

New England Association of Schools and Colleges



Commission on Public Secondary Schools

Report of the Visiting Committee for Francis T. Maloney High School

Meriden, Connecticut

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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 Francis T. Maloney 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 Francis T. Maloney 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 that 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 Francis T. Maloney High School, a committee of five members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people.

The self-study of Francis T. Maloney High School extended over a period of 30 school months from March 2009 to March 2012. The visiting committee was pleased to note that one board of education member, two community leaders, eleven students, and ten parents joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

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, Francis T. Maloney 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 sixteen evaluators was assigned by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the Francis T. Maloney High School. The Committee members spent four days in Meriden, Connecticut, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school meets the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools, central office administrators, institutions of higher education, and the public, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Francis T. Maloney High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 40 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day
- a total of 42 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 Francis T. Maloney 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 Francis T. Maloney High School

Many methods to improve student learning have been put in place at Francis T. Maloney High School. The core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations document was developed by the faculty based upon current research and best practices. The faculty members formally approved it, as did the Meriden Board of Education. The beliefs that all students can learn and improve their performance, that all staff members are dedicated to teaching and to challenging students, that a positive personalized learning environment must exist, that differentiation is essential, and that the use of time must be maximized are all embedded into the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations of the school. The core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations have been widely distributed throughout the school and community. The 21st century learning expectations are clearly written in terms that are easily understood and represent what all graduates of Maloney High School should know and be able to do. However, the core values, beliefs, and the school's 21st century learning expectations are not the driving forces for the decision-making process at any level within the Meriden School District at the present time. At the building level, administrators and teachers use teacher-generated and course content-specific scoring guides and rubrics as well as common assessments; these rubrics and assessments, along with the Meriden District Assessment (MDA) and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) results serve as the basis for curriculum development and revision and instructional strategies rather than the adopted school-wide rubrics for the academic, social, and civic expectations for student learning. However, plans are in place for each teacher to use at least one school-wide rubric at least once per term starting with the 2012-2013 school year. The climate of mutual respect that has been established

among the school administrators, faculty members, and students will assist the school as it strives to reach the next level of student achievement using the adopted 21st century learning expectations. Furthermore, the degree to which the school is achieving the school-wide expectations as well as course-specific expectations, when assessed, collected, and analyzed, can be used to guide policy-making decisions at the central administration and school committee levels.

The curricular programs generally support the academic, physical, and emotional development of students. In 2009-2010 the Meriden Board of Education approved a reorganization plan for secondary schools which eliminated tracking at the middle schools and collapsed five levels at the high school to two college preparatory levels, academic and accelerated, while maintaining Advanced Placement courses in Grades 10-12. The curriculum is designed so that all students, regardless of their abilities and needs, have the opportunity to develop the academic, civic, and social skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century. Curriculum revision for each discipline takes place every five years. As each subject undergoes revision, the new curriculum will be in Making Standards Work (MSW) format and its content will be aligned with the most recent Connecticut Curriculum Frameworks. Each course is broken down into units and aligned with the frameworks; performance objectives are established to identify the essential questions, concepts, content, and skills students will be expected to learn, suggested resources and significant tasks, and assessments practices, including department-developed common assessments (CA) and Maloney High School school-wide rubrics. Furthermore, the professional learning community (PLC) initiative now provides teachers with common planning time to meet and work together on curriculum, cross-disciplinary activities, and to improve student learning. An abbreviated day on Thursdays provides time for PLC meetings. Finally, curricular documents are easily accessed on-line and facilitate the ongoing process of revising and refining curriculum without having to reprint binders to reflect ongoing changes.

The faculty of Francis T. Maloney High School has developed and implemented a number of programs to address student needs, and teachers employ a number of instructional strategies that are consistent with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Teachers strategically differentiate instruction by delivering content using multiple modalities for differing learning styles; providing project and assignment choice; providing self-paced assignments, modified assignments and assessments; and using graphic organizers and a variety of grouping strategies with differentiated tasks. Furthermore, many teachers provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, and to apply the knowledge and skills they have developed on authentic tasks that require inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking. However, students do engage in activities that afford them the opportunity to experience personalized instruction as active and self-directed learners or engage in self-assessment and reflection, but such activities need to continually increase. Since research indicates that students at various points along the academic achievement continuum are successful in classrooms that require them to employ higher order thinking skills and be self-directed learners, those instructional strategies should be employed in all classes at Maloney High School. While the teachers experience a variety of professional development opportunities, it will be necessary for the PLCs to focus professional development in new and current teaching strategies and expand the active collegial system of support to ensure that current research and best practices become the norm in all classrooms for all students.

Assessing the degree to which students meet or exceed the school's 21st century learning expectations is a work in progress. Francis T. Maloney High School has many sources of data. Students take the MDAs in math and reading three times during the freshman year and twice during the sophomore year. All sophomores and juniors take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) and the state-mandated standardized CAPT; juniors take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). In addition, all students take common assessments in the various curricular areas. These data are used during the PLC meetings as a basis for curriculum revision and for the development of new instructional strategies. While most teachers are using at least one school-wide rubric during the 2011-2012 school year, they tend to rely upon the course-specific rubrics to assess academic progress. As a result, the professional staff members do not presently have a mechanism for assessing the degree to which individual students or the school is achieving the adopted 21st century learning expectations. Teachers will need to communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed and provide students with the corresponding rubrics prior to beginning each unit of study. In terms of assessing student progress, teachers will need to continue to employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments, and utilize the results of such assessments as a basis for modifying instruction. Hence, to make the best use of the available data, teachers will need to continue to develop in-depth skills in gathering, analyzing, and making decisions based on available data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement and as the basis for curricular and instructional changes.

Support of Teaching and Learning at Maloney High School

The principal, working with building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The principal and leadership team as well as the faculty and staff members have created a climate that is safe, positive, respectful, and focuses on the well being and learning of all students and celebrates student success. Collaboration is reflected in the district improvement plan, the school improvement plan, board of education meetings, and principals' meetings. In addition, a number of dramatic changes have recently been implemented at Francis T. Maloney High School. Despite concerns of teachers and parents, all Grade 9-10 students were grouped in two levels, academic and accelerated, for their four core classes of English, social studies, science, and mathematics. The reorganization of the course leveling system will expand to include Grades 11 and 12 and will be completed in 2013. To support these changes, the daily seven-period schedule has been modified. Classes meet for forty-eight minutes every day, except on abbreviated Thursdays when the PLC meets. Additionally, on the first Tuesday of each month, the schedule is modified to support an advisory period. It is now time for all members of the Francis T. Maloney High School community to focus attention on the full implementation of the core values, beliefs, and the school's 21st century learning expectations in all aspects of the curriculum, school organization, and decision-making processes.

The overall student support services, including guidance services, health services, library information services, and special education services are consistent with the core values, beliefs, and the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school has timely, generally 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. The

student-support resources, programs, and services enhance student learning by interacting and working cooperatively with faculty and staff members and by utilizing a wide variety of community resources to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students. The size of the library/media center is very small for the over 1,000 students at the school. The library/media specialist, within the constraints of a reduced budget, provides a limited range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum. Effective communication with all stakeholders will be necessary to enlist the support and participation from parents and community members for the challenges the school faces, in addition to celebrating the successes of the school and students. This will take persistence, creativity, and require active participation of administrators, faculty and staff members, and students.

Although economic times are challenging, the community and the district's governing body have not provided dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services including sufficient professional and support staff, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. The school has had three years with a zero budget increase. The existing physical plant and facilities do not meet all applicable federal and state laws and are not in compliance with all federal and state regulations, although it is clean and well maintained for the age of the building. On the other hand, the Meriden City Council approved a \$216.7 million bond to renovate both Maloney and Platt High Schools, a project that will be concluded in 2017. Additionally, a number of productive business, community, and higher education partnerships support student learning. Ongoing challenges will need to be addressed, particularly in difficult economic times. First, the principal and faculty members will be vital to any form of school improvement and will need to be integral parts of all school improvement efforts and initiatives. Second, since the principal and faculty members are in positions to identify student needs on a day-to-day basis, they should be part of the process that will address those needs. Third, the community and the school board will need to provide resources to sustain existing school programs that are effective and to support new initiatives to address identified needs. This will require adequate personnel, services, equipment, technological support, materials, and supplies that will foster student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. To enlist the support of the community, the school will need to actively and effectively engage parents and families as partners in all aspects of educational improvement and student achievement.

This report will provide a blueprint for the future of Francis T. Maloney High School and will also provide a leadership challenge for the school committee, the central office administrators, the principal, the school leadership team, and the faculty and the staff members. Furthermore, if the community, city officials, school committee, and members of the Maloney High School community can continue to work together in a collegial manner for the benefit of the community's children, the Maloney High School core values, beliefs, and the school's 21st century learning expectations can be achieved by *all* students.

School and Community Profile

The School and the Students

Maloney High School serves students in Grades 9-12, with a total enrollment of 1,182 students (574 males and 608 females) in 2010-2011. The school population has remained relatively constant over the past five years. The ethnic, racial, and cultural composition is diverse, with 504 Hispanic students, 482 Caucasian students, 175 African American students, 19 Asian students, and 2 Native American students during the 2010-2011 school year. The graduation rate for the Class of 2009 was 91.4%, and the dropout rate was 1.6%. The average daily student attendance was 90.4%, and the average number of days absent due to illness or personal time for teachers was 5.1 days for the 2008-2009 school year.

There are 85 full-time equivalent teachers at Maloney High School, creating a student-teacher ratio of roughly 14:1. Individual teachers carry an average load of 125 students per semester, with an average class size of 25. Classes range in size from 15 to 30. Students attend school for 181 days with a seven-period daily schedule of 48-minute periods. On the first Tuesday of each month, groups of students meet with assigned faculty advisors to discuss the school's core values and beliefs, academic, social, and civic expectations, and school or community issues. Many teachers have a class period incorporated into their schedules for remediation, during which time students may seek extra help or personal instruction, as well as explore independent study with teachers. Some provision for common planning time for teachers of Grade 9 students has been arranged each day as of the 2010 school year.

All students are required to enroll in English courses (four years), social studies courses (three years), mathematics courses (three years), science courses (two years), health education (one year), physical education (three years), arts or vocational education courses (one year), and business or computer education classes (one year). During the 2010-2011 school year, 13% of students were enrolled in honors or Advanced Placement classes. Approximately 13% of students received special education services, and 6% of the students were enrolled in bilingual education.

Maloney High School offers a variety of co-curricular activities for its students, including 22 athletic programs for boys and girls and 12 different clubs, including chorus and student government opportunities. Enrollment in sports and activities is low, with an average participation rate of 21% of the students participating in sports and 35% of the students participating in club activities.

In 2008-2009, Maloney High School sophomores scored below the state average on CAPT in math, science, reading, and writing. Students at Maloney scored 23.7% on reading as compared to the state average of 45.9%; 37.1% on writing as compared to 59.6%; 23.0% on mathematics as compared to 48.7%; and 18.6% on science as compared to 45.3%. In the class of 2009, 58% of students took the SAT. The average SAT score for the class of 2009 was 463 in reading, 461 in math, and 457 in writing, while state averages were 503 in reading, 508 in math, and 506 in writing. In 2008-09, 11% of seniors sat for a total of 11 different Advanced Placement (AP) exams, with 66% of them scoring 3 or better.

The Class of 2011 sent approximately 81% of its graduates on to further education. One hundred and ninety-one students (76%) of the graduating class attended a four-year or two-year college, and 5% went to a business, vocational-technical, or nursing school. Seventy-two percent of those students attending a two-year or four-year college went to either a public or private school in Connecticut.

Students are recognized for their accomplishments through a variety of means. Each month, each department recognizes two students of the month for exemplary effort and achievement. In addition, local newspapers sponsor academic and athletic achievement awards and business/community-sponsored scholarships. Each spring, the school honors students for individual achievement in academics and community service at awards assemblies.

The Community

Meriden, Connecticut, is part of New Haven County and is located in the center of the state, roughly twenty miles between the major cities of Hartford and New Haven. The city is positioned at the intersection of several major highways, including I-91, I-691, and The Merritt Parkway. Maloney High School is located on the east side of Meriden, about three miles from the downtown area and less than two miles from the northeast border of the city. The school property abuts I-91 and is located just off East Main Street, at 121 Gravel Street.

Meriden is a moderately sized city in Connecticut, with a population of 59,186 and an average increase of 1.6% annually. It is home to a diverse population: 61% white, 28% Hispanic, 7% black, and 4% other. Seventy-one percent of Meriden residents speak English at home, while 26% speak Spanish, and 8.8% speak another language. The average household income is \$53,595, compared to the state average of \$67,034. Just over 14% of Meriden residents live below the poverty line, compared to the state average of 9.4%. The current unemployment rate in Meriden is 10%, compared to the state average of 9.1%. Maloney High School has 48% of its population on free or reduced lunch, compared with 26% as a state average.

Meriden was originally part of Wallingford. It was granted a separate meetinghouse in 1727, became a town in 1806, and incorporated as a city in 1867. It was named for the town of Meriden, West Midland Hills, England. The oldest house in town is still standing; built by Solomon Goffe in 1711, it is now a museum, the Solomon Goffe House.

In the 1800s, Meriden earned the nickname “Silver City,” due to the large number of cutlery and related products which were manufactured here by companies such as International Silver and Meriden Cutlery.

Charles Parker and his younger brother opened their first manufacturing factory in Meriden in 1832, with a capital outlay of \$70. Over the years they manufactured a wide variety of products, from steam engines, train wheels, and printing presses to piano stools. During the American Civil War, Parker's Meriden Machine Company was under Union contract to produce 10,000 repeating rifles and 15,000 Springfield rifles. Parker began producing his own shotgun, referred to as “The Gun of 1866.” In 1868, Charles and his sons, Wilbur, Charles, and Dexter started the Parker Brothers Gun Company, which continued as an independent company until 1934 when it was purchased by the Remington Arms.

The City of Meriden is home to the largest municipal park in New England. Hubbard Park sits on the west side of the city and is comprised of 1,800 acres of public parks, trails, lakes, and a band shell. The Quinnipiac River runs through Meriden, and The Connecticut River (the largest waterway in the state) is less than 15 miles to the east. While silver is no longer manufactured in Meriden, other businesses and regional attractions have taken its place. Westfield Meriden, a major shopping mall, is located off I-691 in west Meriden, adjacent to the newly built Mid-State Medical Center. Several biotech companies have recently moved to Meriden, including Protein Sciences, which have begun to populate the Research Parkway business district. Other major companies located in Meriden include 3M, AT&T, B&L Companies, Canberra, Cox Communications, The Miller Company, Fosdick, CSC, and Northeast Utilities.

The Meriden Public School System is comprised of eight elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools. In addition to these facilities, the city also owns a third middle school, Thomas Edison Middle School, which is run by Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) as an inter-district magnet middle school. Meriden students comprise roughly 70% of the Thomas Edison student population. Beyond the traditional school, Meriden offers several specialty schools for students with varied educational and social needs. The Venture Program is an alternative setting for special education students where instruction can take place in small groups using therapeutic supports to encourage positive behavioral outcomes for students identified as emotionally disturbed. Our Young Mothers program offers pregnant high-school girls an educational setting with a parenting component. Another School Program (ASP) is a small high school program for students unable to achieve success in the traditional high school setting; students must apply for admission. The Expulsion Program offers an alternate setting for students who have been expelled from the comprehensive high school. Meriden is also home to the YMCA Head Start Program for children age's three to five and the Apple Pre-School Program, which is Title-I funded and run by the Meriden Board of Education.

Two high schools serve the City of Meriden: Francis T. Maloney High School on the east side of the city, and Orville H. Platt High School on the west side. In the late 1950s, both high schools were built to serve an expanding student population and to replace the outdated, single "Meriden High School." Maloney and Platt high schools were built at the same time and opened their doors in 1958. They were built with the same specifications and many aspects of the buildings are mirror images of each other. Renovations to each school provided additional classroom space and a swimming pool in each building in 1970. Currently, both schools are in the first stages of a full renovation, The Meriden City Council having approved on June 6, 2011, a \$216.7 million bond to renovate both schools. While the educational specifications for each high school are very similar, the Meriden School Building Committee has hired separate architects and separate general contractors for the two projects, thus eliminating the twin appearance of the two schools following the renovation. The renovation projects will break ground in November 2012 and will be concluded by 2017.

The budget appropriated for the Meriden Board of Education by The Meriden City Council has been \$99,608,340 for the school years 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012, reflecting an increase of 0.0% for the past three years. With roughly 9,246 students registered in the district in 2010, this reflects an average expenditure of \$10,773 per pupil.

Maloney High School engages in school improvement planning. The district publishes a district improvement plan (DIP). This plan is studied and used by the school improvement committee (SIC) to formulate a school improvement plan (SIP). These plans utilize the core values and beliefs statement as well as student learning outcomes to guide their creation, focus, and planning. Also, a committee addresses the integration of the newly required student success plans (SSP) pursuant to state law.

School's Statement of Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Francis T. Maloney High School, a diverse and dynamic community of learners, values the uniqueness of all its students and members.

We work collaboratively to develop the academic, civic, and social skills needed to succeed in the 21st century.

Academic Expectations

Students will:

- Demonstrate communication skills through reading, writing, listening, speaking, and the use of technology.
- Apply decision-making and problem-solving techniques through the use of critical thinking skills.

Civic Expectations

Students will:

- Participate in school and community activities

Social Expectations

Students will:

- Demonstrate responsible behavior by showing respect for self and others.
- Work and learn collaboratively and independently.

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES, INC.

COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

**For High Schools, Middle/High Schools, and K-12 Schools
Effective for Schools Hosting Visiting Committees beginning in the Year 2005**

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

1

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

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

Conclusions

Francis T. Maloney High School frequently 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. The school fosters a dynamic, collaborative and inclusive process through participation by teachers, students, parents, administrators, and members of the community. Since January 2010, Francis T. Maloney High School has used frequent, documented meetings to develop its core values and learning expectation statements. Maloney High School employed current research-based best practices in the development of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The beliefs that all students can learn and improve their performance, that all faculty and staff members are dedicated to teaching and to challenging students, that a positive personalized learning environment must exist, that differentiation is essential, and that the use of time must be maximized are all embedded into the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations of the school. The committee presented a first draft of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to the faculty for approval in May 2010. Following approval, the steering committee made recommendations to revise portions of the statement. The faculty accepted this new draft in November 2010. Many students and parents were familiar with the core values and beliefs that were adopted in November 2010. Therefore, if the administrators and faculty and staff members continue to utilize a focused and formal process for articulating the core values, then students, teachers, and parents will be able to reference the core values and learning expectations, and better comprehend the connections between the daily school activities and the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, survey)

The school, in the vast majority, has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and all are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. The learning expectations at Francis T. Maloney High School appropriately challenge its students and are embedded in the newly implemented school-wide rubrics. All school rubrics use four levels: Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Needs Improvement, and Does Not Meet Expectations. Recently, these rubrics have been finalized and released to teachers, and only some students have been exposed to them. Parents have not received the finalized version of these rubrics, and the school has a plan to incorporate them in the quarterly grades for each subject. Different departments are focusing on different rubrics for the remainder of this school year and in 2012-2013. The English department and some history and civics classes have integrated the writing rubric into the current freshman classes. The rubrics have been designed to challenge all levels of students. Teachers are planning to report the results of one assignment on a quarterly report card. Additionally, teachers have modified, and plan to modify, the school-wide rubrics to apply to their classes. At this point, the teachers have had little opportunity to discuss the type of student work that would merit high scores on the rubrics. The civics rubric is quantifiable and requires community service and participation in school-sponsored activities. Given the student demographics and budgetary constraints, participation in after-school-sponsored activities presents a challenge for students. Because the school-wide analytic rubrics identify high levels of achievement, if applied universally and uniformly, the school will have challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students. These learning expectations, as defined by the school wide rubrics, will address academic, social, and civic

competencies. (self-study, panel presentation, parents, school leadership team, teachers, students)

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are beginning to be actively reflected in the culture. Posters of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are displayed throughout the school, and are posted on the school website. As they become ingrained in the daily activities of the school, they will be reflected in the school culture. Departments are revising curriculum because Francis T. Maloney High School has added new initiatives to align the school's curriculum with 21st century learning expectations, such as revised graduation requirements for mathematics and science, common assessments (CAs), advisory periods, the collapsing of multi-leveled academic courses, and integration of the school-wide rubrics. Staff members utilize formative and summative assessments, including standardized, district, and teacher-developed assessments. School-wide rubrics are in the nascent stages of use departmentally and will be used on a school-wide basis. As curriculum is revised with the expectation of incorporating the school-wide rubrics, additional data will be available to guide curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. The school is striving to allocate resources to meet 21st century learning expectations. For example, the school has received grants to expand technology such as SMARTBoards, LCD projectors, and additional computers. Academic specialists have also been hired in the areas of English and mathematics to provide support for students who are identified as being most in need. However, budget constraints impede the meeting of these goals. Nonetheless, there appears to be an understanding among administrators and faculty and staff members that the core values and beliefs are unique to Maloney High School and represent what the school is striving to achieve, separate and apart from the state mandates. Therefore if the administration and faculty continue to use the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations to drive the school's curriculum, instruction and assessment, and use them to guide policies, procedures, decisions and resource allocations, then they will be truly reflected in the culture of the school. (self-study, panel presentation, parents, school leadership team, teachers, students)

The school intends to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities. The sub-committee which assisted in the creation of the core values continued the process of reflection begun approximately ten years earlier when the former mission statement was created. This sub-committee has proposed a schedule in order to review and revise these core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The sub-committee has been scheduled to meet four times in the 2012-2013 school year (November 2012, February 2013, April 2013) and once in the 2013-2014 school year (October 2013), for the purpose of exchanging ideas and sharing information about 21st-century skills and learning. Multiple sources such as the PLCs, data teams (district-wide and school-wide) and the information generated from the implementation of the school-wide rubrics and school-wide de-leveling of academic courses will provide Maloney High School with a rich variety of information to act upon. Community priorities such as the elevation of scores on statewide tests and the integration of non-English-speaking students and families will also drive this process. All of the key stakeholder groups recognize and embrace diversity as an asset to the school community and the core values and beliefs. Therefore, when the administration and faculty review and modify the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, they will continue to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom and will continue to guide the

school's policies, procedures, decisions and resource allocations. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Commendations

1. The development of school-wide analytic rubrics that are pragmatic, challenging, and measureable
2. The use of the school's core values and beliefs and the school-wide rubrics to drive curriculum development and revision, instructional strategies, and assessment strategies
3. The ongoing meetings to review and revision of the core values, beliefs, and expectations for learning
4. The degree of inclusion and collaboration in which the entire school community is engaged in the development of the core values, beliefs about learning, and 21st century learning expectations
5. The use of diversity as an asset and weaving this theme into the core values and beliefs

Recommendations

1. Ensure the rubric rollout process continues, and that the administration and faculty effectively communicate the rubric's use to parents and students
2. Ensure that the civic expectations are appropriate, measurable, and challenging for students
3. Use the core values and beliefs as a basis for resource allocation
4. Develop and implement a plan with a specific timeline to review and revise core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are completed in a timely manner

2

Curriculum

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

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

Conclusions

The purposefully designed curriculum is currently in the process of being rewritten in a common format in order to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. In 2009-2010 the Meriden Board of Education approved a reorganization plan for secondary schools which eliminated tracking at the middle schools and collapsed five levels at the high school to two college preparatory levels, academic and accelerated, while maintaining Advanced Placement courses in Grades 10-12. This reorganization started with the implementation of a revised curriculum in Grade 9 in 2010-2011, and Grade 10 in 2011-2012, and will continue in Grades 11-12 in 2012-2013. The Grade 9-10 curricula in the core subjects of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies have undergone major revisions, including the elimination of all remedial and lower level courses. Grades 11-12 curricula are currently being revised. The written curriculum is the framework within which the school aligns and personalizes its 21st century learning expectations. The curriculum was designed so that all students, regardless of their abilities and needs, have the opportunity to develop the academic, civic, and social skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century. Teachers have clearly posted the performance objectives outlined in the curriculum throughout the school. The adopted school-wide rubrics are beginning to be implemented. Teachers convene regularly to review and design curriculum according to the school's 21st century expectations. The curriculum includes a purposefully designed set of course offerings, co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities. Once the curriculum is revised for grades nine through twelve, then all students will be able to practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, school leadership team, teachers)

The curriculum in some areas 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; and significant tasks/assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. The Grade 9-10 English language arts and mathematics curricula were revised to reflect explicitly the links between the written curriculum and the Connecticut Frameworks and, more recently, the newly adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The curricula were designed using a template that includes pacing, overview, units, activities, resources, and significant tasks and assessments for the academic and accelerated tiers of expectations. This template is based on Making Standards Work (MSW) and follows the State of Connecticut Curriculum Framework. Social studies (U.S. History, Civics, and World History) and science (Integrated Physical Science, Biology, and Chemistry) revised the Grade 9-10 curricula using the same format. World language, physical education and music were also recently revised. All subject areas were aligned with the Connecticut Curriculum Frameworks and are now being aligned to the Maloney High School's 21st century learning expectations. Subjects are slated for revision every five years. As each subject undergoes revision, the new curriculum will be in MSW format and its content will be aligned with the most recent Connecticut Curriculum Frameworks. Each course is broken down into units and aligned with the frameworks; performance objectives are established to identify the essential questions, concepts, content, and skills students will be expected to learn. The performance objectives, outlined in the curriculum, state what students will be expected to know and be able to do upon completion of each unit. The MSW format also includes suggested

resources and significant tasks and assessment practices, including department-developed CAs and Maloney High School school-wide rubrics. Newly created CAs provide teachers with data about students' mastery of content as well as 21st century skills. The new curricula have been enhanced by the integration of technology-based instruction. When curriculum for all disciplines 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; and significant tasks/assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics teachers, students, and parents will understand what is expected in all curricular areas. (self-study, observations, panel presentation, teachers, student work)

The curricula emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, and the ethical and informed use of technology in multiple ways. The overwhelming majority of faculty members have curriculum-based activities in their classrooms that promote student-centered learning and emphasize depth of understanding and application of knowledge. In the science department, students choose a specific problem to investigate and then design their own experiments to answer their initial questions. In all disciplines, students are provided choice in terms of determining the focus of classroom projects and use inquiry and problem solving to complete those projects. Science simulation resources encourage students to make predictions and perform simulated experiments using computer software. Problem solving is an integral part of the math curriculum at all levels. Teachers model logical and rational problem-solving techniques which students then practice in structuring their own solutions. Tiered assignments are used to allow students to complete increasingly challenging tasks as they progress. In the social studies department, students are exposed to present-day media and historical databases and then challenged to create solutions and to predict consequences of the historical events they have researched. In all disciplines, students analyze the pros and cons of potential decisions and complete authentic assessments by applying learned skills to new tasks requiring a synthesis of knowledge on their part. In English, students' prior knowledge of world languages, linguistics, the fine arts, and history is applied to and enhanced by experiences with a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts. In the physical sciences, consumer sciences, physical education, and art, assignments and projects often require the integration of previously learned math skills. Previously, opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning were limited by the lack of opportunity in the schedule for teachers to confer and collaborate. However, the PLC initiative now provides teachers with common planning time to meet and work together on cross-disciplinary activities that improve student learning. An abbreviated day on Thursdays provides time for PLC meetings. Authentic learning opportunities are evident both in and out of school. Student learning is enriched by activities in Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), Robotics, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), the Medical Career program, and the required 20 hours of community service. The departments are working to ensure that their respective curricula emphasize the ethical and informed use of technology. In order for students to use the computers at school, they and their parents are required to sign the district's authorized user policy (AUP) form, which provides guidelines for student use of technology. Because the curricula emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry, problem solving, higher order thinking, ethical and informed use of technology, students will be successful to achieving the core values and expectations for student learning. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, parents)

The school emphasizes clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum through a variety of initiatives. The adopted curriculum is being implemented in the classrooms at Maloney High School. Adoption of the Connecticut Frameworks and CCSS, establishment of curriculum revision committees, and the Grade 9 team model that allows for team meetings per week, during which time teachers collaborate on lessons and units, address curricular issues for revisions, and discuss the efficacy of instructional practices, promote alignment between the written and taught curriculum. In addition, each discipline has established curriculum committees for curriculum revision work, part of which emphasizes the use of common assessments and midterm and final exams. The collapsing of instructional levels from five to two and newly designed academic and accelerated courses is designed to promote curricular uniformity as well as higher academic expectations for all students. Therefore, the school emphasizes clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum through a variety of initiatives, resulting in a cohesive curriculum. (self-study, observations, school leadership team, survey)

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district. Students come from Grade 8 to Maloney High School from six sending schools, three public and three parochial. Curriculum committee members or their district-level supervisors or both spend time with sending schools for articulation of curriculum. The department chairperson for world languages meets during the year with sending schools, as do the English and math supervisors. During the curriculum revision process, the social studies curriculum committee members met at least twice with middle school social studies teachers for articulation of the curriculum. Furthermore, many Maloney High School students transfer to or from Platt High School. Therefore, the two high schools collaborate with each other to ensure that students who transfer back and forth can access the various curricula seamlessly. The math and English curriculum are co-written by committee members from Maloney High School and Platt High School. As a data team, the social studies teachers who teach AP courses meet with Platt High School teachers quarterly. The career and technical education department chairs from both schools meet frequently to collaborate and write and revise curriculum. In all departments, teachers acquire incoming student grades and IEPs as needed when students transfer from Platt High School. In addition, faculty members spend time collaborating within and across content areas, for the purpose of articulation of the curriculum. Within content areas, each department has at least one data team which meets once a month to evaluate student performance and plan curriculum-based instructional strategies based on data gathered through CAs and other assessment tools. Within content areas, teachers collaborate based on grade level. Across content areas, there is a limited alignment of curriculum. Grade 9 teams are comprised of teachers from across content areas who meet daily to plan interdisciplinary lessons and activities. School musicals, productions, art displays, and concerts offer interdisciplinary learning opportunities within the art, music, and technology education curricula. The Meriden Public Schools curriculum guides provide a continuum of student learning expectations and curriculum guides from Grades K-12. Furthermore, curricular documents are easily accessed on-line and facilitate the ongoing process of revising and refining curriculum without having to reprint binders to reflect ongoing changes. Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools and between Maloney and Platt High School within the district. Therefore, students experience curricular consistency in terms of

scope and sequence district wide. (self-study, panel presentation, school board, central office administrators)

The sufficiency of staffing, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center varies and are limited in the level to which it supports the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. The staffing at Francis T. Maloney High School is not sufficient due to budget cutbacks. The budget, level funded for the past three years, has resulted in fewer elective courses offered across all disciplines, and a steady rise in class sizes. Enrollment patterns and staffing needs require close monitoring as budget issues may result in the loss of teaching and other support positions in future school year. The district has previously supplied sufficient levels of instructional materials and supplies for classroom and office needs. In the past, department chairpersons spent their budgets throughout the fiscal year. For the past several years, however, funding for textbooks and instructional materials has been reduced by budgetary freezes during the school year or changes made to allocations during the budget development process for the following year. In the area of technology the demand for access in classrooms or in the school's computer labs or library/media center has grown significantly, but the number of computers has not kept pace. Funds from a 21st Century Learning Environment Grant have provided fourteen interactive white boards for use by the science, career and technical education, mathematics, and world language students in their classrooms. Another difficulty is the inadequate size of the labs in science classes. As graduation requirements increase, such as an additional year of science, student enrollment will continue to increase, and Francis T. Maloney High School has reached its enrollment limit in the science labs. The library/media specialist attempts to provide staff with audio/visual materials to support curriculum, but the demand to provide current technology is extremely challenging. The media center has a total of eighteen computers, fourteen for individual student use. However, if the media specialist has a request from a staff member to reserve the computers for classroom use, students not in the reserved class are unable to utilize the technology during this class period. It should also be noted that most of the 250 plus computers at the school are at least five years old, and no provision for purchasing new hardware is in place until the new school is operational in five years. In addition, the library/media center is the site where students may access the Odysseyware credit-recovery program. Essentially, the present economic times are compromising the learning opportunities for Maloney High School students. However, when the 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, students and the larger community will reap the benefits. (self-study, panel presentation, school leadership team, teachers)

The district has made an attempt to provide the professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of curriculum using assessment results and current research. Citywide curriculum coordinators unify and develop meaningful K-12 curricula working directly with principals, classroom teachers, and specialists. The curricula is housed in the Making Standards Work (MSW) format to align curriculum to local, state, national, and professional education standards in science, social studies, math, and world languages. While MSW can be updated without waiting for the five-year revision cycle, it has not been utilized by all disciplines to date, although the English curriculum was revised using the MSW from the start. The district made

the decision to implement MSW for all future curricular revisions, which takes into account assessments such as the MDA, CAPT, Connecticut Career and Technical Education assessment (CTE), AP exam results, and departmental data findings and which are aligned to Connecticut Frameworks and CCSS. The establishment of a PLC and the abbreviated Thursday is a key element in the commitment to implementing a guaranteed and viable curriculum. The faculty is directly involved in curriculum evolution, review, and revision, in keeping with Meriden's five-year timetable for curriculum revision. Because sufficient professional development exists, the school's professional staff has sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. (self-study, panel presentation, central office administrators, teachers, Endicott Survey)

Commendations

1. The curricula that emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, and the ethical and informed use of technology in individual and creative ways
2. The comprehensive alignment between the written and taught curriculum
3. The creative use of instructional materials and technology to implement the curriculum
4. The adoption of the Making Standards Work format for all curricular areas
5. The vertical articulation of the curriculum between sending schools and Maloney High School
6. The initiative to purposely design the curriculum according to the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

Recommendations

1. Ensure that the curriculum is purposefully designed for all grade levels so that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. Continue to pursue available grants and advocate for sufficient funding on particular in the budget that will ensure successful implementation of the curricula
3. Rewrite all curricula in the common format

3

Instruction

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

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

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices are examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. The majority of teachers continuously examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Professional development opportunities are provided to support teachers in instructional practices related to 21st century learning. The Meriden Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development Plan is based on the newly revised Connecticut Common Core of Teaching, the Connecticut Frameworks/Curricula Standards, and the Meriden Teaching Competencies. The teacher evaluation plan provides for two formal and two informal observations each year for beginning level teachers. Following the Connecticut State Board of Education guidelines, beginning teachers complete the teacher education and mentoring (TEAM) program, which includes additional informal observations by the mentor teacher. After successfully completing the beginning cycle, teachers move to the professional learning/growth cycle in three years or four years at the evaluator's option, with one mandatory formal observation every five years. In support of school-wide professional learning, the district has modified the school day to allow for rotating professional development meetings; data teams, department meetings, faculty meetings, and school improvement committee meetings take place on every Thursday after school. Furthermore, 64 teachers are currently involved in a peer-coaching program, and English teachers are given release time prior to and after instructional units to reflect upon teaching practices. Recently, several district initiatives have supported collaborative work to develop the academic, civic, and social skills needed to succeed in the 21st century. Since the teachers' instructional practices are examined to promote consistency with the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations, the student's ability to meet learning expectations is enhanced. (self-study, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction; engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning; engaging students as active and self-directed learners; emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking; applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; and integrating technology. Teachers collectively personalize instruction. Overall, most teachers are able to provide specific examples of personalized instruction by providing opportunities for project choices, which allows for the flexibility to express knowledge through a variety of mediums. For example, in an AP Chemistry class, students are able to conduct an independent research project on a topic of their choice and relate their topic to any two content-related topics covered within the course. This emphasis on active and self-directed learning was also present with physics students engaged in a lab taking place in a school stairwell so that they could observe and make observations about students running up the stairs. Additionally, self-paced assignments are utilized to reflect active and self-directed learners as evidenced in the use of Moodle in a computer applications course and in the Read 180 classes. Teachers engage students in cross-disciplinary learning. Examples include the utilization of math skills for a business finance lesson; students in a math class composed various poems; a social studies teacher connected the time period they were studying to a scientific method students learned in their science class; a science teacher used algebraic formulas in his science class and demonstrated the use of trigonometry to determine carbon storage in a tree. Freshman English and social studies classes collaborate by pairing students in both classes. Students respond to

teacher-generated prompts then email their partner to actively promote cross-disciplinary learning. Furthermore, many teachers provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. Teachers across the disciplines create and implement varied tasks and lessons to support authentic learning. For example, students in a science class draw conclusions about the quality of the water by investigating the insects collected in water samples from the Quinnipiac River. Tasks such as this demonstrate the emphasis on inquiry and problem-solving. There is, however, a varied emphasis on higher-level thinking. Limited evidence in student work samples and teacher lesson plans support student engagement in self-assessment and reflection. Teachers consciously integrate technology into their instruction on a regular basis, including but not limited to the use of Edublogs, SMARTBoards, document cameras, video streaming, Mathematica, graphing calculators, PowerPoint presentations, Moodle, Vokis, Beyond Question, WebQuests, Movie Maker, Read 180, WriteToLearn, Internet-based research projects, and podcasts in all grades and at all levels. All Francis T. Maloney High School students have a school-based Gmail account which allows them access to Google Docs. Recent grant funding has allowed for the purchase of SMARTBoards for various content areas. As a result, technology is utilized to enhance instruction. For example, a Spanish teacher utilized a SMARTBoard for students to take a quiz directly after a lesson. Using Beyond Question, he conducted an immediate formative assessment to gauge how well students understood the content. Additionally, in multiple classes, teachers utilized the SMARTBoard by showing various film, television and instructional clips to illustrate concepts and ideas to support instruction. Unfortunately, the ability for teachers to effectively utilize computer labs for webquests, research projects, and other applications of technology is limited, especially for large class sizes due to the limited availability of computer labs. Because Maloney High School students are supported with varied instructional practices, their achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations is enhanced. (self-study, observations, teachers, students)

Teachers consistently adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment, especially during instructional time, strategically differentiating, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Maloney High School teachers strategically differentiate instruction by delivering content using multiple modalities for differing learning styles; providing project and assignment choice; providing self-paced assignments, modified assignments and assessments; and using graphic organizers and a variety of grouping strategies with differentiated tasks. Teachers use group activities in their classes and a variety of teaching strategies in their courses. For example, students in one particular algebra class are paired strategically to work on higher-order thinking tasks enabling the teacher to coach other students who need remediation. Furthermore, targeted literacy instruction for students who need extra support is pervasive. Students in the Read 180 and System 44 classes receive focused instruction and support in their particular areas of need, such as in decoding or phonics or both. A majority of teachers also meet individual student needs through co-teaching, paraprofessional support, one-to-one instruction and by utilizing peer mentors. In addition, teachers are flexible and readily available to provide additional instructional support outside of the traditional instructional period. Teachers consistently use formative assessments during instructional time to adjust their daily instructional practices. Teachers check for understanding using comprehension questions, Collins writing assignments, entrance and exit slips, and peer review and editing. In a Grade 9 science class, the teacher immediately recognized students did not understand the dynamics involved with compost breakdown. He adjusted the lesson utilizing pH strip vials and a plastic

bag to demonstrate the concept. As a result, students were able to gain a stronger grasp of the content. Formative assessments are also regularly utilized in several classrooms with Beyond Question, a student-response system. Moreover, departmental data teams are now being utilized to identify effective instructional practices to support instruction and improve student-learning outcomes. For example, an English teacher utilizes district common assessments to shape instruction to prepare students for CAPT. Maloney is also home to the district's bilingual education program where students receive instruction in Spanish and English. Furthermore, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), teach English through science and mathematics instruction. Hence, the deliberate and strategic instructional practices in place will result in the individual student needs being met. (self-study, observations, parents, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Teachers often improve their instructional practices, individually and collaboratively, 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; and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Teachers regularly examine student work to identify student strengths and weaknesses and adjust their instructional practices accordingly. School-wide data teams meet regularly to analyze student data, which is collected using traditional methods, as well as utilizing technology such as ExamView, Moodle, and Beyond Question. MDAs also drive instruction. For example, a Grade 10 English teacher utilizes MDAs as a basis for selecting instructional strategies and to prepare students for CAPT testing. To better address the transition from middle to high school and the learning needs of ninth graders, Grade 9 teams were piloted last year and continued throughout this academic year. Grade 9 team members meet on a daily basis, in lieu of a duty, to reflect on student performance and to make necessary instructional adjustments. These planning times provide an opportunity for parents to meet with teachers. Additionally, Grade 9 and 10 English teachers collaborate and use specific data provided by the reading specialist to personalize the Read 180 classes and English classes to guide instruction. Although time is allocated for teachers to collaborate, others often direct this time; therefore, most teachers do not utilize that time to improve their instructional practices. The administration provides ample opportunity to engage parents in the educational process and is currently implementing various initiatives to improve home-school communication, such as implementing a family liaison coordinator (FLC). PowerSchool and Alert Now are successful in informing parents, and the annual open house and bilingual meeting with parents have successful turnouts. Evidence of parental feedback regarding instruction is limited. Beyond regular department, SIC and data team meetings, teachers are able to reflect upon instruction and best practices by utilizing the professional library maintained by the library media specialist or by participating in the teachers literature circle or both. The purpose of the group is to engage teachers in dialogue focused on professional text, research articles, and the professional literature. The group meets approximately once every three weeks. Because student achievement data drives instructional practices, opportunities exist for teachers to receive feedback from parents and for teachers to engage in professional discourse; however, more input from parents would impact the shaping of instruction. Professional meeting time is evident; however, an emphasis on using this time specifically for discourse on instructional practices and the learning needs of a heterogeneous classroom would positively impact student learning. (self-study, parents, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers, Endicott Survey)

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, consistently maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. The Meriden School District Professional Development Plan represents a commitment on the part of all certified staff to work together toward the improvement of instruction and learning for all students. Teachers identify and independently pursue professional development needs in order to address the instructional needs of students. In addition, the administration supports ongoing professional development opportunities, both district-wide and out of district including, but not limited to, CALI-effective teaching strategies module, the Advanced Placement Annual Convention, AP Vertical teaming, UCONN statistics workshop, National Council of Teachers of English Convention, and the Connecticut Social Studies Symposium. It is the philosophy of the school leadership to support attendance of all relevant professional development interests and opportunities brought to them by the faculty. Because teachers consistently receive professional support and the majority of teachers maintain expertise and are knowledgeable in their content areas, there are positive impacts on instruction and student learning. (self-study, school leadership team, teachers)

Commendations

1. The teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to promote consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
2. The degree to which instruction is personalized
3. The instruction which provides opportunities for active, authentic learning
4. The effort to consistently adjust instruction to meet various learning needs of students
5. The emphasis on student data impacts instruction
6. The administration increasing opportunities for parental involvement in instructional practices
7. The release time for professional development opportunities provided by school leadership which supports teacher professional growth and classroom instruction
8. The teachers continually addressing personal professional development needs and pursuing knowledge and understanding independently

Recommendations

1. Provide students with more consistent self-assessment and reflection opportunities
2. Ensure that large classes are provided opportunities to utilize computers
3. Structure professional meeting time specifically for teachers to reflect upon instructional practices to further assist them in meeting the complex needs of a heterogeneous classroom

4

Assessment of and for Student Learning

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

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

10. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following:
 - student work
 - common course and common grade-level assessments
 - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
 - standardized assessments
 - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
 - survey data from current students and alumni.

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

Conclusions

The professional staff has begun to employ 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. This year each department is implementing a minimum of one school-wide rubric. A schedule for implementation was developed and received by each department. Teachers use the school-wide rubric assigned to their department. The eight school-wide rubrics assess the areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, technology, decision-making, civic responsibility, and social expectations which align to the school's 21st century learning expectations. While there is no formal process in place at the present time to determine individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning experiences, faculty and staff members have received a draft booklet containing all rubrics and are providing feedback for the final version of a plan to assess progress will be implemented during the 2012-2013 school year. The plan calls for teachers to use one school-wide rubric at least once per term. Full implementation of school-wide rubrics to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations will produce data upon which to base curriculum development and revision as well as to inform instructional strategies as they relate to the school-wide academic, social, and civic expectations. (self-study, school leadership team, teachers)

The school's professional staff rarely communicates individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and does not communicate the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to parents and the school community. Teachers provide parents and students with a comprehensive course overview, which communicates specific course expectations and the school's grading policy. In addition, teachers distribute course syllabi detailing course and behavioral expectations as well as the grading policy. Report cards are issued quarterly, but currently parents and the community are not receiving communication regarding student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Some students are occasionally receiving feedback regarding their progress in achieving one or more of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Student progress has been most often reported in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and problem solving. Classes using school-wide rubrics include bilingual, English, science, special education, and math. Hence, there is a need to ensure that both teachers and students have a sufficient number of opportunities to assess student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations each semester. Consistent communication to students, parents, and the community regarding student and school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations will serve as a basis for curriculum revision and changes in instructional practice and the degree to which the school's progress is achieving the school's 21st century expectations resulting in improved student learning. (self-study, parents, central office administrators, school leadership team)

Professional staff regularly collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. Data teams meet at grade, department, and school levels to identify and address inequities. Staff members utilize formative and summative assessments including standardized, district, and teacher-developed assessments. All sophomores and juniors take the PSAT in preparation for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) to be taken later in the year or the following year. The state-mandated standardized CAPT is administered to Grade 10

students in the spring. The district requires that all students score "proficient" or above on CAPT in order to graduate. Students who do not score "proficient" as sophomores must re-take the sections they have not passed. Beginning in the school year 2011-2012, if by their senior year they have not scored "proficient" or better on CAPT, students must pass the district's Basic Skills for Graduation Test with a score of "proficient" or better; formerly, a score of "basic" sufficed. Students take practice CAPT test released items in Grade 9 to prepare for the CAPT given the sophomore year. Also, students take MDAs in math and reading three times during the freshman year and twice during the sophomore year. With the collapsing of instructional levels introduced to remedy the achievement gap, faculty members have worked to revise the curriculum with district-wide collaborators, including their counterparts at Platt High School, and through professional development. Collaboration within departments, whose members share data, activities, assignments, projects, and instructional strategies, has enriched the curriculum and its delivery to students. Each department utilizes data to communicate information, establish student goals, and monitor progress. Teachers do not regularly collect, disaggregate, or analyze data using school-wide rubrics, and student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations is not included in the student data profile. Using data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement ensures a rigorous and supportive learning environment for all students. (self-study, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

Prior to each unit of study, teachers rarely communicate to students the related school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and often communicate unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. Teachers at Maloney High School provide their students with school-wide, course-specific, and project-specific rubrics that will be used to grade student essays, projects, presentations, and exams, but do not communicate relevant 21st century learning expectations that relate them to the unit of study. Class daily objectives are frequently listed on the board and communicated to students. Classroom posters display 21st century learning expectations. Students rarely hear how daily class objectives are tied to the corresponding 21st century learning expectation. Communicating applicable 21st century learning expectations that relate to the unit of study, assists students in understanding the connection between their daily learning and the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Prior to summative assessments, teachers frequently provide students with the corresponding rubrics. Teachers provide their students with school-wide, course-specific, and project-specific rubrics that will be used to grade student essays, projects, presentations, and exams. Rubrics are often provided with assessment tasks. Most teachers use rubrics to assess student work. Most students receive and understand the rubrics their teachers use to assess their work. The health and physical education department, the career and technical education department, and the math department use course-specific rubrics for written work and game rules, classroom participation, and maintaining student notebooks, respectively. The English department uses essay-specific rubrics and a rubric for the senior speech; the science department uses a rubric for a mini research paper, and the social studies department uses a rubric for a presidential baseball card project. By providing students with rubrics that identify teacher or school-wide expectations or both, students understand criteria for demonstrating the various levels of performance they are expected to meet. (self-study, teachers, students, survey)

In each unit of study, teachers regularly employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Teachers have developed multiple summative assessments for each subject area that provide meaningful pictures of student achievement. A range of assessment strategies has been implemented in academic and accelerated classes. Assessments are used as pre- and post- evaluative tools to inform instruction. Examples of summative assessments include chapter and unit tests developed collaboratively within departments, such as chapter-specific common assessments used for social studies tests and quizzes, Collins Types 2 and 3 writing assignments, and mid-term and final examinations. Chapter tests include a variety of question types ranging from recall to higher order thinking questions. Student work includes a variety of assessments including tests, quizzes, essays, and projects such as posters, PowerPoint, oral and written reports. The physical education department uses formative pre-tests at the beginning of each unit of study to determine appropriate student placement levels for each unit; the art department has created a CA that is aligned with content standards and requires students to write about artwork using Type 1 (formative) and Type 2 (formative or summative) Collins writing assignments. Members of the Bilingual Department collaborate to integrate formative and summative assessments for the range of subjects that they teach. By employing formative assessments teachers are better prepared to address student needs, and by using summative assessment strategies students are allowed to demonstrate their understanding of content, concepts, and the application of their knowledge. (self-study, parents, teachers, students)

Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Teachers meet monthly to collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments. A variety of data teams meet regularly to create, analyze, and revise formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. These formal collaborations include professional development days and department data team, Grade 9 team, department, and school-wide data team meetings. The Grade 9 teams meet daily to plan for instruction and assessment. Their collaboration time is used to collect data from standardized assessments, create pre- and post-tests, make recommendations for revision of the curriculum, create CAs, meet with students or parents or both, and modify classroom assessments for more individualized and differentiated instruction. Transition meetings are held to analyze assessment data in planning student programs. The two high schools collaborate in some areas on assessments and all areas of the curriculum. However, at Maloney High School teachers have not collaboratively reviewed student work using school-wide rubrics nor collaborated on exemplars for each school-wide rubric. Regular, formal collaboration on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments, promotes consistency across departments and grade levels in curriculum implementation and assessment. (self-study, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

Many teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. In many classes, students engage in a writing process that requires them to write several drafts, each of which receives detailed feedback from the teacher. In addition to returning student work in a timely manner, teachers provide corrective feedback on a regular and continuous basis to help students understand how to improve their work. For example, the John Collins Writing Program is used across the curriculum; it emphasizes the important role of frequent opportunities for revision and feedback in helping students become more fluent,

competent writers. Teachers across departments provide feedback to improve student work on a final product or to prepare for a similar future activity. Examples include rough and final drafts of reports, lab reports, and journal entries. Providing students with specific, timely, and corrective feedback improves student learning. (self-study, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Formative assessments are used across the disciplines. Teachers' work on formative assessments is on going in regular data-team meetings and Grade 9 team meetings. Teachers collaborate on and evaluate their formative assessment data, using this data to gauge future teaching practices and modify instruction. At the beginning of the school year, the social studies department administers the United States Immigration and Naturalization Services Citizenship Test to assess basic student knowledge of civics; test results reveal prior knowledge which teachers can use as a baseline for instructional units. The English department's formative assessments include Grade 9-10 vocabulary pre-tests and summative post-tests); the AP English Literature and Composition course prepares students for the AP exam by using AP released items from previous test years as formative assessment. Regularly using formative assessment allows teachers to adapt their instructional strategies in order to ensure that all students understand the topics and skills at hand. (self-study, school leadership team, 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; standardized assessments; data from sending schools and receiving district schools; and survey data from current students. Data teams meet regularly to discuss student work, assessments, and data from sending and receiving schools. Lesson plans include instructional and assessment strategies. Curriculum documents contain evidence of revision including reference to the common core state standards. The curriculum has been revised based on assessment data for algebra, geometry, and biology. Many departments examine common course assessments. In preparation for CAPT testing, supplemental materials have been created to strengthen students' reading, writing, and math skills in various classes. The district employs a research and evaluation person who provides data to professional staff for program planning. Teachers and administrators do not currently review individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. An established formal communication process between Francis T. Maloney High School and post-secondary institutions or alumni is not in place. Informally and anecdotally, graduates and college representatives share information with Maloney High School faculty and staff members. Currently, no data is available from post-secondary institutions or alumni. If teachers and administrators individually and collaboratively meet to examine a range of evidence of student learning, then curriculum enhancements and improved instructional practices resulting in greater student achievement will be forthcoming. (self-study, school leadership team, teachers)

Most grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Departments review assessments for alignment to district values and beliefs. One such type of assessment is cooperative group learning that uses rubrics to measure collaboration and respect for self and others. The building administration is developing a method of reporting student progress in

achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations on report cards generated through PowerSchool. Teachers communicate grading practices to parents and students in various ways such as parent night, syllabi, PowerSchool, and open house. The district has a process for review and revision in grading policy and graduation requirements. Recommendations for change are presented to the Meriden Board of Education for approval. Regular review and revision of grading and reporting practices will ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. (self-study, parents, school leadership team, teachers)

Commendations

1. The plan and progress being made for full implementation in 2012-2013 of school-wide rubrics to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations is in place
2. The professional staff that engages in data collection and analysis on a regular basis to ensure student success
3. The use of course specific and assignment specific rubrics that is pervasive and a part of the culture
4. The use of varied assessments that is a standard practice by most teachers
5. The staff that leverages the use of collaboration time to produce and refine assessments

Recommendations

1. Implement school-wide rubrics in all curricular areas to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations during the 2012-2013 school year
2. Ensure that the entire professional staff continuously employs a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Report individual student and whole-school progress on achieving 21st century learning expectations to students, parents, and the community on a regular basis
4. Include student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations in the student data profile
5. Communicate applicable 21st century learning expectations at the start of each unit of study
6. Increase collaboration for review of school-wide rubric to ensure rubrics are meeting student needs
7. Establish exemplars for each school-wide rubric

8. Ensure all teachers regularly provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to students
9. Establish a formal process for collecting data from post-secondary institutions and alumni for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice
10. Review and revise data from school-wide rubrics that measure 21st century learning expectations to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.
11. Ensure that a sufficient number of opportunities are used each term to assess a student's progress on the 21st century learning expectations as defined by the rubrics
12. Ensure that teachers have sufficient opportunity to discuss and agree upon exemplars for each school-wide rubric

Support Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

5

School Culture and Leadership

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

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

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

Conclusions

The school community deliberately and collectively 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. Most students at Francis T. Maloney High School feel that the school provides a safe and positive learning environment. Building a respectful, positive climate is the goal across the school and is evidenced in the student handbook, classrooms, and athletic and co-curricular programs. A majority of students surveyed feel that teachers provide personal interaction and support for their learning and achievement. A variety of measures and interventions are in place regarding the prevention of bullying, fighting, and conflicts between and among students. Security cameras are in the hallways and in certain common areas throughout the building to deter unauthorized activity. Francis T. Maloney High School has many programs in place, which build a supportive culture that reinforces positive school-wide achievement and hard work while encouraging students to continually strive for academic excellence. For example, students are recognized for achieving honor roll status and for passing all sections of the CAPT. The school's career center oversees programs that foster high expectations for the learning of all students. Some of these programs include Developing Tomorrow's Professionals, a program which teaches a select group of students from minority ethnic groups the skills necessary to succeed in the business world, and offers them job-shadowing opportunities to provide a sense of belonging and pride in the community. The Wesleyan University Upward Bound Math-Science (UBMS) program's goal is to help students recognize and develop their potential to excel in math and science and to encourage them to pursue post-secondary degrees in those fields. Maloney High School has established a medical careers class, which provides students with the opportunity to obtain their certified nursing assistant (CNA) certification. This program has ranked first on the CTE test for three consecutive years. The literary magazine, Starlings, is student published and distributed twice a year. In addition to these programs a wide range of curricular, co-curricular, and club activities is offered for students to join. These groups, which foster a sense of ownership, pride, and high expectations, include extensive athletic programs, student council, Best Buddies, a Distributive Education Club of American (DECA), SKILLS USA, Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), Key Club, robotics, youth and government (YAG), math club, world language honor societies, band program, choral program, FBLA, and color guard. The variety of activities and programs ensures that all students can participate in their school community beyond the classroom, thereby encouraging a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture at Francis T. Maloney High School. The Francis T. Maloney High School formal written crisis management plan is disseminated to all staff and to substitute teachers. Drills are performed according to state guidelines and occur at regular intervals. A school-based resource officer is assigned full-time; Francis T. Maloney High School also employs two hall monitors. In addition, teachers are present and visible during student passing times and regularly alert administrators and support staff of potential problems. These strategies support a positive, safe, respectful school culture. Through formal programs and informal means, all members of the school community reflect the shared ownership, pride, and high expectations. Though the school makes concerted efforts to involve parents and to ensure that they have timely information about the school, parental involvement is limited. When all members of the school community, including parents, build a safe, positive, and supportive culture for learning, the results will be shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all that provides an environment where everyone achieves success.

(self-study, observations, parents, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Beginning with the 2010-2011 freshman class, Maloney High School has initiated by design heterogeneous classes in each core curriculum area for all students. An educational programming goal at Francis T. Maloney High School is to provide a challenging curriculum and high expectations for all students. All Grade 9-10 students are grouped in two levels, Academic and Accelerated, for their four core classes: English, social studies, science, and mathematics. The reorganization of the course leveling system will expand to include Grades 11 and 12 and will be completed in time for the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. While the intent of reducing the number of levels is to ensure that students participate in heterogeneously-grouped courses that provide challenging learning experiences enabling them to achieve the schools learning expectations, teachers and parents expressed concern about the changes. In addition, heterogeneous grouping at Francis T. Maloney High School is intended to provide opportunities for students to learn tolerance, patience, and collaboration. Teachers at Francis T. Maloney High School utilize a variety of assessments that inform instruction and reveal student strengths and weaknesses. Francis T. Maloney High School offers AP level classes to further challenge the most academically motivated students. It is the goal of many departments to increase the number of AP course offerings. When heterogeneous classes in each core curriculum area are fully implemented across the school, all learners will have access to curriculum designed to help students achieve the school's learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, parents, school leadership team, teachers)

Maloney High School provides a formal, ongoing program through which each student has at least one 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. All students are informed of the Francis T. Maloney High School academic, civic, and social learning expectations, and the core values and beliefs are displayed in every classroom to demonstrate what is needed to meet 21st century learning skills. The message of these learning expectations is conveyed to the students in a number of ways, one of which is through the Student Advisory Program, instituted in 2007. A formal advisory program facilitates and encourages a safe, supportive, and positive culture for students at Maloney High School, enabling them to form a trusted relationship with an adult in the building. Advisors work with the same group of students for four years. Faculty and staff in a variety of roles provide student support and meet monthly with the students. A total of 85 faculty members, and other staff members, lead small heterogeneous groups of students in formal and informal discussions on various topics, including cyber-bullying, test-taking strategies, organizational skills, decision making, job readiness skills, violence prevention, and preparation for college. The written curriculum for each advisory grade level is available on SharePoint for all staff. The school continues to investigate ways to increase advisory time and to build a stronger connection between adults and students (which presently takes place on the first Tuesday of each month for 51 minutes). For example, the staff has discussed increasing student engagement in the advisory program through the development of a formal policy that holds students accountable for the material and information covered in the advisory period. Because Francis T. Maloney High School provides a formal, on-going advisory program through which each student has at least one adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, all students are assisted in achieving

the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, panel discussion, parents, school leadership team, teachers, students)

At Maloney High School, teachers engage in professional development programs to improve, assess, and evaluate student learning. Professional development is a process that occurs at the building and the district levels. Professional discourse is encouraged at faculty meetings, team meetings, and data meetings as a way of determining staff needs related to improving instruction and increasing student achievement. The principal conducts monthly staff meetings to share recent issues and data. Additionally, monthly department meetings provide faculty with the ability to voice suggestions or concerns or both to be conveyed to administration through the department chairpersons. The principal conducts school-wide data team meetings and monthly department chair meetings to share information from the school's administrative team as well as those from central office and also uses this time to convey progress toward goals. The Meriden Board of Education provides three contracted professional days for the district. The school's professional development activities are related to current practices that support school-wide and district-wide initiatives. Professional development is offered for the purpose of enhancing teacher knowledge and improving instructional practices; relevant professional development opportunities are based on the school improvement plan, analysis of CAPT results, local assessment results, curriculum review cycles, NEASC reports, district goals, and state and federal mandates. A revised teaching schedule releases students early Thursday afternoons, while the faculty remains for meetings, professional development, collaboration, and professional discourse regarding analysis and utilization of data. While the district has provided professional development in differentiated instruction, as the reduction in course levels is implemented, teachers continue to need ongoing support in meeting the needs of a diverse group of learners. The district provides technology workshops three times a year so that teachers can develop the proficiency necessary to embed technology into the curriculum and instruction. Some departments, such as CTE are allocated grant money through outside sources; for example, the federal Perkins Grant provides funding, some of which is used for professional development. Teachers may request release time for professional development opportunities. Requests are generally granted, but teachers often incur the travel and associated costs of attending professional development opportunities outside the state. When teachers engage in meaningful dialogue related to best practices, the result is improved student learning. (self-study, panel discussion, school board, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

The leaders at Maloney High School regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. Maloney High School has a revised professional evaluation system based on The Connecticut State Department of Education's 2010 Common Core of Teaching. Supervising department chairpersons and administrators divide the number of teachers evaluated to ensure that no evaluator is overburdened by the number of evaluations he or she is responsible for conducting. Teachers with more than four years of teaching experience fall into a cycle of observations that requires one formal observation every five years. Less experienced teachers require a minimum of two formal observations per school year. Informal observations are unannounced and occur one, two, or three times per year based on years of teaching experience. This evaluation plan was developed and implemented through a collaborative process involving the Meriden Federation of Teachers and administration. Most teachers agree that input from supervisors responsible for evaluating their teaching plays an important role in improving their instructional practices. The

data teams that have been recently formed provide some opportunities for feedback to teachers, either through self-reflection or through professional dialogue about teaching and learning based on student learning outcomes revealed by assessment results. Three levels of data teams exist in the district: individual departmental data teams, school-wide data team, and district data team. Departmental data teams collect and analyze data on student learning in focused areas of concern related to improving student performance. Department chairpersons and building leaders meet in school-wide data teams to discuss departmental data collection. School-wide data teams then report results and findings to the district-wide data team to further the process of evaluating the effectiveness of instruction and to improve student learning. Since school leaders use formal and informal methods of standards-based evaluation and supervision to provide instructional feedback to teachers, the result is improved instruction for all learners. (self-study, school leadership team, teachers)

The organization of time at Maloney High School is used frequently to support research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. Maloney High School currently employs a seven-period schedule. Classes meet for forty-eight minutes every day, except Thursday, when the PLC meets. On Thursdays, classes meet for forty-four minutes, and students complete school at 1:28 pm. Additionally, on the first Tuesday of each month, the schedule is modified to support the advisory period. The school's daily schedule supports scientific research-based interventions (SRBI) and the learning needs of all students. Grade 9 team scheduling keeps students with their core subject team teachers, allowing students to benefit from consistent teaching practices within the team. The team structure provides time for selected Grade 9 students to receive subject-specific support during study skills (Freshman Seminar). Programs such as Read 180 and System 44 are offered to those students who struggle most with reading. Students are identified for these SRBI supports based on need, test scores, teacher recommendations, and class performance. Because each class meets daily, students benefit from consistent exposure to intervention instruction, which ensures fidelity of implementation. The school's daily schedule supports professional collaboration, as the newly adopted shortened Thursday schedule provides common planning time for teachers to meet within their departments for collaboration. Thursday's early release schedule gives the faculty and administration the opportunity to hold faculty, department, and data meetings. Teachers collaborate on data gathering and discuss successful teaching practices. In addition, the Grade 9 team teachers have common planning time each day to meet with fellow team teachers to discuss student progress or concerns or both and schedule parent meetings; within departments, teachers are paired across teams to share teaching practices, standardize data collection, and review curriculum. Future scheduling decisions will consider establishing more time during the school day for formal collaboration between and across disciplines. By providing teachers professional time to collaborate and to discuss research-based strategies for effective teaching, the result is stronger instruction and improved student learning. (self-study, panel presentation, school board, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

Student load and class sizes enable most teachers to meet the individual learning needs of all students at Francis T. Maloney High School. Due to recent economic times, Maloney High School has retained staff in the most needed areas. Some classes are capped at 30 students, but in most classrooms, the class size is 25 or fewer students. Some class sizes are too large to have optimum contact time with students depending on the subject taught. Because Maloney High School practices an open enrollment policy for all students entering after the first day of school,

transfers from other schools may occur at any time and course enrollments fluctuate. Teachers strive each day to meet the learning needs of their students through continued efforts with differentiated instruction. In order to optimize contact time, to provide personal attention to students, and to help them transition to grade nine, the Grade 9 teams have been arranged so that each core subject class has an average of 20-25 students. Extra support is available in writing, math, reading comprehension, organizational skills, and other task-related skills for Grade 9 students through the study skills (Freshman Seminar) course. Recently, Maloney High School has offered fewer elective classes which have increased class size in some disciplines and classes. When equitable student loads and class sizes are in place, teachers will be better able to meet the individual learning needs of all students at Francis T. Maloney High School. (self-study, observations, parents, school leadership team, teachers, students)

The principal, working with building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The principal makes her vision clear in both department chair and faculty meetings. The principal meets regularly with assistant principals, department chairpersons, the SIC, the school governance committee (SGC), the parent advisory board (PAB), and the principal's staff relations committee to discuss curriculum or building issues and to seek recommendations when necessary. The principal involves the department heads in many aspects of school management including budget, curriculum, and the enforcement of school policies. The school's leadership team is made up of the principal, two assistant principals, department chairpersons, the SIC, and the SGC; they ensure learning through instructional leadership, curriculum documents, lesson plans, and observations. Meetings of these committees are focused on, but are not limited to, improvement of student attendance, discipline issues, scheduling, state standards and testing, and parent and guardian concerns. Building leaders meet regularly with the student assistance team. The presence of department and school-wide data teams allows building leaders to enhance the school's values, beliefs, and learning expectations with teacher input communicated through department chairpersons. The principal makes it a regular practice to communicate directly with faculty and students when special circumstances arise, either through e-mails, intercom addresses, or group or individual meetings. Because the principal works with building leaders to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, the result is a constructive school culture that helps all students reach their individual potential. (self-study, observations, panel discussion, school leadership team, teachers, students)

At Maloney High School teachers, students, and a limited number of parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Teachers exhibit various degrees of involvement in school-wide decision making. Teachers are involved in the decision-making process through participation on NEASC committees, SIC, curriculum committees, the SGC, staff relations committee, departmental, school-wide and district data teams, and reorganization and evaluation committees. Teachers are involved in union negotiations and meetings, school climate and culture, and in setting academic expectations for students. Through these opportunities, teachers enjoy a direct role in the decision-making process. Students are involved in roles that promote responsibility and ownership through student council, election of class and club officers, and student representation on the SIC committee, board of education, and school governance council. These opportunities provide a limited number of students with meaningful decision-making responsibilities and input

in important decisions. A peer advisory and mentoring program is in place to pair juniors and seniors with underclassman to offer support, guidance, and encouragement. A very small percentage of parents are involved in decisions made at Francis T. Maloney High School. Some parents are involved in the interview process during searches for new principals or superintendents. Parents volunteer to be part of the school's PAB, the SIC, the school governance council, and the core values and beliefs committee. These committees make decisions about school-wide events and programs that will improve the school climate and culture. The principal also conducts monthly meetings with the PAB. During these meetings, the principal works to gain parental support of new initiatives and gives the community a voice in the shared vision of the school. Parents also support clubs and other activities including the band, Props and Paints (drama club), and sports. The band boosters recently raised \$65,000 for new band uniforms. Parents of bilingual education students are involved in annual meetings with school and community leaders to discuss the educational process. When Maloney High School teachers, students, and parents are consistently involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making, all shareholders feel a sense of responsibility and ownership in the school. (self-study, parents, school leadership team, teachers, students, Endicott Survey)

Francis T. Maloney High School teachers often exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase student engagement in learning. Many teachers serve on committees that review and revise curriculum, assessment, instructional strategies, and school organizational practices. These include SIC participation on curriculum committees, the SGC, staff relations committee, departmental, school-wide and district data teams, and reorganization and evaluation committees. Teachers are involved in union negotiations and meetings, school climate and culture, and in setting academic expectations for students. Teachers serve as department chairs to guide and evaluate instruction and teacher mentors in the TEAM program. Additionally, monthly department meetings provide faculty with the ability to voice suggestions and/or concerns to be conveyed to administration through the department chairpersons. Teachers maintain currency through professional development and collaboration. Teachers engage in ongoing professional discourse at faculty meetings, team meetings, and data meetings as a way of improving instruction and increasing student achievement. These professional development opportunities provide teachers time to engage in relevant discourse based on the school improvement plan, analysis of CAPT results, local assessment results, curriculum review cycles, NEASC reports, district goals, and state and federal mandates. The Maloney High School faculty is dedicated to its students. Besides the core curriculum offerings, teachers ensure that many other academic and social initiatives are available to students in order to provide them with the opportunity to mature as life-long learners. Maloney High School offers students the opportunity to join the Key Club, National Honor Society, World Language Honor Society, Student Council, SKILLS USA, FBLA and DECA, to name a few. Many teachers volunteer their time and support to sustain activities such as the Comic Book Club, Best Buddies, Maloney High School Mini Olympics, the Interact Club (affiliated with the local Rotary Club), and peer mentoring. Teacher volunteers increase student involvement in many groups and promote leadership opportunities. For example, a CTE instructor helped to establish a branch of the teachers' credit union at Maloney High School. Students work at the branch, which is open to students and staff during lunch, increasing their knowledge of banking. The school store was established to increase student involvement in and knowledge of retail and marketing. Another teacher established an Outdoor Adventure Program, which has allowed students to participate in activities not traditionally offered in physical

education class. To date, this group has participated in rock climbing, kayaking, scuba diving, hiking, and camping activities outside of school. Teachers are also available before and after school to provide students with extra help when needed, and some teachers/coaches have established after-school study halls before practice for student athletes. Because Francis T. Maloney High School teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school, students are afforded many valuable learning opportunities inside and outside of school. (self-study, observations, school leadership team, teachers, students)

The school board, superintendent, and principal work together collaboratively, reflectively, and constructively in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Collaboration is reflected in the district improvement plan, the school improvement plan, board of education meetings, and principals' meetings. The school improvement plan reflects the DIP, taking into consideration curriculum, instruction, school climate, the school-community relationship, suspensions, and English language learner (ELL) and bilingual topics in mapping out school goals. The school improvement plan is updated every three years, in order to reflect the district improvement plan. Some of Francis T. Maloney High School staff and administration also sit on the Reorganization and the Evaluation Plan Committees, which work collaboratively with the Board of Education (BOE), the superintendent, and the principals to develop plans for the successful implementation of 21st century learning expectations. Because the school board, superintendent, and principal work together collaboratively, reflectively, and constructively, a shared vision for improvement of student learning is being implemented. (self-study, panel presentation, school board, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

The school board and the superintendent provide the principal with sufficient autonomy and decision-making authority to lead the school. The principal meets monthly with the superintendent, associate superintendent, and secondary schools principals for the coordination and collaboration of the secondary schools. The principal has the authority to recommend new staff and make other decisions regarding the hiring and non-renewal of teachers, but final recommendation rests with the superintendent. The principal has demonstrated her decision-making authority through implementing Grade 9 teams, changing the schedule, working with teachers to develop new and pilot courses and spending discretionary funds to support existing programs and awards. Additionally, the principal makes decisions regarding the approval of professional development for teachers. The principal determines the appropriateness of individual requests for professional development and plans or provides input for the three contracted professional development training days for all staff. The principal makes decisions regarding student transcripts and the awarding of credits and possesses the decision-making authority to approve courses taken outside of the school for potential college credit. Furthermore, the principal has decision-making authority to determine when the use of on-line courses is appropriate for students. Because the school board and the superintendent provide the principal with decision-making authority to lead the school, she is able to establish a shared vision on the school and to guide the implementation of the core values, beliefs and learning expectations. (self-study, school board, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

Commendations

1. The school community that 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 conscious effort of the school community to enforce policies that address student learning expectations and student responsibility for learning
3. The teachers who exercise initiative both in the classroom and through their voluntary leadership of many co-curricular activities offered to the Maloney High School student body
4. The teachers union and administration's ability to work collaboratively to increase instructional time as well as collaborative time with their Thursday scheduling change
5. The shared vision and the collaborative and constructive work of the school board, superintendent, and school leadership in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
6. The school board and superintendent that provide building leadership with extensive autonomy to make decisions that impact the climate and culture of the school
7. The reduction in the number of curriculum levels from five levels to two levels

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement ways to increase parent involvement in ownership of building 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. Build a common understanding of the rationale for heterogeneous grouping and share effective practices for meeting the needs of the diverse range of students in each class
3. Develop and implement a plan to assist students in goal-setting and taking responsibility for learning in the advisory program
4. Ensure that teachers receive continuous support for ongoing professional development in research-based best practices that directly impact student learning in heterogeneously-grouped classes
5. Develop and monitor enrollment and scheduling practices to ensure that class size allows for teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students
6. Ensure that parents, in addition to students and teachers, have meaningful input into the decision making

7. Ensure that there is an ongoing program of professional development that will address the implementation of core values and beliefs, curriculum development and revision, instructional strategies and best practice, and assessment of and for student learning

6

School Resources for Learning

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

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

6. Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
 - are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum
 - provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum
 - ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school
 - are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
 - conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

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

Conclusions

The school has timely, generally 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. The student assistance team comprised of administrators, support personnel, including the school social worker, psychologist, guidance counselors, nurse, and representative teachers, works collaboratively to provide a referral and intervention process for early and effective interventions to any students having learning or behavioral difficulties. The process follows a formal "flow-chart" of interventions, which have become increasingly research based. The supplemental reading computer based programs (READ 180 and System 44) reach those students whose scores on CMTs and the district's middle school assessments warrant interventions. A computer based writing program (WriteToLearn) has also been implemented. To assist all Grade 9 students with the transition to high school, the school has implemented a Grade 9 teaming approach which allows teachers to work together to identify students who may be struggling or at risk and to collaboratively implement interventions. All Grade 9 students take the Freshman Seminar that helps students with transition to the high school environment. Additionally, identified students can be placed in resource English and math classes to get extra support for their general curriculum classes. The school employs an ESL tutorial and bilingual program. In addition, a number of programs are available to students to meet specific needs (e.g., the Venture Program, Our Young Mothers Program, Another School Program, Expulsion Program, Life Skills, etc.). Counseling services are available for students and families, and a crisis intervention teacher provides individual and small group support to students. The school is developing a Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) plan that formally tracks individual student responses to three tiers of academic or behavior intervention services. The Wheeler Clinic, the Rushford Program, ConnTac-Educational Opportunity Center, Open DOHR, and Positive Step Healthcare Program are community agencies and resources about which the counseling department makes families aware. While the support personnel engage in many successful strategies, a comprehensive map encompassing all the strategies available at the school is not available. When the school develops a comprehensive overview of the different services available and develops and implements a process for SRBI that formally tracks each student's progress, the school will be in alignment with current state procedures for identifying students with learning disabilities; intervention strategies that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations will be known to all stakeholders. (self-study, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff)

The school adequately provides a variety of forms of information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. The school uses an online system, PowerSchool, that allows parents access to their child's progress, grades and absences through the parent portal, but not all parents routinely access the system. The school routinely uses an automated message service (AlertNOW) to notify parents of upcoming events and services. Messages are broadcast in two languages to support Spanish-speaking parents. The school website has been updated and provides a wide variety of information, including upcoming workshops provided by the school counseling department to give parents information about college applications, the FAFSA, scholarships, and strategies for supporting student success. The school provides parents with a student activities handbook. Information about school-based health services is mailed to parents. The principal holds a monthly Parent Advisory Board

meeting, and a yearly Bilingual Parent Advisory Board meeting. The staff contacts parents and guardians through phone calls and email with concerns about students' academic, social and emotional issues and parents value the ease of email communication with teachers. The school has a full-time bilingual home-school coordinator (shared with the Washington Middle School), who assists parents and guardians with student attendance, behavior and health concerns. The school has a part-time student assistance counselor who provides drug, alcohol, and anger management counseling. The majority of students have indicated that they know who to ask for help if they have personal problems. However, while the school counseling department, administration, student assistance counselor, newsletters, absence letters, and failure notices convey important information to parents, the school does not provide a comprehensive overview of support services available to both students and their families. A number of parents believe that the school provides adequate information to the families about student support services, but that feedback was received from only 42 parents in a school of over 1,000 students in the Endicott Survey. By providing a comprehensive overview of the different services available, parents and students may know about and take more advantage of the many services and programs at the school. (self-study, school leadership team, school support staff, Endicott Survey)

Support services staff consistently use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student, but building technology sometimes limits effective use of technology-based tools. School counselors use the diagnostic tools available in CollegeBoard.com to understand and interpret PSAT and SAT results. The school uses PowerSchool and INFORM to maintain historical grades and monitor test scores and to determine student placement in core academic programs. Through CareerCruising software school counseling department staff members assist students in postsecondary guidance and choices. OdysseyWare is used in the library as a remedial program for students on Wednesday afternoons. The special education department uses IEP Direct, a web-based program for writing and maintaining IEPs and monitoring student progress, and employs computer-based reading intervention programs to improve reading and comprehension skills. The special education department also makes use of adaptive technology such as Dana keyboards and adaptive keyboards. While the library, the special education department and guidance have many excellent programs that are employed in offering students remedial programs, the school does not have an adequate number of computers to use these programs. It has a looming deficit of new hardware, since most of the 250 plus computers at the school are at least five years old, and no provision for purchasing new hardware is in place until the new school is operational in five years. SMARTBoards have been installed in some classrooms though grant funding, but are not available in the library or in many classrooms. One gigabyte of bandwidth available at the school is minimally sufficient for current use. With the advent of new electronic devices added to the network in the future, the bandwidth must be increased for network speed to be maintained. Use of older computers slows software applications and general use of technology, and in some cases software will become incompatible. If current computers are not replaced, the school will experience a hardware and software deficiency. When the support services staff members have the use of up-to-date technology, they will be able to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student and to support 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, observations, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff)

School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff. They meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling. While they implement a developmental guidance program, they have not completed a written curriculum. School counselors and social workers engage in individual and group meetings with all students, deliver collaborative outreach, and make referrals to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. The counselors have incomplete relevant assessment data, such as feedback from the school community and former students, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. School counselors regularly meet with students for personal, academic, career and college counseling. Through CareerCruising in Grades 9-11, counselors help students assess transition options. The five counselors engage in individual and group meetings with all students throughout the year. They meet with Grade 12 students multiple times as those students prepare for college or a career. Counseling services deliver a wide range of collaborative outreach and referrals to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. The Community Health Center, an outside mental health agency, avails students of the services of one full-time mental health therapist who is housed at the school five days per week for individual counseling by referral. The Wheeler Clinic, the Rushford Program, ConnTac-Educational Opportunity Center, Open DOHR, and Positive Step Healthcare Program are community agencies and resources about which the counseling department makes families aware. The counseling personnel and support staff make ongoing referrals to community health care (CHC), a school-based health clinic, which provides psychiatric, dental, and medical services. The school's social worker serves on the Meriden School-Based Health Clinic Community Advisory Board, which meets four times a year, overseeing communication between CHC and the school as well as monitoring the quality of services provided. School counselors participate in the data team, which was developed to measure, and monitor student success and discuss needs of at-risk students. The guidance department has responded to parent input by making college informational meetings available to all grades. The district is developing a comprehensive developmental guidance program, but the written documents are not finalized. The school-counseling department has a significant array of services available to all students. However, a written comprehensive developmental guidance program could improve the effectiveness of all programs for all students. Since the 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; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services, students will learn and be supported as they achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff)

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who provide extensive preventive health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; and 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. The school-based health clinic, staffed by a full-time nurse practitioner, affords students with much needed health care and prescriptions. Students can receive dentistry services and mental health

therapies at the clinic. The nurse practitioner also gives physicals for medical clearance for student athletes and may conduct home visits to develop health care plans for students with special needs. The school also has a full-time and a part-time registered nurses with excellent outreach skills, working closely with community agencies such as HUSKY and CHC, referring students and assisting with the application process as needed. The nurses also work with the special education department to provide lessons on hand washing, proper hygiene and basic first aid. The nurses are part of the crisis team and the indoor air quality team. An additional health aide works 25 hours per week. The nurses submit monthly reports to the department of health to identify health trends within the school. The nurses are proactive and provide preventive health service and direct intervention services to the school population. The health services team has a comprehensive health program, which addresses at-risk families and students who may need physical and mental health care, and may not be able to access, care in the community. Since the school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who provide preventive health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services, it will ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, observations, teachers, school support staff)

Library/media services are sporadically integrated into curriculum and instructional practices. The library has an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel who are able to engage in the implementation of the school's curriculum. The library/media specialist provides a limited range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum within the constraints of a reduced budget. The facility is not always available before school, all day and after school, however the library/media specialist is responsive to students' interests and needs within the parameters of limited resources. The library/media specialist conducts informal assessments on the library program, and receives informal suggestions and feedback from the school community to improve services, and makes strides towards ensuring that each student can achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. The size of the library is small for the over 1,000 students at the school. The library aide position was recently eliminated, resulting in limited open hours for the library. Currently, the library has an intern who assists the library/media specialist all day, five days per week, but this support will not be available next year. The budget for books and journal subscriptions has been cut by two thirds. The library/media specialist queries teachers about title choices via email, and then displays new titles to teachers by group invitation. The library has copies of the summer reading titles. Few interlibrary loans are used, and if an outside library is needed, the library/media specialist uses Russell Library in Middletown. The school library has only 18, five-year-old computers, and a total of six tables for student and faculty use. The library has a district-wide collection of e-books through a subscription with titles appealing to readers with low reading skills. Individual teachers stream movies from their personal Netflix accounts, but the library has no streaming programs; library DVDs can be used in classrooms. Approximately one quarter of students visit the library with their teachers during class time. The library/media specialist integrates the resources of the library into the school's curriculum when accessed by a teacher, assisting teachers in their 21st century lessons. The library/media specialist has written grants to obtain materials, and offers OdysseyWare on Wednesdays after school for remedial purposes. Although the library/media specialist offers to conduct or assist in research classes, supervisory duties and lack of computers severely limit actual research projects across the curriculum. In addition, the number of

accessible databases was reduced last year. These last items limit the degree to which the library can support the needs of a 21st century student. Due to increasing class sizes and the insufficient number of computers available within the library and labs, a limited number of research projects are done either in the library or in the technology labs. Consequently, teachers have difficulty supporting independent learning and ensuring 21st century learning expectations. The library/media specialist is not always available before, during and after the school day due to the need for general supervisory duties within the library. Acquisition of new materials (all mediums) has been significantly reduced due to budget cuts. When 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, library/media services will improve and help to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, facility tour, parents, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff, survey)

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations; provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; and perform limited assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school has ten special education teachers and eighteen paraprofessionals who provide support for identified students, including special education, Section 504, and English language learners. Three of the paraprofessionals are bilingual. The school employs one bilingual tutor working in ELL, regular and special education classes. Other support staff includes two part-time speech and language teachers, a part-time physical therapist, a part-time occupational therapist, a part-time teacher of the hearing impaired, and a teacher of the visually impaired. Additionally there are two certified teachers of ELL and three additional teachers who are certified to teach bilingual classes. Referrals and interventions are driven primarily by the Student Assistance Team, which develops the intervention plans collaboratively with support personnel and teachers. Students are provided with interventions and plans based on identified needs and monitored by the student assistance team. All students are included in the general curriculum through a continuum of services. Multi-handicapped students are served in the Life Skills special education program that includes self-contained academic classes in reading and math, independent living skills, and an "in-house" vocational component. These students participate in general education in elective classes such as music and physical education. Special education teachers collaborate with general educators through the inclusion model, either as support facilitators or as co-teachers. The Grade 9 team model allows special educators to collaborate across disciplines to help implement interventions in the general education classroom. Teachers have indicated that while they have collaborative planning in the Grade 9 team every day, it is difficult to address all students' issues. Additional supports are provided in Inclusion Resource classes that may address math, English, or study skills depending on the student's identified need. The Transition Support class is a new initiative that will be servicing students who exhibit behavioral issues within the

inclusion continuum. The special education teachers collaborate with general education teachers through data team meetings to monitor student progress. However, systematic prevention and intervention procedures and supports under the SRBI model have not been entirely employed in all academic and behavioral areas. Teachers have indicated that more collaborative time is needed for more effective interventions. Through the student assistance team, teaming and life skills programs, the school provides strong support services to SPED, 504 and at-risk students. However, with increased class sizes and increased behavioral and academic needs of students, more collaborative planning time is needed to effectively implement necessary interventions. Because support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations; provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; and perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, support services personnel will continue to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, observations, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff)

Commendations

1. The student assistance team that provides a well coordinated, collaborative intervention process for students in-need and at-risk
2. The teaming approach used in Grade 9 that provides strong support for both students and faculty
3. The dissemination of relevant information bilingually
4. The administration and student support services staff for communicating to parents and guardians in a variety of ways
5. The computer-based remedial reading and writing programs
6. The school counseling department that successfully reaches out to the school's Hispanic population
7. The outreach programs developed by guidance and support staff are extremely effectively
8. The school's health services are very proactive in providing necessary services to at-risk families and students who may need physical and mental health care
9. The library/media specialist who provides significant supports to student learning within limited parameters
10. The library/media specialist who has written grants to increase resource availability
11. The student assistance team for providing strong support services to SPED, 504 and special needs, and at risk students

12. The Life Skills Program that provides an excellent vehicle for students with significant challenges to meet the needs of the 21st century

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement an SRBI program to more systematically collect and monitor data for interventions and progress monitoring
2. Offer parents an overview of the vast variety of services available to students
3. Increase the number of parents using the parent portal of PowerSchool
4. Increase availability of technology resources in classrooms and the library media center for 21st century learning
5. Implement a written, developmental, and comprehensive guidance program
6. Increase available library hours before, during and after school
7. Update core library facility, including computer access, expansion of collection to better support student 21st century learning needs
8. Increase engagement of library into the implementation of the school's curriculum

7**Community Resources for Learning**

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

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

Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body have not provided dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. The school has had three years with a zero budget increase. While no programs have been lost, class sizes have been increased and several positions have been eliminated. The district does provide dependable funding for ongoing professional development and curriculum revision. Three contractually required professional development days for staff are scheduled during the school year. The district also provides technology workshop offerings three times a year for teachers. All professional development for teachers is provided in school, with many sessions conducted by staff and teachers. Not only are limited resources available through the school principal's discretionary funds, but also little funding is available for outside conferences and workshops. School faculty and staff have been very creative in identifying, securing and targeting funding from outside sources to maintain quality programs and instruction. Although the school has three copier machines, they do not function regularly. Teachers become extremely frustrated and use their own resources to make copies. Through grant writing, they have been able to supplement the technological equipment within the school including the purchasing of additional SMARTBoards, Elmo projectors and other technology items (e.g., PowerSchool and INFORM, AlertNOW, OdysseyWare, IEP Direct, etc.). However, access to and quantity of computer labs is inadequate to meet student needs. This is due in part to the increase of class size not aligning with the available working computers within a lab. Teachers have difficulty incorporating this 21st century learning skill into their classroom curriculum. The Endicott Survey clearly indicated that a majority of teachers do not believe that they are provided with adequate instructional materials and supplies to support learning. When 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, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies, students will be able to strengthen their social, academic, and civic skills to prepare them for success in the 21st century. (self-study, observations, panel presentation, facilities tour, parents, school board, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff, students, Endicott Survey)

The school develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant; to properly maintain and replace equipment; and to keep the school clean on a daily basis despite the advanced age of the building. The head custodian is responsible for the creation of schedules and assignments for the three full-time day and six full-time evening custodians. He is also responsible for on-site maintenance and repair of equipment and sends a monthly, or sooner if needed, request for this to the manager of building and grounds. The school appears to be clean and well maintained for a building its age. The custodial staff prioritizes and responds to all staff requests for repair and replacement of equipment. In addition to a detailed summer cleaning plan, the custodial staff annually repaints the cafeteria, hallways, lavatories, door frames, and student lockers to maintain a clean and healthy environment. Staff members who have concerns for school maintenance are provided an opportunity to contact the head custodian in a variety of fashions (personal contact, email, notes). In general, repairs are made to address any unsafe conditions, situations or equipment in a timely

fashion. Currently, no systematic cataloging of equipment or the repair or replacement of equipment on the premises is in place. Because the school develops, plans, and funds programs for keeping the school clean on a daily basis, for ensuring the maintenance and repair of the building and physical plant, and for properly maintaining and replacing equipment, students and staff work in a clean, safe environment. (self-study, observations, facilities tour, panel presentation, parents, school leadership team, teachers, students)

At the present time, the community does not adequately fund and address programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. However, a long-range plan for school renovation does exist which will positively impact programs and services. There are numerous factors that have impacted available funds: zero budget increase over the past three years, elimination of federal grant funding, and rising costs of products and services. A formal, three-year Technology Plan for the district exists that addresses needs, costs, and strategic purchasing of technology. It is implemented with restrictions due to budget and is reviewed on an annual basis. Under the district improvement plan (2010-2013), the hardware and software in all of the school computer laboratories, classrooms, and administrative areas have been updated and an additional computer laboratory and a mobile computer lab have been added; however, the technology resources are still not adequate to meet student needs. The school uses a web-based data management system to track school enrollment trends. Data on student entrance and withdrawal, staff and student schedules, and course enrollment figures is used by the administration to determine staffing needs and future course offerings. Despite challenges in providing adequate funding, the city has approved the renovation plan of the school, acquired an architect and voted in support of funding for an upgraded high school. This major capital improvement plan is scheduled to begin during the 2012-2013 academic year and is a critical step in meeting 21st century learning expectations for all learners. When the district implements its plan for school renovation, the facility will be modernized and better able to support programs and services. (self-study, panel presentation, facilities tour, parents, school board, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff, students)

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. Faculty and building administrators have several opportunities to influence the development and implementation of the budget. The board of education, central office administration, and the city council hold meetings, that teachers and administrators are welcome to attend, regarding the city and school budgets. The faculty also has input regarding budget allocation within each departmental area. Teachers submit requisition forms detailing their requests to department chairpersons, who prioritize and investigate these requests. Priorities are based upon student learning needs that are aligned with the core values and beliefs of the school and state as well as with national standards. The budget for the following school year is based on this information and the needs from the previous year, student enrollment projections and/or enrollment changes, new expenditures such as instructional media, classroom books, and other materials necessary to the maintenance of individual educational programs. Each October, department chairpersons discuss and amend their budgets with the principal, in accordance with the district budget planning timeline, and a school-wide annual appropriations budget request is compiled. All teachers are given the opportunity to provide input into the development of the school budget but have mixed opinions regarding the impact of their suggestions. The tight school budget situation does not encourage proposals for new initiatives.

Because the budget development process is collaborative, administrators and faculty have input on the use of the limited funds available. (self-study, school board, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff)

The delivery of high quality school programs and services is limited by the school site and physical plant. The approximate capacity of the school is 1,400, which is sufficient for the present enrollment of 1,202 students as of March 2012. The capacity of both the gymnasium and auditorium is 1,300. With an average of 70 students absent on a daily basis (5.9%), these two aforementioned locations are sufficiently large enough for whole school programs and assemblies. The school cafeteria and food preparations area sufficiently meet the needs of the school population and staff. The school operates with four lunch waves to accommodate the student body. The average classroom at the school can accommodate 25-30 students. As the funding becomes more and more limited and class sizes increase, spacing within a classroom becomes an issue. This concern is also evidenced by the inability of teachers to take entire classes to a computer lab, which limits student access to computers. Space for science classes is not adequate for laboratory-based science classes that exceed the state-recommended class size of 24. The library media center houses a collection of books and periodicals as well as 18 computers with Internet access for student and staff use. The current size of the library is not adequate relative to the size of the school. The lack of space, technology and current resources in the library is a significant concern as opportunities for independent research and inquiry in meeting 21st century learning expectations are limited. There are not enough computers in the library to support large classes, making it difficult for teachers to use the library effectively. Office spaces throughout the building for administrators, pupil service personnel and nurse allow for confidential and safe meeting places. Two conference rooms, one in the main office and one in the school counseling suite, provide adequate space for meetings throughout the day. Suitable outdoor space and facilities support co-curricular activities. In addition, the school also uses off-site locations (i.e., Falcon Field, Dunn Softball Complex, and Ceppa Field) for practice and games. The school has two gymnasiums that are used for physical education classes and athletic teams. While the size of the gymnasium seems to be adequate, lighting is a concern for the delivery of high quality instruction. The school also maintains an indoor pool for physical education classes and after school programs, but the pool area lacks proper ventilation. Except for the girls' pool locker room, all the gym and sports' locker rooms lack proper space, privacy and security. Furthermore, some lighting in hallways, classroom and common areas is inadequate. Outdoor lighting in the parking lot is not sufficient. While parent involvement is an important goal of the faculty and staff, limited availability of telephones makes communication difficult. Sharing a common phone housed in the conference room results in waiting lines to use the phones, as well as in privacy and confidentiality issues. At the present time, requests for non-safety-related improvements are not consistently fulfilled due to the impending major school renovations. Some major physical plant concerns exist due to the age of the building. Many of the ceiling tiles and floor tiles throughout the building need to be replaced but cannot be due to their asbestos content. In November 2004 a major repair to the roof was completed. However, no other major renovations have been completed since that time. A major renovation project, scheduled to begin in during the 2012-2013 academic year, is expected to address many of the issues mentioned above. When the school has been renovated, the school site and plant will adequately support the delivery of high quality programs and services. (self-study, observations, facilities tour, school leadership team, teachers, Endicott Survey)

The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet most federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations based on the age of the physical plant. The head custodian, principal, and school nurse regularly monitor the condition of the building to ensure compliance with regulations. Adequate personnel are available to ensure that equipment and facilities are well maintained. The boiler inspector, the fire department, and the police department inspect the school on an annual basis. A full-time district electrician and a full-time district plumber also assist with maintenance. Food service facilities are inspected by the state four times per year, and kitchen logs are current and posted in the cafeteria. All updates meet local, state and federal code requirements and appropriate documentation is maintained. An elevator inspection certificate is prominently displayed in the elevator. The swimming pool chemical log is current, and scheduled inspections are documented. The school practices monthly fire drills to maintain proper standards for building evacuation. Lock-down drills are also held to ensure the safety of all students and staff during an unanticipated emergency situation. Exit and evacuation routes are clearly marked and displayed in each classroom and in hallways. The heat and ventilation system is erratic and inconsistent. A large temperature discrepancy exists in areas throughout the building that can result in an uncomfortable learning environment. There is no central air conditioning in the building, and window units have been sporadically added as needed based on student and staff health issues. However, some critical areas are still without a cooling system, including but not limited to the computer labs, cooking room, and copy room. Furthermore, the cooking classrooms have a significant ventilation issue as gas stoves are not properly vented. The school has installed a ramp in the front and rear of the building, replaced door handles for the adult daily living (ADL) room, installed new water fountains and updated bathrooms on the first floor to allow for handicapped accessibility. The school has a 'corrective action plan', which outlines areas of need; the completion date goal is August 2016. Although updates are on going to comply with federal, state and local laws and regulations, the school is not currently in compliance with all ADA regulations. When the school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet most federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations, teachers can concentrate on teaching and students can concentrate on learning. (self-study, observations, facility tour, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff)

All professional staff actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and make efforts to reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. Teachers, counselors, staff and administrators actively communicate with parents about student success, disciplinary issues, and other school-related issues. These methods include, but are not limited to phone calls, emails, Parent Portal updates (via PowerSchool), school counseling newsletters, the AlertNow automated phone system, parent and teacher conferences, the student assistance team, parent information nights and parent orientation nights. A school outreach worker is available to make home visits when the school has difficulty contacting families by other means. Communication is provided in English and Spanish in an effort to reach the diverse families served by the school. The school engages parents in the scholastic lives of their children in a number of ways. Quarterly progress reports, Freshman Orientation Night, September Parents' Night, and quarterly report cards represent just a few of these methods. The National Honor Society and World Language Honor Society Inductions and Senior and Underclass Award Nights highlight students who have achieved outstanding academic success. The honor roll is published four times a year in the local newspaper. The school-counseling department serves as a liaison in the communication between parents and the

school. The school also provides various programs that showcase student achievements in academics, art, drama, music, and athletics. Through letters, the career center, the school website, and newspaper announcements, parents and families are invited to share in these accomplishments. Such activities as Project Excel, the Hicks Speaking and Essay contest, music competitions and programs, the Props and Paints drama productions, sporting events, Senior Awards Night, and the Scholars' Banquet are held annually. Parents often serve as chaperones for school-sponsored trips and work collaboratively to support school events and projects. Additionally, the principal holds a Bilingual Parent Night and facilitates the Parent Advisory Board (PAB) to encourage parent participation. Parents feel welcome in the school environment and a part of their child's school life. Due to all the outreach efforts made by the school and its staff, the parents feel a true partnership with the school. When all professional staff members actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school, all students will be able to achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, parents, school leadership team, teachers, school support staff, students)

The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. The school has productive higher education and community partnerships to support student learning. Students are able to enroll in college level courses through the University of Connecticut (UCONN) and AP courses. College and Career Pathways (CCP) is a partnership between the district and Middlesex Community College. The program articulates various courses as identified in a planned program of study. Students who choose to participate have the opportunity to earn 12-15 college credits in their area of focus upon graduation. In efforts to ensure participating students successfully meet the requirements, Middlesex Community College provides ten hours of tutoring services per week in the areas of mathematics and English to CCP students. The affiliation of the Meriden Schools' Federal Credit Union with the school provides in-school banking opportunities for students and staff of the school as well as work experience for qualified students. The Kiwanis Club invites students to luncheons on a regular basis to increase the understanding of the value of volunteerism and to facilitate collaboration. Bristol Myers Squibb works with the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club to provide a tour of the BMS facilities and to teach students about various workplace activities. The National Guard provides students the opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (ASVAB), career guest speakers, and teamwork field trips. The school career center, located in the school counseling suite, schedules events and activities to highlight careers representative of the 16 career clusters as identified by the state of Connecticut. These efforts are made through a collaborative partnership between the career center and its local businesses, community partners, and post-secondary educators to provide students with various career exploration options and real-world experiences. One way this is achieved is through the Lunch & Learn program, which hosts local professionals who present information specific to their career or industry during round table sessions. Topics discussed include educational requirements, starting salary, opportunity for growth, role/responsibilities, necessary skills and abilities, and future employment outlook. Job shadowing and career exploration field trip programs are also available. Many local businesses, such as Connecticut State Police, Traveler's Insurance, NBC Channel 30, and Bushnell Theater have hosted students. The career pathways coordinator actively participates in the local chamber of commerce's education committee. The committee members consist of educational professionals and local business partners who share the common theme of providing student support services as it relates

to education and career awareness. Participation in this committee provides networking opportunities that often times result in valuable career exploration related student experiences. The college career pathways coordinator works to identify a student representative from the school. Additionally, the Greater Meriden Chamber of Commerce and their members are strong supporters of the job shadow program. Many students have been provided shadowing experiences as a result of their continuous support. An ongoing partnership with MidState Medical Center and the Connecticut Baptist Nursing Home provides clinical experience necessary for medical career students to demonstrate and refine their skills, which ultimately leads to becoming certified as nursing assistants. In addition to the business and community partnerships, the school has a group of Black and Latino male students who participate in the Developing Tomorrow's Professionals program (DTP). The DTP is a collaborative program supported through partnerships with the Connecticut State Department of Education and Southern Connecticut State University. The DTP delivers a carefully constructed curriculum of training, assessment and support services designed to address the needs of high school-aged young men of color, providing overlapping mentoring (one academic mentor already established at Southern Connecticut State University and one professional mentor from the community). Academic Saturdays are held at the university for ten weeks throughout the summer months, but academic assistance and professional mentoring are ongoing throughout the year. The DTP is designed to create, improve and sustain a young man's approach to academic partnerships, character development, leadership, fatherhood, college matriculation and career. Because strong partnerships with parent, community, business, and higher education exist, students are afforded a wide range of educational opportunities that otherwise would not be available to them. (self-study, panel discussion, parents, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Commendations

1. The use of grant writing that has allowed the school to purchase additional technology equipment
2. The remarkable efforts to maintain and keep clean an aging building
3. The formal plan adopted to renovate the school
4. The effort to engage families in a variety of methods
5. The involvement and partnership with community, businesses and local colleges

Recommendations

1. Increase the number of computers available in all labs to meet the needs of the growing class size and the overall student need
2. Ensure that all copiers are fully functional and routinely available
3. Develop a system to catalogue equipment for repair and replacement
4. Ensure that the renovation plan is fully implemented

5. Implement the district technology plan
6. Allocate the fiscal resources necessary to support a 21st century learning community
7. Provide more space and computer access in library
8. Ensure that the school is in full compliance with all ADA regulations
9. Install air conditioning units in all computer labs, the cooking room, and the copy room
10. Correct the ventilation issues in the cooking classroom and pool
11. Utilize a variety of new approaches to engage disconnected families with the school
12. Collect and analyze data to assess whether all parents are utilizing the existing data management system and create and implement a plan to reach those not accessing the system
13. Explore additional community partnerships

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 Francis T. Maloney 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 that 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 Francis T. Maloney 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 that negatively impacts on the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact that 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 that 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.

Finally, the visiting committee would be remiss if it did not express its appreciation for the hospitality, openness, and candid responses extended to committee members by the school board, central office and school administrators, faculty and staff members, parents and students. The members of the Francis T. Maloney High School community made us feel welcome.

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 that 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 that must be reported:

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

Appendix

Francis T. Maloney High School NEASC Visiting Committee

March 18-21, 2012

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