

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

Commission on Public Schools



**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

Commission on Public Schools

**Report of the Visiting Team for
Northwestern Regional High School**

Winsted, CT

12-08-2024 - 12-11-2024

**Heather Taylor, Chair
Mark Ambruso, Assistant Chair
Gary Franklin, Principal**

School and Community Summary

School and Community Summary

Northwestern Regional High School is located in Winsted, Connecticut, and serves the towns of Barkhamsted, Colebrook, New Hartford, and Norfolk. The school is located in Litchfield County and is considered Regional School District #7. The district is composed of two public schools, a grades 7-8 middle school and a grades 9-12 high school.

The four towns within the district have similar socio-economic and racial backgrounds. The data shows that 22.76 percent of the students are below the poverty level and eligible for free or reduced lunch. The four towns lack racial and ethnic diversity, as 94 percent of the residents are white. The other 6 percent consists of Asians, black or African Americans, and Hispanics. English is the primary language spoken within the communities.

As of the 2024-2025 school year, the school's enrollment consisted of 554 students. The school's population has been steadily dropping, and a recent enrollment study projects a continued decline over the next five years. The graduation rate has been 100 percent. The data shows that the graduating class of 2024 had 58 percent planning to attend four-year schools, 23 percent planning to attend two-year schools, 5 percent planning to attend a technical or trade school, 3 percent planning to enter the military, and 11 percent planning to go directly into the workforce.

In 2024-2025, the school spent \$27,024 per pupil, above the state average.

Many educational opportunities are available to students and the community, including adult education, driver's education, agricultural education, and Students in Transitional Educational Placement (STEP), a course extension program. The school works with local businesses to provide authentic learning experiences for students. These businesses include Northwest Community Bank, the Warner Theater, and Camp Jewell. The agricultural education program provides a supervised agricultural experience program (SAEP) at several local businesses, such as the Winsted Animal Hospital, Tractor Supply, Moscarillo's Garden Center, and Barden Farm. In addition, the school partners with Northwestern Connecticut Community College and UCONN Early College Experience (ECE) courses to provide students with educational opportunities beyond the traditional high school program.

Many student recognition programs exist. The National Honor Society inducts a large number of students every year. A list of honor students is published four times per year. Students are recognized for their achievements and talents in a variety of ways, including sports awards at the end of each season, agricultural education awards ceremony, end-of-the-year awards in every academic discipline, music festivals, scholastic art awards, Halo awards for theater, Berkshire League and All-State awards, scholar-athlete awards, and good citizenship letters. In addition, students are often recognized for their service to the community as they participate in events such as blood drives, raising money for Kindness in Motion, food drives, and trick-or-treating on the hill.

Northwestern believes it is important to celebrate students in various ways. They are recognized for their achievements and unique contributions to the school community. Northwestern recognizes the value of connection and the correlation between connection and school success. Northwestern offers 15 clubs, including Envirothon, Model UN, Social Justice, and GSA.

Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate

Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate

Mission Statement

Northwestern Regional High School fosters academic and personal excellence in every student. In partnership with families and communities, we create a safe learning environment dedicated to developing the skills of

lifelong learning. Our dynamic and challenging educational program prepares individuals to respect diversity and become responsible citizens in a rapidly evolving global environment.

Core Values and Beliefs

WE VALUE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

We believe in:

- high academic expectations
- commitment to lifelong learning
- innovative and independent thinking

WE VALUE THE PURSUIT OF PERSONAL EXCELLENCE IN ALL ASPECTS OF OUR LIVES

We believe in:

- acting responsibly with the interests of others in mind
- allowing student choice in the learning process
- giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways

WE VALUE GLOBAL AWARENESS

We believe in:

- taking an active role in a global society
- demonstrating respect for diversity

WE VALUE PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

We believe in:

- community involvement
- social responsibility
- open communication between the school and family

WE VALUE A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We believe in:

- developing bonds between students and staff
- demonstrating respect for ourselves and others
- taking educational risks by challenging oneself
- providing students the opportunity to be heard

Vision of the Graduate

A Northwestern Regional High School graduate will be a(n):

Effective Communicator and Collaborator: Graduates will demonstrate effective verbal and written communication, as well as other methods of relaying information, that gets a point across, as well as the capability to work with someone to produce or create a product.

Critical Thinker and Problem Solver: Graduates will be able to objectively analyze and evaluate issues in order to arrive at an informed position and/or conclusion.

Emotionally Intelligent Individual: Graduates will have the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to be skilled in handling interpersonal relationships judiciously and *with kindness and empathy*.

Civic-Minded Citizen: Graduates will understand the idea that one's identity transcends geography or political borders and that as positive leaders, recognize that responsibilities are derived from membership in the broader

class of humanity.

Passionate, Empowered Learner: Graduates will possess an intense desire or enthusiasm for learning, with an emphasis on academic *integrity and honesty*

Persistent and Adaptable Thinker: Graduates will persist in doing something despite difficulty, obstacles, or delay in achieving success, and have the ability to adjust to new conditions.

School Improvement/Growth Plan

The school improvement/growth plan is attached.

Related Files

- [2024 12 02-06 26 2024-25 School Improvement Plan.pdf](#)

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 who seek voluntary affiliation.

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees, which supervises the work of three Commissions: the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS); the Commission on Public Schools (CPS); 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 shows continued progress addressing identified needs.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit

Accreditation coordinators and a steering committee composed of the professional staff were appointed to supervise the school's Accreditation process, which includes the self-reflection, the Collaborative Conference visit, the development and implementation of a growth plan, and the Decennial Accreditation Visit.

Public schools seeking Accreditation through 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. In preparation for the decennial visit, schools are required to complete a Decennial Summary Report to inform the team about their progress since the time of the Collaborative Conference visit.

In addition, the professional staff was required to read and come to consensus on the summary report to ensure that all voices were heard related to the school's progress on their priority areas for growth.

The Process Used by the Visiting Team

A visiting team of eight members was assigned by the Commission on Public Schools to conduct a Decennial Accreditation visit to Northwestern Regional High School in Winsted, Connecticut. The visiting team members spent four days conducting a visit to the school; reviewed the self-reflection, Collaborative Conference report, and Decennial Summary Report documents; met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students, and parents; and visited classes to determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Committee on Public Secondary Schools' and Public Elementary and Middle Schools' Standards for Accreditation and the degree to which the school is making progress toward their identified priority areas for growth as indicated in the school's improvement/growth plan.

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. The report also includes an analysis of the conceptual understanding, commitment, competency, and capacity (4Cs), which is a framework used to evaluate the school's ability for continuous growth and improvement as a learning organization.

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 1.1a - Learning Culture

Foundational Element 1.1a

Northwestern implements comprehensive safety protocols and supportive community practices. Physical safety measures include securing the campus through controlled building access. All exterior doors are locked at the start of the school day, and visitors must enter through the main entrance via a sally port. They are processed through the RAPTOR system and issued a mandatory photo ID badge.

A full-time school resource officer provides additional on-site security, while monthly safety drills—including lockdown and fire scenarios—prepare students and staff for potential emergency situations. These proactive measures ensure a secure learning environment.

Beyond physical safety, the school cultivates emotional well-being and social responsibility. A diverse array of clubs, sports, and activities enables students to connect with their school community. The Kindness in Motion program, which has engaged hundreds of students and staff, has been particularly effective in fostering a culture of empathy and mutual respect.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 1.2a - Learning Culture

Foundational Element 1.2a

The school has developed a comprehensive foundational document that articulates its core values, educational philosophy, and vision of the graduate. This statement outlines the essential transferable skills, knowledge, and attributes students will develop to prepare them for future academic, professional, and personal success.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 2.2a - Student Learning

Foundational Element 2.2a

Northwestern does not yet have a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments across the school. The school is developing a comprehensive curriculum framework using the Understanding by Design (UbD) curriculum model, and department supervisors are actively guiding teachers through the curriculum design process. The emerging curriculum documents will feature a consistent structure, including units of study, guiding and essential questions, core concepts, specific content and skills, and integration of the district's vision of the graduate

This systematic approach aims to create a cohesive, aligned curriculum that ensures educational consistency and quality across all departments.

Rating

Does Not Meet the Standard

Foundational Element 3.1a - Professional Practices

Foundational Element 3.1a

Northwestern developed a comprehensive school improvement plan (SIP) in the fall of 2024, strategically outlining the institution's path toward ongoing educational enhancement. The plan provides a structured roadmap for systematic improvement, with clearly defined objectives and strategies that will drive meaningful progress when implemented consistently with fidelity.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 3.6a - Professional Practices

Foundational Element 3.6a

Northwestern has program advisory committees that meet periodically to review programming.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Elements 4.1a - Learning Support

Foundational Elements 4.1a

Northwestern demonstrates a comprehensive approach to supporting student learning through multiple intervention strategies. The school's support system encompasses academic, social, and emotional resources designed to meet diverse student needs.

Academic interventions include:

- Focused reading and writing intervention programs
- Math skills seminar course
- Math and writing centers are available during each period
- Academic support classes
- Collaborative classes supported by special education teachers and education assistants

The school provides robust support structures through:

- Developmental guidance programming
- Adequate therapeutic intervention staff
- Strong partnerships with community service providers
- A proactive Child Study Team (CST)

Administrators and school counselors organize regular meetings of the CST, which has a systematic referral process by which faculty members can refer struggling students facing challenges in school. After a referral is made, the CST creates a personalized, targeted intervention plan with specific timelines and support strategies to address the student's needs.

Following the Collaborative Conference, Northwestern identified a critical need to enhance social-emotional learning (SEL) support. The "Reach" program provides targeted intervention for students in grades 9-12 experiencing significant internal challenges, with a particular focus on addressing school avoidance.

These multi-layered interventions create a supportive environment that enhances student safety, increases attendance, and maximizes learning opportunities. By addressing academic, social, and emotional needs, Northwestern ensures comprehensive student support.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 5.1a - Learning Resources

Foundational Element 5.1a

The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that ensure students and adults a safe, secure, and healthy environment. The 42-acre campus sports a physical plant, including all classrooms, labs, and specialty areas that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services. Student interests are sufficiently supported through a variety of facilities including two gymnasiums, an outdoor track, sports fields, tennis courts, an auditorium with a stage, the little theater, band and choral rooms, and art, construction, and graphic art spaces. There are also science labs, a computer lab, and Chromebooks for each student, as well as writing and math help centers. Areas for health and wellness classes, such as an aerobics room and a weight room, are included as well as spaces for a variety of co-curricular programs that take place after school. The library media center and the cafeteria are sufficient spaces to meet the school's needs.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 5.5a - Learning Resources

Foundational Element 5.5a

Northwestern's school facilities are properly maintained to the standards of safety, security, and health. The district demonstrates its commitment to providing an optimal learning environment through comprehensive facility management.

Key facility attributes include:

- Rigorous maintenance protocols overseen by licensed district tradesmen
- Consistently clean and well-maintained physical spaces
- Full compliance with federal, state, and local fire, health, and safety regulations

The proactive approach to facility management ensures that physical infrastructure supports student and staff well-being, creating a conducive environment for teaching and learning.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Elements Ratings

Foundational Element Ratings

Foundational Elements	Collaborative Conference School's Rating	Collaborative Conference Visitors' Rating	Decennial School's Rating	Decennial Visitors' Rating
1.1a - Learning Culture	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
1.2a - Learning Culture	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
2.2a - Student Learning	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet
3.1a - Professional Practices	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
3.6 - Professional Practices	N/A	N/A	N/A	Meets
4.1a - Learning Support	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
5.1a - Learning Resources	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
5.5a - Learning Resources	N/A	N/A	N/A	Meets

Priority Area 1

Priority Area

The school will implement the transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success in the vision of the graduate into all curricula and design and implement a system that provides feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving the vision of the graduate. (1.2a, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1)

Action, Impact, and Growth

The school has taken various steps to create and integrate its vision of the graduate. Work began in 2019 and was completed in 2022. This work identified the six pillars that would comprise Northwest Regional High School's vision of the graduate. All stakeholders were involved: teachers, administrators, students, parents, school counselors, community college representatives, and community members.

The school's faculty met within individual departments in February 2023 to find ways for students to demonstrate fulfillment of the different elements of the graduate vision. Further discussion is ongoing about how to assess these indicators.

The school also implemented various pillars of the vision of the graduate into classroom lessons. The science department identified several areas, mostly within its department, where they address the pillars of the vision of the graduate. The pillars were listed on the curriculum documents for all classes. Freshman seminar programs were developed to familiarize students with the vision of the graduate and introduce them to the pillars. Upperclassmen serve as facilitators in the seminar sessions. Freshman students were surveyed before and after each freshman seminar to provide feedback and engage in self-reflection. In addition, Google Slides have been developed to be shown during homerooms, featuring YouTube videos highlighting pillars of the vision of the graduate.

The professional staff tracks students' engagement with the vision of the graduate pillars. The school identified students who had met certain pillars of the vision of the graduate through civics class projects, a financial reality fair for seniors, and the Kindness in Motion Project.

The action steps significantly improved students' understanding of the vision of the graduate. While students became aware of the concept, they struggled to explain the six pillars or articulate their representation. Stakeholders were involved in creating the vision of the graduate, and its ongoing integration into curriculum documents enables teachers to identify the alignment between it and learning opportunities.

Senior students who taught the vision of the graduate to underclassmen found the training valuable, with freshmen gaining meaningful insights. Some teachers have identified vision of the graduate-related aspects in their curriculum, increasing their awareness of the framework. Student surveys and homeroom presentations with embedded videos further enhanced students' understanding of the vision's language and practical application.

Considerable growth has been made in this Priority Area, as indicated by the completion of the vision and its six pillars. The school has also created several methods of communicating those pillars to students. The homeroom Google Slides, the creation and implementation of the freshman seminar, and the presence of the vision of the graduate in much of the school's literature are all signs of growth in educating students, staff, and the community about the vision of the graduate.

Additionally, adding the vision of the graduate pillars within the school's curriculum documents is a sign of growth in this area. Work is being done to connect the curriculum in classes to the vision of the graduate goals for students. Also, students who completed the civics class projects, financial reality fair, and the Kindness in Motion Project reported that their work was proof that they had met some or all of the pillars of the vision of the graduate.

Recommended Next Steps

Create more intentional opportunities for student voice and leadership in the ongoing review and refinement of the vision of the graduate development process, including student feedback mechanisms and leadership opportunities that directly connect to the vision of the graduate pillars

Expand project-based and experiential learning opportunities that directly connect classroom content to real-world applications, allowing students to demonstrate the vision of the graduate competencies in meaningful contexts.

Develop and communicate a comprehensive plan to introduce the vision of the graduate to middle school students

Make the vision of the graduate more visible for students and staff within the building via posters/signage in common areas and classrooms

Develop a robust assessment framework to collect quantitative and qualitative data on the vision of the graduate implementation, creating mechanisms for ongoing feedback and iterative improvement of the graduate profile

Develop and implement a plan to:

- define what proficiency looks like for each aspect within the vision of the graduate with specific and measurable criteria for success
- integrate opportunities for students to practice the skills within the vision of the graduate and receive feedback on their progress throughout the curriculum
- embed the vision of the graduate into curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices

Develop and implement a formal process to assess and communicate each individual learner's progress toward achieving the school's vision of the graduate to learners and their families

Develop an annual report on whole-school progress toward learners' achievement of the vision of the graduate

Sources of Evidence

- department leaders
- facility tour
- priority area meetings
- school leadership
- school summary report
- student work
- student-led conferences
- students
- teacher interview
- teachers

Priority Area 2

Priority Area

The school will ensure that it has a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments across the school by reformatting and completing its school-wide curricular documents following a consistent template to include instructional strategies and alignment with the new vision of the graduate. (2.2a, 2.2, 2.3)

Action, Impact, and Growth

Since the Collaborative Conference, the school began standardizing the curriculum for all classes in all departments using a common template. The work began by establishing Understanding by Design (UbD) as the framework for standardizing the curriculum documents. In addition, a central repository was created to house standardized curriculum documents as they were created and/or revised from older curriculum formats. The vision of the graduate is being incorporated into UbD curriculum documents as they are created/revised. The school improvement plan for 24/25 lists a goal to finish the curriculum in a standard form, including a vision of the graduate section, by August 2025.

Northwestern has a shared curriculum leadership model, as there is no district or school curriculum director to coordinate and/or ensure consistency and school-wide prioritization. Therefore, the curriculum coordination efforts are largely accomplished via informal conversations and sharing of curriculum documents between departments and teachers. Department heads lead and support teachers in completing this work during monthly department meetings, PLCs, and summer curriculum time. The district has supported curriculum work in the summer when department heads request it. Many documents have been created/updated, but the work is ongoing. Progress differs across some subject areas depending on how much PLC time was available for the job. Department heads welcome additional time to meet collaboratively to coordinate the curriculum prioritization and review process would be welcomed.

Focusing on a common standards-based curriculum has enabled teachers of the same classes at varying levels (e.g., foundations, college prep, honors) to establish agreed-upon enduring understandings, essential questions, concepts/skills, formative and summative assessments, instructional strategies, and differentiation strategies. Teachers have access to shared Google Folder/Classroom repositories of resources, instructional activities, and formative and summative assessments to support curriculum consistency across classes. Teachers of common classes, however, do not all have regular formalized PLC time to support the collaborative work of ensuring curriculum consistency across common classes and class levels. Thus, much of the curriculum implementation work is accomplished informally between teachers.

The growth in this area is evidenced by the increased number of curriculum documents using the same UbD templates. Additionally, the collection of curriculum documents in one centralized repository allows easy access to documents to support the curriculum review cycle to be developed in 2025-26.

Recommended Next Steps

Conduct a curriculum audit to determine the status of the curriculum for each course in the program of studies

Develop and implement a plan for the completion of the curriculum

Develop and implement a curriculum review and revision cycle to ensure that all curricula are regularly reviewed and updated

Develop and implement a collaborative structure for department heads to meet to ensure consistency of curriculum creation, training, and implementation across disciplines

Sources of Evidence

- central office personnel
- classroom observations
- department leaders
- priority area meetings
- priority area observations
- school leadership
- school summary report
- teacher interview
- teachers

Priority Area 3

Priority Area

The school will create formal common planning time for grade-level teams in PLCs to increase opportunities for examining student work and making instructional decisions. (1.4, 3.3, 3.4)

Action, Impact, and Growth

The school has taken steps to enhance and improve its PLC structure. As part of the ongoing effort to strengthen these communities, teachers reconvened under the "Revisiting PLCs" initiative to add more common planning time to the one formal monthly meeting. Two additional 55-minute PLC prep meetings have been added to teacher schedules within the four-day rotation.

Further efforts to strengthen PLCs in Region 7 have focused on increasing professional development to help staff understand their current status as PLC teams and identify areas for growth. In October, the superintendent delivered a district-wide professional development session titled "Professional Learning Community Refresher." This session aimed to establish consistency and improve understanding across the district. Additionally, the superintendent provided feedback on PLC self-assessments, offering guidance to support their continued growth and effective functioning.

A key action step has also been encouraging staff to engage more deeply with data. Some PLCs, like the mathematics team, benefit from additional common planning time. This allows them to review and analyze student data more effectively, leading to informed instructional decisions.

Another important action step is intentionally integrating PLC work and time into the school improvement plan (SIP). This formal inclusion promotes shared accountability and ensures that PLCs remain a critical part of the district's improvement efforts.

The additional time dedicated to PLCs has the potential to deepen the focus on building common assessments and more rigorously analyzing data. However, a consistent structure may help maximize the limited time available for this work.

The superintendent's professional development efforts have had a positive impact by ensuring that each PLC engages in reflective practice through self-assessments, setting goals for growth, and tracking progress. These self-assessments, aligned with the "Four Guiding Questions of PLCs," the "Seven Keys to Creative Collaboration," and the "Seven Stages of Professional Learning Teams," have fostered a growth mindset within the PLCs. By the end of the year, each PLC aims to move forward along this developmental continuum.

The mathematics PLC, particularly, has seen tangible benefits from more focused data analysis. By examining standardized assessment data (SAT), mathematics teachers identified gaps in their curriculum, particularly in problem-solving and data analysis. This analysis led to shifts in curriculum emphasis, such as incorporating statistics, ratios, proportions, percentages, and probability into geometry courses. This intentional shift in standards alignment aims to improve student preparation for the SAT.

Incorporating PLCs into the SIP has reinforced their importance, ensuring shared responsibility for district-wide growth. By using PLCs to review testing data and identify intervention strategies, the district has underscored their significance in improving teaching and learning.

The school has demonstrated growth in this area, particularly through staff advocacy for more common planning time. Staff have expressed a strong desire to collaborate with the superintendent to explore additional opportunities for common planning time in the 2025-2026 district calendar. Staff understanding of the importance of common planning time has increased, with many recognizing how it facilitates effective collaboration and enhances the work of PLCs. Suggestions for revising the district schedule to create consistent PLC time, such as implementing a delayed start or early release, highlight the need for and appreciation of dedicated and structured

PLC time.

Professional development related to PLCs has also shown progress. The superintendent's ongoing support and commitment to this work have laid a strong foundation. All staff members have engaged in self-assessments based on established PLC frameworks, and some staff have requested further professional development to deepen their understanding and implementation of PLC best practices.

Data-driven decision-making and curriculum alignment have seen growth in certain PLCs. For example, the mathematics PLC has made significant strides in using data to inform instructional decisions. Their work on responding to assessment data, adjusting units to prioritize areas of need, and collaborating on unit and assessment design in the UbD format reflects positive outcomes. However, this progress is still occurring in pockets, and there is no district-wide systemic process to ensure consistent data-informed decision-making across all PLCs.

In some departments, PLC minutes have evolved from short phrases to more detailed narratives, better capturing the work occurring in PLC meetings. This shift reflects an increased awareness among staff of what effective PLCs could look like and how they should operate, augmented by the superintendent's district-wide professional development.

The school would benefit from continued professional development to ensure that PLC time is structured effectively and consistently. As outlined in the school improvement plan, a systemic process for reviewing and analyzing data from common assessments remains a goal.

In October, PLCs completed self-assessments to evaluate their alignment with the "Four Guiding Questions of PLCs," the "Seven Keys to Creative Collaboration," and the "Seven Stages of Professional Learning Teams." The results of these assessments were shared with the principal and superintendent, who provided feedback on each PLC's current status and projected growth.

Recommended Next Steps

Engage with the administration to explore options for increasing common planning time, such as implementing delayed start or early release days

Develop a more consistent format and structure for PLCs, including standardized agendas, meeting minutes, and feedback mechanisms

Ensure that PLC meetings systematically analyze assessment data and student work artifacts, using protocols to guide discussions.

Choose and implement a research-based PLC model to provide a consistent framework, common language, and clear expectations for PLC work across the district

Use "Looking at Student Work" or other protocols to examine student artifacts and data, ensuring focused and intentional discussions during PLCs

Arrange PLC meetings with teachers from similar grade levels or courses, ensuring a unified approach to curriculum standards

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- department leaders
- priority area meetings

- school leadership
- school summary report
- student-led conferences
- teachers

Part 3 - Reflection on Student Learning

Reflection on Student Learning

Instructional practices at the school are thoughtfully designed to address individual student learning needs, with strategies carefully tailored to class size and academic course levels. The instructional practices are often influenced by class size and organizational groupings of students by course academic level: general, college preparatory, honors, and AP. For example, in small classes, students receive consistent, individualized support, but there may be limited options for additional grouping strategies. In lower-level classes, guided notes and study guides are widely used to prepare for assessments. Larger assignments are chunked into smaller, more manageable pieces. Teacher-provided scaffolding, such as graphic organizers and targeted practice sheets, allows students to demonstrate their learning as teachers externalize their thinking and model effective problem-solving. Teachers often anticipate students' misconceptions and actively address them in class. Regular education teachers work with special education teachers to modify assignments according to students' individualized education plans (IEPs). A tiered support system exists for non-identified students, with Tier I supports being identified in some department documents. Teachers are available to meet with students outside of scheduled class time; students frequently seek out their teachers for extra support during free periods and before and after school. Teachers use the results of formative assessments to adjust their instruction, and informal assessment practices are used throughout the school. Teachers monitor individual student progress through conversations, online quizzes such as Kahoot!, exit tickets, and frequent questioning during whole-class instruction. Some courses have created common formative assessments, and teachers are looking to expand this practice to include collaborative reviews of student performance in PLCs. There remain opportunities for more student-directed learning and movement within lower-level classes and scaffolded lessons to lead toward more cognitively challenging experiences. While the current practices show significant strengths, student-directed learning and increased cognitive complexity are noticeably lacking in lower-level courses. The school's commitment to meeting individual student needs is apparent, with teachers continuously adapting their instructional strategies to support student learning.

Many students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their learning. According to the NEASC survey, 61 percent of students feel they can make choices about their learning. Similarly, 66 percent of students feel they have opportunities to pursue their interests. Many students feel they have some freedom to explore topics that matter to them. There is a notable difference between core classes and electives, with students having more autonomy in elective courses. However, even within core subjects, teachers often provide some flexibility, allowing students to choose topics related to the core concepts or skills being taught, thus fostering a level of autonomy within the required curriculum. A substantial number of students engage in student-led, active learning experiences, particularly in elective courses and some core classes. For example, in the 12th-grade writer's workshop, students select one of six images and create a dialogue based on the image, demonstrating creative autonomy. In modern world history, students debate the Nuremberg Trials, actively researching and presenting evidence to defend or renounce the trials. In accounting, students develop and present lesson plans on an economic scandal, such as the VW emissions scandal, engaging in critical thinking and presentation skills. In a history of rock and roll class, students choose artists and genres to compare and analyze, allowing them to pursue personal interests within a historical context. In international studies/Model UN, students form groups with different committee representatives and reflect on their experiences at a Model UN conference, showcasing collaboration and student-driven learning. In ceramics, students research a modern ceramic artist and create their own piece inspired by the artist's style, offering a hands-on, creative learning experience. In the agriculture fruit and vegetable production class, students research and plant vegetables in a greenhouse, engaging in hands-on experimentation and tracking growth. In global issues, students design their own assessment questions based on their studies of U.S. immigration, demonstrating their ability to shape their learning assessments. Additionally, in the writer's workshop, students are given the choice of images to create dialogues after practicing punctuation, allowing them to apply their learning creatively. In honors geometry, students work collaboratively in groups to present mathematical concepts, ensuring that each student contributes to the presentation, fostering both individual and group learning. While there are limitations on student autonomy in core classes, there are numerous opportunities for students to have input into their learning, especially in elective subjects. The examples provided illustrate a strong emphasis on student-led activities, critical thinking, creative expression, and

collaboration across a variety of subjects. This approach reflects a balanced environment where teachers encourage independent learning within structured frameworks, fostering a sense of agency and engagement among students.

Many learners have opportunities to engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills. These higher-order skills are evident in the agricultural program, where students are required to complete supervised agricultural experiences throughout all four years. Faculty and students are understandably proud of the student-created projects associated with these courses. These long-term projects synthesize many of the skills articulated in the school's vision of the graduate. Other courses also provide opportunities for students to practice higher-level skills. In science, physics students design their own experiments to test claims, anatomy and physiology students use knowledge from prior dissections to diagnose conditions, and forensics students develop models that can be used to analyze crime scenes. In other departments, students investigated how elevation changes affect surveying, simulations were used to predict population growth, and language students solved puzzles using their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Day-to-day, however, students in higher-level classes have disproportionately more chances to engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills. The school may benefit by incorporating higher depth-of-knowledge activities into mandatory classes to provide all learners with opportunities to engage in meaningful learning.

Learners are routinely given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use it to support their learning. In addition to tests and quizzes, students demonstrate their learning through presentations, essays, worksheets, labs, and student-created lesson plans. In many art and technology department classes, student projects contain a written component in addition to creating a physical product. In social studies, students participate in debates. In one class, students engage in mock trials moderated by a guest attorney who acts as a judge. Students regularly receive feedback that they can use to improve their learning. Math continues to have a policy in which students can earn the chance to revise tests and improve their grades if they have previously created their own study guides based on provided unit objectives. In English, there are multiple ways students receive feedback on their writing. For example, teachers provide whole-class feedback through discussions of common issues they identified and provide student-specific, real-time comments on shared Google Docs. Working in small groups, students give feedback to their peers, and students also self-assess their responses by comparing them to model responses previously analyzed in class. These types of feedback drive the revision of written work in English. Across the school, teachers often use class time to provide individual feedback through formal and informal conferences. Many students have binders for each class; the coursework within their binders is organized and revised for accuracy.

Nearly 77 percent of students agree they use technology in all subjects to support and enhance their learning, indicating the school's effective integration of technology into its teaching practices. The school provides each student with a Chromebook, ensuring universal access to technology and additional computers are available to ensure that students always have access to necessary tools. Students can personalize their learning pace, particularly in subjects like math, using digital tools such as IXL, Khan Academy, Quizizz, and DeltaMath. These platforms allow students to work independently, reinforcing and extending their understanding of mathematical concepts. In addition to these math tools, other supportive digital resources are used to enhance student learning. Desmos and GeoGebra help students visualize and interact with mathematical concepts, while Newsela individualizes reading levels and provides real-time feedback to engage students with different reading abilities. In world language classes, BookWidgets is used to color code incorrect answers, enabling students to identify areas for improvement quickly. Technology is also incorporated into summative assessments across various subjects. For example, students use Desmos for math-related assessments, Google Sheets and other spreadsheet programs for data-related tasks, and cell phone videos for projects in multiple disciplines. Teachers use Google Classroom to deliver lessons, store materials, share resources, and communicate with students, creating a central hub for academic work. Several online platforms, including Kahoot, Blooket, GoFormative, Quizlet, Edpuzzle, and PearDeck, are used for interactive and formative assessments that engage students and reinforce learning. In specific classroom examples, technology is used in a variety of creative and engaging ways. In a sports marketing class, students read assigned online texts and used technology to identify key points and create personal notes. In a human development class, students worked in groups to research health-related topics using their Chromebooks, promoting collaborative learning. Precalculus students practiced converting between coordinates using Google Maps, integrating geographic tools with math learning. In the UConn ECE Spanish class, students used Blooket to practice conjugation, with the teacher analyzing the results to track student progress. In the 3D Home Design class, students employed an online design program to create home

designs for clients, blending creative and technical skills. Spanish II students watched a Facetime conversation video and answered comprehension questions, enhancing their listening and comprehension skills. In a history of rock and roll class, Kahoot was used to review artists and genres before a test. In an introduction to computer science class, students learned coding to understand how computer programs are created. Khan Academy is available to all students for instructional videos and additional practice, providing a flexible, self-paced learning option to reinforce classroom material. Integrating technology at Northwestern Regional High School supports and enhances student learning, fostering a more personalized, interactive, and engaging educational experience.

Part 4 - Capacity for Continuous Growth as a Learning Organization

Conceptual Understanding

The staff demonstrates a shared understanding of elements of effective instruction. Since the Collaborative Conference, faculty have worked to revise previous curriculum documents into a standardized format using the UbD model. The curriculum is now housed in a centralized location. The vision of the graduate has been defined by six pillars, but further work is needed to develop rubrics, integrate these elements more deeply into curriculum and lessons, and provide feedback to both students and parents. The master schedule affords some opportunities for teacher collaboration in addition to monthly PLC meetings. Although the use of PLC time to advance curriculum and the vision of the graduate is still in the early stages, efforts are underway to establish a consistent framework.

Teachers and administrators have been working to foster a shared understanding of the school's Priority Areas to support growth and improvement. The school has identified three Priority Areas for Growth based on the NEASC Standards and Principles: (1) embedding the transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions required for future success, as outlined in the vision of the graduate into all curricula; (2) designing and implementing a system to provide feedback to learners and their families on each student's progress toward achieving the vision of the graduate; and (3) completing and standardizing school-wide curricular documents, with a focus on instructional strategies and alignment with the vision of the graduate.

Since the Collaborative Conference, the school has defined six pillars of the vision of the graduate. This vision has been formally adopted and introduced to faculty and staff through various initiatives. It has also been introduced to students via freshman seminars, daily homeroom slides, ninth-grade student/parent orientations, and features in the school's magazine and student agendas for the current school year. The school would benefit from continued efforts to communicate the purpose of the vision of the graduate and more effectively integrate the vision of the graduate with authentic learning opportunities across all disciplines, as well as developing a system to track and share student progress toward achieving the vision with families and the community.

The curriculum in most departments has been updated using a consistent format and stored in a centralized location. The adoption of the UbD model and integration of the vision of the graduate, have ensured consistency across disciplines. Department heads have coordinated these efforts during PLC opportunities, including paid summer curriculum work. The school aims to complete curriculum updates by August 2025, with a review and revision cycle planned to begin next school year. The school may benefit from developing a comprehensive curriculum review and revision process, including piloting new courses, gaining multi-level stakeholder approval, mapping learning objectives to the vision of the graduate pillars, and ensuring rigorous vertical and horizontal alignment across all content areas and grade levels.

The school has made progress in providing professional development time for teachers, including two additional PLC periods in the rotation and one formal monthly meeting. However, more coordinated collaboration time is required to make significant progress on the important vision of the graduate and curriculum development work. The school is exploring options such as peer observations, instructional rounds, and early release time for PLC work. While these ideas show promise, the current model could be further refined. For example, PLCs may benefit from dedicated, structured time for collaborative planning, data analysis, and curriculum development, focusing on creating common assessments and sharing best practices that support the vision of the graduate framework.

Commitment

Northwestern Regional High School demonstrates a commitment to continuous growth and educational excellence. The school community, including its administrative team and faculty, has actively developed the vision of a graduate framework and is working collaboratively to align the curriculum with the six pillars. While the

vision of the graduate pillars have been established, the school recognizes the need for ongoing refinement, including comprehensive communication strategies, systematic curriculum and scoring criteria development, and authentic assessment opportunities. Educators are dedicated to creating authentic learning experiences, embedding the vision of the graduate competencies across content areas, and supporting student growth through innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Educators' collaboration time is primarily focused on creating a shared understanding of effective instructional strategies and developing and updating curricula. The school is committed to preparing students for future success and may benefit from ongoing professional development around PLCs and UbD curriculum development. The professional community may also benefit from additional release time within the academic year to focus on the work of high-functioning PLCs.

Competency

Northwestern Regional High School's administrative team and faculty demonstrate the competency to implement the required changes to address priority growth areas.

The school has developed an updated improvement plan to guide efforts in embedding the vision of the graduate, updating curricula, and creating formal, common planning time for PLCs. The administration and faculty have collaboratively introduced the vision of the graduate through initiatives such as freshman seminars, daily homeroom slides, and a grade nine student/parent orientation. Additionally, vision of the graduate elements are incorporated in student agendas and the Northwestern Regional School District No. 7 newsletter, which is distributed to community members. Teachers have integrated the vision of the graduate into the updated curriculum format and use PLC time to explore strategies for embedding vision of the graduate elements into lessons and providing students with opportunities for feedback and self-reflection on their growth in the six pillars.

The administration and faculty have made progress in reformatting and completing curriculum documents for a wide range of courses, aligning them with the UbD framework, and ensuring the integration of instructional strategies and vision of the graduate elements. These curriculum documents are stored in a centralized location, and a review and revision timeline has been established. In addition, the administration, alongside the professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC), which includes teachers, has advanced the creation of formal, common planning time for grade-level teams in PLCs. The "Revisiting PLCs" initiative has provided teachers two additional PLC periods during the scheduling rotation to facilitate collaboration and contribute to curriculum updates. Professional development sessions have supported this work, including a PLC refresher presentation, the "Seven Stages of Professional Learning Teams" assessment, and a standardized format for documenting PLC meetings.

While Northwestern Regional High School has made significant strides in these areas, future efforts should focus on aligning and integrating these initiatives to strengthen the overall framework. This will ensure that educators have a clear understanding of the six vision of the graduate pillars, embedding the transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions of the vision of the graduate into the curricular documents and maximize the effectiveness of PLC time to enhance competency in implementing the vision of the graduate across all areas.

Capacity

Northwestern Regional High School understands the needs of its learners and demonstrates the capacity to meet the needs of diverse learners. The school has demonstrated growth in all identified Priority Areas since the Collaborative Conference visit. However, time is a barrier to progress in some areas. The academic calendar includes four professional development days in the fall. However, the majority of this time is utilized for mandatory training. The limited common planning time during the instructional day may or may not support multiple members of the same department, resulting in inconsistent opportunities for meaningful collaboration. While some systems and structures are in place to advance the work, the frequency and duration of time that educators have to sustain focus on Priority Areas is limited. The school may benefit from evaluating the efficacy of the district calendar and allocating more time to professional development and PLCs throughout the school year.

Additional Information

Additional Information

Standard 1 Principle 1

School's rating in the Self-Reflection report: Developing

School's rating in the Summary Report: Implementing

Explanation from the School

Northwestern Regional High School has implemented our vision of the graduate starting in the 2021-2022 school year. Since then, we have started educating our students on the vision of the graduate using our daily homeroom slides. In addition, as departments begin to rewrite their curriculum, they identify how each element of the vision of the graduate is integrated within their curriculum.

Standard 2 Principle 1

School's rating in the Self-Reflection report: Initiating

School's rating in the Summary Report: Developing

Explanation from the School

Northwestern Regional High School has implemented our vision of the graduate starting in the 2021-2022 school year. Since then, we have started educating our students on the vision of the graduate using our daily homeroom slides. In addition, as departments begin to rewrite their curriculum, they are identifying how each element of the vision of the graduate is integrated within their curriculum, and we are developing a system for assessing student mastery of the vision of the graduate. Further, we have utilized our vision of the graduate as the foundational document in developing our freshman seminars, financial reality fair for seniors, and other school-related activities and functions.

Standard 3 Principle 1

School's rating in the Self-Reflection report: Developing

School's rating in the Summary Report: Implementing

Explanation from the School

The document is used to inform decision-making during one-on-one meetings between department heads and the principal.

Standard 4 Principle 4

School's rating in the Self-Reflection report: Developing

School's rating in the Summary Report: Implementing

Explanation from the School

The media specialist position is now full-time. She regularly attends classrooms to help students with research assignments and helps teachers fully utilize databases and other resources. She has also developed a robust

website with a variety of resources, implemented a summer reading challenge, and created an inviting space for students and staff to extend their learning.

Commendations

Commendation

The welcoming and inclusive community atmosphere that prioritizes student well-being and success

Commendation

The comprehensive range of courses that cater to diverse learning styles, interests, and academic levels, providing multiple pathways for student engagement and growth

Commendation

The robust array of after-school programs and clubs that provide students with extensive opportunities to explore interests, develop skills, and engage meaningfully beyond traditional classroom learning

Commendation

The comprehensive selection of advanced and dual-credit courses that enable students to challenge themselves academically and support their college and career readiness goals

Commendation

The dedicated ninth-grade school counselor and structured freshman seminar program that ensure new students receive targeted support, guidance, and resources to navigate their high school transition successfully

Commendation

The strong collaborative approach to leadership characterized by effective communication and a coordinated commitment to student success

Commendation

The culture of mutual trust, respect, and professional autonomy that empowers teachers through meaningful discretion in curriculum development and instructional approaches

Commendation

The safe, clean, well-maintained, and comprehensive facilities that provide a secure and supportive learning environment for students and staff

Commendation

The school's robust communication channels that strategically engage the community through diverse media platforms, including both digital and print means to share institutional highlights, achievements, and important updates

Additional Recommendations

Recommendation

Expand opportunities for project-based and experiential learning that directly connect classroom content to real-world applications, allowing students to demonstrate the vision of the graduate competencies in meaningful contexts

Recommendation

Design a comprehensive professional development plan that builds leadership capacity, provides targeted training on innovative instructional strategies, and supports educators in embedding the vision of the graduate competencies across all content areas

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

This Initial/Decennial Accreditation Report of the Visiting Team reflects the findings of the school's Summary Report 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 the 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.

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.

To monitor the school's progress, the Commission requires that the principal submit a First Report of Progress and Planning and routine Three- and Six-Year Reports of Progress and Planning describing the school's progress implementing the Priority Areas as well as submitting an updated improvement/growth plan. The Commission may request additional Special Progress Reports if one or more of the Standards or Priority Areas for Growth are not being met in a satisfactory manner, if additional information is needed on matters relating to the school's alignment with the Standards for Accreditation, or substantive changes occur in the school.

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 impacts the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Commission's Substantive Change Policy is included on the next page. All other substantive changes should be included in the Reports on Progress and Planning 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, hosted a Collaborative Conference, developed an improvement/growth plan, and completed a Summary Report. The time and effort dedicated to the Accreditation process, school improvement/growth, the Summary Report, and the preparation for the visit ensured a successful Initial/Decennial Accreditation 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)

Co-Chair: Heather Taylor - Putnam High School

Co-Chair: Mark Ambruso - Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School

Team Members

Larry Boada - Orville H. Platt High School

Ms. Kathleen Coghil - William H. Hall High School

Abbie Lareau - Regional District #19

Lee McMillan - Nonnewaug High School

Brad Normand - Frederick U. Conard High School

Laurinda Rua - Central High School