

***REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE***

**Lyme-Old Lyme High School  
Old Lyme, CT**

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Maria Silvestri, Chair

Elizabeth Simison, Assistant Chair

JimWygonik, Principal

New England Association of Schools & Colleges, Inc.  
3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100  
Burlington, MA 01803  
TOLL FREE: 1-855-886-3272 TEL. 781-425-7700 FAX 781-425-1001

## **STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS**

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

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

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

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>Statement On Limitations</b>	
Introduction	
School and Community Summary	
School’s Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations	
Teaching and Learning Standards	
Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations .....	1
Curriculum .....	11
Instruction .....	21
Assessment of and for Student Learning .....	31
Support of Teaching and Learning Standards	
School Culture and Leadership .....	48
School Resources for Learning .....	61
Community Resources for Learning .....	74
Follow-Up Responsibilities .....	85
 <b>APPENDICES</b>	
A. Committee Policy on Substantive Change.....	87
B. List of Commendations and Recommendations.....	88
C. Roster of Visiting Committee Members .....	95

## INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

The accreditation program for public schools involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the Committee'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 Committee 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 Accreditation 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 Lyme-Old Lyme High School a committee of seven members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included students, parents, central office personnel, alumni and school board members.

The self-study of Lyme-Old Lyme High School extended over a period of school months from August 2013 to March 2015. The visiting committee was pleased to note that parents, school board members, students and alumni joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their adherence to the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's mission, learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Committee, Lyme-Old Lyme 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 fifteen evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the Lyme-Old Lyme High School. The Committee members spent four days in Old Lyme, CT, 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 Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools, central office administrators, a board of education, vocational institutions, institutions of higher education, and the public, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Lyme-Old Lyme High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- twenty-six hours shadowing thirteen students for a half day
- a total of 14 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 thirty-two 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 in 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 Committee Standards.

This report of the findings of the visiting committee will be forwarded to the Committee on Public Secondary Schools which will make a decision on the accreditation of Lyme-Old Lyme High School.

## LYME -OLD LYME HIGH SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SUMMARY

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Lyme–Old Lyme High School is a regional high school comprised of two sending towns from the communities of Lyme and Old Lyme, Connecticut. Three elementary schools, Center School and Mile Creek of Old Lyme, and Lyme Consolidated School of Lyme, feed into Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School and Lyme Old Lyme High School to make up Regional School District #18. The high school serves 437 students in grade 9-12, with optional post-high school programming for identified students until age 21.

Old Lyme is a shoreline community established in 1855 comprised of approximately 7,600 permanent residents, and several thousand seasonal residents. Old Lyme is located on the bank of the Connecticut River where it meets Long Island Sound and is roughly 25 square miles, including wetland, marsh, and shoreline and is bordered by the towns of Lyme, East Lyme, and Old Saybrook. Easy access to larger towns and cities via route 95 allows many to access professional work commitments while enabling residence in a small town. There is a rich history of community support for the arts, as evidenced by the numerous art museums and post-secondary school programs offered at the Lyme Academy of Arts. According to 2010 Census data, Old Lyme’s resident population is 96.7 % Caucasian, 1.1% Asian, 0.09% Hispanic, 0.03% Black, 0.02% Native American. The estimated median household income in 2011 was \$87,482.

Lyme, established in 1667, is a small, rural community roughly 30 square miles with just over 2,000 residents which also sits on the eastern bank of the Connecticut River. It is a quintessential New England town dotted with farms and federally protected open space. According to 2010 US Census data, Lyme Residents identify as 97.1% Caucasian, 1.3% Asian, 1.1% Hispanic, .05% Black, and .05% Native American. The estimated median household income in 2011 was \$93,704. The residents of Lyme, as well as Old Lyme, are proud protectors of the land and work to preserve, maintain, and share the natural beauty of the town.

The *Strategic School Profile* published in 2011, notes that the five year enrollment change for Lyme Old Lyme High School was down 8%. According to the district *Enrollment Projections Report* for 2012, there are 1,445 school-aged residents currently attending Region 18 schools. While the school population is considered stable, it is projected to decrease over the next 10 years by approximately 300 students. The per-pupil expenditure in Region #18 is \$17,534, compared to the state average of just over \$15,000.



The Lyme-Old Lyme Class of 2013 had a graduation rate of 96.4%. This percentage includes three students who opted not to take their diploma and now participate in post-graduate programming, and one student who opted for a fifth year credit recovery program. In 2013, 82.2% of graduating seniors went on to a four-year college, 6.5% attended a two-year college, 3.7% of students reported entering the military and another 3.7% reported seeking employment. The two-year drop out average is 0.8%. Last year, the average attendance rate for students was 96.3%. Teachers missed on average 9.29 days of school, excluding professional days.

Lyme-Old Lyme High School students benefit from established relationships with local colleges and universities. Eligible students can participate in a dual enrollment program with Three Rivers Community College, Gateway Community College, and Johnson and Wales University or earn up to 15 credits from Three Rivers Community College through the College and Career Pathways program. Connecticut College also offers one free class to one high school senior per recommendation of school officials.

There are multiple opportunities/programs in place to create relevant school to business partnerships. Students may participate in internships, job shadows, or vocational training with the facilitation of teaching staff. Many clubs offer community partnerships as well, such as the Women in Technology, The Historical Society, DECA, YES, Environmental Club and the Community Service Club.

Students are recognized for accomplishments in many ways and throughout the school year. We honor academic achievements at the Academic Letter Breakfast, the CAPT Scholar Breakfast and end of year award nights. Two students are recognized on the district website each month as "Student Standouts" for their classroom accomplishments. Additionally, one student a month is recognized as the Rotary Student of the Month for scholarship and leadership. On a regular basis, students are recognized for demonstrating integrity and recognized with our honor flag. We also host sports banquets at the end of each season. Twice a month, the school newsletter features an "In the Classroom" article which highlights the delivery of curriculum, and often features student work/interviews. Several departments publish Department Newsletters on a regular basis.

# PURPOSE, MISSION, CORE BELIEFS AND VALUES

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## DISTRICT PURPOSE

*Small Schools, Big Ideas*

*Challenging – Achieving – Excelling*

We are committed to providing exemplary schools, partnering with the community, nurturing passion for lifelong learning, fostering global citizenship, and maximizing potential.

## SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Lyme-Old Lyme High School is a community of learners committed, with pride and purpose, to developing skilled problem solvers, effective communicators, and contributing citizens.

## CORE BELIEFS

The Lyme-Old Lyme High School learning community is committed to the core beliefs that students' learning potential is maximized when school culture supports the following:

- a safe and embracing environment is created and maintained for all and by all.
- collaboration among members of the learning community consistently occurs.
- individual and collective successes are celebrated and promoted.
- caring relationship between students and faculty are nurtured and encouraged.

We further believe that students' learning potential is maximized when school curriculum adheres to the following doctrine:

- 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are developed and applied through authentic problem solving, effective communication, and creativity and innovation.
- inquiry and performance-based learning opportunities are regularly offered.
- learning objectives and essential questions are clearly articulated and linked to daily lessons.

We further believe that students' learning potential is maximized when school instruction encompasses the following:

- high standards and expectations are communicated and reinforced.

- instruction is differentiated to meet the learning styles and needs of all students.
- activities are engaging, interesting, and student-centered.
- formative assessments are used to measure understanding before new material is introduced.

## **CORE VALUES**

As a collective learning community, Lyme-Old Lyme High School strives to strengthen and develop our core values which are:

- **Accountability:** by taking ownership, demonstrating responsibility, and fulfilling the expectation of one's role and actions.
- **Integrity:** by adhering to strict moral principles governed by honesty, pride, and responsibility.
- **Respect:** by expressing worth or honor towards a person, property, or circumstance that is guaranteed for all and by all.
- **Rigor:** by establishing exceptional academic expectations for content mastery, applied skills, and critical thinking in the disciplines being taught.

# **COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS**

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**CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING  
EXPECTATIONS**

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**CURRICULUM**

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**INSTRUCTION**

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**ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT  
LEARNING**

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

# 1

## Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

*Effective schools identify core values and beliefs about learning that function as explicit foundational commitments to students and the community. Decision-making remains focused on and aligned with these critical commitments. Core values and beliefs manifest themselves in research-based, school-wide 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.

## **Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations**

### **Conclusions**

The Lyme-Old Lyme High School, (LOLHS), community engaged in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. The educators at LOLHS are committed to implementing the school's learning expectations. In 2011, an administrative team from LOLHS compiled research-based data to initiate a community discussion regarding the revision of the school's core values and beliefs. A committee of stakeholders met in December 2011 to review current research and to re-examine the existing mission statement. Consensus from stakeholders revealed that LOLHS's current mission statement was important to the community, but needed revisions including measurable values and beliefs. A board consisting of all stakeholders (faculty, students, parents, and local business leaders) was created to evaluate the existing mission statement and found that it was not an accurate representation of the LOLHS community. The committee agreed that subgroups of stakeholders would meet to evaluate data collected from teachers, parents, and students. Polling, surveys, and meetings were conducted to craft the current core values and beliefs. Over two years, faculty members analyzed and revised the LOLHS Mission Statement and Core Values, and Beliefs. The committee sought input from their constituencies as the core values and beliefs document developed and received endorsements from respective groups. Representatives of all stakeholders were invited to after-school meetings which opened up discussions in a community forum for the purpose of gathering more input to create an up-to-date version of the core beliefs and mission statement. Students

participated in the discussions during advisory periods to aid in the development of the core values and beliefs. The subcommittee facilitated multiple faculty meetings and devoted significant time and effort toward the solicitation of feedback from community members about the evolving core values and beliefs statement. Additionally, faculty had opportunities to add input to numerous drafts of the document. The core values committee compiled the data from the numerous meetings and included language that spoke to the priorities of the school which are “community, pride, and purpose.” In April 2012, the stakeholders voted to adopt the guiding document of core values and beliefs about learning for LOLHS. Because the school has an inclusive process based on best practices to identify and commit to core values and beliefs about learning, the school community ensures that the core values and beliefs accurately reflect the beliefs of all stakeholders. (self-study, teachers, parents, students, school board)

LOLHS has challenging and measurable 21<sup>st</sup> 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. Newly established core values and beliefs are both challenging and measurable. These values and beliefs are measured through the school-wide 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations analytic rubrics and can easily be labeled as academic, civic, or social competencies. These learning expectations target a high level of achievement at LOLHS. During a 2013 stakeholder meeting, participants were asked to describe the level of challenge of the learning expectations. Participants consistently reported that students were challenged to higher levels of achievement. In conjunction with teacher and student interviews the evidence of challenging expectations was evident in samples of student work. Teachers consistently ask students to

demonstrate 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills. These learning expectations prepare students with the necessary skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century collegiate experience and/or workplace. During interviews, parents expressed confidence in education received at LOLHS. Students interviewed firmly believe that by the time they graduate, they will be prepared for the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Teachers display the school-wide analytic rubrics in their rooms and each department is responsible for measuring an assigned learning expectation. Teachers acknowledge that they infuse strands of the learning expectation rubrics into their departmental and/or classroom rubrics. Biannually, teachers holistically evaluate their students according to their assigned rubric. This score is then communicated to the student and parents through a standards-based report card. All learning expectations can be measured on a scale from one to four (beginning to exemplary). Expectations are clearly defined on the analytical rubric and students understand that their goal is to obtain exemplary by the time they graduate. The core values and beliefs include academic, civic, and social competencies by design. These competencies were the driving forces behind the development of the official LOLHS document, and pervade each learning expectation developed through the core values and beliefs. Students and parents are able to describe the core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations in general terms. The core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are accessible on the school's website. Additionally, the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and their respective analytic rubrics are located under the website's academic section. Because the school developed challenging learning expectations to prepare each of its students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and has developed analytic rubrics to assess achievement of these expectations, every student has the potential to achieve high levels of academic performance. (parents, teachers, students, teacher interviews, student shadowing, classroom observations)



The statement of core values and beliefs about learning has been extensively evaluated, revised and is currently used to guide major policy and procedural developments, especially in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. Core values and beliefs about learning are evident across the curriculum at LOLHS. Student skills are developed through authentic problem solving and the incorporation of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations which include inquiry and performance-based activities. This is evident in both the curriculum templates and in practice. LOLHS has learning guides which are extracted from curriculum documents that reflect a recent initiative to provide better curriculum communication to the parents. Each learning guide contains essential questions regarding global influence, learning objectives, key vocabulary, and promotes depth of knowledge and critical thinking. One of LOLHS's goals to strengthen instruction is to separate procedural and process-based grading and to make sure teachers can grow professionally to support all student learning needs. According to teacher and administrator interviews, many current grading practices are compliance based, and they acknowledge that a discussion has to be initiated in order for the focus to be shifted to assessment of content mastery. The two- and five-year plans involve developing more differentiated instruction and a SRBI model. The SRBI model includes instructional strategies reflecting the core values and beliefs that enable students to learn from each other including promoting the use of authentic resources, teaching of isolated skills, continual assessment for understanding and adjusted instruction, and increased student talk time in class. The core values and beliefs at LOLHS also drive classroom assessment. Students often have more than one chance to be assessed on a learning expectation which maintains the concept of rigor. Students are not penalized for receiving a low score early in the semester if the student eventually masters the learning

expectations/content. Often, students are not given grades on first drafts, and students are often given test preparation sheets that mimic, but do not explicitly state, what will be on the assessment. This provides students the opportunity to become familiar with and plan for the structure of the assessment which encourages the core value of accountability. There have been substantial resource allocations that have been made in response to supporting the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and its 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Additional professional development resources were allocated to the high school to bring in someone to introduce digital technology integration, to provide the math department with a state consultant to work individually with department members in adapting their instruction to the CCSS for eight days during the 2012-2013 school year, to the library media center high school building plan to ensure a 21<sup>st</sup> century digital learning environment, and to provide additional technology resources to the high school for two laptop carts and one cart of tablets. A K-5 tech facilitator has been reassigned to the middle school to free up the technology integration specialist to spend time supporting technology at LOLHS. Additional summer curriculum money has been allocated to the high school for the past two summers to realign the math and English curricula with the CCSS. A meeting with the superintendent and business coordinator for the district found that administration is frequently willing to provide funding so students have all resources available. On an academic level, this includes the creation of new Advanced Placement classes and the development of the technology education program. On a co-curricular level, the district is supportive of the robotics program and the growth of sports such as crew. Furthermore, the district is committed to smaller class sizes and more staff can be added if numbers support it. This and other decisions are ultimately made on the basis of what is best for all students. Because resource allocations are

made with the core values and beliefs about learning as the driving criteria, the school will maintain its focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices to support the continued reflection on the culture of the school and its 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (panel presentation, student work, teacher interviews, central office administrators, curriculum guides, school handbooks, publications)

The statement of core values and beliefs about learning are examined and revised on a need basis and reflect questions and concerns from faculty. The 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations follow a similar process and are based on a committee inclusive of all departments, the revision of existing school-wide rubrics, and district and community school priorities. The school leadership team has a process and timeline for the regular review and revision of its core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The mission statement is reviewed every five years, and with 94 percent of the teachers supportive of the current core values and beliefs, they are revised on a need basis. The 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations were most recently revised in the summer of 2013. Technology was added as a component of the communication rubric. The civic and social responsibility rubric was revised and a heading was renamed “collaboration” to better reflect students who “work and participate effectively as members of a group of community.” The two categories of civic and personal were expanded to the four categories of “leadership, engagement, respect, and accountability.” The former problem-solving heading was renamed “critical thinking.” School leaders and faculty can cite readings/research to ensure they are cognizant of the expectations 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills as a living document that continually invigorates their curriculum and instruction. The board of education holds meetings on a monthly basis to share information about 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and skills. Although there is not a periodic forum that includes

solicitation of feedback from the local business community, there were opportunities during the development of the school's strategic plan that involved local business members to share their input. Furthermore, many business owners are parents of students or former students who are actively involved in providing feedback. Because of their small community culture, there is a constant dialogue with the local businesses. On an individual and departmental level, the school examines data about students' achievement of school-wide learning expectations, student performance on standardized tests, and student work as part of a review of targeted school-wide learning priorities. LOLHS acknowledges that a large percentage of students achieve high academic scores, and they have been focusing on strategies to incorporate and encourage the smaller percentage of students who struggle academically. In order to promote the growth of all students, the administration showcases both the success of students making progress toward college goals and also offers support services for students pursuing vocational opportunities outside of post-secondary education. Part of each teacher's individualized development goal includes a global component toward which the whole school is working. However, the drought of standardized test scores as a result of the transition from CAPT to SBAC has hindered some of these efforts. The 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations are identified in a curriculum template created by the district curriculum coordinator and are both consistently applied and under constant review. Revisions require teachers to identify which expectation is being addressed based upon review of data sources. Faculty members are provided the opportunity to regularly discuss research on learning and the implications of such research during department meetings. However, this time provided is not always dedicated to the intended purpose. Common preparation periods also support the consistent review and revision of curriculum and learning goals. The faculty incorporates

district and community concerns into its discussion of the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and learning expectations resulting in alignment with the district's learning goals. Through the coordination of professional development opportunities over the past two years, middle and high school schedules have been aligned to ensure more frequent collaboration and vertical articulation of both curriculum and skill acquisition. The LOLHS Model for Continuous Curriculum Renewal, established by the Curriculum Steering Committee, is a plan for continually assessing and renewing district curriculum which includes a comprehensive review of student achievement data, enrollment figures for electives, walk-through outcomes, and teacher input. The results and recommendations of this work are presented to the board of education after thorough analysis to make sure they align with the district's learning goals. There are plans to review the statement of core values and beliefs about learning as part of the two-year plan. When schools engage in active dialogue with all stakeholders and commit to staying current on educational innovation, the entire community has ownership of its core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, and ultimately student learning improves. (panel presentation, teacher interviews, school handbooks, publications, curriculum guides)

**Commendations:**

1. The use of current research-based best practices to inform the development of core values and beliefs
2. The commitment of students, parents, staff, and community members to strong student achievement and preparation for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning

3. The active reflection of the core values, beliefs about learning, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations in the culture of the school
4. The emphasis on the creativity and innovation in the practices of curriculum and instruction
5. The resource allocations to inform the development of the core values and beliefs in practice

**Recommendations:**

1. Provide additional opportunities to communicate school's core values and beliefs to better enable students and parents to stay informed of the school's philosophy and value system
2. Develop a timeline for the continued review and revision of the core values and beliefs about learning

# 2

## Curriculum

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

## Curriculum

### Conclusions

The curriculum has been purposely designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The teachers in most content areas at LOLHS are designing curriculum that has been purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. It is designed to provide all students, regardless of grade level, course level, and range of ability, with opportunities to practice and achieve all of the four school-wide 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Each learning area has taken responsibility for reporting progress on at least one learning expectation so as to ensure that all of them are taught, assessed, and reported. In speaking with teachers it is evident that they know which ones they are responsible for reporting on, but additionally they communicated that many courses address multiple student learning expectations. Some activities and assessments also address more than one expectation at a time. Additionally, all curriculum documents are driven by learning objectives and essential questions which are clearly articulated and linked to daily lessons. In the curriculum templates, each course documents the specific 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. In an effort to further link the curriculum to the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, the faculty has developed an additional rubric, "writing for the 21<sup>st</sup> century" which assesses purpose, organization, evidence, tone, and surface errors. Because the curriculum is purposefully designed proper utilization of the curriculum will ensure all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

(program of studies, school-wide rubrics, teacher interviews)



The curriculum is written in a common format that includes the units of study with essential questions, concepts, content and skills, the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, instructional strategies, and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. The current curriculum templates, unit overviews, lessons, and performance tasks truly reflect the school's core values and beliefs as well as the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. This was demonstrated in the rubrics, curriculum guides, and school's program of studies. Many of the units of study observed contain assessment practices that included the use of a common curriculum template that include essential questions, objectives, activities, performance tasks, and assessments using the school-wide rubrics, groupings, and learning styles. In addition, the curriculum documents indicate a variety of instructional and assessment strategies are being employed throughout the school. The program of studies shows that each curriculum area has taken ownership of at least one of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The instructional strategies being utilized are appropriate for the Advanced Placement, level one and level two homogeneous and heterogeneous mixing of students. Curriculum documents also provide teachers with an accessible range of possible instructional strategies. Curriculum updates are ongoing, and focus is often being placed on linking the school-wide rubrics and teacher-developed rubrics to the common curriculum. Ongoing collaboration for the crafting and updating of the curriculum will ensure a continuance of authentic teaching and learning. (curriculum guides, teacher interviews, program of studies, student shadowing)

The LOLHS curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, authentic learning opportunities

both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology; however, cross-disciplinary learning is minimal and a formal process for ensuring its planning and execution has yet to be put in place. As observed in the Endicott survey and the Staff Generated Survey, inquiry, critical thinking, and problem solving are embedded in many course learning activities and in student projects in many courses across the disciplines. From a review of the student work, curriculum documents, and teacher conversations, it is evident that students are expected to learn through inquiry-based assignments and activities. Such assignments and activities require the students to think critically and to be pragmatic problem solvers. The school offers many Advanced Placement courses in social studies, math, science, English, and the arts. The curriculum design process encourages inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking. Through discussions with teachers, students, and parents, evidence suggests that students find their courses challenging and, as a whole, the school prepares students well for life and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Cross-disciplinary learning does not yet have a formal role in planning curriculum, as stated in a number of student and teacher interviews. Informal opportunities exist for teachers to share information, but a need has been identified for more inter-departmental collaboration. A potential vehicle for this exists in the collaboration block offered to teachers through administrator approval, as well as through the recently introduced peer observation process. Authentic learning opportunities exist within the school, showcased in the math, science and technology departments with real-world skills and connections that the students are gaining through the scientific method, problem-solving process, and engineering design process. Further opportunities exist beyond the classroom experiences to students through independent study options as well as through distant learning, clubs, and activities. Digital citizenship, paired

with informed and ethical use of technology is taught in the High School 101 introductory course with the help of the library media specialist. In the English department, major written assignments are submitted to Turnitin in a universal effort to reinforce with students the message the plagiarism is not acceptable. The evidence further indicates that part of the student advisory curriculum acts as a platform to educate the students on the proper use of social media tools. In conversation with teachers and library staff, a more aggressive push to further educate and remind students about proper use of technology needs to be made. The acceptable use policy is in revision, trying to find ways to balance “SmartUse” of devices for the purpose of learning and minimizing recreational and distracting behaviors exhibited by students. Currently, the library has visual reminders of the “SmartUse” policy, but more needs to be done school-wide to help students develop the habits needed to be responsible users of technology and various devices. As the school continues to emphasize depth of understanding and application of knowledge and by formalizing and executing a plan of cross-disciplinary learning, faculty will be able to better enhance and refine inter-departmental collaboration to further enhance student learning opportunities. (Endicott survey, Staff Generated Survey, Acceptable Use Policy, teacher interviews, school support staff, building administrators)

The written curriculum and the curriculum being taught at LOLHS are aligned. Department instructional leaders are aware of the curricular developments throughout their respective instructional areas. Departmental leader classroom observations, paired with the extensive departmental collaboration opportunities during and after the school year, allow for productive curriculum development and instruction that ensures usage of the written templates. Teachers collaborate to develop lesson plans, share best practices, review data

from a variety of sources, and make adjustments to curriculum on a regular basis during the six-year curriculum review cycle. The adjustments are made through both a formal review cycle as well as a more frequent process based on student learning and student needs. For instance, the math curriculum is reviewed at the end of each year. Lesson objectives and essential questions are on display for students to see. Administrators observe teachers as part of their evaluation process to further ensure alignment. Common midterm exams, final exams, and unit assessments, help to ensure an environment where common curricula are delivered for the benefit of students at LOLHS. Providing a highly collaborative environment for ongoing curricular development that invests all staff members will assure alignment between the taught and written curriculum. (teacher interviews, central office administrators, classroom observations, students)

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and amongst all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools within the district. The culture of collaboration existing within LOLHS once again is used as strong evidence of alignment both horizontally within grades and common courses as well as vertically across grade levels. The leadership positions the department instructional leaders hold have an overlap between schools. There is a K-8 English coordinator and K-5 math coordinator to help facilitate communications between elementary to middle school. Similarly, the four core academic areas have 6-12 leaders. There is one leader across all grades for the special area of the arts. Combined professional development occurs with high school and middle school teachers three times a year. According to faculty and administration there will be more opportunities when the middle school schedule is aligned with the high school schedule for mutual planning times. This year, a new survey was administered for the purposes of

giving feedback to the elementary grade teachers from the middle school teachers and also from the high school teachers to the middle school teachers. The results of this helped teachers in the middle school identify areas for goal development and to find areas of student need to better prepare their students for success in high school. Through active communication across departments and grade levels, alignment and articulation exist to promote higher student achievement. (teacher interviews, central office administrators, self-study)

The staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are currently sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities offered at LOLHS. A majority of students, parents, and staff feel that the resources are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. Class sizes ranging in smaller numbers to the mid-20s show that staffing levels are appropriate for most areas. Anecdotal evidence from faculty and parents, along with budgetary reports, suggests that funding is adequate to provide resources for programs offered at LOLHS. Teachers state that when requests are made for additional resources, they usually have no issue in acquiring it. Teachers and parents state that some classes have dual textbook sets so students can have a book in the room and one at home. A walk-through of the facility shows up-to-date SMARTBoard technology in every classroom, calculators in math classrooms, document cameras, laptop carts, computer labs, well-equipped science classrooms, an announcement scrolling television system in multiple common areas, as well as a state-of-the-art technology education lab. The library media specialist collaborates with the specialists of the other district schools' libraries to ensure that the library media centers of all the district schools are adequately supplied and up to date.

The library media specialist is currently unable to assist teachers in enhancing the use of the blended and online learning opportunities, and other technology tools within the current curriculum guides. Teachers expressed the need to further implement the use of that technology into classes at all levels. Facility improvements have addressed the needs of the overall school, but some areas that need further improvement include storage limitations in the library and science labs and inconsistent volume in the public address system. The library media center lacks an enclosed computer lab to help maintain the library's quiet learning environment while instruction is going on using the computers. The current condition of using laptops in the central area produces a distracting environment to the surrounding areas where other individuals may be working/reading during study hall time. Because the staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient, the curriculum is fully implemented and supported, giving students the opportunity to better achieve their academic and social goals. (Endicott survey, teacher interviews, school support staff, facility tour, central office administrators)

By design, 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 and current research. A formal process exists in Region 18 that allows for ongoing curriculum changes. Aside from the six-year cycle of curriculum renewal, evidence from discussions with teachers and data from the self-study report shows that the school's curriculum development and revision is ongoing. Evidence also shows that the process is not isolated to being a top-down approach to curricular development, but ideas and input comes from teachers and students alike. Multiple interviews revealed that teachers

have autonomy and can initiate and execute needed changes, in collaboration with students, other teachers, instructional leaders, and curriculum coordinators. Teachers collaborate to make informed decisions on how to adjust curricular topics and instruction using student performance indicated by a variety of sources including common assessments, midterm and final exam, unit tests, and AP results. Time allocations and funding are evident in the summer hours granted to teachers for developing common curriculums as well as by the collaboration blocks that can be requested during the school day. Innovative thinking is showcased in a developing program for the advisory period involving summer reading through which teachers, the library media specialist, and some students are working together in a committee to select books to create summer reading lists. Because curriculum development is highly encouraged and promoted at LOLHS, the students receive instruction in classes with standards aligned and infused with the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, teachers, central office administrators, curriculum review documents)

**Commendations:**

1. The purposefully designed curriculum which enables students to practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
2. The creation and implementation of common curriculum templates throughout the school that include objectives, performance tasks, and assessments
3. The presence of authentic learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom
4. The shift to department instructional leaders which addresses department needs, as well as curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional learning

5. The use of a fluid curriculum cycle that gives allowance for curriculum modification, based on authentic assessment
6. The availability of a variety of courses to accommodate a wide range of interests and abilities
7. The district's support of curriculum through the commitment of sufficient time, financial resources, and personnel to the development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum

**Recommendations:**

1. Provide time to faculty to foster the integration and reinforcement of curricula in a collaborative manner across content areas
2. Increase opportunities for collaboration around the development and implementation of cross-discipline curriculum
3. Review the use of Virtual High School, Blended Learning, and other technology tools within the current curriculum guides and work to further implement the usage of that technology into classes at all levels



# 3

## Instruction

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

## **Instruction**

### **Conclusions**

Teacher's instructional practices at LOLHS are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

Teachers at LOLHS regularly examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Teachers regularly have time to collaborate and examine both their curriculum and instructional practices as evidenced by department minutes and teacher collaboration notes. The school's teacher evaluation plan allows for the process of reflection, modification and implementation of new instructional strategies to ensure student success. In addition to teacher-based review, administrators offer additional meaningful and constructive feedback on instructional practices as evidenced in teacher evaluation plans, formal observations, and reviews of classroom practice. Teachers from all departments participate in peer observations to identify components of lessons that are supported by the rubric of the System for Educator Evaluation and Development, (SEED), evaluation models. Peer observations are also used to assist teachers in devising new instructional strategies or improving those that are currently being implemented. Departments have regularly scheduled collaboration time that occurs every fourth day of the schedule rotation. Collaboration blocks occur throughout the school year at the request of teachers to create consistent horizontal and vertical alignment of curriculum and instructional practices as well as to develop and evaluate common assessments and to refine instructional strategies based on data collected from assessments. Teachers have duties covered or substitutes provided for classes in order to participate in these valuable conversations. The school's culture of reflective teaching is promoted and

greatly supported by the current administration. Teachers state that they have never been denied a request to participate in a collaboration block to review curriculum, data, and instructional strategies. According to the Endicott survey, 93.8 percent of the teachers at LOLHS report that they continuously examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

LOLHS has school-wide rubrics for writing that are based on criteria for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. These criteria include "communication, critical thinking, creativity, writing and innovation and collaboration." Departments use versions of the school-wide rubrics that highlight specific strands in formal assessments, individual assignments, and projects. This assessment by "specific strands" was observed in teacher rubrics, interviews, work samples and student conversations. Students are aware of both the use and purpose of rubrics which accompany their assignments.

Teachers consistently examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with LOLHS's core values of "Accountability, Intensity, Respect and Rigor." Teachers create learning experiences for students which enable them to be more accountable for their own learning. Students are given multiple opportunities across disciplines to make choices regarding research topics, modes of presentation and aspects of instructional content. These include the use of Noodletools, Youtube channel, Prezi, Animoto and Socratic circles, guided inquiry and peer-editing, and Harkness circles.

LOLHS academic departments have developed "student learning guides" for their units of instruction. Essential questions and learning objectives are clearly communicated to

students on the learning guides created for various courses and units, posted in classrooms and verbally communicated to students at the beginning of unit lessons. Because instructional practices are consistently and continually examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, students are keenly aware of what is expected of them and have a more meaningful learning experiences. (teacher interviews, School Leadership Subcommittee members, classroom observations, student shadowing)

LOLHS teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. It is clear that instruction is personalized at LOLHS. There are multiple opportunities for students to make choices about their learning experiences. This was seen in the wide variety of courses offered at the high school and a myriad of opportunities for independent studies. Within a wide variety of classroom settings students are given choices within projects and unit assignments. This choice-based model is done without sacrificing high standards of achievement and not losing sight of objectives and essential questions. This was evident in conversations with teachers and students, in student work samples, and through student shadowing. In addition there was evidence that teachers gave individual feedback to students, and progress was monitored by teachers circulating and asking students if they needed clarification. Students were encouraged to take responsibility for their learning by asking questions for clarification when needed. On student work samples meaningful written feedback in some cases was provided and rubrics were used in some cases. Cross-disciplinary learning is not explicit or formalized. As stated in meetings with teachers, students, and the School Leadership Subcommittee, cross-disciplinary learning

takes place for the most part informally and is considered part of a building-wide spirit of collaboration.

Instruction at LOLHS is often geared toward high levels of student engagement, self-directed learning, and applying knowledge to authentic tasks and real-world skills across most departments, but it is not consistently visible. Students are given individual choice in projects and assignments which gives them a sense of ownership over the learning process. Student-led discussions take place on a fairly regular basis in most classes. Students also use knowledge of acquired skills to produce and simulate real-world scenarios and experiences in many disciplines particularly in business and technology education. Higher order thinking skills and inquiry-based learning are often present. The use of technology is sometimes integrated across disciplines in a variety of ways such as student-led presentations, teachers showing video clips and SMARTBoards being utilized, and the use of mobile computer labs for peer editing. In a French class students use individual computer programs to follow progress in listening, reading, writing skills, while in math the ALEKS program is used for self-directed study. Because LOLHS teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, students are offered a variety of learning experiences which help them apply knowledge and skills learned in class to authentic tasks and real-world scenarios. (student shadowing, classroom observations, teachers, School Leadership Subcommittee members, student work, parents)

Across disciplines and grade levels, LOLHS teachers routinely adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of most students by using formative assessment during instructional time, differentiated learning, purposefully organized group learning activities

and provide additional support and alternative strategies. Based on the evidence collected, teacher interviews and classroom observations, that teachers use a variety of formative assessments during instructional time. In various classes across many disciplines, teachers utilize warm-up exercises, exit slips, interactive SMARTBoard activities, reading quizzes, binder checks, pre- and post-tests, reteaching activities, extended practice and practice assessments. The formative assessments currently used provide preliminary feedback to the students about their progress but do not provide substantial information to guide teachers in making decisions about the next steps in the student's learning process. Many faculty at LOLHS have started to implement a comprehensive formative assessment approach to teaching and learning.

Teachers at LOLHS differentiate instruction by creating leveled classes, but activities and instruction within each class are not differentiated. Across various classes, teachers use the instructional strategies of scaffolding, visual aids, providing alternative readings and working with special education staff to address the varying needs of students, however, minimal personalized or individualized learning was observed. True differentiated instructional practices are found in pockets throughout the school. Teachers purposefully organize group learning activities to enhance individualized learning. Students are often strategically grouped for the benefit of effective learning. In various classes across the disciplines, peer-to-peer collaboration allows students to help one another gain a better understanding of class objectives, work with problem-solving strategies and achieve the learning goals. Student collaboration extends across both academic and real world lessons. Collaborative techniques were seen in English classes with peer editing and revision of writing, in music theory with the creation of rhythmic pieces, and in math with solving numerical problems.

Teachers routinely adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of most students by providing additional support and alternative strategies. In various classes and across various disciplines, students use graphic organizers, study guides, rubrics to understand assessment requirements, graphing calculators to solve problems, *Youtube* videos to better understand math and science concepts, and screen recorded lessons that enable students to work at their own pace. Students also have the opportunity for alternative and additional support by meeting with teachers before and after school, during lunch and after school in the homework club. Providing additional support and alternative strategies enhances the students' opportunities for learning and allows students to achieve the rigorous learning objectives. When LOLHS teachers routinely adjust their instructional practices across learning areas and grade levels to meet the needs of each student, students will acquire and master the skills being driven by the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, classroom observations, student shadowing, students, parents)

LOLHS teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, examining student work, and using feedback from a variety of sources including students, other teachers, supervisors and parents. Collaboration is highly encouraged through common planning time, peer observations, collaboration blocks and informal conversations among teachers on a regular basis. Professional development takes place throughout the first half of the year with the focus on improving instructional practices to be implemented throughout the year. Student work is examined on a continual basis to inform instructional practices through a

wide variety of assessments both formal and informal: labs, projects, entrance/exit slips, student reflections and the use of school-wide rubrics. Teachers use data and feedback from these avenues to make decisions about current instructional strategies and to develop new ones, which, in turn, will increase student engagement and comprehension.

Teachers use feedback from supervisors and other teachers to improve instruction through the school-wide evaluation model, informal observations, learning walks, common prep time and departmental meetings. Teachers communicate about data, assess and modify instructional strategies, and collaborate with each other to make sure that they are aligned and on track. Teachers also use this information to identify weaknesses in student performance and as a means to tailor instruction to address those weaknesses. Parent feedback is given during Open House, Report Card Night, school newsletters and direct communications with parents and administration. Parents are also able to log into the school portal, PowerSchool, to access their student's grades, check on their student's progress and communicate with teachers. Data from the Endicott survey record that 41.3 percent of students and 27.5 percent of parents report that teachers ask for student ideas/opinions and feedback to improve instruction. Because teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, examining student work, and using feedback from a variety of sources including students, teachers, supervisors and parents, student learning will increase through classroom academic experiences that are consistently reflective of student individual interests and academic needs. (parents, School Leadership Subcommittee members, panel presentation, teacher interviews, school board)



Teachers at LOLHS as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Teachers regularly reflect with their colleagues to improve teaching strategies, develop high interest lessons, projects and authentic assessments. This takes place during common planning times, collaboration blocks, peer observations and informal conversations with one another. This happens in every discipline and is encouraged and supported by teachers and administrators alike.

All teachers are participants in workshops and conferences offered by the district.

Additionally, many teachers also participate in state and national professional development opportunities. Professional development is driven by conversations between the school leadership committee and building administration. Teachers from many disciplines belong to professional organizations related to their subject areas. New and veteran teachers expressed that administration is highly supportive of their participation in a myriad of professional development opportunities and are not denied permission to attend such offerings. Because teachers as adult learners are reflective practitioners who maintain expertise in both subject area and content-specific instructional practices, students benefit from a progressive learning environment that fosters the importance of lifelong learning. (School Leadership Subcommittee members, teacher interviews, self-study)

**Commendations:**

1. The regular collaboration of teachers within their departments
2. The opportunities provided to students for self-directed learning
3. The skills and knowledge expected by teachers for authentic tasks

4. The development and improvement of teaching strategies by faculty
5. The commitment by the administration to use the evaluation process to ensure self-reflection on teaching practices
6. The opportunities for students to assess themselves and conduct reflections on their learning processes

**Recommendations:**

1. Provide more opportunities for collaboration across curriculum areas to integrate cross-disciplinary learning
2. Provide targeted professional development that will assist teachers in making the necessary changes to their differentiated instructional practices
3. Implement the use of formative assessment that drive instructional changes
4. Increase technology integration in instructional practice
5. Develop a long-term plan that supports technology integration to support 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
6. More opportunities need to be explored for teachers to use differentiation models more effectively in the classroom to ensure that the needs of students across various instructional levels are being met.
7. Create consistent instructional practices for the High School 101 Program.

## Teaching and Learning Standard

# 4

## Assessment of and for Student Learning

*Assessment informs students and stakeholders of progress and growth toward meeting the school's 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
2. The school's professional staff communicates:
  - individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to students and their families
  - the school's progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
  - standardized assessments
  - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
  - survey data from current students and alumni.

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

## Assessment

### Conclusions

The professional staff at LOLHS is in the process of continuously employing a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. LOLHS has worked over the last three years to develop a formal process to assess individual student progress through the use of school-wide rubrics that measure achievement of their 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations have been embedded in the school's curriculum, instructional and assessment documents and are visually presented in almost every classroom. A majority of the LOLHS faculty uses the school-wide rubrics to assess individual student growth in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. This foundational procedure is well attested to in the Endicott survey as 85.4 percent of the staff understands and 70.8 percent of the staff formally assesses individual student progress through the use of school-wide rubrics measuring 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Although these measurements are an integral part of the assessments of all academic departments throughout the entire year, the results are reported at the end of each semester as an entry on the student report card. However LOLHS does not have a formal process to assess whole-school progress at this time. The continual implementation of a formal, long-term process to assess both whole-school and individual student progress in achieving integration of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations will ensure that all students make progress in both the civic and academic aspects of their school and community. (student work, students, teacher interviews, self-study)

The professional staff at LOLHS communicates individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to students and their families; the school's progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to the school community; however the school in the process of developing a process to determine and communicate whole-school progress at this time. The staff at LOLHS regularly communicate student progress in achieving the learning expectations to students and their families. In teacher interviews, instructors commented that it is a school-wide and consistent practice to assess and record student progress of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations as an integral part of unit lessons. Based on work samples there is ample evidence of a connection between unit learning objectives and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and rubrics capable of mirroring measurements of growth on both sets of learning expectations. According to parent interviews, report cards contain scores, not only of assignments but also pertaining to the achievement of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Parents receive this report at the end of each semester. The new measurement is also communicated to parents via the school's PowerSchool website. According to the Endicott survey, 76.7 percent of parents agree that the school provides a formal report of the students' progress. LOLHS has developed new ways to make this grade visible to families through their Report Card Night after the first quarter when parents can meet with teachers and discuss overall grades and student progress for the first quarter of the year. The school has posted their 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and rubric measurements on their school's website for the community. The clear and concise communication of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to both students and their families allows all parents and students the opportunity to understand the school's commitment to the schools learning expectations and when the school communicates whole school progress then

all stakeholders will be informed of the school's progress. (teacher interviews, parents, Endicott survey, LOLHS website)

The professional staff at LOLHS collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. Through a process of collecting and analyzing assessment data, teachers at LOLHS identify and respond to inequalities in student achievement. According to teacher interviews the staff meets both formally and informally to share student work and to analyze assessment data. LOLHS administrators have designed a schedule allowing time for teachers to meet in their departments to analyze results gleaned from student work, adjust instructional procedures, rethink curriculum, and revise their assessments in order to help students gain mastery of content standards. According to teacher interviews and department minutes, this common time is often used to analyze data and determine which standards require additional attention. Focus in these periods can include analysis of assessment data, revision of curriculum scope and sequence, development of instructional plans to improve student engagement and to achieve academic progress. According to the Endicott survey, 93.75 of teachers collaborate with colleagues at least once per month to analyze and revise formative/summative assessments. According to the self-study, both teachers and administrators use statewide assessments (CAPT) to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. The staff at LOLHS have created an after-school CAPT Academy for students who struggle to pass the exam. Besides the CAPT, AP exams scores and data have been used to review instruction and shape curriculum. According to the self-study, several new AP courses have been added to the curriculum allowing students to participate in a wider range of advanced studies; the school has earned the

distinction of being named to the College Board AP Honor Roll. Teachers at LOLHS also utilize data to scaffold instruction and ensure all students are successful. Often students are able to analyze their errors on given assignments. This was clearly demonstrated in the music department with the program SMART MUSIC, through which students record their performances and are graded. Students can then address problems with their performance and improve their mastery of the piece. Because department teams collect and analyze assessment data, it allows the school to improve the delivery of curriculum and fosters a creative and progressive learning environment capable of addressing the needs of all learners. (teacher interviews, student work, department minutes, building administrators, students)

Prior to each unit of study, teachers at LOLHS communicate to students the school's applicable 21<sup>st</sup> learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. Most teachers at LOLHS introduce students to both the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and unit-related expectations at the beginning of each unit. Based on teacher interviews and student work samples, LOLHS teachers introduce learning guides for each unit of study listing essential questions, vocabulary terms, and unit objectives based on 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Both teachers and students comment that "the learning expectations are reinforced verbally during lessons." Introduction to school-wide rubrics and learning expectations start in the freshman year with each new student taking a High School 101 class. This class promotes a successful transition from middle school to high school expectations. It is during this class that 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are introduced to both the state-wide rubrics and the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations that will shape their academic progress. According to student comments they become "very familiar with what the teacher



is really looking for and what they have to do to complete an assignment.” When asked what their teachers most frequently want them to do, they respond with words such as “explain, analyze, and interpret.” These academic words point to the internalization of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Teachers comment that by the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students have largely internalized the different strands of the school’s learning expectations. Students comment that as they move up in the grades, the explicit references to the learning expectations decreases. Work samples of performance-based unit objectives in English, power mechanics, math and science clearly show how classroom learning objectives and essential questions are linked to identified 21<sup>st</sup> century skills at all grade levels. According to student interviews, teachers primarily use the school’s learning expectations by focusing on individual strands (critical thinking, communication, creativity and innovation) from the 21<sup>st</sup> century rubrics. Teachers state that this “simplifies the process of embedding the learning expectations across unit lessons.” According to the Endicott survey, 89.6 percent of the teachers and 79.3 percent of students and parents report that teachers communicate the school’s 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and unit-specific learning expectations at the start of each unit through the use of learning guides. The clear communication of unit learning goals and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations allows students the opportunity to better explore academic subjects, to understand personal connections and to develop the capacity to gain mastery in any subject. (parents, students, teacher interviews, school leadership team)

Prior to summative assessments, teachers provide students with the corresponding rubrics. The majority of teachers at LOLHS provide students with rubrics prior to end of unit summative assessments to help them monitor their progress. Rubrics are an integral part of unit objectives in the core academic subjects. According to student interviews, teachers

provide them with rubrics for specific projects and performance-based activities prior to the final assessment. Students report that these rubrics help them to understand how to work on the assignment and what the assignment consists of. According to work samples, science uses lab rubrics; school-wide writing rubrics are used in both English and history departments. The world languages department uses performance task rubrics as does the math department. Rubrics that show a strong and explicit connection to both 21<sup>st</sup> century academic skills and student self-reflection include the history-based DBQ (Document Based Questions) and Latin rubrics. The development and implementation of rubrics allow students the opportunity to chart their own progress and develop mastery in achieving their academic goals. (students, student work, teacher interviews)

In each unit of study, teachers at LOLHS employ a range of assessment strategies including formative and summative assessments which currently provide students with a recall level of content mastery. Teachers at LOLHS have worked to develop both formative and summative assessments which measure student growth in their classrooms and act as a catalyst to improve curriculum and instruction. According to teacher interviews, most instructors comment on their favorite “checks for understanding” including short reviews at the beginning of a lesson to check students recall on a previous topic, re-teaching with extended practice, warm-up activities, interactive SMARTBoard activities, cold calling, binder checks, weekly content and skill self-reflections, journal entries, quizzes and exit tickets. Students have commented that they are often given short quizzes and questions at the beginning of class to review the material from the previous day and at the end of the period as an exit slip to “see how much they have learned or remembered.” According to the Endicott survey, 97 percent of the teachers report that they use varied strategies for assessing, including

formative and summative assessments. According to the self-study, teacher surveys reveal that 65.6 percent of the teachers report using one to two summative assessments per unit; 25 percent report that they use three to four summative assessments, and 9.4 percent use five to six summative assessments per unit indicating that teaching staff use multiple assessment strategies for each unit of study. Teachers comment that “multiple types of assessments give you a snapshot of the student’s progress while maintaining high expectations.” When all teachers use of a wide variety of formative and summative assessments, students will be active participants in the learning process and will build a foundation for mastery in any subject of inquiry. (teacher interviews, students, Endicott survey, student work)

LOLHS teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Based on review of the self-study report and teacher interviews, the majority of the teachers collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments. According to the Endicott survey, 91.7 percent of teachers state that they meet regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments. Class schedules for the math, English, world languages, social studies, science and music departments have built in common prep time that provides departments the opportunity to meet formally as a whole every rotation cycle to collaborate on common assessments. During these meetings, department members discuss and plan future assessments and reconsider well-established assessments to determine if revisions need to be made based on student performance. All departments utilize common midterm and final exams for like courses. Math, English, world languages, social studies, and science courses utilize common summative unit assessments. Some departments utilize the same unit tests for like courses, while others use

mostly common unit test assessments with slightly different questions. Teachers also utilize this time to calibrate assessment rubrics by blind scoring several samples of student work from each class and analyze the data from student tests to determine if adjustments need to be made. When teachers have opportunities to formally and regularly collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments, they are better able to adjust curriculum and instructional practices to ensure the equitable student achievement of the school's learning expectations. (Endicott survey, self-study, teachers)

Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. According to Endicott survey, 68.8 percent of students say that teachers assess/correct their school work in a timely fashion and 73.3 percent say that their teachers offer suggestions to help them improve their school work. Some teachers utilize formative assessment to check for student understanding and provide immediate feedback to students.

Teachers utilize specific school-wide rubrics per department to provide students with feedback on their progress toward the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. For long-term assignments teachers will give feedback on intermediate steps including the outline and rough draft along with the final product. For example, a sample of student work from a biology class written by freshman and sophomore students included a rough draft of a lab report. Students were charged with reporting out the results of their experiment after completing a pre-lab and conducting an experiment. The teacher provided substantial feedback to the students, as it was the first lab report written by the students that year and for some of the students the first of their high school careers. Final drafts were collected after students had the opportunity to improve as a result of the feedback. The final draft was

graded on a combination of analytic/numerical rubric that was aligned with the school-wide critical thinking rubric. Some teachers allow test corrections for students to improve their work and their understanding of concepts, especially in AP classes as the tests are designed to match the rigor of the AP exams. Nearly all interviewed students stated that their teachers provide timely, helpful feedback. Students stated that the majority of feedback comes in the form of written feedback or verbal responses from the teachers. Consistently offering specific and corrective feedback to students in a timely manner will provide opportunities for students to revise and improve their work, to expand their learning, and to achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (Endicott survey, self-study, teacher interviews, students)

Teachers regularly use formative assessment to check for student understanding and to revise instruction for the purpose of impacting student learning. Teachers across departments use a variety of methods to check for student understanding including unit pre-assessments, warm-ups, entrance and exit slips, homework, individual whiteboards, mobile phone applications, thumb/signal voting responses, practice problems, summarizers, and reflections. Examples of formative assessment observed during classroom observations include an entrance ticket with six practice problems in an Algebra II class. The teacher circulated the room, checked for understanding and provided students with immediate feedback informing students that they solved the problems correctly or identified mistakes and asked students questions that required them to make their thinking visible. An English class started with a warm up that required students to write a story using 15 of the 20 vocabulary words from the current unit. This task was displayed on the SMARTBoard: "Use 15 of your vocabulary words in a story about \_\_\_\_\_." This was clearly a routine in the class as a student volunteered to go up

and fill in the blank with the story topic. He chose “sharks and minnows.” The students took out their vocabulary journals to write the story without being prompted to do so. After 10-15 minutes of writing time, volunteers shared their stories. The teacher listened for proper use of the word, part of speech, and pronunciation and then provided feedback to the students.

Teachers adjust instruction and planning when it is evident students are struggling as a result of formative assessment. For example, in adjusting the Algebra II curriculum to the Common Core Standards, the math department gave a pre-assessment and determined that they needed to develop a new unit that reviewed essential concepts taught in Algebra I.

Likewise, if students demonstrate familiarity or mastery of a learning objective during pre-assessment, lesson plans are altered accordingly. When teachers use formative assessments to improve assignments and adapt instruction by re-teaching concepts, students will benefit from the opportunity to further practice skills, and the curriculum will be adjusted to meet the needs of all students. (classroom observations, students, teacher interviews)

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 student work, common course and common grade-level assessment, individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school’s 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, standardized assessments, and data from the middle school. Most teachers collaborate regularly to develop and review common course assessments. According to the Endicott survey, 85.4percent of teachers state that teachers and administrators examine a variety of student work for common course and grade level assessments to revise and improve curriculum and instructional practices. Class schedules for the math, English, world languages, social studies, science, and music departments have built in common prep time

allowing teachers the opportunity to meet every rotation to collaborate on common assessments. During these meetings, department members discuss and plan future assessments and reconsider well-established assessments to determine if revisions need to be made based on student performance. Teachers work together to calibrate assessment rubrics by blind scoring several samples of student work from each class and analyze the data from student tests to determine if adjustments need to be made. All departments utilize the school-wide 21<sup>st</sup> century rubrics, however each department uses them differently. These rubrics are attached to specific performance tasks and graded by the teacher. Other classes use them as an opportunity for student self-assessment and reflection. The school reports performance toward achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to students and parents twice per year as a separate grade on their report card. For example math and science are responsible for reporting on the critical thinking skill and English and world languages are responsible for reporting on communication. Over this past four years this formal process of reporting on the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of individual students has been implemented one grade per year. Students from this year's graduating class has received formal feedback on their progress toward achieving the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for the duration of their high school academic careers. There is currently no formal process or school-wide protocol for analyzing data on student growth toward achieving the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations or using the data to revise curriculum or drive instruction. Administrators gather and disseminate all data from standardized assessments including CAPT, AP and SAT scores. The CAPT test is only taken by students in the science department. Other learning areas are transitioning to the new Smarter Balance Assessment. AP teachers utilize detailed student reports from the College Board to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement to

revise curriculum and drive instruction. Department leaders from math, science, social studies, and world languages collaborate with middle school teachers to review instruction and develop communication between the two schools. The math and world languages departments utilize placement tests at the middle school as a tool to facilitate the placement process at the high school. The school's two-year plan identifies the need to implement the Alumni Tracker system to gather data from receiving schools and postsecondary experiences. When a formal, school-wide process of reviewing evidence and analyzing data related to student learning is incorporated school-wide, teachers will be able to adjust their instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students and improve teaching and learning across curriculum. (Endicott survey, teacher interviews, students, student shadowing, self-study)

Grading and reporting practices at LOLHS are reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. All departments utilize the school-wide 21<sup>st</sup> century rubrics. Teachers utilize department common planning time to discuss grading practices. Grade weighting for common sections is standardized for most departments. Teachers revise rubrics by blind scoring multiple samples of student work.

According to the Endicott survey, 74 percent of students think that their teachers' grading is fair and consistent. Teachers post student grades to PowerSchool at intervals determined by the departments. Teachers are expected to communicate the nature and duration of posting intervals to administrators, students and parents. This expectation supports the core value of accountability among teachers, students, parents and guardians. The school's two-year plan identifies the need to develop and implement a formal process to assess data in achieving whole school progress toward the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The school's five-year



plan indicates the need to further evaluate and review grading practices. Establishing a practice of regularly reviewing and revising grading policies creates opportunities to ensure these practices align with the school's core values and beliefs about learning which insures student opportunity to achieve stated expectations. (Endicott survey, teacher interviews, students, student shadowing, self-study)

**Commendations:**

1. The implementation of formal department common planning time integrated in the teacher schedules
2. The practice of some teachers who allow students to resubmit work after corrective feedback or complete test corrections for AP courses
3. The range and variety of assessment practices used by teachers
4. The use of common assessments to inform and adapt instruction for the purpose of improving student learning
5. The formal process used to assess student work based on school-wide rubrics.
6. The school's practice of communicating student results of progress on 21st century learning expectations to students and parents.
7. The one on one collaboration regarding student work.

**Recommendations:**

1. Develop a formal process, based on-school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and communicate that progress to the school community

2. Develop a plan to gather and analyze data regarding student growth toward meeting the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations over time
3. Ensure grading practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning
4. Increase the practice of offering specific and corrective feedback using school-wide and departmental rubrics
5. Develop a consistent process to examine student achievement on a school-wide level utilizing standardized testing data along with instructional assessments

# **SUPPORT STANDARDS**

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**SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP**

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**SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING**

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**COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING**

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**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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
12. The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

## School Culture and Leadership

### Conclusions

The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. The majority of the community believes LOLHS is a safe, positive, supportive, and respectful educational environment. Community pride is a central value at LOLHS and is evident in both the curricular and co-curricular programs. School-wide programs that foster student responsibility for learning include learning center, homework club, peer tutoring sessions and PowerSchool to track grades and assignments. LOLHS also has several programs that promote high expectations including a quarterly Honor Roll, Rotary Club Student of the Month, the Academic Letter and the National Honor Society. LOLHS has incorporated an “honor flag” system to acknowledge a student who personifies the high expectations of the school’s social, academic, co-curricular and civic values. The school also offers several clubs designed to support the rigorous demands of the classroom including the peer support group, advisory group, homework club and the learning center. The school community builds and maintains a safe, positive learning environment allowing students and teachers to engage fully in the process of teaching and learning and deepening the connection to the school allowing the students to experience academic success. (self-study, students, parents, teacher interviews, classroom observations, Endicott survey)

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. Currently, all LOLHS students enroll in one or more heterogeneously grouped core classes during their four-year academic experience. The mission of LOLHS is centered on full inclusion for students with special education needs and aside from prerequisite skills no student is denied access to a desired course based upon previous ability. This goal of inclusive education for all extends from the classroom to co-curricular activities and is a district-wide initiative as seen in community activities such as eighthgrade parent night and meetings with middle and high school guidance during the spring semester of the students' eighth grade year. Based on a wide range of interviews with students, parents, and teachers, LOLHS is reported to be a school in which students participate in many non-leveled courses. Because LOLHS is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity that challenges students with learning opportunities designed to reach their individual potential, students have a greater opportunity to achieve the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (students, parents, teacher interviews, school graduation policy, program of studies)

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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. LOLHS presently has a formal advisory program as part of the homeroom system to ensure that all students have an adult other than a guidance counselor with whom to interact on a daily basis. To better facilitate the personal connection between student and teacher, twice a month advisory homeroom meets for a 25-minute block. The extended blocks are designed to cultivate self-reflection, responsibility, and individual growth in order to advance the school's mission of a safe and nurturing environment. These advisories promote the mirroring between the school's academic and civic expectations in achieving 21<sup>st</sup> century learning goals. According to the

LOLHS self-study, one such advisory was created to showcase a lesson on the importance of moral integrity and ethical decisions and how this promotes growth as a person and a citizen. Providing students with an adult, who is not their counselor, and with whom they are able to connect throughout their high school career, will enable them to better meet the school's mission and to achieve 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, students, teachers, panel presentation, classroom observations)

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 obtain currency with best practices; dedicate formal time to implement professional development; and, apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The staff and administration regularly meet to engage in professional discourse in order to review teaching strategies, research cutting edge pedagogy, and create innovative solutions to identified student and teacher needs. According to teacher and instructional leaders, four full days and three half days are dedicated in the district calendar to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. Faculty meetings currently meet twice per month are used to disseminate information on a wide variety of new initiatives: new school-wide writing rubric, 21<sup>st</sup> century learning topics, preparation for new state SBAC testing, PGEs and Common Core. The discussions and implementation of new initiatives carries over to the department level at which new initiatives are incorporated into the different subject areas. LOLHS also has incorporated a wide variety of outside opportunities for teachers and instructional leaders to gain a deeper understanding of the new skills needed to achieve 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment. The administration and instructional leaders have developed a formal method of professional development through a consistent multi-leveled process. After



an area of concern is identified through discussions involving the instructional leadership team and administrators, each department meets as a group to discuss the ideas and begin follow-through implementation. Because the administration and faculty at LOLHS meet collaboratively to develop meaningful, teacher-driven professional development opportunities for all staff that support school-wide initiatives, students benefit from improved teaching and learning and ultimately increase their academic successes. (teacher interviews, self-study, school leadership team)

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. The staff and administration at LOLHS have maintained a formal process for evaluating the faculty based on the Connecticut System Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) Model. Under this model, based on state guidelines for education evaluation, faculty members are observed three times per year by an administrator. Each faculty member's progress is measured toward the achievement of three annual goals focusing on effective instruction and improved student learning. Administrators use standardized test scores and student scores gathered from both formative and summative tests. The evaluation system allows for ample feedback and instructional support to improve student performance. According to the self-study and teacher interviews, both new and veteran teachers participate in this process which includes a teacher education and mentoring program for new teachers. Because the administrators adheres to the evaluation practices outlined by the state of Connecticut, they promote effective instruction school-wide and provide greater opportunity for enhanced student learning. (self-study, teacher interviews, building administrators)

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. LOLHS currently structures its academic day to allow students to enroll in up to eight classes with a maximum of six meeting on a daily basis. Each class period is 57 minutes long which allows for the creation of lessons designed to reach an in-depth understanding of lesson material and opportunities for learning in the classroom. Classes also rotate meeting times, which according to the self-study allows for both morning and afternoon learning. To facilitate the review of the taught curriculum and examination of both lessons and assessments, teacher schedules provide department-based time for professional collaboration once during a four-day cycle. Also, the instructional leadership team has scheduled time to meet once per cycle. Opportunities for teacher collaboration are scheduled during three early release days and four full-day releases. Also, the faculty has been given inter-disciplinary “blocks” during the day to promote cross-curricular teaching. Providing time for all faculty members to participate in professional collaboration supports research-based instruction in all courses and allows teachers to consistently meet the learning needs of all students across all disciplines. (self-study, teachers, master schedule, student handbook)

Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the needs of individual students. LOLHS maintains small class sizes to better serve the student population and provides many opportunities for students to make connections with their teachers. Average class size for core academic subjects is 17.16 with the largest class being Modern World History with a class size of 26 students. LOLHS faculty works diligently to balance class size while offering many opportunities for students to personalize their schedule through innovative offerings which include independent studies. Teachers average five classes per semester while

instructional leaders have four classes per semester. According to the self-study and teacher interviews when class sizes are above the average, teachers promote student success through personalized learning, differentiated learning, continual formative assessment strategies and collaborating with a teacher assistant assigned to individual classes. With optimal student load and class size, teachers at LOLHS have the opportunity to personalize learning and help students meet and achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, classroom observations, Endicott survey, students, teachers, parents, panel presentation, school leadership team)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The administration team at LOLHS, consisting of a principal and assistant principal, and their instructional leadership team, consisting of the head of each department, collaborate by meeting once every four-day cycle to discuss important issues including instructional initiatives and practices, school policy alignment to core values and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, scheduling challenges, and testing protocols. The school honors its commitment to being a community of learners as exemplified by the role the instructional leadership team takes in addressing the school's commitment to its core values and beliefs as a basis for its approach to planning and problem solving. According to the self-study, teacher interviews and school leadership, the school benefits from the frequency, consistency, and communication provided by these many meetings and opportunities for discussion and dialogue. Because the administration has provided a leadership model that is inclusive of all stakeholders, the members of the school staff remained focused on their continued improvement and learning goals in all their work. (self-study, teachers, students, school leadership team)

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Student leadership is essential to the culture of academic excellence fostered at LOLHS. Student leaders are frequently consulted regarding school policy as it directly relates to student life. According to student interviews and the self-study, student input shaped the outcome of several decisions including an overall policy of lunchroom student expectations for the school. Student concerns are also represented to the board of education through the voices of two student leaders. These students attend the BOE meetings and both give a report directly to the board regarding issues important to the student body, but also participate in discussions that have an impact on policies that impact the culture of the school both academically and culturally. The school's commitment to a culture of collaboration is also seen in its inclusion of the voices and concerns of parents and caregivers in the development of policies at the school. Parents are invited to become a part of the Parent Advisory Board, which meets six times during the academic year. The PAB aims to be a forum designed for both educating parents and influencing academic/social issues in an atmosphere of mutual trust and openness. Parents have been involved in many aspects of building the school's culture including staff appreciation lunches, serving on hiring committees, athletic surveys, working on the Core Value and Belief Subcommittee and on the district's Strategic School Plan Committee. Because all members of the school community share the core values and beliefs as the essential component for success, they have created a culture of ownership that strives for excellence and increased performance. (self-study, teacher interviews, parents)

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. LOLHS has a well-defined leadership team that works closely with the principal and assistant principal to meet their goals. The instructional leaders represent each department, and they meet regularly with the administration to set goals, review work completed and prioritize "next steps." Teachers volunteer to serve on committees that discuss discipline, academic integrity, school spirit, technology, the core values and beliefs, and the school-wide rubric, to name a few. In addition, teachers lead school clubs and after school activities that extend learning to forums that expand student personal interests. The leadership team provides information to all teachers on the progress of their work and any new initiatives that might come out of their discussions. Because the administration works collaboratively with the instructional leaders to promote effective teaching and learning, the school as a whole works together to provide an educational environment that fosters student engagement and increases student achievement. (self-study, teachers, school leadership team)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The Principal, the school board, and the superintendent have a unified vision that supports the school and the work being done there. School board members are well-informed of all school practices and have been a part of all major decisions affecting the school. The Regional School District 18 Board of Education meets once per month and includes the superintendent and the principal. In addition, there is a district administration team meeting that meets twice per month, which includes the principal, superintendent, and principals from all district schools, the district director of curriculum and instruction, and the director of special services. These meetings

provide the necessary information to ensure that there is a systemic understanding of the vision and learning goals for every high school student. These meetings provide the district leaders with an opportunity to collaborate on new initiatives, reflect on past practices, and construct plans and budgeting for the achievement of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

Engaging all district leaders in conversations that influence the high school provides the high school leadership with a strong culture of learning and an amazing support structure for instructional changes and improvements. (self-study, teachers, district leaders, school leadership team)

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. Teachers, school board members, the superintendent, Principal and Leadership team report that there is effective ongoing communication and collaboration in order to successfully articulate a clear vision for the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The strong collaboration among the school board, the superintendent, and the school administration have provided a platform of support for the school to ensure all students have the opportunity and resources to meet the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

The board of education demonstrates a high degree of trust and confidence in the principal's ability to lead the school and has support his work in implementing new instructional changes such as the use of learning objectives, learning walks, and collaborative blocks. The board of education indicated a high level of respect for the superintendent and principal and gives both leaders authority to make decisions about policy and readily collaborate with them to keep the school's focus on student learning. As a result of the board of education and superintendent providing the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the

school, the principal is able to make decisions in order to meet the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. (school leadership team, self-study, board of education)

**Commendations:**

1. The school culture that reflects high expectations for student behaviors and fosters a safe, respectful learning environment
2. The commitment of school-wide programs to foster a positive and safe school culture
3. The commitment of the administration to provide effective and consistent evaluations so that teachers can develop and meet the instructional teaching and learning goals
4. The optimal student load and class size which enables teachers to personalize learning for their students and to help them achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
5. The commitment by the school community to ensure that all students have access to the curriculum
6. The collaboration of the superintendent, board of education, and principal
7. The commitment of the principal and assistant principal to collaborate with the school's instructional leaders to ensure a commitment to meeting learning goals
8. The practice of allowing all students to take an Advanced Placement class

**Recommendations:**

1. Evaluate and review grading practices school-wide

2. Create a process for continued collaboration across all curriculum areas that will address the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations



**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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

## **Conclusions**

LOLHS 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. The majority of intervention programs at LOLHS are deliberately coordinated and reviewed among the different support personnel including administrators, school counselors, special education/regular education teachers, library media specialist, school psychologist, nurses and learning center tutors to promote student achievement in the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. A Student Assistance Team, Child Study Team, and Crisis Team are presently in place to support students who have emotional, behavioral, and academic needs. Students may self-refer or be referred by a teacher, parent/guardian or counseling staff. Teacher interviews confirmed all students participate in a bi-monthly advisory program during homeroom. In addition, a student-mentoring program, called peer support group (PSG), promotes social connections between participating students with their peers through social activities. Eighth grade orientation (EGO) provides an opportunity for the incoming freshmen to tour the school and discover the academic, co-curricular, and social opportunities provided by LOLHS. Also during EGO, the school psychologist administers a developmental asset survey. All parents of new students and incoming freshmen are invited to attend a picnic where the students receive an informational packet, a schedule, and a parent/student handbook to support their transition. Teachers shared that parents are also invited to meet teachers at an Open House in September and to attend a Report Card Night in November when they can discuss the student progress with individual teachers and consult school counselors. All freshmen take High School 101, a

course that helps with the transition from middle to high school. In addition to creating a student success plan, as part of High School 101, the students meet the support staff who will be available to help them throughout their four years in high school. The support staff includes the school counselors, school psychologist, nurses, administrators, school-to-career coordinator, and library media specialist. Additional opportunities are accessible to all students for support of achievement of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The learning center is an academic support center for all students that is staffed by two part-time tutors who provide academic intervention when needed. Although some students are assigned to the learning center based on a 504 designation, the learning center is open to all students. At the community level, the Lyme Youth Service Bureau (LYSB) delivers programming in conjunction with the high school. As a result of the multitude of programs, disseminated information and services being implemented at LOLHS, timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies are available to assist all students in achieving their 21<sup>st</sup> century learning goals.(self-study, teacher interviews, teachers)

LOLHS provides timely, regular and pertinent information to families, especially those most in need, about available student support services. A review of self-study evidence demonstrates that prior to entering LOLHS, students are introduced to the available support services through eighth grade and new student orientation. This event provides students with information about the school's core values, co-curricular activities, and includes an opportunity for incoming students to interact with a student panel. Parents are invited to attend the freshmen orientation picnic in August, where information regarding student support services is provided. Parents also meet administrators and staff members, review student schedules and may choose to participate in a tour of the school. The parent-student

handbook highlights parent programs and events, such as Open House and Report Card Night, where parents can obtain additional information. Parent interviews indicate frequent email and written communications provide families with current information. The Region 18 website includes updated data regarding counseling and support services. Counseling department staff indicates that newly developed data collection tools, such as Parent Night surveys, an eighth grade transition survey, and senior exit surveys are being used to ensure that communication and services are meeting the needs of all students and families. As a result of LOLHS's efforts to use various modes of communication and outreach, students and their families are given the opportunity to be well-informed and have access to available support services. (self-study, parents, school support staff)

LOLHS support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. The self-study reports the introduction of several technological applications to assist the LOLHS staff to deliver support services including PowerSchool, Office 365, the district's website, Individualized Education Plans (IEP) direct, School Nurse Assistance Program (SNAP) Health Center, Destiny and Naviance. The integration of the new technology enables school counselors, school psychologist, the library media specialist, special educators and the school nurses to communicate effectively with students and their families as well as to extensively deliver a wide array of coordinated services. The school counseling department utilizes PowerSchool, a student information and management database, for scheduling, grades, transcripts and attendance. Naviance, a college and career exploration and information program, is available to all staff, students, and parents. The school nurses use SNAP Health Center, a comprehensive medical documentation and tracking software suite that manages every aspect of student health related data, to maintain

student health records and screenings. The library media center provides access to a school-wide copier/printer. The library media center has nine desktop computers and twenty-five laptop computers available for staff and student use. Documents support that the library media specialist designs and maintains a comprehensive website that provides access to library resources and services such as online databases and technological tools (NoodleTools and Turnitin). LibGuides, a library content management system, is used to curate knowledge and design research guides for subject areas and course assignments. Teacher interviews included that special education teachers use technology to prepare state-mandated reports, design and deliver instruction, and access various applications including IEP Direct, PowerSchool, Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS) and Virtual Learning Academy (VLA). Because support staff at LOLHS utilizes technology effectively, students are able to receive effective, coordinated services that assist them in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century expectations. (parent interviews, self-study, teacher interviews)

LOLHS counseling services have adequate, 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 service providers; use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Evidence of documents supports the school counseling department's consistent delivery of a comprehensive developmental program and are presently in the final stages of documenting this program in a written curriculum. In addition, the curriculum currently being prepared has a developmental focus at each grade

level. During ninth grade, the focus is on the transition to high school, and in tenth and eleventh grades the curriculum addresses career planning and college exploration. During twelfth grade, the concentration is on post-secondary plans, with an emphasis on the college and career selection and application process. In addition, all students participate in the “Names Can Really Hurt Us” full-day workshop to heighten awareness and sensitivity to the negative impact of bullying. Teachers report that school counselors meet regularly with students to provide services that promote academic, personal/social and career/college potential of its students through a variety of ways including individual meetings, classroom presentations, parent workshop/presentations and student seminars. Students share they feel comfortable seeking out their school counselor on an as-needed basis. In addition, counselors seek out students who are struggling academically, socially, and emotionally throughout the year. The school counseling department delivers collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. The self-study states students have been referred to community agencies such as Lymes’ Youth Service Bureau, Child and Family Services and Emergency Mobile Psychological Services to name a few, for social/emotional issues such as loss, depression, school phobia, anxiety, family issues, and substance abuse. Representatives from the LYSB attend the School Counseling Parent Nights. The school counseling department has initiated the process of utilizing ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school’s 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Surveys currently utilized include the developmental assets survey provided in HS 101, the senior exit survey through Naviance and parent evaluations for informative planned evening events. Because the school counseling department provides many

informational opportunities, a written developmental program for students and continues to analyze feedback from multiple avenues, it will continue to improve upon its delivery of information to ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (teachers, students, self-study)

LOLHS'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 and use ongoing relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The Endicott survey indicates that 89.6 percent of staff and 85.2 percent of parents agree that staffing of one full-time nurse position is adequate to meet school needs. As evidenced by handouts, press releases, and the Region 18 website, preventive health services include participation in National Drug Facts Week and the school Wellness Committee, and alcohol abuse prevention education. The school's self-study identifies direct intervention services such as evaluation and treatment of injuries, illnesses, emotional issues, and other student health concerns. Ongoing student assessment data, including current and historical conditions, demographic information, and physician and emergency contacts are used to track student eligibility for sports participation. While the school nurse utilizes in-school support personnel, additional community supports are accessed through a process that provides parents with a referral form to use as a communication tool for referrals to physicians or emergency health clinics. Staff interviews indicate that multiple assessment tools provide the data necessary to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. These include maintaining statistics on the



number of monthly office visits to health services for screenings, injuries, meetings, and medication administration. A bi-annual survey of students in grades 6-12, conducted in collaboration with Lymes' Youth Services Bureau, assesses rates of youth substance abuse. The Endicott survey indicates that 79.5 percent of parents and 75 percent of staff agree that health services provide preventive health and intervention services. Because health services personnel work closely with teachers, administration, counselors, community agencies and parents/guardians, they effectively promote wellness and healthy lifestyles for all students, ensuring that students meet their 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, social, and civic expectations.

(Endicott survey, school support staff, self-study)

The Library Media Specialist (LMS) reports that an adequate, stable budget provides a print and digital resource collection that reflects all curricular areas. Annual funding is sufficient to permit the LMS to respond positively to faculty and student requests for curriculum-specific items as new needs arise. In addition, independent student learning that extends beyond academic application is supported directly by the LMS; for example, by way of helping a student locate an online resource to answer a personal inquiry. A review of the ninth-grade High School 101 curriculum indicates that freshmen receive instruction in the use of tools and resources provided by the LMC, such as NoodleTools, a robust collection of databases, and the Destiny online catalog system. Through HS 101, the LMS delivers direct instruction in effective digital citizenship skills, critical evaluation of research sources, and appropriate citation in academic work. Beyond grade 9, LMS/teacher collaboration and co-teaching is sporadic, occurring when individual teachers seek support to build personal capacity in the application of digital skills, or reinforcement of research strategies and/or digital productivity

skills for students. The school's LMC is staffed adequately to promote its usage before, during and after the school day. Its hours of operation meet the needs of the school community. The Endicott Survey indicates that 69.1% of students feel the school LMC is available to them before, during and after school hours. The LMS reports that an expanded assessment process is being implemented to collect community feedback regarding services and programs. As the library media center continues to provide a functioning environment that integrates curriculum across content areas, students will benefit from adequate and effective resources that will supplement their content learning and skills development. (school support staff, other documents, self-study, Endicott survey)

LOLHS support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; and perform ongoing assessment, using relevant data including feedback from the school community to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. A full range of services is provided for students at LOLHS by a director of special education services, five special education teachers, and ten instructional assistants. Statements shared by teachers support that the special education teacher serves as a liaison to the English, math, social studies and science departments to provide input and collaboration in the creation of modified materials for students with a variety of learning needs. Three teachers carry an average caseload of fourteen students and the department leader carries a reduced caseload of

six students due to supplemental duties. The fifth certified special education teacher runs a Life Skills program as well as a Post-High School Transition program. In addition to these certified teachers, a clerical support person coordinates PPT meetings, 504 meetings, and the maintenance of student special education files at the high school. The self-study identifies a physical therapist, occupational therapist, and speech and language pathologist consult on a regular basis with special education students and staff. Lastly, a transition coordinator from CREC (Capitol Regional Education Council), contracted by the district, assists with all aspects of transition planning for special education students. This includes, but is not limited to, assistance with writing of IEP goals and objectives, application for adult services, setting up and taking students on job shadows and job interviews, and practicing the use of public transportation. Based on their demographic, they do not have a need for an English language learner instructor at this time. In the past when there has been a need for English language learner (ELL) support, this need has been adequately met through the special education department. Based on the Endicott survey, 81.3 percent of teachers and 84.6 percent of parents are in agreement that the school has adequate certified support services personnel for identified students, including special education, 504 and English language learners. The Lyme-Old Lyme High School support services collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Support in the mainstream classroom and in the mastery lab is provided by ten instructional assistants. *Because LOLHS's support services for identified students have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and programs to assist these students, they are better able to meet and achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.* (teachers, self-study, Endicott survey)

**Commendations:**

1. The development and implementation of a SAT team, Child Study Team and Crisis Team that is timely, coordinated and directive in providing intervention strategies for all students
2. The written, developmental guidance program that ensures all guidance counselors provide personal, academic, career and college counseling for students in all grade levels
3. The collaboration among the school's health services personnel that provides ongoing, preventative and direct health intervention services to all students
4. The outreach of the library media specialist in support of collaboration and instructional technology integration that provides students with opportunities for development of research and digital productivity skills
5. The comprehensive information sent out in various forms by guidance and the administration regarding services to students

**Recommendations:**

1. Develop a plan that will provide an equal sharing of responsibilities for faculty that are responsible for student work modifications
2. Increase the opportunities for the LMC to involve teachers in the learning opportunities offered for students so that these programs better align with the content curriculum.



## Community Resources for Learning

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

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

## Community Resources for Learning

### Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body extensively provides 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.

LOLHS has a newly renovated school that allows for numerous programs for academic and co-curricular activities, including a school-owned boathouse which is used for the crew team, and designated fine arts and engineering spaces. The students and staff take great pride in their school and remark on the school facility as having good workspaces that are conducive to a productive learning environment. All of the stakeholders are given ample opportunities to address the budget, as well as anything related to the school, from a facilities standpoint. There is a collaborative effort among the principal, assistant principal and staff members that lends itself to opportunities for communicating their needs and receiving anything that will enhance their courses. The various department leaders and teachers have the required materials and furnishings that are necessary for the classes to function well. One example of this was evidenced during the walk-through, when MACs, which are known to facilitate art and music classes, were supplied to those departments, even though the rest of the school uses PCs. Classroom space is effective and there are plenty of storage facilities both inside and outside of the classrooms. Staffing needs are sufficient and additional staffing occurs as part of the budget process when needed. According to the principal, redistribution is preferred over reduction of staff. For example, an elementary art teacher is sharing her time between the elementary school and the high school rather than hiring a part-time high school

art teacher and reducing a position at the elementary school. In an effort to improve technology support and professional development, a technology integration specialist was hired this year and another one is being hired for next year. Classrooms size is sufficient with teachers having their own classrooms for teaching and preparing delivery of instruction. Only one teacher used a cart to move teaching supplies from classroom to classroom. Professional development is provided and often occurs imbedded in the school day as part of a department's collaborative meeting time. The abundant programming, the community support, the autonomy of the school administration and consistent and ample funding provides the resources necessary for student's achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, central office administration, teachers, students, parents, school leadership team, student shadowing)

The development of formal plans and dedicated funding that ensure the maintenance and repair of the school building and plant will provide a safe learning environment for students to achieve their 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. There is more than sufficient funding for LOLHS maintenance and improvement of the building facility. There are actually three funds used to maintain, repair, and upgrade the equipment. These three funds include the regular maintenance budget, the contingency facilities fund with an allocation of 200,000 dollars annually and an "undesignated" fund that is generally used for capital improvements.

Custodians are available during the week, the weekends, and in the evenings as needed(i.e., snow removal). There are a total of six custodians with varying shifts. In addition there are two maintenance employees available during the school day with other support as needed.

The use of an electronic monitoring system entitled Schooldude allows maintenance requests to be distributed and completed by custodial or maintenance staff. Although the computer

program indicates usage by teachers and completion dates, it does not indicate when the original request was made by the teachers or any additional notations for follow up on particular tasks. Custodial staff indicates Schooldude's ineffectiveness, as frequent access to a computer does not occur during their work day. All custodians carry a specific SIP device in order to be reached, in case there is an immediate need and is the preferred method of staff to contact them. The facilities director did concede that communication between custodial shifts is lacking, and there is no formal system for relating information. All new custodial staff is trained, mentored, and given a job responsibility checklist according to the facility director. The community support, funding for the development and long-range plans that address continual improvement on LOLHS allows for the consistent delivery of curriculum, instruction, program and services. (central office personnel, self-study, teachers, school support staff)

The community deliberately funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. There is an extensive list of resources at this school that allow for an optimal experience for its students. Maintenance records and reports of all of the equipment are stored at the facilities director's office. For the size of the school, the programs/classes that are available to the students are innumerable. All of the following were noted in the facilities tour: a Tech Ed Design Lab with SolidWorks programming, a Mandarin language course, two art studios, a large kiln, a 3-D printer, an electric car, a robotics program, Mac labs for the arts and music departments, a music technology lab with recording capability, a television studio (WLWM), a drone, a renovated auditorium, an installation of a geothermal energy to supply the classrooms and smaller areas of the school



with renewable energy, one boiler plant for the district, one waste treatment facility for the district, one water system for the district (17 miles of pipe underground for water), and a secure and unsecure wireless system to allow visitors to use the wireless without affecting the school's systems. In terms of their technology, LOLHS has six laptop carts, one for each department, and one in the media center, as well as, a wired lab in the library. There is an ongoing plan created through the Strategic Planning Committee, a subcommittee from the board of education that currently meets six to eight times per year to review building and maintenance needs. There is also funding through both the Contingency Fund and Undesignated Funds if specific or if emergency needs arise. The school's intention is to renovate the fields and eventually turn them into turf fields, to add shades in the music room to prevent sun glare, and to renovate a boathouse that they use for their crewing program. A town grant entitled Lyme-Old Lyme Education Foundation was established in 2008 by concerned parents and community members to support the school and community in funding educational pursuits. For example, there was a purchase of a large kiln for the art department, iPads for the world languages department, and renovation of the boathouse for crew. The dependable funding provided for school programs, personnel, services, professional and support staff, and sufficient equipment greatly enhances the educational experience and ability of students to meet the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations of LOLHS. (parents, teachers, central office personnel, school leadership team, self-study)

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. The school's budget has been approved for the past three years with a majority vote. All of the stakeholders that are involved with education in this

town are brought to the table to discuss the various components. This ranged from students, parents, board members, the community, school administrators, faculty and staff. There is ample opportunity and time for people to be aware of the budget, as well as, the opportunity to discuss issues related to it. There are numerous newspaper articles, notices sent from school administration, as well as, public forums to address concerns. The process begins when teachers report their budgetary needs with their department heads in October who place them in the school application called “Budgetsense,” and then discuss it with their principal. The staff and administration work on ways to collaborate and combine resources to purchase large ticket items. Then the principal presents the requested budget to the superintendent, and subsequently to public forums for informational sessions, concerns, and adjustments. In most cases, all funding that is requested is given. Because all school stakeholders are active participants in the budgetary process, members of the school community develop their budget to support the school’s vision in achieving the school’s academic and civic goals and there is assurance that student learning needs will be met.(self-study, teacher, students, central office personnel, Endicott survey, community members)

The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. Adequate and appropriate space is provided ensuring full implementation of the educational programs at LOLHS. LOLHS was recently renovated in the fall of 2013 with state-of-the-art facilities across all of the disciplines. Each classroom has a SMARTBoard and wifi capability. All teachers have Ipads with an AirServe connection in addition to laptops for school use. The classrooms provide students and teachers with ample room to work effectively and with the technology to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. Common areas are suitable as mixed-use areas. For example, the cafeteria also serves as a common

study area during non-food service hours. The library media center is also a mixed-use area as the library media specialist can hold classes in one part of the library, while allowing other students to work independently on computers or in comfortable seating areas. The music department which houses both chorus and band has a dedicated wing of the school building including an auditorium that can seat the entire student body along with six private, soundproof practice rooms with recording capability. There is ample outdoor space including parking for staff and students, athletic fields, and proper lighting of all outdoor facilities where necessary and compliant with state and local laws. However, locating the school was difficult since there is no signage. Because LOLHS is able to provide students and faculty with the facilities necessary to ensure a successful learning experience, all staff and faculty are better able to support and promote high quality services and programs, along with teaching and learning, to help students achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (school support staff, teachers, students, parents, community members)

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.

During the facility tour it was noted that the material safety and data sheets were kept in the custodial office. All other documentation and certifications are kept at the town office currently housed at the campus at the middle school. Ample documentation was provided to indicate the regular compliance of all local fire, health and safety regulations. Funding in the new budget will allow for the increase in CCTV coverage of the stairwells. This was to ensure the safety of the school members in areas that are not immediately visible from the school or that are hidden. This is a "green" school with a geothermal component with its own water source for the district. The school also makes efforts to recycle, use only

designated cleaning equipment that is safe for the environment and has a designated person to monitor all of the dangerous science-related chemicals. There is a chemical coordinator designated to maintain the chemicals. The current HVAC system has not fully been completed by the outside contractor, and therefore there has been significant heating and cooling issues. Room temperature fluctuations occur. In speaking with the facilities director, the school is unable to make adjustments other than changing filters, without the final completion and turnover of the system to LOLHS, which the facility director believes should happen this summer. Because LOLHS maintains the plant to meet all federal and state laws, students, faculty, and staff members who come to school daily feel safe and secure. (central office personnel, Endicott survey, school support staff)

All professional staff members are fully committed to 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. According to the guidance office, there are meetings throughout the students' careers to engage them in the educational process and meetings with the parents as well. If a student is not performing satisfactorily, then numerous meetings and interventions are put into place to make sure that the students has multiple opportunities to be successful. Teachers have created individual educational classroom experiences for students outside the classroom through programs that include independent study courses and Virtual High School courses. There are also a variety of co-curricular/sports activities that students, staff and faculty are involved in. A Parent Advisory Board meets every other month to discuss school-related issues and has presenters speak about a variety of topics related to the pursuit of education. However, if there is an immediate need, then the Parent Advisory Board will meet to discuss the issue. Honor Flag

is a program at LOLHS that recognizes students for non-academic achievements. LOLHS also provides courses for students that include AP courses and provides coursework flexibility to allow students to master materials that are challenging. Guidance meets with parents at each grade level (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>) to review expectations in preparation for each transition. Open House in the fall allows all parents to meet with their children's classroom teachers. This is followed by a Report Card Night after the first marking period for parents to discuss grading or other concerns with teachers. Teachers have their own weblinks for students and parents to keep up to date on assignments. LOLHS uses PowerSchool (the online gradebook), which allows parents and students to receive updates on grades and assignments. LOLHS regularly connects with families and the community through the use of their website, automated emails, and quarterly newsletters that are sent to the entire community, not just to families served by the schools. The intention is to make sure the community is aware of any activities that occur at the schools, and can therefore participate in any school activity. According to the superintendent, there are current plans to update the marquee to an electronic version to update the community on events as well. The strong sense of community and connectedness and engagement at LOLHS provides parents multiple opportunities to become educational partners in support of students' learning. (central office personnel, teachers, school support staff, community members, parents, self-study)

The school intentionally develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. Teachers noted that Virtual High School allows students to explore curricular areas not provided by the school in an independent study format. The school currently provides 20 seats for students to earn high

school credit in Virtual High School. The support staff also noted Virtual Learning Academy as a resource that supports students who are at risk of not receiving credit for class. There are also local affiliations with the Lyme Academy of Art, Connecticut College, New England Institute of Technology, Wesleyan University, Three Rivers and Gateway Community colleges, and the University of Connecticut Early College Experience. There is also collaboration, funding and volunteer services provided by Pfizer. Juniors and seniors are provided credit opportunities for both work-related and job shadowing experiences. For student athletes, if there is a sport that is not available at LOLHS, the students have the opportunity to play that sport at another high school in Essex. Students are provided with all transportation costs. The learning experience for all LOLHS students is significantly enriched by the variety of partnerships that have been established. When a community, parents, and partnerships with higher education support standards of excellence, such as those that exist at LOLHS, the student body benefits from opportunities to explore and develop 21<sup>st</sup> learning expectations. (Endicott survey, parents, students, community members, self-study, panel presentation)

**Commendations:**

1. The newly renovated school that allows for numerous programs for academic and co-curricular activities
2. The extensive community partnerships that provide both services and educational opportunities for students
3. The dedicated fine arts and engineering spaces that promote authentic and engaging lessons

4. The active participation of teachers, supervisors, and administrators in the development of the budget
5. The 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies available in classrooms, supporting all instruction, learning, and communication
6. The effort of the administration and maintenance staff to keep the building current with health and safety regulations and codes

**Recommendations:**

1. Acquire signage to indicate the entrance to the high school
2. Develop a communication system for the day and night shift custodial staff to ensure that the building is maintained properly
3. Address the need for the coordination of building maintenance and the provision of reliable HVAC services
4. Create and implement a formal long-range plan to address all future facility needs and improvements

## 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 Lyme-Old Lyme 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 Committee requires that the evaluation report be made public in accordance with the Committee'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 Committee as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. To monitor the school's progress in the Follow-Up Program the Committee requires that the principal of Lyme-Old Lyme 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 Committee 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 Committee 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 Committee has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Committee within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts on the school's adherence to the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Committee's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page xx. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Committee office has current statistical data on the school.

The Committee 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 Committee'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 Committee staff following the on-site visit.

The Visiting committee extends its appreciation to Lyme-Old Lyme High School for the hospitality extended throughout the visit. From the inspiring panel presentation and the wonderful welcoming reception, to the fabulous accommodations provided to the team, all of



which contributed to a positive experience for the visiting team members. The visiting committee is very appreciative of the effort expanded by everyone at Lyme-Old Lyme High School to produce a candid and accurate self-study. This contributed to making the work of the visiting committee significantly more efficient which allowed the members to focus more appropriately on crafting purposeful and productive recommendations to help drive school improvement. The visiting committee also thanks the school's faculty and staff for their participation in various meetings, including the teacher interviews on Sunday afternoon, and for the willingness of the teachers to welcome team members in their classrooms as the team shadowed the students. A special thanks to all the students who allowed team members to shadow them throughout their day. They gave us a true idea of the pride they have in their school. Thank you to all the parents, school board members, and central office personnel who took time from their personal and professional schedules to meet with the visiting committee members on Sunday and during the three days of the visit.

And finally, a special thank you to the chair of the steering committee and the remaining members of the steering committee, the chairs of the self-study subcommittees, and to the superintendent, principal, and vice principal for their support throughout the visit. The visiting committee was delighted to share each day with the members of your school community.

# NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

## Committee on Public Secondary Schools

### SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

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

## *Lyme-Old Lyme High School*

### COMMENDATIONS:

#### **Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations:**

1. The use of current research-based best practices to inform the development of core values and beliefs .
2. The commitment of students, parents, and community and staff members to strong student achievement and preparation for 21st century learning .
3. The active reflection of the core values, beliefs about learning, and 21st century learning expectations in the culture of the school .
4. The emphasis on the creativity and innovation in the practices of curriculum and instruction .
5. The resource allocations to inform the development of the core values and beliefs in practice.

#### **Curriculum:**

1. The purposefully designed curriculum which enables students to practice and achieve each of the school's 21st Century Learning Expectations.
2. The creation and implementation of common curriculum templates throughout the school that include objectives, performance tasks, and assessments.
3. The presence of authentic learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom.

4. The shift to Department Instructional Leaders which addresses department needs, as well as curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional learning.
5. The use of a fluid curriculum cycle that gives allowance for curriculum modification, based on authentic assessment.
6. The availability of a variety of courses to accommodate a wide range of interests and abilities.
7. The district's support of curriculum through the commitment of sufficient time, financial resources, and personnel to the development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum.

**Instruction:**

1. The regular collaboration of teachers within their departments.
2. The opportunities provided to students for self-directed learning.
3. The skills and knowledge expected by teachers for authentic tasks.
4. The development and improvement of teaching strategies by faculty.
5. The commitment by the administration to use the evaluation process to ensure self-reflection on teaching practices.
6. The opportunities for students to assess themselves and conduct reflections on their learning processes.

**Assessment of and for Student Learning:**

1. The implementation of formal department common planning time integrated in the teacher schedules.

2. The practice of some teachers who allow students to resubmit work after corrective feedback or complete test corrections for AP courses.
3. The range and variety of assessment practices used by teachers.
4. The use of common assessments to inform and adapt instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.

**School Culture and Leadership:**

1. The school culture that reflects high expectations for student behaviors and fosters a safe, respectful ;learning environment.
2. The commitment of school-wide programs to foster a positive and safe school culture.
3. The commitment of the administration to provide effective and consistent evaluations so that teachers can develop and meet the instructional teaching and learning goals.
4. The optimal student load and class size which enables teachers to personalize learning for their students and help them achieve the school’s 21st century learning expectations.
- 5.The commitment by the school community to ensure that all students have access to the curriculum.
6. The collaboration of the superintendent, Board of Education, and principal.
7. The commitment of the principal and vice principal to collaborate with the school’s instructional leaders to ensure a commitment to meeting learning goals .
8. The practice of allowing all students to take an Advanced Placement class.

**School Resources for Learning:**

1. The development and implementation of a SAT team, Child Study Team and Crisis Team that is timely, coordinated and directive in providing intervention strategies for all students.
2. The written, developmental guidance program that ensures all guidance counselors provide personal, academic, career and college counseling for students in all grade levels.
3. The collaboration among the school's health services personnel that provides ongoing, preventative and direct health intervention services to all students.
4. The outreach of the Library Media Specialist in support of collaboration and instructional technology integration that provides students with opportunities for development of research and digital productivity skills.
5. The comprehensive information sent out in various forms by guidance and the administration regarding services to students.

**Community Resources for Learning:**

1. The newly renovated school that allows for numerous programs for academic and co-curricular activities.
2. The extensive community partnerships that provide both services and educational opportunities for students.

3. The dedicated fine arts and engineering spaces that promote authentic and engaging lessons.
4. The active participation of teachers, supervisors, and administration in the development of the budget.
5. The 21st century technologies available in classrooms, supporting all instruction, learning and communication.
6. The effort of the administration and maintenance staff to keep the building current with health and safety regulations and codes.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations:**

1. Dedicate a section of the school website to better highlight the Core Values and Beliefs to better enable students and parents to stay informed of the school's philosophy and value system
2. Develop a long-term plan that supports technology integration to support 21st century learning expectations
3. Develop a timeline for the continued review and revision of the core values and beliefs about learning

### **Curriculum:**

1. Provide time to faculty to foster the integration and reinforcement of curricula in a collaborative manner across content areas.

2. Increase opportunities for collaboration around the development and implementation of cross-discipline curriculum units.
3. Review the use of Virtual High School, Blended Learning, and other technology tools within the current curriculum guides and work to further implement the usage of that technology into classes at all levels.

**Instruction:**

1. Provide more opportunities for collaboration across curriculum areas to integrate cross-disciplinary learning
2. Provide targeted professional development that will assist teachers in making the necessary changes to their differentiated instructional practices
3. Implement the use of formative assessment that drive instructional changes.
4. Increase technology integration in instructional practice
5. Create consistent instructional practices for the High School 101 Program.

**Assessment of and for Student Learning:**

1. Develop a formal process, based on school wide rubrics, to assess whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. Develop a plan to gather and analyze data regarding student growth toward meeting the 21st century learning expectations over time
3. Ensure grading practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning



4. Increase the practice of offering specific and corrective feedback using school-wide and departmental rubrics
5. Develop a consistent process to examine student achievement on a school-wide level utilizing standardized testing data along with instructional assessments

**School Culture and Leadership:**

1. Evaluate and review grading practices school-wide.
2. Create a process for continued collaboration across all curriculum areas that will address the school's 21st century learning expectations

**School Resources for Learning:**

1. Develop a plan that would provide an equal sharing of responsibilities for faculty that are responsible for student work modifications.
2. Increase the opportunities for the LMC to involve teachers in the learning opportunities offered for students so that these programs better align with the content curriculum.

**Community Resources for Learning:**

1. Acquire signage to indicate the entrance to the high school.
2. Develop a communication system for the day and night shift custodial staff to ensure that the building is maintained properly.
3. Address the need for the coordination of building maintenance and the provision of reliable HVAC services.

4. Create and implement a formal long-range plan to address all future facility needs and improvements.

**Lyme-Old Lyme High School  
NEASC Accreditation Visit  
May 3-6, 2015**

**Visiting Committee**

<p><i>Maria Silvestri</i>, Chairperson West Springfield High School West Springfield, MA 01089</p> <p><i>Elizabeth Simison</i>, Asst. Chair Bacon Academy Colchester, CT 06415</p> <p><i>Julie Bisbano</i> Portsmouth High School Portsmouth, RI 02871</p> <p><i>Kim Noivadhana</i> Arts at the Capital Theatre Willimantic, CT 06226</p> <p><i>Daniel Czuchta</i> Lewis S. Mills High School Burlington, CT 06013</p> <p><i>James Freund</i> Seymour High School Seymour, CT 06483</p> <p><i>Jason Henry</i> Norton High School Norton, MA 02766</p>	<p><i>Matthew Talbot</i> Somerset Berkley Regional High School Somerset, MA 02726</p> <p><i>Amy Marchetti</i> Berlin High School Berlin, CT 06037</p> <p><i>Jason Efland</i> Suffield High Schools West Suffield, CT 06093</p> <p><i>Marjory Palmer</i> Staples High School Westport, CT 06880</p> <p><i>Jennifer Neal</i> Bloomfield High School Bloomfield, CT 06002</p> <p><i>Shaun Tharaldson</i> West Springfield High School West Springfield, MA 01089</p> <p><i>Ernie Andrews</i> Haverhill High School Haverhill, MA 01832</p>
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