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

Hanover High School and Richmond Middle School comprise the two-state Dresden Interstate School District. One of the last bills signed by John F. Kennedy in 1963 created the Interstate Dresden School District. It was the first interstate school district in the United States. The Dresden Interstate School District Compact is the legally binding agreement for district operations between the two towns of Hanover and Norwich. The Dresden School District is part of the School Administrative Unit 70 (SAU 70). The SAU 70 district includes two elementary schools, the Marion Cross School in Norwich, Vermont, and the Bernice A. Ray School, in Hanover, New Hampshire. Students from Norwich and Hanover come together as one class in the seventh grade at Richmond Middle School. The 12-member Dresden School Board comprises five Norwich School Board members and seven Hanover School Board members. The fifth member from the Norwich Board is a non-voting member of the Dresden Board.Under the statutory Compact, expenditures properly approved by Dresden voters become a binding charge against the regular school districts of Norwich and Hanover. The amount each is to raise and turn over to Dresden is determined by a formula incorporated in the Interstate Compact agreement, based on the number of pupils attending from each town. According to the Compact, the Norwich and Hanover school districts will continue to function to raise tax money for Dresden, provide necessary school bus service, and furnish primary education facilities for each town for the present.

The Town of Norwich is located in Windsor County, Vermont. In 2024, the population of Norwich was 3,639 compared to a population of 3,614 in 2020. The average household income in Norwich is $181,549, with a poverty rate of 5.39 percent. The median age in Norwich town is 40.6 years: 38.2 years for males, and 42.8 years for females. According to the most recent American Community Survey (ACS), the racial composition of Norwich town was 92.49 percent white, 5.17 percent two or more races, and 2.35 percent Asian.

The town of Hanover is located in Grafton County, New Hampshire. Hanover's 2024 population of 12,146 reflects a 2.19 percent increase since the most recent census, which recorded a population of 11,886 in 2020. The average household income in Hanover is $205,266,with a poverty rate of 7.15 percent. The median age in Hanover is 26.9 years: 24.1 years for males, and 27.6 years for females. According to the most recent American Community Survey (ACS), the racial composition of Hanover town is 74.8 percent white, 10.21 percent Asian, 9.31 percent two or more races, 3.68 percent black or African American, 1.5 percent other race, 0.35 percent Native American, and 0.16 percent Pacific Islander.The majority of Hanover High School parents hold advanced degrees.

Students from surrounding towns in Vermont and New Hampshire also attend Hanover High School as part of school choice programs in towns that do not have public high schools. The latest figuresshow the average cost per pupil is$23,419.The average cost per pupil in New Hampshire for the 2023–2024 school year was $21,545.

In FY24, there were 667 students enrolled at Hanover High School. In 2022, there were two English language learners at the school. This year, we have nine English language learners. In 2022, the number of students receiving special education services, IEP or 504 plan, was 27 percent (186 students). In 2022, 4 percent of students were eligible for free/reduced meals. Currently, 6 percent of students receive free and reduced lunch. We have 43 Vermont and 80 New Hampshire tuition students, with private tuition students adding six more. Compared to this year's actual enrollments, there is an expected increase of 17 students next year, and 131 of our enrolled students next year are projected to be tuition students. The largest increase, 33 students, is expected to be in the entering ninth-grade class. There is still uncertainty with some of our Vermont tuition students due to consolidations and the recently settled legal challenge allowing public school funds to be used for private school tuition, including religious entities.

Due to the nature of the staffing duties and changing class sizes, some adjustments were made to staffing for FY26. The school increased FTE's in regular education teachers by 0.10, and .10 FTE in the ESOL teaching department due to an increased need for services. A reduction was made in the regular education assistants by 1.0 FTE due to a consolidation of departmental coverage. There was a slight adjustment in special education aide hours, resulting in a decrease of 0.04 FTE, and expanded media assistant coverage in the library with an additional 0.34 FTE. The total staff FTE decreased by 0.50 FTEs overall. The most significant changes to the

school's expenditures were in salary increases at 4 percent plus steps/track advancements and associated benefits, and a health insurance rate increase of 12.9 percent.

Rising property taxes are a grave concern to community members in both Norwich and Hanover. Addressing this concern is extremely challenging due to the complex nature of the Interstate School District and the different approaches each state uses to fund public schools. The FY26 Hanover High School budget total is a 3.88 percent increase compared to FY25. The impact of the Dresden budget is included within the tax rate estimates for the Hanover and Norwich districts and their respective budget documents. Hanover's assessment is 1.39 percent higher than 2024-2025, and the Norwich assessment is expected to increase by 2.33 percent. The projected increase in the current tax rate depends on many state-mandated factors that have not yet been ratified.

The school'smission 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 co-curricular activities. Curricular offerings reflect the Dresden Board of Education's graduation policy and include board policy and templates for curriculum instruction, development, and approval.Dresden Policy ILBBrequires 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 a partnership with Hartford Area Career and Technology Center (HACTC) and supporting college and career readiness with several dual credit courses. Students can take courses throughDartmouth Collegeand dual enrollment opportunities in theRunning Start programassociated with New Hampshire's Community College System,Vermont's Early College program, and through the personalized learning department's independent studyorsenior bridgesopportunities. Co-curricular activities comprise a significant part of the Hanover High School 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 throughYouth-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. We have adesign lab that can allow studentsto become industry-certified in CAD. The extended learning opportunities (ELO) program matches students with local internships that meet student interests.

Students are frequently recognized for their academics, arts, citizenship, and athletic excellence. Various competitions, performances, and recitations in math, science, and world languages allow students to demonstrate mastery in these areas. Each spring, students are recognized for academic, music, drama, and community service achievements in our graduating class, and a separate awards ceremony is held for grades 9 through 11. Eighty-nine percent of students graduating from Hanover High School attend a four-year college or university. Most remaining students report intending to attend a two- or four-year institution following a gap year, travel, and/or employment. In the fall of 2022, Hanover High School received the National Blue Ribbon award.

Community Summary Links

- Dresden FY25 Budget Tuition Rate Setting
- Dresden FY 2025-26 Budget Book and Exhibits
- Dresden FY 2025-26 Budget Presentation V.5 Jan 7, 2025 pdf
- World Population Review Hanover

- World Population Review Norwich
- Dartmouth Community High School Program
- Hartford Area Career and Technical Center (HACTC)
- Running Start Program
- Dual Enrollment HHS link
- Vermont's Early College Program
- Early College HHS link for more information
- Senior Bridges
- Youth-in-Action
- Blue Ribbon Award letter
- Hanover High School Blue Ribbon Application 2022
- Design Lab

Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate

Hanover High School Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate

NEASC Decennial Report 2025

Core Values, Beliefs, and 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) and the identification of outcome indicators necessary to monitor the SAU70 Board Strategic Plan.

Hanover High SchoolMission 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 identified in our SAU 70 Portrait of a Graduate/Learner.

Portrait of a Graduate/Learner

Critical Thinker: 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' opinion, 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, 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 intention of others
- Value diversity of perspectives as a way to both acknowledge differences and find common ground

School-Wide Core Competencies (Expectations for Student Learning)

ACADEMIC SKILLS

- Reads actively and critically.
- Writes/creates effectively.
- Speaks/ presents effectively.
- Listens attentively and critically.
- Identifies and utilizes a variety of resources for obtaining information.
- Employs multiple strategies in critical thinking, problem-solving, and performance.
- Demonstrates knowledge and skills in a variety of forms in different disciplines.

SOCIAL & CIVIC SKILLS

- Works effectively and responsibly as an individual and in groups.
- Acts as a responsible citizen using the democratic process to address concerns and effect change in the community, state, nation, and world.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the necessary balance between the resource needs of human beings and the finite nature of the environment.

School Improvement/Growth Plan

The school improvement/growth plan is not attached.

Related Files

- 2025_03_01-08_44_School Growth Improvement Plan Principles updated with Goal 5.docx.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 Hanover High School in Hanover, New Hampshire. 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

The school community provides a socially and emotionally safe environment for students and adults. The Hanover High School Portrait of a Graduate emphasizes empathy and reinforces it through classroom norms and advisory. The school conducts regular equity audits and integrates findings into professional development and instruction.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 1.2a - Learning Culture

Foundational Element 1.2a

The school has created written documents describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and portrait of a graduate. The school's core values are expressed in a mission statement that drives decision-making. A district-wide collaborative process developed the portrait of a graduate, which includes the transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for the future success of all students.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 2.2a - Student Learning

Foundational Element 2.2a

There is a written curriculum in a largely consistent format for all courses in all departments across the school. The written curriculum includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, skills, instructional strategies, and assessment practices. The school is working on a process for continually refining and updating these documents.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 3.1a - Professional Practices

Foundational Element 3.1a

The school has a current school improvement and growth plan. The plan includes all of the Priority Areas identified in the Collaborative Conference report and has informed decision-making at the school. For example, the school has recorded all curriculum using the agreed-upon district template. Student well-being has been enhanced through the advisory program and expanded academic supports, including an academic coaching class and a drop-in "help hub" staffed by teachers and peer advisors.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 3.6a - Professional Practices

Foundational Element 3.6a

Hanover High School does not have its own career and technical education program. Students in the Dresden district who want to be part of a career and technical education program can attend the regional career and technical center on a full or part time basis.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Elements 4.1a - Learning Support

Foundational Elements 4.1a

The school has intervention strategies designed to support all learners. The school builds in support for all ninth graders, which includes study hall and study skills classes. As students grow, they are gradually given more independence and guided choice. Students who show that they need more to succeed are identified by teachers and administrators and assigned by counselors to appropriate supports. Potential interventions include counseling, study skills and academic coaching classes, and referral to the pupil services team for potential educational evaluation. The school has a response-to-needs program that serves students reentering school after extended absences and any students who have experienced a recent hardship that prevents them from accessing school without support. All departments have resource centers to provide subject-based extra help. A centrally located "help hub" provides drop-in academic support to all students.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 5.1a - Learning Resources

Foundational Element 5.1a

The school site and plant support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services. The building is clean and well-maintained. It is accessible to people with disabilities that limit their mobility and complies with local fire, health, and safety regulations. The facilities support the district's rich curricular and co-curricular programs, including the arts, athletics, and technical arts. The school's Wi-Fi is adequate for supporting the use of technology across the curriculum as well as the school's operational needs.

Rating

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 5.5a - Learning Resources

Foundational Element 5.5a

The school provides a physically safe environment for students and adults. Investments in infrastructure and the learning environment reflect the school's dedication to maintaining a secure educational setting. The physical plant is well maintained. Access to the school building from the outside is limited to two doors monitored by school personnel. Visitors sign in and wear lanyards. Updated safety protocols and emergency preparedness measures ensure a secure environment for all students and staff. All school staff receive yearly training in emergency protocols. A registered school nurse staffs a health office. Survey data indicate that students, staff, and parents feel that the school is a physically safe environment for 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	Does Not Meet	Meets	Meets	Meets
2.2a - Student Learning	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet	Meets	Meets
3.1a - Professional Practices	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet	Meets	Meets
3.6 - Professional Practices			Meets	Meets
4.1a - Learning Support			Meets	Meets
5.1a - Learning Resources	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
5.5a - Learning Resources	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets

Priority Area 1

Priority Area

Complete a transparent and consistent documentation of our curriculum that is accessible to our community externally and internally. (2.2a, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7)

Action, Impact, and Growth

The school has moved in an organized manner to document its curriculum using a consistent format. First, the department coordinators and administration at the high school met with the assistant superintendent to set up a three- to five-year action plan. Next, the assistant superintendent created and shared a common curriculum template to be used throughout the district. Since 2023, the school and district have prioritized providing time and resources to teachers and departments for this work, including professional development time built into the schedule and paid summer work time. This effort has resulted in shared completed curriculum templates for all courses. The district has begun summarizing the curricula for dissemination on the school website. Summaries have been posted for some courses.

The impacts of these actions have included ongoing discussions between teachers about practices that should be consistent across all classrooms. For example, all sections of the same course have common assessments and grading practices in the math and social studies departments. Other departments are working toward that goal. Additionally, students and some faculty have voiced concerns about inconsistencies between teachers regarding retakes, posting assignments, and grading procedures. Teachers acknowledge that reassessment, late work, and grading policies differ from teacher to teacher and course to course. Thus, the work on mapping the curriculum in a consistent format has brought focus to areas needing refinement to ensure clarity for both staff and students.

Work on this Priority Area has contributed to the school's growth. The completion of the curriculum maps and the posting of some curriculum summaries to the school's website have promoted clarity and transparency. Perhaps more importantly, this work has begun discussions about the balance between teacher autonomy and consistency, which will benefit students and staff alike.

Recommended Next Steps

Develop and implement a plan to ensure the development and use of common assessments that ensure consistent and equitable learning opportunities across grades and courses

Provide specific and measurable criteria for success to learners before assessments and ensure regular and consistent checks for understanding in ways that engage every learner's thinking, including self-assessment

Align and cross-check curriculum maps to coordinate content, identify gaps, and limit redundancy

Develop and implement a formal, ongoing curriculum cycle of review and revision for all courses in all departments

Sources of Evidence

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

Priority Area 2

Priority Area

Create a system to keep our curriculum document accurate and consistent between courses and in alignment with the strategic plan and portrait of a graduate. This includes common language regarding skills and competence across departments. (2.2a, 2.2, 1.7, 5.1a, 1.1, 1.3, 1.6)

Action, Impact, and Growth

With the support of district leadership, Hanover High School has developed a plan for the continued refinement and revision of curriculum documents. With the basic curriculum documents now complete, school personnel can begin ensuring that all maps are consistent, accurate, and contain common language regarding skills and competencies that reflect the portrait of a graduate.

As a result of this work, the school is beginning to create an environment that encourages ongoing collaboration and alignment. There is a heightened awareness of common language used across courses and a recognition that conversations around shared grading procedures, assessment practices, and late work policies are in the best interest of students.

Areas for growth include prioritizing and sticking with this work. The district's five-year plan supports this. Creating specific ongoing systems and structures for its continuation is a necessity.

Recommended Next Steps

Establish consistent reassessment, late work, and grading policies for all sections of the same course

Designate a specific time for teachers to revise curriculum maps periodically to ensure they reflect current course frameworks and what is actually being taught

Refine curriculum documents for all courses, including establishing how each course provides opportunities for students to meet the goals of the portrait of a graduate

Upload public-facing curriculum documents to the district website for all courses

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

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, examine the Hanover High School mission statement, portrait of a graduate/learner and strategic plan, and identify areas in the school where our practice supports these documents and areas that we need to develop and create a plan to develop those areas. (1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 2.4, 3.1, 3.1a, 3.3, 3.5, 5.1a)

Action, Impact, and Growth

Hanover High School has taken steps to create a deliberate practice of employing the school's agreed-upon core values in all decision-making at the school level and overarching district policy. In October of 2023, the district created the portrait of a graduate/learner, which was developed with input from all staff, administration, students, parents, and community members. The district then created a strategic plan, which prioritized documenting curriculum using a shared template. Hanover High School then created its own growth and improvement plan, which reflects district priorities and is aligned with recommendations from the NEASC Collaborative Conference report. After these documents were developed, the school began examining how they are integrated into the day-to-day work of the school by having teachers complete scavenger hunt type activities to hunt for and record evidence of where the mission statement and portrait of a graduate were evident. This helped school leaders identify areas of strength and highlighted areas where more improvement was needed.

Hanover High School has reaffirmed its commitment to all students engaging their minds in pursuing excellence and academic challenge. Students have multiple opportunities to advance their learning in elective courses and multiple opportunities for independent, self-paced learning through the senior bridges class and the independent studies through the ELO program. Students can also pursue dual-enrollment classes through Dartmouth College, local community colleges, and the area career and technical high school.

Hanover High School has taken action steps to ensure students respect themselves, others, and the environment. They have worked to consistently improve the existing advisory program by adding more social-emotional learning (SEL) activities. Peer mentors are trained to oversee and lead the advisory classes for ninth graders, fostering a strong school culture grounded in empathy and equity. The school also recently implemented a new cell phone policy, encouraging students to have better, deeper connections with their peers and greater classroom engagement. Hanover has continued supporting its restorative justice program, encouraging students to advocate for themselves and others. The March Intensive program allows students to experience the world beyond their high school experience and gain an appreciation of the world around them. For one week, the school pauses all typical course offerings to branch out and offer diverse courses that pique the collective interests of staff and students, encouraging students to participate in learning for learning's sake.

Hanover High School continues to support student voices in the decision-making processes within the school community. It is a democratic school; the council acts as the legislative branch in decision-making at the high school. Every year, 48 students, staff, and community members elect or volunteer to become council members. Any student, staff member, or community member can bring a proposal for a change to the council. These proposals are then debated and forwarded for either approval or rejection by the principal.

School administrators work to raise awareness of these foundational documents in their work with the faculty. When new tasks are presented to the faculty for discusion, they are always linked to the initiatives in the growth and improvement plan.

The impact of these action steps can be seen in the culture at Hanover High School, which is immediately apparent upon entering the building. Students constantly seek opportunities to improve their minds, hearts, and

voices. The multiple course electives and choices for independent studies have allowed students to pursue areas of interest, which drives ownership of learning. There has been an increase in equal access to opportunities for all students. For example, in English classes, students can decide which course level they desire and challenge themselves. The advisory program, specifically the peer leaders program, has resulted in greater student connection to each other, their advisors, and the school community as a whole. The peer leaders are passionate about guiding underclassmen through their first year of high school and assisting in facilitating SEL lessons. The democratic process through which Hanover High School operates gives students an authentic seat in all decision-making processes, including the hiring process, the student handbook, and other various school decisions. The council allows students to argue for change that they believe to be important, which empowers them to embrace the school's core values. The impact of these actions can also be seen in the March Intensive program, a week-long period in which students propose activities and trips to further their learning and understanding. These trips allow students to gain empathy for others.

The school's growth in this Priority Area is indicated by the continued amplification of student voice and the changes due to these policies. Hanover has also seen an increase in student clubs and organizations to over 80, largely due to the encouragement and support of faculty and staff for students to pursue their interests. Hanover's growth is also indicated by the decrease in the number of student discipline referrals and increased interaction between students and between students and faculty. The council's established judiciary committee allows for open discussion about discipline decisions and allows for more respectful, responsible, empathetic, and empowered students. The council also makes recommendations to the principal about curriculum and scheduling issues; as a result, they have experienced positive changes to both areas, including a new schedule in the fall of 2023, which reflected student and faculty requests. The council's success and the democratic process at Hanover High School led to student leaders presenting at the NEASC conference in the fall and sharing with other communities about this unique program.

The mission statement and portrait of a graduate of Hanover High School state that they encourage all students to achieve the competencies of critical thinking, empathy, responsibility, and problem solving. These competencies are deeply embedded in the high school's culture and allow students to equally pursue interests that not only interest them but also allow them to grow as learners and community members.

Recommended Next Steps

Define the portrait of a graduate in student-friendly language and devise specific and measurable criteria for success

Articulate what the portrait of a graduate means at all grade levels and use the language of the portrait of a graduate in conversations with students, in assignments, projects, etc.

Ensure that organizational practices promote equitable inclusion of students from historically underrepresented groups in all courses, programs, and opportunities, including career and technical education programs, and that the values embodied in the core values and portrait of the graduate are embedded in the learning process for all students

Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- department leaders
- priority area meetings
- priority area observations
- school leadership
- school summary report
- teacher interview

- teachers

Priority Area 4

Priority Area

To identify practices that promote student and staff well-being, 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, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.1

Action, Impact, and Growth

The school has taken various steps to manage students' mental health needs. School counselors are very accessible; for example, students can easily make appointments via posted QR codes. The school nurse regularly examines data to ensure that student needs are being met. Two therapy dogs are available for students at the school, and neurodiverse students, in particular, use them for self-regulation.

The amount of daily adult/student interaction and the relationships formed by this consistent, positive engagement help adults identify student concerns and intervene early. Twice-weekly advisory sessions allow teachers and students to connect and form bonds with diverse people. Well-trained peer leaders facilitate weekly social-emotional learning sessions in advisory and provide younger students with another resource to whom they can turn. Peer leaders are excited about and invested in their work; advisory teachers also value these student-to-student lessons. The new policy limiting cell phone use during the day also encourages engagement and social connections for students throughout their day. “How Are You Feeling Today?” signs posted prominently throughout the building allow students to assess their social-emotional status and take appropriate steps. TV screens in the building highlight upcoming religious and cultural celebrations to recognize different traditions. The ninth-grade physical education requirement is another way to expose students to mental health topics and form connections with staff members. All tenth graders take health classes, which include a mental health component. However, there remain some populations within the student body, such as some boys who struggle with discipline and achievement and LGBTQ+ students, that may require additional intervention.

Some steps have been taken to address well-being for adults in the building. The school provides each department with an academic resource center and an educational assistant to help with clerical work, proctor assessments, and perform other duties, which helps reduce teacher workload. Recent changes include creating a specified staff area for educational assistants and an increased number of social events. Staff members can work part-time to balance home life and teaching. However, promoting staff well-being has not been as much of a focus as student well-being.

The results of these actions can be seen in the increased well-being of students. For instance, the school counseling department is considering reducing staffing as fewer students require regularly scheduled mental health visits. Students also recognize the need for mental health interventions and address them in council, which has passed motions for a mental health day, implementing five-minute brain breaks during blocks, and prioritizing sleep when students arrive home late from away games on buses. Students have formed new clubs to explore interests and build connections with others. One change to raise awareness of these new activities has been adding a club fair in February and introducing a club of the month award. Staff members appreciate having opportunities to pursue their passions and create opportunities for students. Overall, there is a strong school culture grounded in empathy and equity, and staff members take pride in how well they support their students.

The growth from these actions is indicated by the increase in mental health interventions for students, which are resulting in improved outcomes and student agency in identifying additional needed interventions. Administrators and staff members report that, while some actionable items have been successfully implemented to improve staff well-being, additional interventions need to be identified to support adults in the building.

Recommended Next Steps

Prioritize adult conversations about how to balance student needs, school-wide demands for increasing collaboration, and individual workloads

Prioritize time for departmental and interdepartmental conversations and collaboration

Sources of Evidence

- department leaders
- facility tour
- priority area meetings
- priority area observations
- school leadership
- school summary report
- students
- teacher interview
- teachers

Priority Area 5

Priority Area

Establish a formal growth/school improvement plan. (3.1a, 3.1, 3.2, 1.4, 1.2)

Action, Impact, and Growth

Hanover High School is dedicated to cultivating an enriching and inclusive learning environment where students are encouraged to think critically, engage meaningfully, and take ownership of their educational journey. The school growth and improvement plan builds upon the institution's long-standing values and priorities, outlining key initiatives designed to enhance curriculum and instruction, support student well-being, and strengthen connections within the school and broader community. As a result of the Collaborative Conference process, Hanover High School developed a growth and improvement plan. The plan closely aligns with the concurrently developed SAU 70 Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Graduate/Learner. The strategic plan and portrait of a graduate/learner were written with input from all relevant stakeholders, including staff, administrators, students, parents, community members, and the school board. Hanover High School was given autonomy from the school board to determine the areas of highest need to be included in the growth and improvement plan. This plan aligned with recommendations from the Collaborative Conference report and identified priority goals, action steps, and relevant professional development needed to ensure future success.

The results of this work can be seen in refining the curriculum across departments and organizing it into clearly defined units of study. Units feature guiding or essential questions that promote critical thinking and deeper understanding. Completed units establish a clear framework for learning, aligning key concepts and content with the Hanover High School Portrait of a Graduate and shared with faculty, staff, and the wider community to ensure transparency.

Various professional development opportunities show growth in this Priority Area. Educators are provided with structured learning opportunities while maintaining autonomy in their professional growth. Teacher, school, and district-wide goals guide the learning process, ensuring that instructional practices evolve to meet the diverse needs of all students. Ongoing training in differentiated instruction, culturally responsive teaching, and technology integration empowers educators to create engaging and equitable classrooms. Collaborative professional learning, instructional coaching, and mentorship programs further enhance professional practices.

Growth is also evident in the increased emphasis on student access to the resources needed to thrive academically and personally. Strengthening mental health support, expanding social-emotional learning initiatives, and implementing intervention strategies form the foundation of the school's commitment to student well-being. The school faculty and staff are working to foster a more inclusive approach to special education and English speakers of other languages (ESOL) services.

Recommended Next Steps

Develop a process for creating future school growth and improvement plans that contain measurable action steps, timelines for completion, persons responsible, and resources needed

Engage all stakeholders (parents, teachers, administrators, community partners) in regular communication about the growth and improvement plan

Implement periodic reviews with stakeholder input to inform progress towards stated goals

Sources of Evidence

- central office personnel
- department leaders
- priority area meetings
- school board
- school leadership
- students
- teacher interview
- teachers

Part 3 - Reflection on Student Learning

Reflection on Student Learning

Instructional practices are often designed to meet the learning needs of each student. Best practices, personalized learning programs, and differentiation are ongoing efforts by teachers, staff, and administrators. 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 they know how each student learns best. Learning specialists report that classroom teachers are easy to access for collaboration in support of students. The ESOL program is expanding to meet the needs of an increasing population of students who are English language learners (ELLs). Many teachers check for understanding using various instructional strategies. In two world language classes, students could choose their own research topic, based on interest, choose what they wanted to present, and provide feedback to other students. Students have time to prepare questions for peers and provide feedback based on their level of understanding. In a methods class, students review gas law concepts by walking around the room to answer questions on task cards. This gives them the opportunity for movement and collaboration as they get up and interact with their peers. In a health class, students sit in a circle on camp chairs to encourage open sharing and comfort as difficult topics were discussed. Support dogs are used to help students in meetings with the school psychologist and/or when students become disregulated. Social studies classes make frequent use of discussion, in both small and large groups, to check for understanding. Most departments have an educational assistant to support students with retakes and make-up work. New this year, the help hub is open all day long and staffed by teachers and a variety of students who volunteer as “experts” willing to tutor peers in various subjects. Academic coaching is available, and in the face of unforeseen situations, students are referred to the response to need (RTN) program for assistance in the event of a life-altering situation.

Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their learning. Learning is personalized to varying degrees, and students feel they have the ability to guide their own learning. In English classes, students work collaboratively to ask questions of one another and take ownership of learning. The teachers use a variety of questioning techniques, and students elaborate. In DIY: Woods and Metals, students choose their own final project, as well as make design choices while creating wooden bears and planters. In an American government class, students analyze various primary sources from different media outlets and ask two questions they had after spending time with their sources. Questions are shared and direct the discussion and research that follows. All students can create their own independent study or extended learning opportunity (ELO). This program will continue to expand next year with the addition of a part-time (0.8) ELO coordinator. Currently, a pilot is running where the student and the advisor work together to develop individualized competencies and assessments. Any student can sign up to take the senior bridges class for the second semester of their senior year. All students participate in the March Intensive, where they are able to design or choose a personalized experience and spend four days immersed in experiential learning.

Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills. Eighty-three percent of faculty and 81 percent of students agree that teachers encourage their students to think deeply and rigorously instead of just trying to memorize things. 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. In a world language class, students choose a Spanish-speaking country, research, and share a current issue, such as child exploitation in gangs in El Salvador and child hunger in Peru. They give advice on how to combat these issues and provide feedback to other groups. Students in social studies classes are asked to use various sources to analyze which strategies of the civil rights movement were most effective in supporting a claim. In an economics class, the teacher uses volunteers to play out a simulation about resources. It took the students a few rounds of the simulation to catch on to the point that pushed them to use higher order thinking skills to understand a real world issue. In an honors biology class, students work on a process-oriented guided inquiry learning activity on photosynthesis during which they discover patterns and make connections to concepts by examining diagrams and data. The students

discuss their learning with each other throughout the process.

Students demonstrate their learning through a range of assessment practices that support and improve their learning. Formative assessments, such as exit tickets in the methods class, help identify areas in which students need support or if they are ready to move on with new content. In addition, in a biology classroom, students actively engage in a formative assessment activity involving photosynthesis. Students work on the task while the teacher intervenes with targeted support and questioning. Not only do students show their understanding through traditional summative assessments, but they also have the opportunity to demonstrate their learning through projects, presentations, and discussions. Ninety-three percent of faculty say they allow students to show what they have learned in different ways, not just tests. In an honors pre-calculus class, students create a "spirograph" using Desmos. They apply the math concepts they are learning to use parameters of their own choosing to create a successful product. They can apply their knowledge to solve a problem instead of completing a traditional pencil-and-paper test. Furthermore, the success criteria are communicated to students before they begin so that students understand the goal and targets. In some cases, such as a multiple genres project in advanced prose writing, teachers also provide exemplars so that students can view proficient work. In addition, students use self-assessment and peer feedback to improve their work. For example, in freshman English, students work in small groups to create the rubric for the assessment. These ideas were then brought to the entire class, where students create the rubric for their writing assessment together and then self- and peer-assess the final product. Finally, students are given some opportunities to present their learning to authentic audiences. In pop/rock ensemble, students of all abilities participate in a band that performs at local establishments. Although there is a wide variety of assessment strategies, only some departments, such as math, science, and social studies utilize common assessments.

Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support further growth. Students receive feedback from both teachers and peers. In many world language classes, learners are provided with consistent, timely and corrective feedback from both peers and teachers on research papers and oral presentations. In these classes, they are also given time in class to peer edit, revise their work, and self-reflect. In pottery, students reflect on their work and receive feedback from other students and teachers. Other students get ideas/inspiration for their own work and make adjustments. In several social studies classes, students work their way step by step toward a claim about the 1920s. Students are assessed along each step of the way, sometimes on paper, sometimes in full class discussion, and sometimes in small group table discussions with teacher check-ins. In advanced prose writing, students create drafts of several writing pieces using a variety of genres. Then, they receive peer and teacher feedback, creating at least three drafts. In music classes, teachers give students feedback in the moment to improve their work. The school plans to work on creating common rubrics in order to build consistency with feedback and grading procedures within common courses.

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. Teachers and students use Schoology as their learning management system. In geopolitics, students learn to research using the ArcGIS program. In an Algebra II honors class, students use Desmos to make exponential curves based upon Newton's second law of cooling. They analyze the temperature over time for both hot water and hot water surrounded by ice, and make a plot of temperature vs. time using temperature probes. In the senior CAPPS class, students design experiments to send up with NASA. In order to test their ideas, they conduct trials and create prototypes with 3-D printers. For example, they make carabiners from different plastics and then test their hypothesis regarding the strength of their creations. In addition, special education assistive technology enables students to access content. Eighty-four percent of students agree they use technology to learn, whether it is to access course materials, create projects, or collaborate with others.

Part 4 - Capacity for Continuous Growth as a Learning Organization

Conceptual Understanding

Hanover High School students, staff, and administration have a shared vision of effective learning. The school's mission statement has long been a cornerstone of educational practice. While the portrait of a graduate was developed only recently as part of a district-wide process, this document reflects the school's longstanding educational values and practices. Thus, though the portrait of a graduate itself is not widely known or referred to by students and staff, its attributes (critical thinking, empathy, responsibility, and communication) are referred to repeatedly by staff and students as what makes education at Hanover High School special.

These values are also reflected in school practices. Students and faculty can shape school protocols through democratic decision-making in the council, which has developed and promoted many of the school's best practices, including the March Intensive program. The school has created a rich array of personalized learning opportunities so that students can pursue their interests through electives, independent studies, leadership opportunities, internships, and co-curricular activities. As they progress through Hanover High School, students are allowed ever-widening opportunities for meaningful choice and responsibility. In the past two years, faculty and administrators have focused on ensuring that all students' experiences reflect the values embodied in the mission and portrait of a graduate. To this end, faculty have developed an array of academic supports and interventions, such as the help hub and academic coaching.

To ensure that all students meet the school's vision for learning, faculty also examine their curricula and instructional practices, exploring both differentiation and possibilities of using more heterogeneous grouping. Led by the committee on programs and procedures (CPP), faculty are beginning to discuss their grading and assessment practices, debating what should be similar across classes and what works best on a class-by-class basis. As the school works to fully live the principles in their mission statement and portrait of a graduate, these conversations, though difficult, are important to ensure that all students can access all that the school has to offer.

Commitment

The students, staff, school board, and the wider school community are proud of Hanover High School. They recognize that the school's high academic standards, innovative curriculum, student freedom and responsibility promotion, and dedication to meeting individual needs are both unique and beneficial to students. Students praise the school for its many opportunities for learning and growth, including the March Intensive, leadership opportunities like council and peer leader, and the opportunities to design their classes and internships for credit. Students are encouraged to approach problems with a growth mindset through teacher messaging and experiential learning embedded throughout the curriculum. Ninth-grade students learn to work together to overcome challenges in physical education. Students who struggle with executive function receive personalized support in classes like academic coaching, and seniors stretch themselves in senior bridges, designing real-world projects like building a drone or designing and planting an organic vegetable garden.

Faculty work hard to design meaningful and rigorous academic experiences for all students, while at the same time working to meet individual student needs. Faculty members are proud of their work to teach all learners and their efforts to offer a rich variety of learning opportunities for all students, both in classes and co-curricular activities. At the same time, faculty members are committed to their professional growth. The school administration is also committed to “radical transparency,” the desire to be clear about what they are looking for in terms of institutional growth, and a willingness to listen to and incorporate constructive feedback.

The district, school, and departments have invested considerable time in documenting curriculum using shared curriculum templates. This work requires collaboration and time. While there is still more to be done in terms of

reviewing and creating a system for revising these documents, the school and district's commitment to this process has enabled them to make strong progress.

The school has also shown great capacity for growth as it has worked to expand its practices to help all learners challenge themselves and succeed. They have built and enhanced a multi-tiered system of student academic support, including an improved drop-in help hub staffed by teachers and peer leaders. Recent professional development initiatives included teachers investigating cultural humility and exploring techniques for differentiation. The school has shown it can support educators as they work to meet the needs of all students.

The district and the school continue to develop in their capability to promote institutional growth strategically. The district recently completed a strategic plan, and as a result of the NEASC process, the school has implemented and completed its first post-COVID school improvement plan. These documents are essential for directing and sustaining institutional growth. The administration's idea for a school improvement plan, spanning three years, with defined yearly benchmarks, will help the school select a small number of goals, set clear and measurable benchmarks, and engage in yearly progress checks to celebrate the wins and recalibrate for the misses and help all stakeholders engage fully in the improvement process.

Competency

The school's educators have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to collaborate and achieve their stated goals successfully. There is a strong tradition of democratic participation at the school. Teachers and students can propose school improvements; if the council and administration approve them, they become school practices. Oftentimes, council proposals require refinement and guidance from faculty/administrative committees. This shared leadership model builds skills in leadership and collaboration. Faculty members take on many school-wide responsibilities, including leading professional development, organizing the advisory curriculum, and designing schedules. Some faculty members have been trained as instructional coaches and welcomed by their peers into their classrooms. The school has a talented faculty and administration that feels empowered to generate good ideas and turn them into a shared reality.

The school has a culture of professional development. In addition to the recent whole-school learning experiences on cultural humility and differentiation, the school plans to explore Universal Design for Learning techniques next year. Individual educators also have access to generous funding for workshops and courses. Educators expressed appreciation to the school and district for the many opportunities to pursue further education. This work supports educators in ensuring all students have equitable opportunities to develop their hearts, minds, and voices and realize the qualities described in the portrait of a graduate.

The school is a dynamic environment filled with engaged educators and students. While the benefits are obvious, educators note that the number of ideas and initiatives can sometimes be overwhelming. This causes some educators to be on many committees and others to pull back and not participate. While responding to student and faculty needs raised by the council will necessarily create unplanned initiatives, limiting the number of initiatives in the schools' improvement plan, and laying out clear steps and defined tasks to achieve them may help educators who feel too busy for a big commitment feel empowered to take on a smaller one.

Capacity

Hanover High School has the material resources, community support, and professional competence and commitment needed to implement effective learning, make progress on its goals, and implement its vision of the graduate. Time continues to be the school's scarcest resource. The recently modified schedule includes more time for professional collaboration than its predecessor. Every Wednesday afternoon, there is dedicated professional development time from 2:10 to 4:00. One Wednesday each month is for K-12 professional development. The other Wednesdays are equally divided between faculty and department meetings. Each week contains two end-of-the-day forty-minute flex blocks. Administrators assign flex block coverage so that

department members are free simultaneously for one flex block per week. The new schedule also includes a fifty-minute-long lunch block for all faculty. Additionally, there are times in the year (SAT and PSAT mornings, for example) when most teachers are unscheduled and potentially have time to collaborate.

Still, educators point out that there is not enough time in the schedule to meet with each other or do professional, department-based work. Some departments plan regular meetings during their lunches to work while they eat. Given the student-centered nature of the school, most educators work with students in all flex blocks rather than meeting with other adults. Most educators run clubs and activities, coach, and serve as advisors for the numerous independent studies and student projects, making the education student-centered and dynamic. Programs, like March Intensive, while invigorating, require extensive planning. Excellent educators are creative and set high standards for themselves and their students.

Some of the school's Priority Areas (especially documenting the curriculum) have required considerable department time. The relatively short turnaround time between the Collaborative Conference and the Decennial visit created a condensed timeline for creating these and other needed documents. Now that the big push of creating these documents is done, refining them and working together to live their message is ongoing. It can be planned for in an organized, strategic, and realistic way. Make clear goals. Chunk the tasks into manageable steps. Set realistic timelines, and celebrate the small wins.

Additional Information

Additional Information

Standard 1 Principle 2

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

School's rating in the Summary Report: Implementing

Explanation from the School

Hanover High School is now implementing Principle 1.2. The school's core values, beliefs about learning, portrait of a graduate/learner, professional practices, learning support, and allocations of learning resources have all been acted on through our school's growth and improvement plan.

Standard 1 Principle 4

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

School's rating in the Summary Report: Implementing

Explanation from the School

Hanover High School is now implementing Principle 1.4. The school's community professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and critical thinking. Protected time now exists for collaboration within departments and interdepartmentally. Staff consistently connect with local resources, Tuck's Business School, Dartmouth College, and Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical School to facilitate and advance their own professional growth, which translates to positive and innovative impacts on their students' learning. Professional development has been developed with guidance from our equity steward and other staff opportunities within the SAU 70 Staff Development Master Plan. Multiple avenues for learning are offered to staff. There is an increased number of ways staff are sharing their individual educational expertise. A primary focus over the last two years has been differentiation in the classroom and raising awareness about classroom cultures so that we can, with intentionality, create a culture of learning that supports all students. As a result of collaboration, reflection, and research based on the findings from our school's equity audit and academic data analysis, our school is committed to Universal Design for Learning to improve our school's ability to meet the needs of all learners. The school has strengthened its ESOL program and grown our school's help hub and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).

Standard 2 Principle 2

School's rating in the Self-Reflection report: Not Yet Evident

School's rating in the Summary Report: Developing

Explanation from the School

The school is now developing a curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments.

- This school year, 2024-2025**,** currently in process is the preview of documented curriculum and the evaluation of the alignment of common courses and assessments to NEASC Standards and Principles, the mission and vision, and state and national standards 2024-2025. One of the identified objectives in our

school's curriculum work is to have demonstrated connections across academic subjects that are built with interdisciplinary collaboration.

- The district posted the curriculum for all schools in SAU 70 online on Aug. 22, 2024. The new system provides Hanover High School parents and our larger community with easy access to overviews of curriculum (across K-12), including course description units of study and resource materials included. The information is offered so that parents will be better equipped to engage in their students' education. This initiative is part of our school's and the district's commitment to enhancing communication between schools and families and ensuring that families have the tools they need to support their student's learning journey. Explore the Curriculum

Standard 3 Principle 1

School's rating in the Self-Reflection report: Not Yet Evident

School's rating in the Summary Report: Implementing

Explanation from the School

The school's growth and improvement plan now informs school goals and decision-making. The plan has been shared with parents in the principal's weekly and with staff in the principal's opening school welcome email (8.27.24).

Standard 5 Principle 2

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

School's rating in the Summary Report: Implementing

Explanation from the School

Hanover High School is now implementing Principle 5.2. There is more time dedicated to research-based instruction and professional development among educators.

Three needs were identified in our school's Collaborative Conference, which identified specific objectives for this protected time:

- For departmental work, systematically enshrining team meeting times within grade levels/disciplines.
- For interdepartmental conversations and collaboration.
- To engage in reflection and collaboration, both formal and informal, specific to shifting roles and responsibilities.

Changes have been made to give staff in each department the same study flex time to work together, providing more collaborative time. There is protected time within the weekly staff meetings for departmental meetings, professional development, and curricular work (departmental and K-12). The school has adopted a proctoring rotation schedule that allows for day-long departmental time once per year for all departments. These additional protected times have made a significant positive impact. The challenges continue to be addressed within the newly adopted schedule and will be considered as the school continues to evaluate best practices to meet the well-being needs of students and staff.

Commendations

Commendation

The continued commitment of all educators to meeting diverse student learning needs, ensuring that all students feel known and authentically cared for

Commendation

The emerging collaborative effort across departments and the school that is beginning to align essential educational standards and practices to benefit all learners

Commendation

The alignment of the strategic plan, portrait of a graduate, and school improvement plan with each other and with the existing best practices of the school

Commendation

The ongoing support for staff growth and development, and the enthusiastic participation of faculty in opportunities for growth

Commendation

The ability for students to make choices in their learning journey and the tremendous diversity of projects, courses, co-curricular activities, independent academic experiences, and experiential learning opportunities they can choose from

Commendation

The active role that students take in maintaining a safe, welcoming, democratic environment

Commendation

The thoughtful, impactful decisions that administrators and teachers have made around the school's cell phone policy

Commendation

The commitment of school leaders to the democratic values of the school and their work to move the school forward through transparency and collaboration

Commendation

The ongoing, innovative work to improve the advisory program

Commendation

The instructional coaching program and the role it plays in building teacher collaboration around shared best practices

Additional Recommendations

Recommendation

Prioritize time for departmental and interdepartmental conversations and collaboration to establish which practices should be shared across classrooms (i.e. assessments, grading policies, pedagogical practices) and which should be left to individual teacher discretion

Recommendation

Develop a process for creating future school improvement/growth plans with a limited number of specific goals that contain measurable action steps, timelines for completion, and procedures for yearly reporting to stakeholders on progress

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)

Chair: Ms. Sandy Crawford - Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School

Assistant Chair: Jessica Pilla - Old Rochester Regional High School

Team Members

Dana Andrews - SAU #48

Kim Bleier - Concord High School and Regional Technology Center

Sarah Nassif - Alvirne High School

Mr. David Scannell - Milford High School

Mrs. Candice Schmitz - Salem High School

Lyn Vinskus - Concord High School and Regional Technology Center