize technology on a regular basis, an inadequate server and a limited number of usable, functioning computers frequently interfere with regular access to technology for students and staff. The lack of reliable computers and an inadequate server hinder support services staff members in their ability to use technology to deliver an adequate and effective range of coordinated services for each student. (support staff members , facility tour, students)

School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel to deliver a variety of instructional and support programs to all students but are lacking an adequate support staff. Four school counselors provide a range of services to an average of 200 students each. However, the counselors report that there is too little time to actually carry out their programs with all students in a timely and effective manner because the part-time guidance secretary is shared with other departments resulting in the need for guidance counselors to perform a number of clerical duties. The Endicott Survey indicates that approximately 70% of students and parents feel that they do not meet with their counselor often enough. The guidance department has a written developmental program for all students that guides them in their transition to high school and in planning for career and college choices. However, there is no assessment data to show the effectiveness of the instruction so no adjustments have been made in guidance service programs. Counselors meet with each student at least twice each year to provide age appropriate instruction, including personal, academic, and college/career counseling as well as to conduct assessments and to make referrals. Counselors also meet with students in groups and in more personalized, directed individual settings. The school counseling staff delivers collaborative outreach and referral to outside community mental health agencies and social service providers. There is no relevant data utilized to improve services and to ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century expectations. Because school counseling staff members are required to perform clerical tasks unrelated to their job responsibilities, time constraints prevent the full implementation and evaluation of support services for all students. (school support staff members, clerical staff members, Endicott Survey)

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members who provide preventative health and direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, and conduct ongoing student health assessments. The health office has two certified /licensed nurses, each of whom works half-time. Nurses provide preventative health services including vision, hearing, and BMI screening. Sports physicals are conducted in the nurse's office by a local pediatrician. Students are provided with direct intervention services such as administration of prescribed medication and direct treatment of injuries and illnesses. The health suite provides personal privacy and a setting conducive to preventative and direct intervention. According to the Endicott Survey, 75% of students feels comfortable going to the health office. The nurses make appropriate referrals to services

offered by the South Coast Health Van and Family Planning as well as Mass Health Dental, and mental health services. Health service staff members meet five times each year to review past interventions and services and to make program revisions as needed. The adequate number of licensed nurses in the health department provides preventative and direct intervention services to students and timely, appropriate preventative health services and direct interventions. (health services personnel, facility tour, Endicott Survey)

Library media services are integrated into some curriculum areas and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel. The library media staff works closely with the English and social studies departments on a variety of projects including the freshman orientation and sophomore research papers. The librarian is expanding curriculum integration to include the science, mathematics, foreign language, business, and applied technology departments. The librarian is not involved in curriculum planning but invites teachers to make suggestions about acquisition of appropriate materials to support curriculum and instructional needs. With advanced notice, the librarian provides appropriate resources and instruction in the use of those resources to satisfy particular instructional needs. The media center has a limited range of current print materials, technologies, and other information services. The print collection is outdated and not regularly updated because of budget constraints, and access to electronic resources is hindered by a lack of reliable, working computers. The outdated catalog and circulation system is not readily accessible to students. In spite of budget restrictions, however, the librarian has brought new materials and computers into the media center through fundraisers and donations in excess of \$15,000. The facility is a welcoming and comfortable environment, which is available before, during, and after school hours. While there is no formal vehicle to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of library/media services, the librarian solicits input from staff and students on how to best use the monies gained by fundraising initiatives. Although the library media center is adequately staffed, a lack of funding and an inadequate supply of working computers prevent library/media services from being fully integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and limit independent learning for students. (library staff members, teachers, facility tour, students, self-study)

The support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel who have insufficient time and opportunity to collaborate with all teachers, counselors, and targeted services in order for their students to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. Wareham High School employs 10 special education teachers, 4 one-on-one paraprofessionals and 6 additional paraprofessionals, one specialist for English language learners (ELL), one support staff secretary, one school psychologist/team chair, one school adjustment counselor, and one special education department chair. There is also a district-wide director of student services and one special needs supervisor. Wareham High School defines an inclusion class as being comprised of a combination of regular and special education students having an enrollment of no more than 17 students. Teachers of inclusion classes report having no in-class support, with the exception of instructional aides in some English classes. Special education teachers, who serve as liaisons to their special education students, address the individual needs of special education students via academic support

classes. These special education teachers stress the importance of being able to communicate and collaborate with inclusion teachers, but the schedules and time constraints of both teachers do not usually allow the desired meetings to take place. In addition, the special education department office was displaced from its suite, which is now used by the four new deans, and there is now insufficient space to perform required testing and to hold IEP meetings. The department now has first choice to use the conference room in the main office area for both testing and IEP meetings. Special education teachers have the same amount of preparation time as other departments through the development of a new block schedule but often use that time for IEP meetings and student testing. ELL students are enrolled in regular education classes and are supported by one certified ELL teacher who provides an ELL Support class. The special education department performs ongoing assessment using relevant data from initial and 3-year evaluations, cognitive and achievement batteries, mental health evaluations, student portfolios, and classroom assessments. In addition, special services use attendance records, discipline records, and TAC Team referrals as well as MCAS results and satisfaction surveys submitted by community members to assess the effectiveness of services. Limited opportunities for communication and collaboration between special education and regular education teachers, counselors, target services, and support staff prevents optimal implementation of the IEP which limits the academic success of special education students. (special education teachers, teachers, classroom observation)

Commendations

1. The development of TAC and SASS teams to support students in need of academic interventions
2. The hiring of an adjustment counselor to provide psychological, behavioral, and substance abuse interventions
3. The hiring of four deans who personalize the handling of disciplinary issues and the writing of 504 Plans
4. The delivery of a developmental guidance curriculum
5. The access to a variety of outside agencies for preventative health care
6. The librarian's initiative to successfully raise funds in support of library/media services

Recommendations

1. Establish a regular meeting schedule for the TAC team to ensure that directive intervention strategies are timely and coordinated
2. Develop and implement a more reliable way of ensuring the delivery of information about support services to families

3. Provide technology resources and professional development necessary to implement the Naviance system
4. Update and expand student access to the media center circulation and cataloging system
5. Ensure that support staff members have consistent, reliable access to functioning computers and Internet sources
6. Provide support to school counselors to allow them to fully implement school counseling services
7. Provide a formal assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidance curriculum and library/media services
8. Update the print collection in the library
9. Provide an adequate supply of working computers for school-wide access to electronic library/media resources and curriculum integration
10. Provide sufficient scheduled time for collaboration and communication between inclusion teachers and special education teachers



Community Resources for Learning

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

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

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

Community Resources for Learning

Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body provide limited funding for a wide range of school services and programs, for professional support staff, and for ongoing professional development for all teachers. In addition, there is insufficient funding for curriculum revision, for a full range of technology equipment and support, for other equipment, and for instructional materials and supplies. Over the past years, funding for Wareham High School has been consistently and drastically reduced although the school has managed to preserve the most crucial programs. Core academic classes have remained intact, and core class sizes have decreased. There have been, however, reductions in the number of course sections, such as chemistry, and in the elective course offerings; for example, of the 350 students who elected to take woodshop this year, there was room for only 240 to enroll, and the remaining students were placed in classes that may not have related to their personal interests. Despite the limited resources, however, teachers willingly share the resources they have and routinely spend personal funds to purchase needed supplies. There are insufficient support staff personnel in special education, particularly in the inclusion classrooms, and the professional development offerings in the last two years have been insufficient. Although a half-time technology specialist position was created this school year, it is not sufficient to serve school needs. The lack of dependable funding prevents the school from meeting the needs of students and achieving its 21st century learning expectations. (budget, teachers, administrators, self-study)

The school has developed a plan and provided limited funding to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant and to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment. The WHS School Improvement Plan identified a need to repair broken windows and replace carpeting with tile to improve the learning climate, air quality, and aesthetics in classrooms. These physical improvements were completed in 2011. The school building is kept clean on a daily basis; daily maintenance is provided by the head custodian during the school day, and a crew of five additional custodians in the evening. Overall the building is clean and well-maintained. The school adheres to federal and state regulations in regard to inspections, permits, and expiration dates for equipment, but there is a band-aid approach to maintenance and repair for the physical building and equipment. Funding is often reallocated from other areas to cover these costs. There is not sufficient preventative maintenance; rather, equipment is repaired or replaced when it breaks. This system has been effective for smaller projects, but it is ineffective for larger capital projects such as the school roof, which is leaking in many places. In addition, other neglected projects are getting worse such as drainage problems on Viking Drive, the roof on the announcer's booth on the football/baseball field, the dust collector in the woodworking shop, the ventilation in the dishwasher room, and the replacement of glass over fire extinguisher boxes in the school building. And, most pertinent to learning, there is no schedule for the maintenance and/or replacement of computers so there are computers in the labs, offices, and library which are unusable or do not support current software programs. These examples of insufficient planning, budgeting, and preventative maintenance compromise student learning, instruction, extracurricular programs, and school safety. (facility tour, head custodian, groundskeeper, principal, self-study)

There is insufficient community funding to implement a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. Wareham Public Schools has developed a strategic plan for 2009-2013, which addresses student achievement, technology, community, and resources. While the "plan" describes district goals and objectives, it does not specify how the objectives will be attained nor how specific high school needs will be provided for. The high school principal has developed an informal long-range plan addressing both academic and building needs. The academic areas include the need to provide four years of mathematics instruction for identified students who fail or whose assessment shows a need for improvement to pass the mathematics portion of the MCAS, to add a third year of lab science, to add a Scholastic Aptitude Test preparation course requirement, and to offer online courses. The plan anticipates little enrollment change, and it calls for hiring 1.5 teachers. Six years ago, the high school added four 20-year old portable classrooms that were acquired from the middle school after its renovation. There is a concern regarding ventilation, heating, and the condition of the carpeting in these portable classrooms. The portable classrooms do, however, have covered access, internet access, and handicapped accessibility. And, while there are not restroom facilities in the portables, the classrooms, thanks to the military program housed there, are better equipped (SmartBoards, clickers, laptops) than most classrooms in the main building. There is no plan to remove the portable classrooms or to add onto the building. Technology improvements in the principal's plan include the purchase of 36 new computers and 9 new LCD projectors per year. Facility and capital improvements in the plan include repairing the leaking roof, repairing 20 windows per year, purchasing new desks and chairs, replacing a boiler, cleaning and replacing HVAC ducts, converting vestibules to office space, and carpet to tile conversions. The window repair and carpet conversion projects are underway. This plan indicated that some funding will come from grants, some from the maintenance budget, and some from the equipment repair line item. There is no community commitment to fund the plan. Without community support for funding the plan for improvements, this plan probably cannot be implemented which will negatively impact teaching and learning in the building and preparing students for 21st century learning expectations. (WPS Strategic Plan 2009-2013, WHS Standard Seven-Year Long-Range Plan document, self-study, staff members)

While faculty members and building administrators are actively involved in the development of the budget, due to a lack of communication, the faculty has limited understanding of the implementation of the budget. At the beginning of the budget process, teachers and staff members submit program needs for supplies and equipment through their respective department chairs. The department chairs make a proposal to the administrative team, which prepares, submits, and presents the budget to the central administration and the school committee for revision and approval before being presented to the town for approval. Budgeted funds are then allocated to Wareham High School, and implementation of the budget is under the control of the school's administrative team. The distribution of funds in the school is handled by the building administrators. As a result, faculty members are not sure of the resources they have to support instruction in their departments, and this negatively impacts their ability to deliver the curriculum effectively and to improve and expand resources

and materials available to teachers and students. (teachers, department chairs, school committee members, self-study)

The school site and plant support the delivery of most school programs and services. General classroom space is adequate, with a daily usage rate of 90%, but there is insufficient adequate space to expand either science or computer labs and one school program is housed in portable classrooms. There is safe and adequate storage for science chemicals. The guidance area has sufficient office and meeting space and allows for confidential conversations with students, parents, student support groups, and teachers. The nurse's space has several private areas for students who are ill as well as an ADA compliant lavatory. Special education has dedicated office and classroom space, but uses the main office conference room for team meetings. The cafeteria, auditorium, and the locker rooms support the needs of the various programs, but, as a result of the leaking roof, the gymnasium is not always accessible for programs. There are frequently not enough working computers in one space for whole class instruction. In addition, curricular demands prevent instructors of academic classes who are not business and technology instructors from accessing the computer labs for their courses. The media center/library has a separate room with sixteen computers available for student use as well as an additional twenty-four computers located throughout the library. The exterior of the building has well maintained athletic fields for physical education classes and athletic teams. These fields are used both by the schools and the community at large. The grounds are clean and well maintained, but there are problems resulting from deferred maintenance outside the building that include replacing the roof on the announcer's booth and replacing spectator stands. Although parking is adequate, with ample space for handicapped parking, the storm drains on Viking Drive are not routinely cleaned, resulting in localized flooding. While, in general, the site supports the effective delivery of most programs, the lack of computer access and the roof problems inside the school do negatively impact the staff's ability to deliver high quality instruction and services. (tour of the facility, maintenance personnel, groundskeepers, staff members, self-study)

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. Current permits and registration certificates are posted in an area near the boilers and hot water heaters. Temperature logs for the refrigeration equipment in the cafeteria are posted in the kitchen. There are formal protocols for hazardous waste disposal and a pest management plan. There is no need for an asbestos plan considering the young age of the building. The principal is responsible for scheduling all required inspections and maintains records of these inspections. Regular evaluation and inspection of the building ensures the safety of the learning environment for students and staff. (maintenance staff, tour of facility, self-study)

Most professional staff members actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the schools. According to the Endicott Survey, over 60% of the staff agrees that they actively engage with parents and families, but only 44% indicates that they reach out to families who are less connected to the school. However, only 31% of the parents surveyed feel that the professional staff actively engages them as partners in their child's education. The

faculty and staff engage families through use of PowerSchool, a web-based grade book, Global Connect phone messages, paper handouts to students, announcements in the local newspaper, open houses, showcases, incoming freshman orientation, information meetings on topics such as financial aid, individualized telephone calls made by guidance counselors and teachers, parent-teacher conferences, email, and the solicitation of parent input using surveys. Last year, the school added four new dean positions to oversee each grade level. The deans communicate with families regarding student performance and demeanor, and one dean is responsible for community relations to promote and publicize student activities and to conduct site visits to the homes of truant students. In addition, the school nurse and school adjustment counselor frequently contact parents regarding health and social/emotional issues. Finally, a new electronic signboard is being installed to post school news for the public. The school's active outreach creates positive school and family relationships that promote the academic and social/emotional growth of students. (teachers, deans, school nurse, guidance counselors, principal, self-study, Endicott Survey)

The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. There are numerous opportunities for parents to become informed about and involved at the school starting with an orientation program for incoming freshmen and including open houses, a school website, Global Connect messaging system calls, announcements at sporting events, parent access to PowerSchool, and phone and email contact with teachers. A core group of parents participates in fundraising, booster clubs, and activities related to extracurricular activities such as music, drama, athletics, DECA, and clubs. According to the Endicott Survey, only 48% of the parents surveyed perceive the school as having effective community and parent partnerships. However, there is a wide range of evidence illustrating school/community partnerships at Wareham High School. Last year, the community donated \$250,000 in scholarship money to graduating seniors. Every other day, a group of students leaves school in the afternoon and participates in internship programs with local businesses and institutions such as Tobey Hospital, the Wareham Fire Department, local restaurants, Wareham Community TV, and other schools in the district. Representatives from local businesses and industries participate in the school's career fair. Sophomores have the opportunity to participate in a college visitation program at schools such as Salve Regina, Roger Williams, Bridgewater State, and Stonehill, funded through the generosity of a local family. Some students participate in dual enrollment with local colleges such as Cape Cod Community College. A.D. Makepeace, a local cranberry grower, has provided grant funding for technology and supplies to support student learning. These many partnerships support student learning and help students become productive members of the community. (self-study, principal, panel presentation, faculty and staff members, students)

Commendations

1. The clean and well-maintained building and grounds
2. The principal's long-range plan for the high school

3. Compliance with applicable federal and state laws and with local fire, health, and safety regulations
4. The variety of communication strategies employed to keep parents informed
5. The many community partnerships that strengthen learning opportunities at WHS

Recommendations

1. Ensure adequate staffing to deliver a wide range of curricula to meet student course requests
2. Ensure technology support is adequate to serve school needs and support instruction and learning
3. Develop and fund a district-wide formal long-range plan to include programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements
4. Provide permanent space for the programs housed in the portable classrooms
5. Provide communication about the status of the approved budget to teachers
6. Ensure an adequate number of well-maintained, up-to-date computers for classroom instruction
7. Replace/repair the leaky roof
8. Identify and engage disconnected families
9. Explore additional opportunities to increase parental involvement

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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

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

The Commission urges school officials to establish a formal follow-up program at once to review and implement all findings of the self-study and valid recommendations identified

in the evaluation report. An outline of the Follow-Up Program is available in the Commission's *Accreditation Handbook* which was given to the school at the onset of the self-study. Additional direction regarding suggested procedures and reporting requirements is provided at Follow-Up Seminars offered by Commission staff following the on-site visit.

The visiting team wishes to express sincere appreciation for the high level of hospitality extended to the team. The warm reception of the team made the work easier and the visit comfortable and enjoyable.

**WAREHAM HIGH SCHOOL
NEASC ACCREDITATION VISIT
OCTOBER 16 -19, 2011**

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NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

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