

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

Commission on Public Schools



Commission on Public Schools

**Report of the Visiting Team for
Hanover High School**

Hanover, NH

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School and Community Summary

School and Community Summary

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SUMMARY

Hanover High School is in the two-state Dresden School District, serving students from Norwich, VT and Hanover, NH as well as tuition students, a majority of whom come from Lyme, NH. The first interstate school district in the country, Dresden was created by legislation that was one of the last bills signed by President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Members of the Hanover and Norwich School Boards meet jointly to govern the Dresden District, which includes the Richmond Middle School (grades 6-8) under SAU 70.

The town of Hanover is on the western edge of New Hampshire about halfway up the state near the intersection of two interstates, I-91 and I-89. It is a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Boston, three hours from Montreal, and five hours from New York City. There is bus service to Montreal and New York City, and a small regional airport in the nearby town of Lebanon. Free public bus service provides connections between major population centers in the Upper Valley. The largest employers are Dartmouth College, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, the Army Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory, and several engineering and technology firms. Norwich, VT is across the Connecticut River, and it is approximately two miles from the high school to the center of the village.

The local economy is adjusting to higher levels of inflation, low unemployment rates, and rising wages. For the second year in a row, employers are facing labor shortages and employees are facing the high cost of living. The SAU 70 community feels this impact as several positions across the school districts remain unfilled. Over the last year, inflation in the Northeast region grew to 7.6% while it is currently at 6.9%, putting pressure on school budgets (CPI June 2022). According to Zillow, local property values have climbed sharply since the pandemic began, increasing over 17% and 20% last year alone for a typical home in Norwich and Hanover, respectively. In the Upper Valley, wages have grown 4.3% since last year, and unemployment remains low.

The communities of Hanover and Norwich are racially, ethnically, and culturally similar with a combined population of 12,690. Norwich, VT, has a population of 3,612 with 93% White, 3% Asian, 3% Hispanic, and 1 % Two+ (Census Reporter). Hanover's 2020 population, according to the US Census Bureau, was 9,078 with 74.5% White, 4.9% Black or African American, .6% American Indian and Alaska native, 12.6 % Asian, 5.7% two or more races and 5.7% Hispanic or Latino. Of this population, 16.6 % speak a language at home other than English (Hanover CDP, NH). The racial/ethnic composition of the school is: 85% White, 9% Asian, 3% Black or African American, 1% Hispanic or Latino, 1% native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 0.6% American Indian or Alaska native, 0.4% two or more races. Minority enrollment is 20% of the student body (majority Asian) which is higher than the NH state average of 16% (majority Hispanic and Asian).

According to Census Reporter, median family income in Norwich, Vt. is estimated at \$117,069 (\$63,477 median household income - State of Vermont) and the median family income in Hanover is estimated at \$105,446 (\$77,923 median family income - State of New Hampshire). In Hanover, 96.3% of the population have graduated from high school or higher and 81.8% have at least a bachelor's degree. In Norwich, 99.2% of the population have a high school diploma and 80.9% have at least a bachelor's degree.

Hanover High School is within easy walking distance of the public library, Main Street, Dartmouth College campus, the Appalachian Trail, the Connecticut River, and nature preserves. The school's central location also enables local and regional field trips that enrich the curriculum, and until the pandemic temporarily ended the practice, students were able to take courses at Dartmouth as special students. The school has an open campus designed intentionally to allow students opportunities to develop personal responsibility and learn how to manage their time. Beginning with the second semester of ninth grade, students with parent permission are allowed open campus privileges.

The latest figures show the high school spends \$22,874 average cost per pupil. Hanover High School is 20th out of 73 NH high school districts in the FY22 average cost per pupil and 5th out of 8 schools in the Upper Valley

(NH). Tuition students enrolled at Hanover High School come from both NH and Vermont sending towns. The COVID pandemic negatively affected tuition student numbers, as some sending towns made alternative arrangements. In the 2023-24 budget projections, revenue from tuition students represents a \$399.40 increase in budget-to-budget tuition revenue. The 20-23 Annual Report & 2023-24 Proposed Budget shows an increase of 4.5%. Due to tuition income the budget assessment overall is increasing by 3.68%. Dresden is facing the impact of Vermont consolidations and the recently settled legal challenges allowing for public school funds to be used for private school tuition. There are several proposed bills in the NH legislation that may alter the public education landscape going forward. For more information go to voter information on SAU 70 website.

The number of students in the high school as of Oct. 2022 is 653 and projected to be 667 for FY24 with the addition of 6 district students and 119 tuition students. Average enrollment has declined by approximately 7% over the last 5 years. The total enrollment for next year is projected to be stable with the increased enrollment of tuition students. There are two English Language Learners at the school, and 4% (28 students) are eligible for free/reduced-priced meals. The number of students receiving special education services, IEP or 504, is 27% (186 students).

Daily attendance from 2016-17 to 2020-21 ranged between 99% to 97%. Of the 174 students graduating in the class of 2021, 87% enrolled in a 4-year college or university, 2% enrolled in a community college, 3% enrolled in a career or technical training program, 2% found employment, 1% joined the military, and 5% did something else (most took a gap year). The graduation rate at Hanover HS is 97%, with a zero percent dropout rate.

(See the SAU 70 District Philosophy and commitment to our learners). The school's mission statement: Hanover High School is an active learning community that provides broad academic and co-curricular programs. We engage students' minds, hearts, and voices so they become educated, caring, and responsible adults. All students are given the opportunity and encouragement to use their minds to pursue excellence, academic challenge, and personal success; hearts to respect and care for the emotional and physical well-being of themselves and others, and for the environment; and voices to contribute to the democratic process and the common good.

The school community strives to meet this mission statement with curricular and extracurricular activities. Curricular offerings reflect the Dresden Board Graduation Policy IHF and requirements, and departments work to design rigorous courses that engage and challenge all learners. Dresden Policy ILBB requires the Superintendent to develop and manage a curriculum assessment program that provides an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum on improving student performance. Curriculum evaluation is based on both local and statewide assessments.

Extended learning opportunities include our partnership with a regional career and technical center (HACTC), and supporting college and career readiness with several dual credit courses. Students can take courses 1) through Dartmouth College, 2) as dual enrollment opportunities in the Running Start Program (associated with New Hampshire's Community College System), 3) as part of Vermont's Early College Program, and 4) through the Personalized Learning Department as Independent Study or Senior Bridges opportunities. With a certified teacher in our Design Lab we are developing more opportunities for our students, like becoming industry-certified in CAD. The ELO program matches students with local internships that meet student interests.

Extracurricular activities comprise a significant part of the HHS learning experience, and provide students the capacity to pursue personal interests and take on a more experiential role, including leadership potential. An important connection to the community is through Youth-in-Action, a registered non-profit, whose mission is to provide students with volunteer opportunities in and around the Upper Valley. Students serve meals at local homeless and community centers every month and glean produce from local farms that is distributed to local food banks. Students volunteer and participate in a number of fundraising events for the cancer center and children's hospitals at Dartmouth Health Center. Thanks to Youth-In-Action, students are able to connect with the low-income, independent, senior living complex across the street from the high school.

Students are frequently recognized for their excellence in academics, arts, citizenship, and athletics. Various competitions, performances and recitations in Math, Science, and World Languages, allow students to demonstrate their mastery in these areas. This year HHS has 16 National Merit Finalists. Each spring students

are recognized for academic, music, drama, and community service achievements on Underclass Awards Day. This fall Hanover High School received the U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Award for Exemplary High Performing Schools: Hanover High Schools National Blue Ribbon Schools

Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate

Core Values, Beliefs, Vision of the Graduate

The Core Values and Beliefs of our school are founded in its democratic principles and practices. Our handbook outlines this in its first few pages, as part of the Honor Code.

Honor Code: Hanover High School is a democratic school. Therefore, all members of the school community are expected to uphold high standards of responsibility, honor, and integrity both in and outside the classroom. Living by these standards inspires confidence and trust in others as well as oneself.

To that end, all members of the Hanover High School community are expected to abide by the rules of the HHS Handbook. Violations of these rules conflict with our Honor Code principles and betray our community of trust.

HHS continues to develop the democratic nature of our school: all issues and actions are presented to all stakeholders transparently. All stakeholders have a voice in discussion, deliberation, and actionable measures that ensue. The HHS Council empowers all stakeholders to bring motions to the floor for consideration. This practice engages all stakeholders in the work to make HHS a safe and equitable place for ALL students.

In 2022 HHS staff and administration worked hard to codify the decision-making process. This measure details the steps of the process that engages all staff and administration in discussion, debate, and fair and equitable decision-making, prioritizing effective learning/systems when consensus is hard to find. This process and our highly engaged staff ensure that everyone has a voice in our process.

The SAU70 Equity Policy and the HHS Equity Steward are important to note as supporting resources for our Core Values and Beliefs. Truly, they are an outcome of our desire to implement democratic principles and uplift every mind, heart, and voice. SAU 70 and HHS establish the need for equity for ALL students in all aspects of educational opportunity, learning experience and support in order to exemplify the Portrait of a Graduate (Portrait of a Learner). To this end, principles of equity must be integral to all policies, programs, operations, practices, and resource allocations. Clear definitions and expectations for Equity and Culturally Responsive Practices drive the implementation of equity in curriculum and instruction, equity in student support services, and equity in recruitment and hiring practices. Accountability is realized through:

- annual review of the policy (beginning in 2025)
- identification of outcome indicators necessary to monitor this policy
- provision of a semi-annual status report to the SAU70 Board

Portrait of a Graduate:

Current HHS Mission Statement:

In our Hanover and Norwich Schools, we engage students' hearts, minds, and voices so that they become educated, caring, and responsible adults. All students are given the opportunity and encouragement to use their...

- minds to pursue excellence, academic challenge, and personal success.
- hearts to respect and care for the emotional and physical well-being of themselves,

others, and the environment.

- voices to contribute to the academic process and the common good.

In order to achieve this mission, our school community is committed to fostering these competencies in our students at each step in their educational journey:

Critical Thinking

Learners in our Hanover and Norwich Schools will...

- recognize the larger context and propose solutions that are mindful of the impact they may have on other parts of a system.
- develop the desire to learn, unlearn, and relearn through self-reflection, analysis, and assessment.
- apply disciplined and well-reasoned thinking that is clear, open-minded, and informed by evidence.
- understand, negotiate, and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions

Empathy

Learners in our Hanover and Norwich Schools will...

- employ awareness, sensitivity, concern, and respect to connect with others' opinions, beliefs, experiences, and cultures.
- imagine and be curious about what others are thinking, feeling, or experiencing.
- celebrate and value diverse cultures and unique perspectives through mutual respect and open dialogue.

Responsibility

Learners in our Hanover and Norwich Schools will...

- honor commitments and own the outcomes, whether positive or negative.
- be accountable for their behavior and actions.
- contribute to the greater good of their schools, families, community, society, and environment, and take action to make the world a better place.

Communication

Learners in our Hanover and Norwich Schools will...

- articulate thoughts and ideas effectively in a variety of creative forms and contexts.

- read, write, speak, and use nonverbal communication skills to learn, create, and teach across all subject areas.
- listen and read effectively to decipher meaning, acknowledging context, values, attitudes, and intentions of others.
- value diversity of perspectives as a way to both acknowledge differences and find common ground.

LEARNING CULTURE

Learning Culture

The school provides a safe learning culture that ensures equity and fosters shared values among learners, educators, families, and members of the school community. These shared values drive student learning as well as policy, practice, and decision-making while promoting a spirit of collaboration, shared ownership, pride, leadership, social responsibility, and civic engagement. The school community sets high standards for student learning, fosters a growth mindset, and facilitates continuous school improvement to realize the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.

1. The school community provides a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought.
 - 1a. The school community provides a safe environment.
2. The school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources.
 - 2a. The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.
3. The school community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student and can demonstrate how each student is known, valued, and connected to the school community.
4. The school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection.
5. The school's culture promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth.
6. The school has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning.
7. The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility.

STUDENT LEARNING

Student Learning

The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, disciplinary/interdisciplinary knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary to prepare learners for their future. Students are assured consistent learning outcomes through a defined curricular experience and have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in a variety of creative ways. Students actively participate in authentic learning experiences while practicing the skills and habits of mind to regularly reflect upon, and take ownership of, their learning.

1. The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success and provides feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving this vision.
2. There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate.
 - 2a. There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments.
3. Curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.
4. Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.
5. Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning.
6. Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.
7. Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum.
8. Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning.
9. Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

Professional Practices

The school maintains and implements a school improvement/growth plan, organizational practices, and productive community relationships to meet and support student learning needs. Educators engage in ongoing reflection, collaboration, and professional development to improve their practice and examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, programs, and services.

1. The school engages all stakeholders in the development and implementation of a school improvement/growth plan, which reflects the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.
 - 1a. The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.
2. Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being.
3. Educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services.
4. Collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of curriculum.
5. School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.
6. Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Learning Support

The school has timely, directed, and coordinated interventions for all students. The school provides targeted supports to meet each student's individual needs, including counseling services, health services, library/information services, and other appropriate support services to assist each student in meeting the school's vision of the graduate.

1. All students receive appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success.
 - 1a. The school has intervention strategies designed to support students.
2. All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.
3. All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.
4. All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.
5. Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.

LEARNING RESOURCES

Learning Resources

The school has adequate and appropriate time, funding, and facilities to support the realization of its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate. The school and school community provide time, funding, and facilities for student learning and support; teacher collaboration and professional growth; and full implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs in the school. The school has appropriate plans, protocols, and infrastructure in place to ensure consistent delivery of its curriculum, programs, and services.

1. The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services.
 - 1a. The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.
2. The school/district provides time and financial resources to enable researched-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services.
3. The community and the district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.
4. The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities.
5. The school has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations.

Introduction

Introduction

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

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees, which supervises the work of three Commissions: the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS); the Commission on Public Schools (CPS), which is composed of the Committee on Public Elementary, Middle, and High Schools (CPEMHS), and the Committee on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI); and the Commission on International Education (CIE).

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public school member institutions, CPS requires visiting teams to assess the degree to which schools align with the qualitative Standards for Accreditation. The Standards are *Learning Culture, Student Learning, Professional Practices, Learning Support, and Learning Resources*.

The accreditation program for public schools involves a five-step process: the self-reflection conducted by stakeholders at the school; the Collaborative Conference visit, conducted by a team of peer educators and NEASC representatives; the school's development and implementation of a growth/improvement plan; the Decennial Accreditation visit conducted by a team of peer educators and NEASC representatives; and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-reflection, the recommendations of the visiting team, and those identified by the Committee in the follow-up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school participate in the accreditation process over the ten-year cycle and that it show continued progress in addressing identified needs.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Reflection

Accreditation coordinators and a steering committee composed of professional staff were appointed to supervise the school's self-reflection and Accreditation process. A highly inclusive steering committee, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the Accreditation process. The steering committee organized appropriate committees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people by completing the school self-reflection.

Public schools evaluated by the Commission on Public Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their alignment with the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's core values, beliefs, vision of the graduate, and unique student population. The school used questionnaires developed by the Commission on Public Schools 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-reflection.

In addition, the professional staff was required to read and vote on Part 2 of the self-reflection to ensure that all voices were heard related to the alignment of the school to the Standards for Accreditation. All professional staff members were expected to participate in the self-reflection process either by participating on a committee or by participating in discussion and evidence gathering to support the school's alignment to the Standards.

The Process Used by the Visiting Team

A visiting team of five members was assigned by the Commission on Public Schools to conduct a Collaborative Conference visit to Hanover High School in Hanover, New Hampshire. The visiting team members spent two days conducting a visit; reviewed the self-reflection documents, which had been prepared for their examination; met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students, and parents; and observed

classes to determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Commission on Public Schools' Standards for Accreditation. The team also reviewed the proposed priority areas for the school's growth plan to be developed as part of the Accreditation process.

Each conclusion in the report was agreed to by visiting team consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting team are included within each section of the report. The report includes commendations and recommendations that, in the visiting team's judgment, will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and implement its plan for growth and improvement.

This report of the findings of the visiting team will be forwarded to the Commission on Public Schools, which will make a decision on the Accreditation of the school.

Foundational Element Ratings

Foundational Element Ratings

Foundational Elements	School's Rating	Visitors' Rating
1.1a - Learning Culture	Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
1.2a - Learning Culture	Does Not Meet the Standard	Meets the Standard
2.2a - Student Learning	Does Not Meet the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
3.1a - Professional Practices	Does Not Meet the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
4.1a - Learning Support	Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
5.1a - Learning Resources	Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 1.1a - Learning Culture

Narrative

Hanover High School provides a safe school environment. Working collaboratively, the school board, administrators, staff, and the Council deliberately build and maintain a physically safe environment by creating and implementing policies and processes around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, which contribute to ensuring the safety of learners and adults.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 1.2a - Learning Culture

Narrative

Hanover High School has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the learner which was created through a collaborative, inclusive process involving all major constituent groups in the school community.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 2.2a - Student Learning

Narrative

While an effort is currently underway to meet this Foundational Element, the school does not yet have a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's portrait of a learner.

Rating

Does Not Meet the Standard

Foundational Element 3.1a - Professional Practices

Narrative

While the school district has a Strategic Plan currently in development, the high school does not yet have an improvement/growth plan; however, the school plans to create one based on the Priority Areas for Growth identified through the Collaborative Conference process.

Rating

Does Not Meet the Standard

Foundational Element 4.1a - Learning Support

Narrative

Hanover High School has a robust system of intervention strategies that are designed to identify students at risk or who need support and provide a targeted, tiered intervention that will lead to student success. Seven school counselors (including a director), two mental health clinicians, three school nurses, a school psychologist, and many other certified support personnel work in concert to ensure student success through intervention strategies.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 5.1a - Learning Resources

Narrative

At Hanover High School, the school buildings and facilities ensure a safe, secure, and healthy environment for all members of the school community. The building is clean and well-maintained daily. All of the school's annual inspections and certifications are up to date, indicating that the buildings and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and comply with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Standard 1 - Learning Culture

Narrative

The school community places great emphasis on providing a safe, positive, respectful and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought. Through observations, while touring hallways, and visiting classrooms, it was noted that the overall tenor of the building is calm, safe, and respectful. Since the school operates as an “open campus”, students spend a portion of their day without direct adult supervision. They gather in small groups at tables in and around the atrium, the senior “pit”, or in the open cafeteria where they work, collaborate, or chat quietly. They enjoy and respect these privileges. This is supported by the data from the student surveys where 88.2 percent of the respondents indicated that they feel safe at school and the family survey where it was 73 percent. This is echoed in the staff survey, where 93.6 percent indicated they feel safe at school. Students indicated they have many ways to participate in democratic principles and leadership roles in the school. This is evidenced by the overwhelming examples of various stakeholders having the power to change policy and impact school culture for example, gender inclusivity updates to the handbook, the change to a more culturally appropriate mascot, the name card policy, religious holiday motion, existence of The Rainbow Alliance and the She's the First club, to name a few. The Council, made up of student and faculty representatives, is now celebrating its fiftieth year of existence and involvement in the governance of Hanover High School. Recently, it has served as the vehicle for several of the aforementioned initiatives and is also responsible for creating the Examining Equity Committee, which has a goal of creating impactful and sustainable all-school events that will create a more equitable learning community. This past December, the SAU school board approved a new equity policy and also created an Equity Steward position. The school also conducted an Equity Audit through The Center for Education Equity (CEE). While the findings were positive overall, there were several recommendations from the CEE, with professional development for all staff being the most pressing need. There is an Equity Committee in place to tackle some of these issues. Last year the school took part in a full faculty book study on *Building Equity; Policies and Practices to Empower All Learners* by Dominique Smith, Nancy Fret, Ian Pumpian, and Douglas Fisher.

The school is in the process of developing core values, beliefs about learning, and a vision of the graduate to drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources. Democratic principles and practices drive many of the school's policies and procedures. This commitment to democracy in action is evident in many practices, such as the Decision-Making Committee, The Council, and the Committee on Program and Procedure. A shared decision-making process is currently underway to revise and finalize a draft of their portrait of a learner. The school recognizes a need for collaboration time that is embedded in the daily schedule for faculty to do the work of inserting core values into their teaching practice in a unified manner. Moreover, the school needs a system to evaluate and measure how these values and beliefs guide teaching and learning practices. In the staff survey, 83.5 percent of respondents indicated that core beliefs and values about learning influence teachers' professional development. Each year the faculty sets professional development goals and selects a book for study. The school has focused on the best practice of differentiation as evidenced by the professional development offerings for the 2022 - 2023 school year, which involve many trainings on the subject, including a school-wide book study group on *Differentiation and the Brain* by David Sousa and Carol Ann Tomlinson.

The school community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student and can demonstrate how each student is known, valued, and connected to the school community. Survey results suggest that 82.5 percent of students indicated at least one caring adult knows them well. Moreover, 74.8 percent of the students and 77.7 percent of teachers said all adults seem to take responsibility for the academic well-being of all students (not just the students they teach). Approximately 64.8 percent of students and 75.7 percent of teachers feel that all adults take responsibility for the social and emotional well-being of all students (not just the students they teach). In student interviews, they overwhelmingly agreed the school offers many opportunities for students. They referenced the extensive variety of sports and clubs and appreciated the opportunity for any student to start a club. The student handbook lists 78 clubs for the 2022-2023 school year. One thing is constant at Hanover High School, virtually every student begins his or her day by entering through the front door, which is supervised by the school atrium coordinator. While his primary focus and responsibility is safety, his duties also include monitoring every student to detect signs of obvious

distress. Any student for whom he has a concern is reported to the school counselors. The school has implemented an Advisory Circle curriculum. All staff and students participate and have the opportunity to express feelings and opinions on a wide variety of relevant topics. While some students reported feeling uncomfortable sharing in front of their peers, this activity still provides a valuable opportunity for the adults to get to know their students by leading the groups. The Pupil Services Team (PST) meets weekly to discuss students and provide any support needed. The school has created a Response to Need (RTN) protocol wherein a support team works with any student in an emotional and/or physical crisis.

The school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection. Ninety-one percent of the teachers indicated that multiple times a year, they set concrete improvement goals for their instruction, and 89.2 percent of them indicated they create plans to meet those goals multiple times within the school year. Just over 72 percent of the staff indicate that on a daily or weekly basis, they evaluate their lessons and adjust their teaching accordingly. All staff members have a three-year professional growth plan with annual goals embedded. The staff votes yearly on a book study. This year their focus is differentiation in the classroom, while last year, it was building equity. A formal process for evaluating programs was instituted by The Council in 2009, which involves mandatory course evaluations and encourages discussions between staff and students regarding best practices in the classroom. The school recognizes the need to create a written curriculum for each class as part of this process.

The school's culture promotes intellectual risk-taking for both students and staff, as well as personal and professional growth. In staff surveys, teachers indicated 63.2 percent of their colleagues are open to trying something new. There are abundant examples of shared agency and responsibility from the department heads, the Committee on Programs and Procedure, and The Council, to name a few. The school district's staff development master plan affords teachers a wide array of opportunities for growth from which they can self-select. The school's culture promotes the idea that mistakes are part of the learning process, an idea supported by 92.5 percent of the staff and 86.7 percent of the students. Just over 94 percent of the teachers state that they encourage students to try something new, and this was echoed by 85.1 percent of the students in their survey. During the March Intensive, all students are expected to try something new, from travel to another country or a big city to exploring a local graveyard. When meeting with students, they indicated inconsistency among classes in terms of the quality of instruction and concerning opportunities for revision of their work to demonstrate their learning. Teachers cited a lack of common planning time during which they could set these standards for each course.

The school has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning, as evidenced by its overarching mission to be a fully democratic institution. The principal is given appropriate decision-making authority while allowing a variety of stakeholders to influence policy decisions. Students strongly felt they had many leadership opportunities. Every student participating in the panel discussion agreed that even if they do not take advantage of the opportunity to participate in decision-making, they all know how to do so. The Council, The Decision Making Committee, and the Committee on Program and Procedure all allow various stakeholders to play a role in leadership and decision-making. Seventy percent of students said they are given important leadership opportunities and 74.3 percent of staff said they are given important leadership opportunities. Over 85 percent of staff reported that they have a great deal of influence over the school's curriculum, and 80 percent said they have a great deal of influence in determining which books and other instructional materials are used in classrooms. Parents indicated that only 52.8 percent of them felt the principal and other school leaders asked parents like them what could make the school better. Approximately 73 percent of parents indicated that the amount of general communication from the school and the staff is just right.

The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility. Students are encouraged to run for a seat on The Council, and all students can bring an issue to The Council. The influence of The Council was clearly evident while visiting the school, particularly in the past efforts to change the school mascot and the continued effort to create equity and inclusion. Students also participate in the Restorative Practice Program due to a motion from The Council. In the student survey, 71.1 percent of the students report they learn about current social issues. When visiting social studies classes, students in each class were tackling social issues such as affirmative action, immigrant experiences, and voting rights. Nearly 70 percent of students indicated they make contributions to their community, and 93.8 percent report taking responsibility for their own actions. Nearly 84 percent of parents indicated the school teaches their children to take responsibility for their own actions. March Intensive, Extended Learning Opportunities and courses through local colleges encourage learning experiences

beyond the school campus.

Sources of Evidence

- central office personnel
- classroom observations
- community members
- department leaders
- facility tour
- NEASC survey
- school leadership
- self-reflection
- students
- teachers

Standard 2 - Student Learning

Narrative

At Hanover High School, the development of the portrait of a learner is in progress. Although the school does not have a formally adopted portrait of a learner, it is evident that they stress the importance of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success. Approximately 70 percent of students and faculty and 65 percent of parents believe that the school has a clear vision about the skills and knowledge students need to develop to succeed. Moreover, about 90 percent of faculty and students and 81 percent of parents agree that the school sets high standards for academic performance. Currently, the assistant superintendent is leading the effort to create a school-wide document of transferable skills that describes specific and measurable criteria for success and rubrics to assess levels of achievement. Furthermore, the school does not yet have a formal process to communicate individual learner progress toward achieving the school's portrait of a learner. As a result, 69 percent of faculty believe they provide feedback, and 74 percent of students believe they receive feedback. Still, only 47 percent of parents agree that they receive information about the progress their child is making in achieving the skills and knowledge he/she needs to be successful in life.

The school does not yet have a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate. While there is evidence that some courses in some departments have common curriculum maps and units of study, it is not consistent throughout the school; however, work is underway in this area. The professional staff is currently documenting the existing curriculum, and there are plans to make the curriculum consistent across all areas to include instructional strategies, assessment practices, and the skills, knowledge, and dispositions in the portrait of a learner. There are shared Google Drive folders and templates for this work. The need for uniformity in policies, in addition to curriculum scope and sequence, is apparent. Although a Council motion required all sections of the same course to be consistent along three axes: lateness policies, grading categories, and retake policies, multiple stakeholders report that is not yet the case. In conversations with students and parents, they expressed the need for such consistency. Finally, although 60 percent of faculty agreed that there is a consistent curriculum that is regularly reviewed and revised, in conversations, they highlighted the importance of ensuring the written curriculum aligns with what is being taught in the classroom. Teacher individuality and personality can be honored on a daily basis while still adhering to a common curriculum and consistent set of policies.

The curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge. Departments evaluate their course offerings regularly and seek input in Committee on Program and Procedure (CPP) meetings. The program of studies is extensive. The school prides itself on the wide variety of electives offered and the opportunity for students to explore topics of interest more deeply and challenge themselves academically. In conversations with students, one of the most common responses about what they liked about the school was the choices they have selecting courses and the variety of content. In addition to robust course offerings, the school also emphasizes higher-order thinking and learner application of knowledge and skills. Eighty-one percent of students said they learned a lot almost every day, and 79 percent of parents believe the classes their child takes are challenging. Students are asked to apply their learning in writing from class to class. The content and skills in math and science courses spiral in complexity from year to year, and students gain deeper understanding and apply their knowledge through projects and experiments. Inquiry and project-based learning are valued across curriculum areas. In addition, students can engage in interdisciplinary learning experiences through Senior Bridges, Independent Study, and other personalized learning experiences. A large majority of students and teachers agree that teachers want students to use thinking skills, not just memorize things.

The school is improving the design of instructional practices to meet the learning needs of each student by including differentiation, individualization, personalization, and best practices in cultural responsiveness. Currently, differentiation is not consistently planned and applied in all classes to help every student reach mastery before moving on. A recent faculty professional development focus has been differentiation, including reading and discussing *Building Equity: Policies and Practices to Empower All Learners* and forming book study groups for *Differentiation and the Brain*. Ninety-six percent of faculty believe they can explain the things that students have difficulty understanding and summarize lessons in ways that help students remember the main ideas and

concepts. Seventy-seven percent of students agree that teachers can explain difficult concepts in multiple ways so that they understand. In addition, 89 percent of faculty feel that they know how each of their students learn best, and 69 percent teach students about the culture and history of people from different backgrounds. Evidence is apparent in classroom observations. In all six social studies classes observed during one period, they are discussing issues around cultural diversity. Also, in biology classes, students can choose which content objectives they want to explain in their assessment. Moreover, in a world language class, the teacher goes into depth with each student while they defend their responses. The teacher sees the needs of each student while engaging the student in the target language.

Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning. Learning is personalized to varying degrees across the curriculum. When asked in interviews, students responded that they had a lot of choices in their school day and, depending on the course, they had input on what they learn and how they demonstrated their understanding. This is evident through classroom observations. For example, in a woodworking/drafting class, students design their own projects, which consist of developing code to explore wind trajectories. In addition, in a world language class, students collaborate to choose various aspects of their group project. Also, in a world language class, there are multiple variations of a video project that students can choose from. The teacher shows exemplars and gives students a choice of which type of video they would like to create. Moreover, in a science class, students chose the content and format of their assessment. In addition to the wide array of electives, students also have the chance to lead their own learning outside of the traditional classroom. The March Intensive is a four-day program where students can choose an enrichment experience beyond the high school curriculum. Furthermore, students can engage in personalized learning experiences through Senior Bridges, Independent Study, and other Personalized Learning Department (PLP) programs.

Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills. Eighty-three percent of faculty state that they encourage their students to think deeply and rigorously instead of just trying to memorize things. Eighty-one percent of students agree. In addition, 83 percent of students say their teachers make them explain their answers and why they think what they think. Courses, units, and day-to-day lessons across the curriculum are intentionally designed to promote students' deep understanding by making connections and understanding relationships through analysis, synthesis, and use of their own creativity. Evidence of this can be seen through classroom observations. In an American Government class, students are asked to analyze affirmative action practices and create a college admissions plan using case law. Students will also be tracking two current Supreme Court cases whose outcomes within the next two months will amend these practices. In an English class entitled Great Themes, Humanities students are tasked with working with a partner to define a "chair" and then defend their definition. What ensues is a highly energized student philosophical discussion that involves virtually every student in the class. Overall, students at Hanover High School develop critical and creative thinking skills, flexible thinking, and independence.

Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum. Many formative and summative assessments are used to inform instruction and curriculum. Ninety-three percent of faculty say they allow students to show what they have learned in different ways, not just tests. Not only do students demonstrate their learning through various assessment strategies, but 100 percent of faculty state that they also use those assessments to adjust instruction and meet students' learning needs. Although there is a wide variety of assessment strategies, only the math, English, and science departments utilize common assessments. Similarly, only some departments communicate specific and measurable criteria for success to learners before assessments. During a classroom observation, a math teacher explicitly discusses the upcoming assessment with her students, indicating what would be required. However, based on conversations with students, that is not a consistent practice across all courses. Furthermore, students mentioned they received learning targets in science classes, but in many content areas, there is a lack of communication of unit-specific learning goals to be assessed before each unit of study. Overall, consistency in assessment practice remains an issue.

Learners have opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning. Students receive feedback from both teachers and peers. In many classes, such as music, teachers give students feedback in the moment to improve their work. In a science class, the teacher conferences with students about how to improve their work on a cellular respiration and photosynthesis project. In world language classes, peers give each other helpful suggestions. In addition, 93 percent of teachers say they give students multiple opportunities to show what they know, while 80 percent of students agree this is true. However, the implementation of revision practices is inconsistent. Eighty-seven

percent of teachers believe they provide opportunities for students to revise their assignments to demonstrate learning or improve their grades, but only 67 percent of students and 61 percent of parents agree. In conversations with students, one of the most common responses for what they would like to see change at Hanover High School was the inconsistency from class to class and teacher to teacher about late work, revising assignments, homework, and grading policies.

Technology is used to support, enhance, and demonstrate learning. Hanover High School has a 1:1 Chromebook program, which has been adapted to allow students to also bring their own technology to school. They are reevaluating the status of Bring Your Own Device to school (BYOD) to determine its viability concerning equity and compliance with existing NH State Laws requiring all schools to monitor students' use of technology. The school staff use technology in various ways to support student learning, and 100 percent of faculty indicate they have access to the technology they need to support student learning. In a biology class, the class uses iPads along with the teacher to submit a formative assessment quiz, scan a QR code to access an activity, and complete interactive notes. Schoology is the current learning platform used to organize and support coursework. Students also use Canva, WeVideo, Onshape, ArcGIS, and other digital tools to enhance their learning, such as digital music and advanced photography software. In addition, special education assistive technology enables students to access content. Eighty-four percent of students say they use technology to learn, whether it is to access course materials, create projects, or collaborate with others.

Sources of Evidence

- central office personnel
- classroom observations
- department leaders
- NEASC survey
- school leadership
- self-reflection
- student work
- teachers

Standard 3 - Professional Practices

Narrative

While Hanover High School engages all stakeholders in the development and implementation of a District Strategic plan, there is no formal school improvement/growth plan. Staff participate in a variety of decision-making processes. Fifty-one percent of the staff state they do not take part in the development of the school improvement plan or it's neither true nor untrue. These responses indicate the need for establishing a clear improvement/growth plan that is clearly communicated. The school has created a specific goal to develop and implement a school improvement plan and, based on the democratic philosophy of this school, there will be a cohesive and inclusive procedure to develop that document.

Educators regularly engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being. There is no formal staff collaboration time embedded into the current schedule during the day, however, there are opportunities for teachers to collaborate with each other during early release days and professional development days. Some teachers use their lunch as informal collaboration time with colleagues. It was also stated in various meetings that it would be beneficial to have more collaboration time to analyze student work, work on horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment, and analyze data. Sixty percent of teachers state that they revise and refine the curriculum less than once a month or one to three times a month. There was a consistent message that common collaboration time would be beneficial for the staff and student achievement.

Staff are required to participate in the SAU70 Continuous Improvement Supervision and Evaluation Procedures. They engage in supervision and evaluation using effective and timely feedback to improve practices that result in increased student learning. Staff members have a comprehensive process where they participate in self-evaluation and reflection, walkthroughs, mentoring, and development and implementation of a personal professional growth plan. The school also began a teacher-led instructional coaching model and recently hired a .4 instructional coach who has begun working with several staff members. The success of this new initiative is evident. The number of teachers who would like to take advantage of instructional coaching exceeds the capacity of the existing coach to meet the demand. The consensus is that the expansion of this program would provide services and support to more teachers and would also ensure greater consistency in the quality of instruction, assessment, and the establishment of grading procedures.

To a great extent, educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services. Eighty-seven percent of the staff state that they generally ask students for feedback to improve their teaching or practice as an educator however, only 65.4 percent of the staff state that they examined student work to make instructional decisions less than once a month or one to three times a month. There are opportunities for students to give feedback to teachers through end-of-course surveys and parents also have an opportunity to provide feedback to teachers and staff through an end-of-year survey. A district-driven Curriculum Project has focused teachers' efforts on establishing curriculum expectations, reflection on curriculum and student achievement, and instruction strategies. Much of this important work has been facilitated by the HHS Shared Curriculum Drive and the availability of curriculum planning days. While teachers have some time for collaboration, it is believed that having common collaboration time embedded into the daily schedule would increase the opportunity to analyze student work, data from formative and summative assessments, and the results of common course and grade-level assessments.

Collaborative structures and processes support the coordination and implementation of the curriculum. The unique structure of the interstate district demands greater coordination and collaboration. As mentioned, the district Curriculum Project is focused on all aspects of curriculum, instruction, and student achievement. There is a shared drive that contains curriculum information for each school within the district, containing standards, scope and sequence, unit outlines, as well as a sample template with definitions and examples. There are also documents linking to state frameworks and state standards. The creation and location of these documents provide opportunities to bring together the SAU70 district and community. The school uses these structures and processes to develop vertical articulation within the school and with sending schools in the district. Over the past three years, significant work has been done to ensure the horizontal and vertical articulation of the curriculum across the four schools in the district through the direction of the assistant superintendent. Specifically at the high

school, the initiatives such as curriculum planning days, a Shared Curriculum Drive, instructional coaching, and peer observation have strengthened effective curricular coordination within and among each academic area and program in the school. Additionally, led by the Assistant Superintendent, an effort is currently underway to ensure that the high school curriculum is written in a consistent format for all courses in all departments. The realization that the current schedule seriously hinders the ability to meet student's needs in course selection and the opportunity to provide staff with more formal time for professional collaboration during the school day a schedule change is planned for next year. The hope is that a new block schedule will allow for the creation of a block of departmental meeting time each semester on a rotating basis.

To a great extent, school-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student. Students have access to challenging academic experiences such as Hartford Area Career and Technical Center, Dartmouth College courses, Dual Enrollment courses, and Vermont's Early College Program. There are policies and practices in place that support the growth of the curriculum. Organized practices include courses throughout the curriculum that are populated with learners reflecting the diversity of the student body. For example, there is a department dedicated to Personalized Learning Programs which specializes in developing thoughtful learning experiences that are tailored to the needs and interests of students. This department also provides academic support and advising, academic coaching, and independent and project-based learning opportunities. Additionally, there are many programs in place that provide academic assistance to students in need. For example, there is academic coaching, which is a short-term solution that focuses on executive functioning skills, and a study strategies course, which is a credit-bearing elective course mainly for freshmen who need more assistance. There is a flex-structured study hall that assists students who need extra help. The Response to Need program also addresses individual student needs. When it was determined that the current schedule restricts student choice and flexibility, a new block schedule has been developed for the coming year that will provide students with more scheduling options and greater opportunities to challenge themselves academically. Fifty-one percent of students according to the NEASC survey state that the classes are challenging for them and 75.4 percent of students surveyed state that their classes meet their learning needs.

Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning. Educators enable and promote relationships with the community, businesses, and higher education institutions that support authentic student learning experiences. The staff survey states that 71 percent of staff think that at Hanover, all students have learning opportunities that connect them with community members or programs involving parents, local businesses, and local colleges and universities. Students at Hanover High School have multiple opportunities to extend their learning outside of the classroom and promote a sense of ownership in their education. These opportunities include the March Intensive, volunteer opportunities in the community, the Senior Bridges project, and independent study opportunities. Some of these programs involve culminating student presentations where they share their experiences and reflect on their accomplishments. The Extended Learning Opportunities program allows students to create and implement their own semester-long course of their choosing which include an internship in the community, a work-study program, volunteering opportunities, or an art or music program. Another example of extended learning is the Youth-in-Action organization which provides students with opportunities to help and support local organizations throughout the community.

The school does make an effort to promote communication between the school and families. The Principal's Weekly is a newsletter sent out to share information with parents and families about activities at the school and their student's learning. There are various SAU policies that create regular activities and practices to ensure communication, for example, Parent's Night, Open House, email communication about curricular and co-curricular opportunities, and the high school website. Bear Camp is also a new program started in the summer of 2022, which along with Summer School, provides services to incoming freshmen. Routine communication continues into students' sophomore year by following their meeting with counselors to create long-term plans for academics and specific student needs. This communication intensifies throughout their junior and senior year through post-graduation planning and needs. Parents are also encouraged to participate in an annual end-of-year survey to provide feedback to the school.

However, there is a disconnect between the perception of the staff and those of the students and families concerning the school's effort and ability to engage students and families as partners in each learner's education and to reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. Only 28.8 percent of parents feel that the school and its staff engage them as partners in their child's education. As a result, the school has created a specific goal to improve parent communication and engagement.

Sources of Evidence

- central office personnel
- classroom observations
- community members
- department leaders
- NEASC survey
- school leadership
- self-reflection
- students
- teachers

Standard 4 - Learning Support

Narrative

To a great extent, all students at Hanover High School (HHS) receive extensive, planned, and appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success. According to the NEASC survey, 91.6 percent of staff believe that they notice when a student needs help, and 95.3 percent of staff believe that they act to do something when a student needs help. The school has numerous levels of support to address diverse student needs. The special education department, school counseling department, and personalized learning programs specifically provide intervention and target individual student needs. The health office also assists in this area. Slightly more than 62 percent of family respondents believe they know who to turn to when their student needs academic help, and 53.8 percent of students think that adults notice when someone needs help. HHS supports social and emotional learning for students and staff through the equity and differentiation of professional development opportunities, advisory circle work that occurs weekly in small groups with students, and the Pupil Services Team. All students participate in an advisory that has an established social and emotional curriculum. The HHS Student Support Tiers outline three levels of student support accessed by students and their families directly or by referral from a teacher or counselor of the pupil services team. These services target various student academic, social, emotional, and disciplinary support needs. From here, a student could be referred for a 504 intervention or a special education evaluation, as warranted. According to staff members, as a result of the numerous intervention strategies that are available and provided to students when they recognize there is a concern, students' needs are not overlooked at Hanover High School.

All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel. There are seven school counselors, including a director, two mental health clinicians, three school nurses, a school psychologist, and many other certified support personnel. Eighty-five percent of faculty believe a counselor is available to students when they need help. Similarly, around 84 percent of staff believe that counseling services meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs, and 88.7 percent believe that counseling services meet students' college/career-related needs. Slightly more than 83 percent of parents indicate that a counselor is available when their child needs help. The counseling department welcomes families and students to HHS and helps by supporting students with academics, educational and career planning, and personal concerns. The office has a welcoming environment accessed by students throughout the day for various reasons. Counselors help new students to navigate any placement exams that might be required and determine placement upon review of academic records. Counselors guide students in planning for a career, school course, and college applications. The HHS Community trusts high school students to act responsibly and make important decisions about managing their school lives. Counselors are available on a drop-in basis and/or by appointment. Counselors meet with students and families about academic, post-high school planning, and personal concerns. School counselors also assist with the administration of career exploration using Naviance software which is delivered in subject area classes to engage them in possible career interests and to help students begin to think about their future. Regarding academics, students choose courses with the advice of teachers and school counselors. The counseling department attempts to tailor students' programs to individual needs, desires, and aspirations. Counselors are available throughout the day and after school to help students with social and emotional support. The 9th-grade counselors work from November through March with middle schools and families to educate them about HHS and help them register for classes. A significant amount of work is happening with 8th graders and their families from Richmond Middle School and sending schools. Counselors spend considerable time visiting sending schools, communicating with 8th-grade teachers and counselors, and visiting students. For sending schools, they administer placement tests and help with the course selection process. They also host parent nights and three different days when 8th graders can visit HHS. Since issues of equity and inclusion are integral to student social and emotional well-being, the Equity Steward position was established in 2022. The Equity Steward acts as a staff resource for equity issues and the development of programming and collaboration at HHS in equity and inclusion.

All students receive comprehensive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel. The health services represent another real strength for Hanover High School. The goal of the health office is to assist students in making healthy lifestyle choices, learning to take

responsibility for their health, and becoming advocates for their own healthcare needs. The health office is staffed by three part-time registered nurses with strong clinical skills and an outstanding affinity for understanding adolescents. They are open, communicative, proactive, and informative, and over time, have built a solid and responsive set of relationships and procedures within the school and the larger community. This allows the school to ensure that the full range of student needs are met in a timely and focused way. The HHS school nurses provide direct and preventive care for all staff and students. School nurses play a broad and critical role in helping the school community remain healthy through early detection and referral for significant health problems or injuries. The school nurses report an average of 836 students per month visiting the health office. Many of these visits are related to mental health issues that span a full spectrum from stress management to a clinical diagnosis. CPR training and certification are offered free to staff each year. The nurses also oversee the concussion and ready to return to learning/playing protocol. The health office is often a resource for students seeking help for mental health issues due to its accessibility and approachability. Over 95 percent of faculty survey respondents feel that a nurse is available when students need help, and a similar percentage believe that the nurse supports students' social and emotional well-being and physical health. This is corroborated by 87.9 percent of parents who believe that a nurse is available when their child needs help, and 78.8 percent believe that health staff effectively support their child's wellbeing. Similarly, 86.3 percent of students state that the nurse is available when they need help. The overwhelmingly positive responses to the survey questions regarding the health office reflect the effective structures and processes in place, as well as the strong commitment of the nurses that serve the HHS population. HHS health office and services are comprehensive.

All students receive and have access to the library/information services team members who are certified. The library/information services span departments, scaffold student and faculty/staff needs, and extend to teaching topics in some classrooms. At HHS, 88.5 percent of staff responded that library/information services effectively support students' learning; 87.5 percent of staff feel that the library/media resources are available to students before, during, and after school hours; and 83.6 percent of staff say that library/information services are integrated into the curriculum. Eighty-one percent of students agree that they can use the library when they need to, including before/after school; however, only 67.2 percent report that they use the library/information services to support their learning. The library is a highly valuable resource at HHS. It is an open, welcoming space where students like to gather. It is always decorated with interesting and changing educational displays. The library and computer lab are open for student use throughout the school day. Students have access to books, media, printers, scanners, a copier, and interactive TV, as well as Chromebooks, MacBooks, and iPads. To best serve student needs/preferences, the library has various seating options, including study carrels, comfortable chairs and end tables, and standard tables and chairs. There is also a room for silent study and spaces for group work. Students have access to private rooms for conducting online meetings/courses and for recording classes. The stem lab has a conference area where ten students and/or staff can meet, along with an interactive TV and a special webcam for videoconferencing as a group. The lab is also available to small classes that want to meet there. To optimize the integration of library and technology resources, the library is connected to the Technology/Information Services Department. This proximity and collaboration enhance the transfer of technology and materials to students and staff. Additionally, the library media specialist teaches academic integrity, digital literacy, and online safety.

Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services that support their learning from a robust list of support options by adequate, certified/licensed personnel. There are numerous, continuous efforts to scaffold all students as needed and are intensive to address multiple aspects of need/support to address individual needs. Over 92 percent of the faculty state that students with IEPs and 504 plans receive appropriate services and support, and 91.3 percent agree that special education students are appropriately included in in-school and after-school activities. HHS has expanded its student support over the past five years. In addition to the special education and 504 services and Title I tutoring program, the school created a new department identified as the Personalized Learning Program (PLP). The PLP department and programs were created to address a long-standing need at HHS which focuses on students that are not eligible to receive special education or 504 services but who still need support to be successful. The HHS Department of Personalized Learning Programs provides access to a range of options for students needing interventions that do not entail an IEP, including academic coaching, a study strategies course, the flex study hall, Response to Need (RTN), and a 504 Plan.

The HHS Student Support Tiers outline three levels of student support that are accessed by students and their families directly, or by referral from a teacher, counselor, or the Pupil Services Team (PST). These services target various student support needs: academic, social, emotional, and disciplinary. From here, a student could

be referred to a 504 or IEP evaluation, as needed. The PST includes administrators (HHS Associate Principals), all of the counselors plus a school psychologist, the nurse, the 504 Plan coordinator, the Personalized Learning Program (PLP) coordinator, and the special education coordinator. It meets weekly to stay abreast of current concerns. This team has a running agenda that monitors students in need of attention which includes: Students in Response to Need (RtN), students entering or exiting 504 plans or special education, all cases of disciplinary action for the week, attendance concerns, students on the Chalk Talk Concussion Protocol, students receiving/in need of tutoring services, and a “big picture” item (something that demands attention that week/imminently). Students on the low-grade list or at risk of failing are also discussed. All district student support systems are represented and leveraged in this group. The PST is a problem-solving team that is critical for awareness of current events/situations in the school and with students. Referral to the PST occurs through the Referral For Assistance (RFA) form. Students are usually considered after they have exhausted other resources, such as weekly advising. Students also qualify for consideration in the event of a life-changing event.

The special education department, the largest department in the school, is led by the Coordinator of Student Support Services. The coordinator serves on curriculum committees and the Pupil Services Team (PST). Other service providers in the department include the speech-language pathologist, six special education teachers, ten special education assistants, and intensive special needs assistants. Two school psychologists also serve the high school, both performing student assessments and meeting with students regularly over the course of the school year. Also, students whose IEPs require access to physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and assistive technology instruction. HHS also leverages the presence of two therapy dogs who bring smiles and comfort to those they serve. The department currently services 69 students with IEPs.

Collaboration between the special education department and multiple other departments is a necessary and valued means to maintain open lines of communication with general education teachers across all content areas. The learning specialists are responsible for their caseload of students and are located strategically in learning centers across the school building. Learning specialists have case management duties, they ensure that the IEP is met in the classroom setting, and they collaborate with teachers on differentiation and universal design within the curriculum. Students are intentionally placed with a specialist and/or in a particular learning center to best address their academic, functional, and developmental needs. Outside of personalized learning and special education, the STEM skills class offers enhanced opportunities for learning and practicing science and math content and skills to ninth graders who are working to improve capacity in these areas. The newly established writing center provides guidance in writing for students who want to improve their skills.

A little over 72 percent of staff believe that English Language Learners receive appropriate services and support, and 75.3 percent believe that English Language Learners are appropriately included in in-school and after-school activities. HHS follows the requirements for English Language Learners (ELL) and shares employees within the district to ensure they meet the needs of those identified students. The ELL population is small, and HHS provides services targeted to specific areas of need; however, the school feels it is clear from the survey results that more needs to be done to address family and staff concerns. The counseling department is the first point of contact to discuss ELL needs and concerns. ELL service providers are shared among all of the SAU schools and are coordinated by the guidance staff. There is a .2 position on-site to address HHS ELL needs in a more integrated/coherent fashion. Knowledge of the process for ELL/504 referral is not widespread due to the limited number of students identified. While the initial planning for newly identified students in need of service is coordinated and adequate, more focused time to inform staff of the process can be provided so that they will better understand how to support the plan as they integrate into the school.

Sources of Evidence

- central office personnel
- department leaders
- NEASC survey
- school leadership
- school support staff
- self-reflection

- teachers

Standard 5 - Learning Resources

Narrative

The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of a high-quality curriculum, programs, and services. The FY 22-23 Dresden School District budget for the high school was \$15,876,585, representing a 4.5 percent increase over the previous fiscal year. The school's current per pupil expenditure is \$22,874, which is about \$3500 above the state average. The school has policies and procedures in place to ensure that all aspects of the facility provide an environment that is conducive to promoting teaching and learning. A Safe School Atrium Coordinator controls access to the building and is also charged with the responsibility of working with local agencies and everyone in the building to maintain a safe and healthy environment in the school.

The building, originally constructed in 1924, has undergone at least five renovations and/or additions to the existing structure. The most recent was in 2007, which resulted in updating the building to existing health and safety codes in a larger, modernized space to accommodate changes in teaching and learning. The school's entrance was expanded to create a welcoming atrium that includes spaces for students to gather and work individually or collaboratively, an open cafeteria that encourages freedom and collaboration, and additional public student spaces which are heavily used during the day. The renovations led to a repurposing of existing spaces to accommodate new learning areas to good effect. Portions of the old auditorium were renovated to create new art classrooms, and the old gymnasium is now the library. There is also ample office space throughout the building for administrators, counseling services, and the SAU central office. Classrooms throughout the building are organized by departments which also facilitates staff collaboration. Slightly more than 86 percent of students and 89.2 percent of staff believe that the building and facilities support student learning.

A custodial staff consisting of one daytime custodian and 7.5 evening staff ensures that the building is routinely cleaned and that minor maintenance issues are addressed promptly through the use of the online app Brightly (formerly SchoolDude). The respectful behavior of the students who inhabit the building also share responsibility and credit for keeping the building clean. Slightly over 90 percent of students and teachers agree that the building is clean and well-maintained. The mechanical systems necessary to maintain a safe and healthy environment are all in good working order, many of which were updated and modernized as part of the last building renovation. Ample heat is provided by a wood chip-fired boiler that augments three oil-fired boilers and the school's electrical systems, technology infrastructure, and pumps have been updated to meet increased needs in the school. There are plans to upgrade the lighting in the school with energy-saving technology soon, and there are longer-range plans to install solar power arrays on all buildings in the district to become more energy sufficient. In addition to past renovations, which brought the building into compliance with updated codes, constant vigilance by school administrators, maintenance staff, and local agencies ensure that the school meets all applicable federal and state laws and complies with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

The school/district provides sufficient financial resources to enable researched-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services; however, the school does not provide formal time during the day to support research-based instruction and professional collaboration. In the recent past, staff had opportunities to collaborate and engage in professional discourse through Critical Friends groups; however, that is no longer occurring. Currently, teachers have two hours every other Wednesday from 2:00 to 4:00 pm to meet in departments. Many teachers also meet informally during lunch to plan or engage in professional discourse. Feeling that there is insufficient time for them to engage in professional development, curriculum work, and improvement of instruction and analysis of assessment results, there is an expressed desire on the part of teachers to have more time available for collaboration, common planning, and the analysis of student work to inform curriculum and instruction. Almost two-thirds of faculty believe that they have sufficient instructional time to meet the needs of all students.

One concern raised by both students and parents was the inconsistency in the quality of instruction across the curriculum. To innovate and improve instruction throughout the school, a teacher-led effort resulted in the development and commitment to an instructional coaching model. A pilot program was established with two teachers being trained in instructional coaching. Fourteen teachers took a coaching course offered at Hanover High School, and a group of teachers researched and created a playbook of instructional strategies. Recently, a

.4 FTE instructional coach has been hired to work with colleagues to improve instruction. Currently, five teachers have completed a coaching cycle, and as evidence of the program's success, there are more teachers interested in participating in coaching than time will allow.

The school district has created an extensive and detailed SAU 70 Staff Development Master Plan, which identifies several available opportunities for staff to expand their learning. Among the creative options available to staff beyond taking graduate-level courses and attending conferences and workshops are peer coaching, conducting research, writing a book, and participating in committee work. The school's budget includes \$103,724 for professional development and \$68,992 for staff development. Slightly more than 90 percent of teachers feel that there is adequate funding available for professional development, and 67.9 percent state that there is a sufficient amount of time made available for professional development.

The community and the district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. Hanover High School (HHS) provides a wide range of programs and services designed to meet the needs of its students. The school's program of studies offers all students a wide range of course options, including required courses and a very diverse array of relevant elective courses. Students are also provided with broad counseling services, adequate health services, and various extended learning opportunities within the school and opportunities to pursue career and technical education at the Hartford Area Career and Technical Center. HHS also offers students a wide variety of interscholastic athletic opportunities and an impressive range of co-curricular offerings to meet the diverse needs of the student body. The school's budget includes \$923,928 for athletics and \$143,887 for co-curricular programs. An average of 85 percent of the student body believe that the school's funding for athletics and co-curricular programs is adequate, and parents and teachers share that sentiment.

The school has an adequate amount of staff to meet student's academic needs and to ensure appropriate class sizes. The most recent school budget includes \$164,503 for instructional supplies and materials. Almost 74 percent of students report that they feel they have sufficient access to the learning supplies, with parents concurring at an even higher rate at 90.9 percent. Slightly over 98 percent of teachers state that they have sufficient instructional supplies and materials to meet the needs of all of their students. Instruction at HHS is enhanced by the integration of technology, which is manifested in the 1:1 Chromebook initiative and the technology budget of \$547,563 to replace equipment and support technology use in the school.

The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities; however, they have not yet been outlined in written and published formats, largely due to conflicting laws inherent in an interstate school district. The school district is currently in the process of creating a strategic plan which will include as one of its major components a specific capital improvement building plan to project all future major facility maintenance and replacement efforts. As part of the effort to address facility issues, the district contracted with Bureau Veritas to conduct a Facility Condition Assessment and Netzero Energy Audit for all of the schools in the district. The study resulted in recommendations that will inform the strategic plan process going forward. Since many of the safety and accessibility issues were addressed in the most recent renovation to the facility, the school was found to be in relatively good shape. Currently, there are plans to resurface the track and refurbish the baseball field due to drainage and safety issues. The artificial turf football field was recently renovated to alleviate some of the same conditions. The district and school's focus on facilities and maintenance issues is best expressed in the following goals: 1. provide and ensure access to buildings and grounds that address the curricular and extracurricular goals within the districts; 2. embrace sustainable measures as updates are made to facilities and grounds; 3. ensure that future facilities and ground upgrades are tied into annual budgetary needs; and, 4. create and sustain a safe, secure, and healthy environment. Routine maintenance issues are handled by a district maintenance team currently consisting of three members, soon to be expanded to four. The district uses Brightly, an online maintenance and tracking application, to address day-to-day issues, and larger issues are planned for the future when time and money are available. The school budget includes \$138,350 for general maintenance and \$183,075 for grounds.

Hanover High School has sufficient infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations. The school has created and implemented several protocols to keep students, staff, and visitors safe in the event of an emergency or a crisis. The HHS Threat Protocol, Safety Protocol, and Evacuation Protocol are included in the HHS Handbook which staff, students, and parents can access. In addition to the emergency protocols, the school also has written documentation that describes responses to various situations. Every staff member is provided with an Emergency Planning Binder, which contains recommended procedures to be

followed for several emergency or crisis scenarios. The school has an established plan to review and update all safety protocols regularly and to hold regular drills to ensure that protocols are followed. However, since the disruption of the Covid pandemic, the protocols have not been reviewed and updated, and safety drills have been suspended. The school also has a crisis team consisting of administrators, counselors, school nurses, and several staff members. It meets regularly to ensure that they are prepared to address any crisis within the school or in the community that would impact the student body or the staff. A second committee, The Emergency Planning Team, is led by the Safe Schools Atrium Coordinator and is tasked with ensuring that all necessary procedures, protocols, and essential training and drills for responding to an emergent situation in the school are up to date. While representatives from the local police and fire departments are not active participants in the work of the various safety committees, the school maintains a positive working relationship with both agencies. In addition, to ensure a timely response to an emergency situation, training is routinely offered to staff in CPR, First Aid, the use of an AED, and the administration of an EpiPen. Seventy-eight percent of students and 86.5 percent of teachers state that they know what to do in the event of a crisis in the school. Slightly more than 84 percent of teachers state that the school's policies and procedures for managing a crisis are clear; however, only 22.8 percent of parents state that they are familiar with the school's crisis protocols.

Sources of Evidence

- central office personnel
- community members
- facility tour
- NEASC survey
- parents
- school leadership
- self-reflection

Priority Areas

Priority Area

Priority Area for Growth #1 Goal Statement: To make a more deliberate practice of employing our school's agreed-upon core values in all decision-making at the school level and in overarching district policy. (1.2)

School Response: Staff analysis of the Faculty Opinion Survey results prompted observations that our school is missing a common goal that is well-known by all students, staff, and families. While the school has two written documents describing its core values, strong evidence that these core values are referenced and prioritized in all decision-making within our school is lacking. Both the Hanover High School mission statement and the SAU 70 Portrait of a Graduate (Learner) speaks to preparing students through the lens of Minds, Hearts, and Voices. While the school's mission was adopted in 2001, there is work to be done to engage in a more intentional practice of employing the agreed-upon core values in all decision-making at the school and district levels. A related area of high need was identified in the surveys. Not all students feel safe in our school. While 78.2 percent of the students reported feeling safe at school, it is noted that 10 percent felt safe some of the time, and 3 students reported never feeling safe. The school commits to addressing these safety concerns to ensure that Hanover High School has a school climate and culture where all students and staff feel safe. The school plan includes continuing the work of the HHS Equity Committee and the use of Equity Audits to collect data and inform ongoing action steps. The goal is to achieve a school culture where upon examination through surveys, focus groups, and data collection (qualitative and quantitative) will demonstrate that ALL students and staff feel safe at school. The school's work on DEI and neuro-differentiated learning needs to continue. We aim to demonstrate that ALL students and staff feel safe at school. Evidence of success will be obtained from surveys, focus groups data collection (qualitative and quantitative). This will require an individualized and whole-systems approach that is reflected currently in the SAU 70 Strategic Plan, and the SAU Equity Policy, and include the School's Growth/Improvement plan. While this work has been ongoing for over a decade, at this time there is the confluence of three factors that support our school's success in this specific priority area of growth: (1) an adopted SAU 70 Strategic Plan, (2) the Portrait of a Graduate/Learner, and (3) the NEASC self-study. All three have raised awareness and engaged multiple stakeholders in the community (such as the school's students, staff, and administrators) which has resulted in an informed collective commitment to move forward on this priority growth area.

- Principle 5.1a: Adjust building spaces throughout the school to provide a supportive and safe environment to work. Example: Adjust the upper Computer lab space to create the Academic Support Center which will accommodate students and teachers in a welcoming manner so that we can provide support and a safe environment to work.
- Principle 1.1: Secure school-wide adopted definitions of what these terms mean in our school and our district: "inclusive culture," "ensures equity," and "honors diversity in identity and thought." Identify what this looks like at HHS and measure it with collected data to mark progress toward identified goals.
- Principle 1.3: Continue the school's ongoing efforts to know, value, and connect to each student by taking into account the experiences and culture of students, especially those from historically marginalized communities. The plan includes the use of the disaggregated data from this year's equity audit.
- Principle 1.6: Establish intentional outreach that includes students, families, and community members from historically marginalized communities in decision-making. Identify and then employ the processes that ensure that these voices are elevated and valued.
- Principle 1.7: Clarify how "civic engagement" and "social and personal responsibility" are defined within our school community. Examine how well the definitions, as well as the school's culture and practices, value the experiences and culture of historically and currently marginalized communities.

- Principle 1.7: Increase student engagement and foster an equitable, inclusive, and safe culture at Hanover High School.
- Principle 2.2: Ensure that the curriculum review process includes an audit of cultural bias.
- Principle 2.4: Ensure that instructional practices are informed by research-based or best practices of cultural responsiveness and neurodiversity.
- Principle 3.3: Routinely disaggregate data to identify patterns of achievement.
- Principle 3.5: Collect and disaggregate data from course enrollment, co-curricular participation, and other areas of student participation and identify patterns.

Visiting Team Response:

The visiting team concurs with this Priority Area for Growth identified by the school and the detailed steps to accomplish this goal. Accomplishing this goal and all of its constituent parts will further align Hanover High School's Core Values and its routine practice around issues of decision-making, student engagement, and ensuring diversity, inclusivity, and equity with the Standards for Accreditation.

Priority Area

Priority Area for Growth #2 Goal Statement: Create a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments. (2.2, 2.2a)

School Response: Across the district and within our school, there is a priority to have a complete and transparent system of curriculum documents that are available and accessible, externally and internally to the community and staff. The goal is to establish multiple stages using SMART goals to complete the documentation of curriculum across subject areas and grade levels in a consistent format that includes (a) aligning course expectations and assessments for common courses, (b) identifying competencies across the school's curriculum and individual courses, and (c) establishing common language across curriculum/courses. To accomplish this curriculum documentation, a protected time will be earmarked for staff to work on the curriculum document, improve assessments, and align them with the school and district's core values. More specifically, this process includes a commitment to intentionally use a DEI lens in curriculum development and decision-making. The end result will be a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses, in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate.

- Principle 2.2: Complete curriculum documentation.
- Principle 2.3: The curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.
- Principle 2.4: Continue to purposefully organize student group learning with clear goals and measurable outcomes.
- Principle 2.7: Learners will demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum.
- Principle 2.6: Use of research-based instructional strategies to improve teacher skills and practice that best support student learning. Instructional Coaching is one example of meeting this principle.

Visiting Team Response:

The visiting team concurs with this Priority Area for Growth identified by the school and the detailed steps to accomplish this goal. These steps will ensure that at the end of the process, the school can demonstrate that it has

a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's Portrait of a Learner.

Priority Area

Priority Area for Growth #3 Goal Statement: Establish a formal Growth/School Improvement Plan. (3.1, 3.1a)

School Response: Implement the Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Graduate/Learner. Establish a formal improvement/growth plan (goals, measurable indicators, actionable steps, etc) that is regularly communicated/discussed. The school will have an improvement/growth plan that includes school-specific goals that also align with the SAU 70 Strategic Plan. The end result will be a school improvement plan that informs decision-making in the school based on the school's priorities.

- Principle 3.2: Educators will have specifically identified and protected time to engage in reflection and collaboration, both formal and informal, specific to shifting roles and responsibilities. Next year will begin a cycle of protected departmental meeting times to allow for this ongoing and important collaborative work.
- Principle 1.4 The school's professional culture and commitment to continuous improvement will include explicit work to build the cultural competency of all educators through professional development that includes building core knowledge, competency, and skill practice.
- Principle 1.2 Implement the district's Equity Policy. Ensure that the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate include explicit commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Reflection within the decision-making process, at all levels to ensure that the Portrait of a Graduate/Learner and the SAU 70 Equity Policy are used to inform practice and decision-making. In reporting on decisions, reference will include how the plan aligns with school values (SAU Equity Policy) and Portrait of a Graduate/Learner.

Visiting Team Response:

The visiting team concurs with this Priority Area for Growth identified by the school and the detailed steps to accomplish this goal and recognizes the importance the school has attached to accomplishing this goal as it addresses one of the six Foundational Elements in the Standards for Accreditation.

Priority Area

Priority Area for Growth # 4 Goal Statement: Develop and implement a plan to manage the increasing mental health needs of the school community, both students and staff, to help students and staff achieve a life balance that is integral to well-being. (1.1, 1.3, 4.1)

School Response:

Action steps may include:

- Identify and implement specific action steps that build and maintain a physically and emotionally safe environment for all students and staff.
- Prioritize the creation of a stronger link between health skills and how students and staff can use these skills to achieve a positive school/work and life balance.
- Identify and implement ways for students and staff to improve on self-reflection through verbal and non-verbal techniques.
- Maximize school and district resources in areas of high need. Foster a growth mindset and facilitate student independence.

- Continue annual School Climate surveys that include both student and staff feedback. Continue to engage students and staff in shared decision-making.
- Bring the SEL work into an existing department so that the curriculum/learning progress of students can be delivered in a structured and intentional way that supports and assesses students' learning progress in Social and Emotional Learning.
- Promote mental health access for students within the school. An example: Consider remote telehealth mental health access for students with community-based mental health counselors.
- Principle 3.3: Educators will examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, programs, and services. The school will continue effective communication and collaboration with families to let them know about student successes and struggles. The school needs to make the path for student learning support and interventions for learning success clearer to parents, students, and staff. Clear and effective communication from the school's academics and Pupil Services Team to better inform and support student success in their extracurricular activities that may include but not be limited to: athletics, theater, and clubs.
- Principal 3.5: Continue to design and implement school-wide organizational practices to meet the learning needs of each student. Establish multiple transparent and accessible pathways that students can take through the curriculum to successfully achieve graduation.
- Standard 3.2: The school prioritizes staff time so that teachers can be “students of teaching.” Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being. Instructional Coaching is one model the school is currently growing.
- Principle 4.1 Develop a support system that all students can access without a referral through the Academic Support Center.

Visiting Team Response:

The visiting team concurs with this Priority Area for Growth identified by the school and the detailed steps to accomplish this goal. Addressing the mental health needs of students and staff is critical to ensuring the well-being of all members of the school community and enhancing a culture that is supportive, nurturing, and conducive to improved teaching and learning throughout the school.

Commendations

Commendation

The 50 year history and continued existence of the school's Council which serves as a democratic vehicle for student, staff, and community engagement in decision-making

The strong commitment to shared decision-making in the school

The availability of a wide array of course offerings

Commendation

The dedication to the personalization of student learning

The ability of students to make choices in their learning journey

The faculty's effort to provide opportunities for inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills

Commendation

The use of a wide range of assessment strategies to allow students to demonstrate their learning

The accessibility to and thoughtful use of technology to support learning

The staff's commitment to prioritizing student needs and interests with varied course options

Commendation

The school's commitment to promoting relationships with the community, businesses, and higher education institutions that support authentic student learning experiences

The availability for students to extend their learning beyond the classroom walls in programs like the March Intensive, Senior Bridges Project, and community volunteer opportunities

The intervention strategies that support all students' academic, social, and emotional success such as academic coaching, study strategies course, flex study hall, and Response to Need

Commendation

The counseling services that meet the personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs of all students

The comprehensive health services that ensure students' physical and emotional well-being with proper communication to families

The return to learn/play concussion protocol for students

Commendation

The school's commitment to fostering Democratic principles in spirit and action

The creation and maintenance of a safe and respectful school environment

The supervision and evaluation model that is responsive to the learning needs and preferences of staff

Commendation

A growth mindset evident throughout the school community that embodies continuous growth and improvement

The continuous dedication to and pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion for all members of the school community

A plethora of student choices in co-curricular activities and access to authentic leadership opportunities

Commendation

The belief among students that they feel known and supported by adults in the school

The school community's commitment to civic engagement and social responsibility

The staff-led effort to initiate an Instructional Coaching Program to improve instruction and student achievement at HHS

Commendation

The creation of a District Strategic Plan, which includes a Capital Improvement Building Plan

The diverse academic, co-curricular, and interscholastic athletic opportunities available to all students at HHS

The comprehensive Staff Development Master Plan that details a wide variety of self-directed professional development opportunities for all staff

Commendation

The community and school district support for professional development for all staff to improve teaching and learning at HHS

The development of an SAU Strategic Plan that includes a district-wide Portrait of a Learner

Recommendations

Recommendation

Implement the Portrait of a Learner and embed it in the culture and curriculum of the school

Recommendation

Create a school-wide document of transferable skills that describes specific and measurable criteria for success, a method to assess levels of achievement, and a formal process to communicate individual learner progress toward achieving the school's Portrait of a Learner

Recommendation

Create, implement, and communicate procedures to ensure greater consistency of departmental assessment policies, grading procedures, and the timely communication of student performance

Recommendation

Engage students and families as partners in each learner's education and reach out to specifically those families who have been less connected with the school

Recommendation

Provide more formal time during the school day to enable teachers to collaborate to improve instruction and assessment strategies

Recommendation

Inform staff of the English Language Learner (ELL) process and how to better support students as they transition into school

Recommendation

Review and update all emergency procedures and protocols on a regular basis

Recommendation

Ensure that parents are aware of all crisis protocols and procedures in place to keep students and staff safe in the event of an emergency

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

This Collaborative Conference Report reflects the findings of the school's Self-Reflection and those of the visiting team. It provides a blueprint for the faculty, administrators, and other officials to use to improve the quality of programs and services for students in this school. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administrators yearly of progress made in aligning with the Standards for Accreditation.

The Commission expects school officials to use the results of the Collaborative Conference Report as well as the school's identified Priority Areas for Growth to draft a school improvement/growth plan, and to review and implement the findings of the Self-Reflection and Collaborative Conference Report. An outline of the next steps in the Accreditation process is included in the Commission's Accreditation Handbook, which is available on the Commission's website.

A school's initial/continued Accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing the school's improvement/growth plan based on the Priority Areas validated by the visiting team and recommendations identified by the Commission as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. The school will complete a Summary Report and host a Decennial Accreditation visiting team two years after the Collaborative Conference to show progress implementing the school's Priority Areas. The Decennial visiting team will identify recommended next steps as well as additional recommendations for the school to continue to align with the Standards for Accreditation and to improve outcomes for students.

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

The visiting team would like to express thanks to the community for the hospitality and welcome. The school community completed a Self-Reflection that clearly identified the school's strengths and areas of need. The time and effort dedicated to the Self-Reflection and preparation for the visit ensured a successful Collaborative Conference visit.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES Commission on Public Schools

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

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

Roster of Team Members

Chair(s)

Chair: Paul Mangelinkx - New England Association of Schools & Colleges

Assistant Chair: Mr. Anthony Sperazzo - Gilford High School

Team Members

Kim Bleier - Concord High School and Regional Technology Center

Sarah Nassif - Alvirne High School

Lyn Vinskus - Concord High School and Regional Technology Center