

New England Association of Schools and Colleges



Commission on Public Secondary Schools
Report of the Visiting Committee for
Joseph Case High School
Swansea, Massachusetts

March 27 - 30, 2011

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning.

The accreditation program for public schools involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the Commission's visiting committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study and the valid recommendations of the visiting committee and those identified by the Commission in the Follow-Up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school be reevaluated at least once every ten years and that it show continued progress addressing identified needs.

Preparation for the Evaluation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Joseph Case High School, a committee of seven members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included seven Joseph Case High School students and seven parent representatives.

The self-study of Joseph Case High School extended over a period of 18 school months from October, 2009 to May, 2011. The visiting committee was pleased to note that students and parents joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

Public schools evaluated by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their adherence to the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's core values, beliefs, learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Commission, Joseph Case High School also used questionnaires developed by The Research Center at Endicott College to reflect the concepts contained in the Standards for Accreditation. These materials provided discussion items for a comprehensive assessment of the school by the professional staff during the self-study.

It is important that the reader understand that every subcommittee appointed by the steering committee was required to present its report to the entire professional staff for approval. No single report developed in the self-study became part of the official self-study documents until it had been approved by the entire professional staff.

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of 15 evaluators was assigned by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the Joseph Case High School. The Committee members spent four days in Swansea, Massachusetts, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school meets the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools, central office administrators, and vocational institutions diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Joseph Case High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- three hours shadowing fourteen students for a half day
- a total of 15 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility
- individual meetings with 30 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers
- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

Each conclusion on the report was agreed to by visiting committee consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting committee appear in parenthesis in the Standards sections of the report. The seven Standards for Accreditation reports include commendations and recommendations that in the visiting committee's judgment will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better meet Commission Standards.

This report of the findings of the visiting committee will be forwarded to the Commission on Public Secondary Schools which will make a decision on the accreditation of Joseph Case High School.

Overview of Findings

Although the conclusions of the visiting committee on the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation appear in various sections of this report, the committee wishes to highlight some findings in the paragraphs that follow. These findings are not intended to be a summary of the report.

Joseph Case High School employed the self-study as a means of examining its culture, environment for learning, programs, and services it provides for the students of Swansea. It also examined its beliefs and practices regarding teaching and learning. The self-study delineated its many accomplishments and areas of need. The identification of needs both in the self-study and in this report will form the basis for continued school improvement at Joseph Case High School.

While there are challenges to address, Joseph Case High School has great strengths in the community formed by the students, teachers, administration, and families – as well as in the extended community that surrounds the school. With a plan and the support of these constituencies to address specific goals and tasks in the coming years, Joseph Case High School will continue to provide strong educational opportunities for the students of Swansea.

Teaching and Learning at Joseph Case High School

Students are at the center of the culture at Joseph Case High School. The level of participation in and out of the classroom by students and teachers engaged in authentic learning and activities in support of learning is commendable. It is through these activities that one can see many of the core values and 21st century learning expectations in action. In addition, there is a number of other learning avenues available for students such as the Virtual High School, dual-enrollment, and a robust level of technological options that all support learning in different ways and assist in access to curriculum for different types of learners.

However, while the administration and faculty are in the early stages of implementing mandates such as access for all students to heterogeneous classes, integration of technology as a tool for learning in the classroom, interdisciplinary classes, and further implementation of the use of the school-wide rubrics to assess 21st century learning expectations in every classroom, there is a significant level of work yet to be done. This accomplishment is hindered by the absence of an over-arching plan for professional development outside of the recent need for preparation for the NEASC accreditation process. In addition to, a professional development plan that includes some format for faculty members to review student work effectively, it is critical that the level of high expectations for all students and consistent practices in all classrooms that support individualized instruction and assessment would increase.

Support of Teaching and Learning at Joseph Case High School

The Joseph Case High School Principal recognizes the school's areas of need and has worked with the faculty to address these areas in a manner that has resulted in many faculty members being willing to address needed tasks during personal time and without compensation. Thus, high among the resources that support teaching and learning at this high school and clearly a strength of the school is the people who work there. The commitment and hard work of support staff members working in concert with the faculty, have afforded students an enriched environment where they are monitored and supported to do their best.

At the same time, the building in which the school is housed has issues of significant concern. Perceptions of unhealthy air quality, as well as a number of needed capital improvements, such as an additional entrance to the building and major repairs/replacement of the gym floor, are currently impacting the daily lives of those using the building with the

potential to detract significantly from the school's high quality of instruction. In addition, while the principal has autonomy in making decisions at the high school, the inclusion of the principal's input in the annual budget process, beginning with its initial development through the final allocation within the building, would strengthen his role as the high school community's leader.

School and Community Summary

Joseph Case High School is located in Southeastern Massachusetts, situated between Fall River, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island. Swansea is approximately 50 miles south of Boston and 200 miles northeast of New York City. Established in 1667 and incorporated as a town in 1785, this suburban community, with a total area of 22.12 square miles, has a population of 15,383. Swansea residents value their town for its rural character and take pride that many see the town as an excellent community in which to raise families. Swansea retains sixteen original, intact colonial houses, including a living museum and a picturesque Main Street.

Based on statistics from the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training, Swansea's socioeconomic profile is relatively stable. The unemployment rate slightly declined from 9.9 percent in April 2010 to 9.7 percent as of December 2010. In 2000, 3.4 percent of families lived below the poverty level, 416 households earned less than \$10,000, and 841 earned under \$24,999 annually. The median family income in Swansea is \$60,567, with 911 households earning an annual income in the \$60,000 to \$74,999 range. Overall, Swansea residents obtain employment as sales associates, office workers, professionals and service providers. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Swansea's ethnic, racial and cultural composition has remained constant with 98.8 percent Caucasian, 0.5 percent African American, 0.6 percent Hispanic, and 0.4 percent Asian residents. There are a large number of first and second-generation immigrants, predominantly of Portuguese heritage. Swansea residents primarily speak English, but some families communicate in Portuguese and Spanish at home.

Swansea Public Schools serve the town with four elementary schools, one junior high school, and one senior high school. Gardner School and the Mark G. Hoyle School service students pre-K through the 2nd grade. The Elizabeth S. Brown School and Joseph G. Luther

schools house grades 3-5. Joseph Case Junior High School provides for students in grades 6-8, with Joseph Case Senior High School educating students in grades 9-12. Seven independent schools and facilities exist in Swansea offering a wide range of specialized educational services. Total enrollment in the Swansea Public Schools is 2,078. Joseph Case High School has a current enrollment of 585 students divided between 299 males and 286 females. Throughout the district, 7 percent of students meet federal eligibility requirements for free lunch and 4 percent for reduced lunch.

The town of Swansea allocated 51.6 percent of local resources in FY10 to the school district for a total of \$16,801,033. In 2009, Swansea Public Schools expended \$10,080 per student, compared to the state average expenditure of \$13,006 per pupil, a slight decrease in comparison to the 2008 expenditure per student of \$10,562 in relation to the \$12,448 state average. In February 2010, the *Fall River Herald News* celebrated the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's announcement that Swansea's dropout rate was 0.7 percent for 2009-2010, while its graduation rate was 96.4, a result of strategic interventions and initiatives that have reduced the rate from an average of nearly 10 percent dropout rate of graduating classes from 2003-2008. On average for the past three years, the student attendance rate has been approximately 93 percent. The attendance rate for teachers was 98 percent for the 2009-2010 academic year.

In the class of 2010, 50 percent of graduates attended four-year colleges, with 32 percent enrolling in two-year colleges and business and technical schools, 10 percent entering the workforce, and 4 percent entering the military. Graduates take advantage of the considerable educational opportunities available, choosing from state colleges and universities such as UMass Amherst, Bridgewater University and UMass Dartmouth, as well as Harvard, Brown, Boston

University and Northeastern University. Students opting for a two-year college alternative enroll primarily at Bristol Community College and the Community College of Rhode Island.

Local educational opportunities available to the community include Case's Little Faces, a preschool program integrated within the high school; South Coast Collaborative Programs, an alternative education placement for students in Swansea and the neighboring communities; and School-to-Career, a program providing students with on-site job experience.

Joseph Case High School's college partnerships provide benefits to students, faculty, and the greater Southeastern Massachusetts community. Joseph Case High School supports student teacher preparation programs for undergraduate and graduate students from area colleges including Bridgewater University, the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Boston University, and Providence College.

The high school's business partnerships include ones with Trinity Repertory Theater Company, the Attleboro Art Museum, the non-profit Save-the-Bay, Swansea's living museum, the Martin House and many local pre-schools. In addition, the high school hosts Career Day, an annual event supported through community members who present and discuss career experiences and opportunities in the community, and annual College Fair and Financial Aid nights held in partnership with Somerset High School.

Joseph Case High School has established effective higher-education partnerships with local colleges and universities. Partnerships with area colleges focus on the supervision and training of undergraduate and graduate students in the education field. These colleges include Bridgewater University, UMass Dartmouth, and Providence College. Presently, Joseph Case High School has articulation agreements with Bristol Community College and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. The Tech. Prep Program, an intensive program offered through

Bristol Community College for students who intend to begin post-secondary education at the community college level, allows enrolled students to earn articulated credit, take free college courses, and have early access to the Accuplacer test. Currently, the Tech Prep Program at Joseph Case High School offers Child Care students an internship opportunity in collaboration with local pre-schools during the students' junior and senior years. The Bristol Community College Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program allows eligible high school students enrollment in one college course each semester free of charge. Students demonstrating financial need may receive additional financial aid for books, supplies and transportation.

Annual student recognition programs at Joseph Case High School include the Academic Awards Assembly, John and Abigail Adams Scholarship reception, and Class Night, a pre-graduation celebration that awards alumni and private scholarships and acknowledges outstanding academic achievement at the high school.

Student success is also acknowledged at an annual National Honor Society induction ceremony, a South Coast Conference Academic All-Stars luncheon, a season sports nights sponsored in conjunction with the Friends of the Cardinals, an annual Child Care banquet, Social Studies Student of the Month recognition, the Good Citizen Award, three seasonal athletic fall and spring captains and activity leaders' luncheons, and the Joseph Case High School Annual Art Show. Daily, the administration applauds individual student, team and program success through morning announcements, as well as the principal's *Cardinal Notes*, which is emailed to all members of our educational community. The Superintendent's Breakfast facilitates open dialogue between administrators and student leaders in our community. Student achievement is also highlighted in seasonal newsletters, display cases, and department bulletin boards.

Joseph Case High School's Mission Statement Swansea School System

Public education in Swansea shall provide each student a safe and nurturing environment in which to develop the values, knowledge and skills needed to foster lifelong learning, achieve full potential in his or her personal, social and work life, and to contribute actively to the civic, moral and economic spirit of our diverse democratic community and society.

Joseph Case High School will provide a safe, diverse and nurturing environment to help students become lifelong learners with 21st century skills.

Core Values

Communication

Authentic learning opportunities

Shared responsibility in academic excellence and integrity

Engagement of students as active learners

Higher order thinking skills

Strong 21st century knowledge base

21st Century Learning Expectations

1. Students should use technology to access, evaluate and apply appropriate information for authentic learning opportunities.
2. Students should work independently and collaboratively to problem solve.
3. Students should communicate clearly and effectively.
4. Students should become active learners, demonstrating innovation and adaptability.
5. Students should apply processes of analysis, evaluation and creation in problem-solving.
6. Students should demonstrate character through:
 - personal responsibility
 - cultural appreciation
 - ethical behavior

Teaching and Learning Standard



Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

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

Conclusions

The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. Joseph Case High School, through an extensive and inclusive process, has identified and committed to a set of core values and beliefs about learning that include an emphasis on communication, authentic learning, engagement, and higher-order thinking skills. Beginning in June of 2008, the faculty, under the leadership of the principal, began a two-year process during which these values and beliefs were examined, researched, discussed, and studied. During this process, the faculty reviewed current research on 21st century skills, participated in professional development on identifying and implementing these skills, and voted to approve the core values and beliefs (June 2008) and 21st century learning expectations (December 2009). The faculty was afforded extensive input throughout this process, and other stakeholders were included by the formation of ad hoc committees consisting of students, parents, and teachers. The core values and beliefs were also reviewed and approved by the school committee and the school council. The values and beliefs, together with a mission statement and the 21st century learning expectations, form a document that clearly spells out the school's values and beliefs about learning. This document is posted in every classroom and throughout the school building and is readily available on the school website. Each day, the school's mission, all core values and beliefs, and a selected 21st century learning expectation are read over the morning announcements. Teacher interviews indicate that there is widespread knowledge and acceptance of these core values and beliefs. Most students are familiar with the overall school mission and core values. Parents who were interviewed were likewise unable to

describe the school's core values and beliefs, but the Endicott Survey indicated that the majority (77%) of parents is familiar with the learning expectations. All groups agree that the core values and beliefs accurately portray the guiding principles of the school. The school's commitment to this process has led to the widespread acceptance of the revised core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.(teachers, self-study, students, parents, teachers, leadership team, administrators)

Joseph Case High School has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, civic, and social competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. The school has adopted six learning expectations that require collaboration, higher-order thinking, personal responsibility, and the use of technology, among other skills. School-wide analytic rubrics for all learning expectations were developed by the school leadership team. These rubrics were reviewed and approved by an ad-hoc committee consisting of teachers, parents, and students and were unanimously approved by the entire faculty in June 2010. The rubrics indicate the desired level of achievement that the school expects students to attain. All of the rubrics use the same terminology (meets standard, progressing towards, does not meet) to avoid student confusion about different levels of achievement. The clarity and scope of these rubrics provide students with clear guidelines as to what is expected of them in meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations.(self-study, panel presentation, classroom observations, parents, teachers)

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century expectations are inconsistently reflected in the culture of the school but at this time do not drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom. They are, however, to a limited extent, a guiding force in the

school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. The school's ability to "provide a safe, diverse, and nurturing environment" has been enhanced by the advisory program, the anti-bullying program, and reintroduction of the Gay-Straight Alliance and peer mediation, as well as through the adoption of an in-school suspension program. Student access to technology has been improved by the piloting of iPod and Mac labs, an additional classroom computer lab and mobile labs, and the Senteo interactive response system. The recent implementation of a senior capstone project is in direct response to the school's need to assess students' social and civic expectations. Existing curricular offerings, such as the childcare and school-to-career programs, support the core belief regarding authentic instruction. There is engagement in higher order thinking skills, but not all assignments and assessments reflect these. The school's curriculum documents consistently reference the 21st century learning expectations, with individual departments assuming ownership and responsibility for certain expectations. While the program of studies includes a statement of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, currently, they receive variable focus within classroom instruction. For example, emphasis on higher-order thinking skills explicit in the learning expectations is not consistent in regular instruction, so that not all students have sufficient practice to master these skills in every academic area. At this time, the school's analytic rubrics to assess student mastery of the learning expectations are formally used and reported upon in classroom assessment twice a year. Most examples of student work do not incorporate these rubrics and cannot serve as accurate measures of student progress in achieving the school's learning expectations. Aggregate student achievement of the school's learning expectations has been collected and reported, both via individual student report cards and on the school's website. The school district has allocated resources to increase the availability of technology at the high school, but there has been no

corresponding increase in funding for professional development to help teachers learn and practice techniques for aligning this technology with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations and using it consistently in classroom activities. While the school's core values and beliefs are reflected in the culture of the school, their recent implementation and assessment has left questions regarding how the data will be used. Joseph Case High School should analyze its bi-annual reporting as a basis for driving in instructional change. (student shadowing, student work, teacher interviews, self-study, students, teachers)

The school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on limited research and data sources and district and school community priorities. The school reviews its core values, beliefs, and learning expectations annually at the final faculty meeting of the school year. Faculty members cite resources such as the article "enGauge: 21st Century Skills" and resources from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills website that were used during the recent revision of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations process from June 2008 through June 2010. There were many faculty group brainstorming meetings that produced input for the revision process that included analysis of standardized test results, and teachers just begun to meet to review student achievement of the school's newly adopted learning expectations. Community involvement in this process was limited to parental membership on ad hoc groups and the school council and the review and approval by the school committee. The school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations have some alignment with the district mission statement which is currently undergoing revision. A formal plan for data analysis to inform policy and program revision at the school will help Joseph Case High School's ability to fully implement its vision and goals. (panel presentation, school committee, teachers, students, self-study)

Commendations

1. A collaborative and dynamic process used to revise the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
2. The development of analytic rubrics which identify high levels of achievement
3. The steps taken to incorporate the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations into the culture of the school
4. The introduction of a senior capstone project with the goal of promoting authentic learning, application of knowledge, and the opportunity to exhibit social and civic skills

Recommendations

1. Ensure that a wide variety of current best-practice research is used to inform future revisions to the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
2. Develop and implement a more formalized plan for regular review and revision of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

Teaching and Learning Standard

2

Curriculum

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

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

7. The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research.

Conclusions

The curriculum is designed in most subject areas to ensure that students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The format of the curriculum templates indicates which subject area has primary assessment and reporting responsibility for specific 21st century learning expectations; however, there is no documentation in the templates to show specifically where students practice the 21st century learning expectations within each course curriculum. Also, there are no connections between course content and the learning expectations although there are multiple curricular areas that include learning experiences related to each of the school's learning expectations. With an increased level of integration and implementation in the curriculum, specific courses and the program of studies, there will be greater support for a sustained vision of instituting and implementing 21st century learning. (self-study, teacher interviews, teachers, classroom observations)

The curriculum is written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, skills, and the school's 21st century learning expectations, but the curriculum format does not contain examples of assessment strategies that include the school-wide rubrics. There are curriculum documents for each subject area including vocational and technical courses. All of the courses use the same template and clearly identify the units of study with essential questions, concepts, content and skills. The 21st century learning expectations are indicated on the template and instructional practices are suggested. The Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks are used to guide the creation of the essential questions, content,

concepts, and skill benchmarks. The curriculum guides include lists of assessments and course-specific rubrics. Teachers are familiar with existing departmental rubrics and state they utilize them frequently. As a result of the common format used to write the curriculum, it is easy to access unit concepts, content, essential questions, 21st century learning expectations, and departmental rubrics. The curriculum format would be strengthened by specific references to school-wide rubrics to fully integrate them into the curriculum. (self-study, teachers, student work)

To a limited extent the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through higher-order thinking and cross-disciplinary learning. It also often emphasizes understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving with authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school as well as the ethical use of technology. After a review of student work, it was observed that many pieces demonstrate creativity and a clear understanding of the task directions, but evidence of higher-order thinking was infrequently seen in student products. Interviews with teachers and students indicate the school uses a Socratic Seminar in some departments and courses to encourage inquiry and higher-order thinking. The Capstone project is intended to encourage cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities in and out of school, higher order thinking, inquiry and problem solving. The project is in its pilot year, and the data available to demonstrate the realization of these goals will not be available until the end of the current school year. While cross-disciplinary learning is being emphasized in individual classes and some student work and assignments such as the Save the Bay project and the Computer Science and Genetic Engineering project show its effectiveness, its implementation is limited. These assignments can be exemplars in interdisciplinary studies for all academic areas. The applied and learning arts curricula are

excellent examples of real-life applications of cross-disciplinary and authentic learning opportunities and teachers recognize that those courses keep students engaged. In and out of school there are authentic learning opportunities available for students at Joseph Case High School that allow them to apply their knowledge and skills to real-life projects and activities; excellent examples of this are the school paper, a television production class, and an early childhood class where high school students work with children. The ethical use of technology is supported by the Internet user agreement which is significantly enforced in classes where technology is utilized as well throughout the school community. The integration of cross-disciplinary applications would promote full integration of the 21st century learning expectations.(student work, teachers, students, parents, classroom observations, self-study)

There is consistent active alignment between the written and taught curriculum. Teachers report that department heads routinely check to make sure their departments are on task. Individual departments accept responsibility for ensuring the covering and testing of at least one of the school's learning expectations, and many of the teachers list on the board the day's focus upon specific standards and learning expectations. While there is evidence of connections between the written and taught curriculum, formalizing a procedure for department heads and teachers to regularly assess the alignment between the school's curriculum documents and daily classroom activities would strengthen student outcomes. (teachers, self-study, classroom observations)

Curricular coordination and vertical articulation have begun among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district, but they are in the early phases of implementation. Specific opportunities for articulation exist within the high school in a common planning period for department heads that meets once every seven days in a scheduled

school leadership meeting. Teachers observe that a great deal of time has been devoted to developing and streamlining curriculum, and that there is a strong desire at both the building and district levels to identify an effective curriculum review cycle that would include time for development, review, and evaluation. However, there is no formalized plan in place at this time, and Kindergarten through 12th grade linear curriculum maps are a district priority but have not yet been developed. Vertical articulation is being initiated through periodic meetings between middle school and high school core academic department heads and system-wide directors are also working on coordinated vertical articulation. Daily scheduled preparation time affords teachers time for collaboration that has resulted in clear, comprehensive curriculum guides at the high school level. Increasing scheduled meeting time between the high school and the sending schools would lead to a seamless curricular transition between the two levels of education.(self-study, teachers, school board, central office personnel)

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. However, Joseph Case High School facilities sometimes limit teachers' ability to effectively implement the curriculum. The school's general education class sizes are approximately 20 or more students rather than the 14.5 students per class noted in the self-study. Staffing is sufficient to effectively implement the curriculum. There are sufficient instructional materials to implement the curriculum also, but teachers express a concern regarding a lack of technology training and support to effectively utilize recently introduced technology. Contemporary technology such as mobile labs, SMART Boards, iPods, Senteo, and STEM Lab has been made available to all classes. There are also many systemic problems with the 1970 HVAC systems in the building. Problems with humidity levels

have negatively impacted the condition of the gymnasium floor, providing obstacles to effective curriculum implementation. Also, there are climate control problems in a number of classrooms, and students and teachers report incidents of temperatures being too high and too low during various times of year. Despite budget constraints, there is a wide variety of co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities offered with no user fees for students. These include a competitive drama program during and after school, a successful and competitive math team, journalism classes, an award-winning band, a production class where students produce and create television shows that are aired on local television stations, and early child-care classes involving young children. There are also dual enrollment programs with Bristol Community College and the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. These activities are supported by the active participation of local businesses and parents. As a result of a dedicated school community, students at Joseph Case High School enjoy a variety of curricular and co-curricular programs that positively enhances their high school experiences. Additional professional development and improvements in the condition of the facility itself, will support further implementation of the integration of technology into classrooms as well as enhance all curricular and co-curricular programs. (self-study, facility tour, teachers, students, parents)

The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel but would benefit from additional time or financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. School-level curriculum coordination, articulation, and revision are works in progress. The work that has begun at the high school will inform the process at other district schools, however, members of the Case professional staff have been actively involved in the process of curriculum development and revision in a variety of settings including early release/late start time, common

preparation time, and personal time during the school year and summer. In recent years, teachers have completed curriculum revision outside of the regular school day without financial support for these efforts. Teachers use assessments such as MCAS results, advanced placement tests, and quarterly exams to adjust instruction, but there is no formal plan for the revision of curriculum using either assessment results or current research. Greater support for the collaborative development and revision of curriculum will support the school's comprehensive program offerings and its ability to fully implement its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in the curriculum. (self-study, district administration, teachers, curriculum subcommittee)

Commendations

1. The creation and implementation of a common curriculum template used by all academic departments
2. The variety of authentic learning opportunities including a wide assortment of extra-curricular activities and non-mainstream classes.
3. The dedication of the staff members who use their personal time to complete school-wide goals
4. The availability of the Virtual High School and Dual Enrollment Programs
5. The consistent, active alignment between the written and taught curriculum
6. The staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies and the resources of the library/media center which are sufficient to implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities

Recommendations

1. Increase opportunities school-wide for more higher-order thinking and cross-disciplinary learning throughout all curriculum areas
2. Provide embedded opportunities for professional development in the effective integration of technology into teaching and learning in all classrooms
3. Develop and implement a review cycle to update and maintain the curriculum
4. Develop and implement cross-disciplinary opportunities to expand student readiness for the 21st century workforce and/or continued education
5. Increase funding for formal curriculum development evaluation and revision
6. Include in the common curriculum format references to strategies for assessment that include the school-wide rubric

Teaching and Learning Standard

3 Instruction

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

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

- engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.
5. Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

Conclusions

Teachers instructional practices, at Joseph Case High School, are sometimes examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Teachers at Joseph Case High School work within their departments to integrate into their instructional practices the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks and the school's core values and beliefs and 21st century learning expectations. Teachers use varied classroom activities and assignments to evaluate effective oral and written communication skills; they provide opportunities for self-assessment and reflection and use assignment-specific or course-specific rubrics to drive instruction, and they provide feedback and encourage revision. Using common preparation time within their departments, teachers analyze quarterly examination results to assess student achievement. Many teachers reflect on their own practices and use end-of-course surveys to modify their instruction, and a formal discussion procedure or practice of evaluating instruction occurs primarily as a function of the evaluation process. The school has not created formal interdisciplinary groupings of teachers for the purpose of evaluating instruction at the school. Additional formal opportunities for discussion regarding instruction would ensure that best practices would become commonplace and all students would be afforded the benefits of differentiated instruction, self-reflection, and self-assessment that would be consistent with the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teacher observation, teacher meetings, parents, classroom observations, teacher interviews, student shadowing, students, self-study)

The school is beginning to actively and formally foster include some instructional practices that support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning, engaging students in active and self-directed learning, emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking, applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, engaging students in self-assessment and reflection, and include some integration of technology. While some departments include inter-disciplinary activities such as Constitution Day and the Manhattan Project, the current curriculum documents do not include references to these interdisciplinary activities. The newly introduced Capstone project for seniors requires interdisciplinary work and research management and encourages students to work closely with different subject teachers. The project also personalizes learning, as students choose their own topics for research. The Virtual High School program provides students with coursework not available at Joseph Case High School, giving students the chance to personalize their own schedules with twenty-five seats open for upperclassmen each semester. Student self-assessment takes place using rubrics and checklists, but these are not consistently applied as intended. While there are a number of heterogeneously grouped courses, there are many additional opportunities for differentiated instruction at Joseph Case High School. Some students are given extra reading and writing assignments to earn honors credit, but instructional tools in some courses lack higher order thinking and problem-solving requirements. Many teachers use instructional tools such as exit slips, summaries, and responses as formative assessments. Students are frequently asked to recall and interpret. Teachers provide opportunities for students to revisit and reflect on content through retesting, using the "bubble" period to complete additional work and participate in labs and cooperative learning activities. Students in upper level courses are frequently afforded opportunities to

develop higher-order thinking skills and apply authentic learning through Socratic seminars, oral presentations, and peer tutoring, but these strategies are not incorporated into all coursework across all levels of learning. Teachers integrate technology to provide students with authentic tasks for inquiry and problem-solving. Senteo technology is used by some teachers as a means of formative assessment to check for individual student understanding and mobile labs, a Mac lab, and SMART Boards are used for research and in-class group discussions and activities. Some teachers are using varied instructional practices to support achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. With consistency in providing all students an opportunity to become active, self-directed learners and use higher order thinking skills, the widespread application and mastery of 21st century knowledge would be in greater evidence.(teachers, students, self-study, student shadowing, classroom observations, parents, student work)

Teachers are beginning to adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using a variety of formative assessments, especially during instructional time, with occasional strategic differentiation, by purposeful organization of group activities, and by providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Monthly faculty meetings have been restructured as Curriculum Improvement Time (CIT) to provide more time for departments to reflect on instructional practices. Additionally, some members of the teaching staff have completed Understanding Teaching I (formerly Research for Better Teaching). Teachers who have participated in this professional development have benefitted greatly. Opportunities for more recently hired teachers to receive this training in the future would strengthen the consistent application of this philosophy. Many Joseph Case High School teachers organize group learning activities to engage students in in-depth learning and to assist students in practicing collaboration. Students report regularly working with other students in almost all of

their classes. Many teachers provide extended time for tests and quizzes, study guides, and small group instruction during the “bubble” period, and in after-school help sessions. Some teachers analyze formative assessments and other information collected about individual students’ achievement to devise and employ instructional strategies to specifically help individual students master rigorous concepts and skills. Additional and consistent use of formative assessment, strategic differentiation, purposeful organization of group learning activities, will increase opportunities for all students to achieve the school’s 21st century learning expectations.(students, parents, teachers, student shadowing, classroom observations, student work, teacher interview, self-study)

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by examining student work, engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, use student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, and use feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents however this work varies from teacher to teacher and would benefit from the use of a formal protocol. Teachers would like more current research to inform changes in their instructional practices. Eighty-eight percent of the faculty states that they use faculty meeting time to examine curriculum, instructional practices and strategies, and assessment and assessment data within their disciplines to improve their instructional strategies. Quarterly examinations are given in all subjects, and some department members collaboratively review student achievement on these exams to inform instruction. Some teachers also use summative end-of-course surveys to alter curriculum topics and instructional techniques, but this practice is not widespread. There is very little evidence that a wide variety of assessments is examined for these purposes. The administration has established common teacher preparation time for the four major core subjects,

but this is not available to teachers across all subjects and is not formally designated as common planning time for teachers to collaborate with peers. Foreign language teachers are provided the opportunity for this time. In core subjects, teachers are afforded opportunities for professional discourse through Curriculum Improvement Time to review, reflect upon, and assess data from formative assessments for the purpose of improving their instructional strategies, but this discourse does not appear to lead to significant changes in instruction. There is clear inequity in these opportunities for formal collaboration, as only some teachers' schedules include this time. Teachers discuss instructional strategies with their peers informally. There are infrequent peer observations used to gain feedback from colleagues, and few teachers solicit feedback from other sources including students, supervisors, and parents. The faculty have dedicated curriculum improvement time as well as common planning time in core areas to examine and discuss new instructional initiatives. Although the librarian maintains a limited collection of professional books, journals, and links to websites, most teachers do not make use of these materials for informing improvements in pedagogy. Thus, while teachers informally share information about instruction, additional formal opportunities for discussing and examining instructional strategies would strengthen professional collaboration and reflection as part of the school culture.

(teachers, self-study, survey, school leadership)

Most teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. All Joseph Case High School teachers are highly qualified and are certified in their content areas. Only 24% of students and 20% of parents state that they have been asked for feedback concerning instructional practices and strategies. Some teachers maintain portfolios or journals to document their own work and self-reflection. Given additional, formalized reflective practice opportunities, teachers, who are

experts in their content areas, would continue to develop teaching practices that consistently support the school's 21st century learning expectations. (students, teachers, self-study, school leadership)

Commendations:

1. The emerging inter-disciplinary activities such as Constitution Day and the Manhattan Project
2. The newly introduced Capstone project for seniors
3. The Virtual High School program provides students with coursework not available at Joseph Case High School
4. The common preparation time designed for teachers to discuss instructional strategies
5. The availability of technology to enhance learning opportunities

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a professional development plan for all teachers that support the integration of the 21st century learning expectations into instruction
2. Develop and implement a formal plan for all teachers to increase the usage of assessment data to drive their instructional changes
3. Develop and implement additional opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration
4. Provide and implement formal opportunities for teachers to reflect on research-based instructional strategies

Teaching and Learning Standard



Assessment of and for Student Learning

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

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

8. Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work.
9. Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.
10. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following:
 - student work
 - common course and common grade-level assessments
 - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
 - standardized assessments
 - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
 - survey data from current students and alumni.
11. Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

Conclusions

Twice a year, Joseph Case High School's professional staff employs a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving most of the school's 21st century learning expectations. School-wide rubrics for the first five learning expectations are formally applied twice yearly by two or more departments assigned to report on specific expectations. This process often includes a student self-assessment which is reviewed by the teacher before allocating the level of achievement reported in the comment section of all second and fourth quarter report cards. The school plans to evaluate the sixth learning expectation using a school-wide rubric at the completion of the piloted senior capstone project. Seniors are given a formal opportunity to be assessed on the sixth learning expectation, demonstration of character, through a mandatory senior capstone project. As formal

assessment and data examination practices of the 21st century learning expectations are in their pilot year, the school should use this information to further strengthen teaching and learning at the high school as well as determine best practices for future assessments of student achievement of these expectations.(self-study, student work, teachers, students, parents, school support staff)

The school's professional staff communicates individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students, families and the school community. For the first five learning expectations, teachers from reporting departments indicate the level of individual student achievement of the specific learning expectation adopted by their subject area using a comment code on report cards referencing the appropriate rubrics result for that learning expectation. The high School's website contains a list of the analytic rubrics used to arrive at the judgment. These comments created by the reporting teacher remain accessible through the school management system X2.School-wide data for each of the first five learning expectations, compiled and reported through a formal report generated by the principal, are disseminated to the school community by mail, e-mail and the school website twice each year after the second and fourth quarter. While the report card does not include the school's targeted level of achievement based on the use of the analytic rubrics, it references the school's website for the analytic rubrics for each expectation. Although the school's professional staff does communicate individual and school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students, parents and the school community, the report would benefit from additional clarity on how students are meeting or making progress toward meeting 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, meetings with teachers, students, parents, department leaders, teacher interview)

The professional staff at Joseph Case High School collects, disaggregates and analyzes data collected from both formative and summative assessments to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement by developing corrective action plans. Most departments have common planning time with the opportunity of meeting during each seven-day cycle. Teachers and department leaders report that this time is sometimes used to analyze results from formative, summative and standardized assessments and to have ongoing discussions of adjustments to be made based on the results. A formal and systematic protocol would be helpful to address inequities in achievement. An ongoing process of analysis and response to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement would ensure that students are being given the opportunity to meet course requirements. Additional consideration regarding the data generated in two annual cycles using the 21st century learning expectations would help ensure that students are in the process of meeting all of the school's learning goals. (self-study, teachers, department leaders, teacher interview)

Prior to units of study, most teachers communicate to students which of the school's 21st century learning expectations are related to the learning goals to be assessed. Teachers regularly post the learning expectations that their department biannually evaluates. Teachers report that there is an informal but active intent to address all learning expectations throughout the school year. They say that their communication to students of unit-specific 21st century learning expectations is mostly informal and verbal, and is presented to students at the beginning of units. Students have a clear understanding of what teachers expect them to know and be able to do within a unit of study based on course requirements. Consistent communication of 21st century learning expectations enables students to make connections to how the material addresses these

learning expectations in all courses. (self-study, student work, students, meetings with teachers, department leaders, teacher interview)

Prior to most summative assessments, most teachers provide students with the corresponding rubrics although some summative assessments such as tests and quizzes do not require rubrics. Students report that for some assignments, such as the piloted senior capstone project, rubrics are available as each piece of the project is introduced. In general, most rubrics used are course-specific rather than school or department-wide. The only school-wide rubric used regularly, in addition to the 21st century learning expectations, is the expository writing rubric. Continued implementation of analytic rubrics, particularly prior to giving an assessment, will help students gain a clear understanding of what will be used to assess their learning. (self-study, teacher interviews, meetings with teachers, students, department leaders)

In most units of study, the majority of teachers employ a range of assessment strategies including formative and summative assessments. Some examples of formative assessment include exit tickets, Senteo interactive response system, activators, check-in questions, and homework. In addition to formative assessments, teachers use many summative assessments to gauge student knowledge, including quarterly final exams, quizzes, projects, unit exams, research papers, and art creations. Many teachers report that they consistently review student daily progress through questioning to ensure understanding, and they encourage students to revise assignments, frequently using the “bubble period” for teacher/student interactions regarding feedback and self-correction. Teachers report that prior to assigning a project, they provide exemplars for students to model. Course-specific rubrics are used in many classes and with many projects, but measurement and student achievement of the school-wide 21st century

learning expectations are done through the biannual assessment. Implementation of a wide range of assessment strategies ensures that students have the opportunity to showcase their understanding of concepts in varied ways and promotes identification of weaknesses for ongoing review and revision of instruction and assessment. (self-study, student work, teacher interview, student shadowing, meetings with teachers)

Many teachers collaborate regularly in formal and informal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Once during each seven-day cycle, teachers and some administrators in the four main academic subjects and foreign language have the opportunity during common preparation time to analyze and discuss formative, summative, and standardized assessments and adjust teaching practices, curriculum and assessment to meet the needs of students. In addition, the administration has changed scheduled faculty meetings to department meetings to allow for curriculum improvement time (CIT) for discussion and sharing of instruction and assessment practices. Some teachers report that they administer common unit exams and quarterly final exams within departments; some teachers of common classes administer different assessments but report that they share ideas and methodology with their colleagues. Teachers express a need for the opportunity to have cross-curriculum collaboration as this is currently limited. Teachers often meet to discuss student work, departmental assessments, and rubrics. In addition, these meetings are used for examination of the implementation of school-wide analytic rubrics for the 21st century learning expectations to ensure that instruction and assessment are meeting student learning needs. The common preparation time incorporated into the schedule for departmental meeting time enables most teachers' collaboration regarding assessment practices.(teacher interview, self-study, meetings with teachers)

Most teachers provide specific, corrective, and timely feedback to provide students with opportunities and assistance to revise and improve their work. Students report that they often receive many helpful detailed comments on their work with opportunities for revision. Student work samples demonstrate this practice, although this is not consistent in all classes across the school. Teachers use the “bubble period” to meet with students to review student work and allow for self-correction. Rubrics used for projects are generally holistic and serve to outline the critical components of the assignment and explain how the student will be assessed. Some feedback is limited to a numeric score with little or no explanation. Report cards and progress reports provide feedback with course grades and comments. Teachers’ timely corrective feedback enables student mastery of a unit of study and awareness of standards and methods of improvement. (classroom observations, self-study, teachers, student work)

Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Many teachers report that they examine the results of formative assessments to adjust their instruction prior to moving on to the next lesson. Additionally, many teachers consistently use techniques to check for understanding such as peer assessments, error logs, and class discussions. Core subject teachers have the opportunity to collaborate once during a seven-day cycle, allowing time to discuss formative assessment results and to share ideas on successful methods of assessment. Students corroborate this information, reporting the daily use of multiple forms of formative assessment. The use of formative assessment promotes improved student learning. (self-study, teacher interview, meetings with teachers, student shadowing)

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following: student work; common course and common grade-level assessments; assessments of individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations; standardized assessments; data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary schools; and survey data from current students and alumni. Teachers frequently examine student work, both individually and collaboratively, to help improve lessons and assessments. Teachers examine departmental lessons and assessments to identify successful methods and modify instruction. Some departments develop and use common course assignments; others use methods and assessments that are more reflective of individual teaching styles while covering the same content among common courses. Guidance staff members report that standardized assessments and data are examined to appropriately serve incoming students. As a result of data analysis, a Math Exploration program has been implemented for all incoming freshmen. MCAS scores are shared and analyzed, often resulting in changes to curriculum and instruction. Examination of a range of assessment data used by some teachers fosters change in curriculum and instruction. (classroom observations, self-study, teacher interview, meetings with teachers, parents, school support staff)

Grading and reporting practices are generally reviewed and revised with consideration given to the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The high school's recent adoption of a school-wide practice for weighting term marks and final exams is a result of the staff's collaborative discussion and agreement regarding grading and reporting practices. There is collaboration on grading policies and the balanced use of formative, summative, and common assessments by most teachers within many departments. There is opportunity for discussion

and/or consensus about grading policies, but there is a recognized need for collaboration across curricular areas. Work to consider core values and beliefs when reviewing and revising grading and reporting practices, such as in the development of the senior capstone project, will help strengthen the connection between assessment and the school's values and beliefs.(self-study, teachers, students, department leaders, student work)

Commendations

1. A wide range of assessment strategies that provide students with opportunities to showcase their understanding of concepts in various ways
2. The curriculum improvement time (CIT) that affords teachers opportunities to collaborate within departments to analyze, create, and revise assessments
3. The biannual plan to assess student expectations using school rubrics
4. The process used to communicate student achievement to students and parents

Recommendations

1. Develop more explicit connections between 21st century learning expectations and assessment
2. Continue to refine the report of student achievement to provide more specific feedback to parents and students



Support Standard School Culture and Leadership

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

1. The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.
2. The school is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course (English/language arts, social studies, math, science, or world languages).
3. There is a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
4. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff:
 - engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning
 - use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices
 - dedicate formal time to implement professional development
 - apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
5. School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning.

6. The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.
7. Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students.
8. The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.
9. Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.
10. Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.
11. The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
12. The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

Conclusions

Joseph Case High School provides a positive and safe environment that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership. For some students, the school fosters pride and high expectations; however, the February 2010 Endicott Survey indicated that 39.3% of students respects teachers and that 30.6% of students respects each other. In addition, the faculty self-study committee noted the need to develop a specific plan to increase pride and respect throughout the school. There has been a beneficial result so far of this awareness on the parts of administrators and faculty and staff members who have begun to address issues of pride and respect. There has been a decline in disciplinary data numbers relating to student issues. In

addition, many students now participate in extracurricular activities and clubs such as the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), drama, band, debate and math teams, and athletics opportunities as a means of active student participation that supports pride in their school. Students in the CACE and ARCH programs and other special needs students also have some opportunities to participate in this culture. The principal has assumed a leadership role in the introduction of heterogeneity in courses, with the underlying expectation that this will support a greater level of student responsibility for learning.

While the surveys indicate issues in some aspects of the school environment, data regarding student activities, discipline, and ongoing efforts of faculty and administration indicate a positive environment at Joseph Case High School that is moving toward greater responsibility for learning. (parents, teachers, students, discipline reports, student handbook, program of studies, student work)

The school has begun a process to create an inclusive and equitable environment that fosters heterogeneity, where every student over the course of his or her school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course. The principal has made heterogeneity a top priority in his vision for the high school in order to create a learning environment that is inclusive. Joseph Case High School offers heterogeneous courses in every curriculum area. While freshman students take heterogeneous classes in English, science, history and a math elective, most upperclassman are enrolled in at least one heterogeneous course. The program of studies includes a variety of course offerings to allow most students to achieve at high levels. The program of studies contains advanced placement and honors level courses in some content areas and grade levels, with other courses offered at: level 1 and level 2. Clarity of

purpose and consistency of definition in the description of levels varies significantly from discipline to discipline. Honors courses are sometimes incorporated into level 1 courses with teachers differentiating the level for students in the number, type and complexity of assignments resulting in greater heterogeneity of the student body within the course. Graduation requirements are set for all students. Some students have the graduation requirement of physical education waived to take an additional academic class. Foreign language is recommended for college preparatory students. Some special needs students are served using a “pull out” model that separates them from other general education, potentially role-model students. Additional assistance for special needs students in core curriculum classes is provided through small classes where a special needs teacher with dual certification delivers instruction with paraprofessional support. Thus, while the school has begun efforts to foster heterogeneous courses, it has not linked these efforts to specific and measurable professional development activities that will ensure all teachers and other staff members are trained in 21st century best practices aimed at improving teaching and learning equitably for all students. (program of studies, school support staff, teachers, department leaders)

Three years ago, beginning with the Class of 2012, the principal instituted a formal advisory program to support personalized learning for students and the achievement of the school’s learning expectations. The program was phased in one grade at a time so that in 2010-2011 all students in grades 9-11 participate. The time for the program is provided through a “bubble block” by extending period two (8:09 – 9:29 A.M.). Approximately fifteen times during the year, groups of twelve to fifteen students meet to cover such topics as course selection, learning styles, finals exams and goal setting, understanding grade point averages, scheduling, and time management. A teacher volunteer coordinates the program, and approximately twenty-

four teachers have volunteered to serve as advisors. Formal paid professional development time for the development of content for advisory sessions takes place with teacher volunteers during one day in the summer. Students are heterogeneously grouped and the same topics are discussed for all students in a group session. All students remain with the same advisor for throughout their high school years. The advisory program is reviewed annually with student feedback given at the end of the academic year. The summer advisor's workshop provides a formal venue for faculty reflection and planning. Thus, implementation of a formal advisory program at Joseph Case High School is a positive first step in personalizing learning. Professional development for the teachers who are advisors and a curriculum that focuses on the school's expectations will go a long way toward making the program a recognized success. (school leadership, self-study, students, leadership team)

There is some professional development at Joseph Case High School where faculty members may engage in discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning, use current best practices to improve teaching and learning, have formal and ongoing time to implement high quality professional development, and apply the skills and practices they have learned. The superintendent of schools reports that there is a multi-year district plan with established overarching professional development goals for the district. The current plan includes district goals such as the expansion of communication with parents and training to embed technology effectively in instruction. The district plan is due to be renewed this year. The current Joseph Case High School 2010-2011 School Improvement Plan (SIP) contains as a district goal the heading "Human Resources and Professional Development" that includes two school-based professional development activities: an activity identified as "ongoing" for this year is "to increase release time for the NEASC self-study" and the other professional development activity

is “to transition faculty meeting times to curriculum improvement time (CIT) that is dedicated to reflection on curriculum, instruction, and assessment.”. Department heads in the core content areas have been formally delegated to lead the curriculum improvement time. However, all department heads do not utilize curriculum improvement time for reflection in instruction and assessment. In addition, school-based professional development activity further detailed for the last three years to indicate specific and measurable activities that department heads would engage in to accomplish the goals stated in this school improvement plan was not available. The principal has also created “Cardinal Academy” as a means to provide ongoing voluntary after school professional development opportunities for his staff with offerings taught by fellow faculty members. Sixteen staff members have attended workshops and conferences outside the district. While high school principal does not have direct jurisdiction over professional development funds, he may make recommendations based on the needs of his faculty. Joseph Case High School should continue to provide, to all faculty and staff, ongoing, embedded, and high-quality professional development aimed at improving teaching and learning.(principal, self-study, students, leadership team members)

The principal and assistant principal evaluate staff members in accordance with the district’s negotiated teacher evaluation instrument that utilizes the seven categories of the state’s “Effective Principles for Teaching”. Each category is detailed with subcategories taken from the “Effective Principles” document. Professional staff members are rated for each category with a four-tier rating scale that utilizes the following four levels: “exceeds standard, meets standard, standard not consistently met, and standard not met”. Formal evaluation is based at least one formal classroom observation in addition to more extensive informal classroom contact and observation. If a teacher receives a rating of “standard not met” for one or more indicators, the

evaluator provides documentation for the rating with his/her comments. A professional staff member may be placed on “performance improvement plan” in accordance with district procedures. The principal reports that some faculty members have been placed on performance improvement plans. All administrators have been trained in Research for Better Teaching, but the evaluation instrument is not reflective of current best practices in supervision and evaluation, in particular regarding such components as rating structure, intervals of observation, and variety of teacher feedback. Department head job descriptions in the collective bargaining agreement state that they share with the administrators the responsibility of evaluating department members but department heads report that they provide informal feedback to administrators but do not formally evaluate teachers in their departments. There is a formal, first- year teacher induction program where teachers who are assigned as mentors receive stipends and are formally trained. Also there are some mentors who provide informal mentoring to new teachers in the second and third year of their careers at the school, but this is not a formal program. Teachers have infrequent opportunities for peer observation and feedback. Increased supervision from a variety of people would positively impact instructional practices. As a result, the supervision and evaluation of faculty members provides only a minimal level of regular and ongoing feedback from administrators and department heads to enable teachers to grow professionally as active and reflective learners.(school leadership team, department heads, self-study)

In only a limited manner does the high school schedule’s organization of time support research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. In the master schedule, there is common planning time for the core departments. But

the use of that time for collegial work and examination of student work and assessment is voluntary as it must take place during teachers' contracted preparation periods. Many faculty members express a desire to meet more often and, if possible, in interdisciplinary teams. With the current schedule, there is no consistent and clear process for department heads to use formal best practice protocols to engage staff members in reflection and discourse aimed at improving practices. Teachers note that there was a scheduling committee formed some time ago to review the current schedule, but to date, no variations of the traditional seven periods of forty-six minutes has been considered except for the addition of the period two "bubble block" (of eighty minutes) which was instituted in the 1990's. As a result, the current master schedule only partially supports effective time for all teachers to collaborate within and across departments, for best practices in instruction and assessment that require extended time, and for all students to engage in rigorous and relevant learning. (student shadowing, school leadership team, self-study)

Student load and class size in most areas enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. Although the self-study documents that the student/teacher ratio is 14.5 students per staff member, typical general education courses have class sizes over twenty students. Despite this difference, teachers are able to check continually for understanding and use formative assessment through classroom conversation. Most teachers and students feel that the learning needs of students are being met. The Case Alternative Center for Education (CACE) program facilitator acknowledges that the principal is "very cognizant of the class size and monitors the numbers frequently". The schedule allows for classes that have low enrollment numbers to be combined with another class during the same period to avoid a cancellation of

either class. The teacher is then expected to modify or differentiate content to fit the needs of both classes or levels of learners with class assignment, homework and supplemental reading. Additionally, while some teachers modify pace of content in these classes and differentiate assessment and workload for students in these more heterogeneous classes, direct instruction remains the same for all students. Students have the opportunity for self-directed study or required MCAS tutoring during “study hall” periods, and seniors in good standing have the option to arrive late or leave early if these periods fall at the beginning or the end of the day. Faculty members are aware of the socio-economic challenges outside of the school environment that impact the availability of technology in some homes and allow students to utilize the technology within the building that they may not have at home to complete assignments. Students are afforded additional opportunities to meet learning needs through the advisory program, an occasion to discuss and reflect on current school issues, consider post-secondary planning, and delve into pertinent topics that are relevant to all members of the educational community. As a result, student class size is at a level that is considered adequate to allow teachers to most often meet learning needs of individual students.(classroom observations, student shadowing, facility tour, student work, teachers, central office administrators)

The principal, working with other building leaders, has made an effort to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school’s core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The principal models the core values by being an advisor within the advisory program. He is seen daily welcoming arriving students in the morning and is visible during high traffic periods. The principal communicates through “Cardinal Notes” which is an e-newsletter

sent to faculty members, school committee members, and parents and posts school news on the school website. The principal is accessible and available to students, teachers and parents through daily conversations throughout the building, scheduled appointments, advisory sessions, and the “superintendent breakfast”. The school’s mission statement and core values are read daily during morning announcements. These visible actions consistently model the ideals of the principal’s leadership vision. The principal also requires that the core values have connections in the classrooms. The school has recently adopted a “students come first” initiative, and the principal participates actively, knowing every student by name. The school recognizes all student success equally during the morning announcements, in the school display cases, and on the school walls. By developing committees, the principal involves the faculty, community, and students collaboratively when he makes important decisions that affect the school. Most recently he worked with a number of stakeholders in a process to develop the school’s core values and beliefs about learning. For decisions regarding school policy, procedures and discipline, the principal has the authority to enact a decision that reflects the mission statement, core values and 21st century learning while remaining fair and consistent. The principal meets with a leadership committee once every seven-day cycle and can meet with department chairs during their common “prep” blocks. Without disrupting the rotation of student classes, the schedule of department chairs has been adjusted to allow the entire leadership committee to meet every seven days. The majority of the principal’s time is centered around student compliance, crisis management, and informal and formal classroom observations to gather data on class management. The remainder of his time is spent on logistics and scheduling of upcoming school-wide events. When administrators and faculty leaders provide leadership focused on instruction that is founded in the school’s core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, the

school can be confident that teachers will have high expectations for student learning and that all students are given the opportunity to reach their individual potential.(classroom observations, student shadowing, facility tour, student work, teachers, school leadership, school board)

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. The culture and character of the staff has embraced the “students come first” initiative by taking on additional tasks such as the summer development of curriculum, participation in establishing and running a parent portal, and the collaboration to develop the core values and 21st century learning expectations. The staff has shown that it is supportive of collaborative decisions that are made.

As part of the NEASC evaluation, the school conducted the Endicott Survey to gather data and information from the parents, students and teachers. In that survey, administered in 2009, the majority of parents/guardians agreed that they are given the opportunity to participate in policymaking at Joseph Case High School. However, only 34 percent of students believes that they have the ability to impact change, and 40 percent of teachers believes that their opinions are valued in the decision-making process.

Teachers head various committees such as the professional development committee, the non-bias materials committee, the student handbook committee, and the teacher handbook committee. An additional teacher led committee has been created to evaluate the school schedule and determine whether it is consistent with optimal educational strategies. Teachers are provided opportunities to participate in several additional committees such as the leadership committee, NEASC Standards Committees, curriculum writing committee, and the professional development committee. Teacher committees have been involved in the creation of professional

development workshops within the school on E-board, Wikis, Senteo, X2 and access to the public library. Teachers are able to initiate change through their department heads and system wide directors, who discuss the issues with the principal in leadership team meetings.

Leadership committee meetings are described as being agenda-driven and focus on student needs and achievement. The minutes of these leadership meetings indicate that many initiatives are suggested by the principal to the leadership team. Formal decision-making forums are available to students through student council and the election of class officers. The school council is described as the student organizational body that meets once per month to discuss various issues, including but not limited to, course offerings, changes to the student handbook, the school improvement plan, and community involvement. Student council members present issues to the principal as a body representing student interests. Student members of the superintendent's advisory committee are credited with initiatives that include the allowance of cell phones in the cafeteria during lunch, a refund for students who obtain their license but already paid for a full year of bus transportation, and the creation of an additional pep rally and the girls' powder puff football game. Students can also have their voices heard through the quarterly online school newspaper called "The Cardinal". They have multiple opportunities to provide feedback at the course level through e-board discussions, but these reflections are often considered to be homework. Athletic team captains also meet regularly with administrators to talk about sports-related issues.

Parents have the opportunity to join ad hoc committees, interview committees, school council and school committee. Parent members of the school council have adjusted the meeting calendar to four times per year. Participation from all stakeholders has been constant in the past seven years. Parents have been credited for implementing the use of Impact testing for student-

athletes, fundraising clubs for extracurricular activities, the return of the Auto 1 course-offering, and the acceptance of the video production course to meet the graduation requirement for fine arts. An example of a parent/guardian initiative was a parent involvement survey developed by two parents involved in student council in 2008, which had 105 parents respond. However, there are inconsistently defined roles for teachers, students, and parents in decision-making to promote responsibility and ownership and to ensure that community members are invested and committed. A plan to further incorporate student and teacher participation in more of the decision-making processes would promote a deeper level of ownership and responsibility.(student shadowing, facility tour, teachers, school leadership, school board, self-study)

Teachers exercise initiative and provide some leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. The self-study states that the school has developed departmental professional learning communities for core subject teachers for the 2010-2011 school year, and that teachers are aware of their professional learning communities (PLCs). The self-study also states that there are five late start days, five early release days and three full in-service days dedicated to collaboration amongst teachers to focus on student learning. Teachers meet in departments to review and revise curriculum, assessment strategies, instructional practices and school organization practices. The common faculty meeting time is allotted to the departments to focus on improvement of student learning. This schedule appears to result in ten after school department meetings utilized for collaboration. This time is also used for updating the curriculum, discussion of better teaching practices, and interdisciplinary projects. As a result of these meetings, the school has implemented Socratic Seminar, quarterly finals, development of rubrics, the U.S. Constitution project between English and History

departments and the addition of the 9th grade heterogeneous class “Math Explorations”. Teachers are taking on leadership roles through advancement into the position of department chairs, system-wide coordinators, mentors of new teachers, and student advisors. Furthermore, in an effort to improve the school climate, teacher and student driven initiatives include the Gay-Straight Alliance, Community Service Club’s Green Team and the development of a cross-country team. It is common to see many faculty members attending after school extra-curricular activities indicating their level of interest in students. The continuing promotion of teacher collaboration in bringing forward and engaging in reflective discourse will result in further increases in student engagement and school improvement.(student shadowing, facility tour, teachers, school leadership, school board, self-study)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school’s 21st century learning expectations. The principal meets regularly with the superintendent of schools to collaborate and reflect throughout the school year after school committee meetings, scheduled administrative meetings, and during summer months. The superintendent is often present at weekly leadership meetings within the high school. It is evident that the principal, school committee and superintendent have a long term relationship that is connected with a sense of community both within the building and in the town. The principal is supported by the superintendent and school committee in his decisions and often has the opportunity to reflect on the situation with the superintendent before making a decision. Both the superintendent and the principal understand their roles, have listening skills, and value communication. Their relationship has taken on a mentoring atmosphere with open and adequate constructive feedback. The collaborative nature of these inter-relationships is the jointly developed demerit point system to create consequences for disciplinary issues. The

school's 21st century learning expectations are clearly embedded in the school culture and the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving these expectations.(self-study, school board, leadership team)

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. The job description of the principal includes the following responsibilities in regard to teaching and learning: establish and maintain effective learning opportunity for all students; create, design, evaluate, and implement an instructional program schedule; oversee the coordination of curriculum; implement the curriculum accommodation plan; promote instructional practices responsive to student needs; and consult with the administrator of special education regarding accommodations. The principal has autonomy and decision-making authority to make important decisions for the school. While the budget is developed by central office, the principal has the authority to disseminate funds designated to the school in a manner that supports teaching and learning. Providing additional decision-making and leadership authority to the principal regarding the development of a site-specific budget based on meeting the needs of teaching and learning for the school is essential to support building-based leadership.(self-study, school board, leadership team)

Commendations

1. The principal's leadership in creation of core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

2. The implementation of heterogeneity by principal and staff as a means to foster inclusiveness and equity in learning opportunities
3. The implementation of a formal advisory program for students in Grades 9-11
4. The willingness of faculty members to become professional development providers for colleagues
5. The addition of common preparation time for some departments in the master schedule

Recommendations

1. Implement increased opportunities for engagement of students in ways that will expand pride and respect at Joseph Case High School
2. Focus on implementing the core values and beliefs across the school and implement high expectations for all students in all classes
3. Provide opportunities for all teachers to meet with other teachers as you have for core teachers
4. Provide additional professional development to effectively use PLC time
5. Provide the principal with the necessary decision making and leadership authority to participate actively in developing a budget based on meeting the needs of teaching and learning for the school
6. Provide clearer opportunities for teacher and student contributions to school decision-making and initiatives



Support Standard School Resources for Learning

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

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

community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

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

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

Conclusions

The school has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students. Joseph Case High School implements intervention strategies for all students through a formal advisory program first implemented during the 2008-2009 school year. The advisory program is run by self-selected volunteer faculty members who meet with small groups of students twice per month during the school day for approximately thirty minutes to discuss relevant topics. Students report that advisory leaders ask for their input and feedback in constructing and revising future programs during the final meeting of the year.

Guidance counselors follow students through all four years of high school and work closely with students to provide timely interventions through personal, academic college, and career counseling services. Students identified as at-risk are referred to the Case High Intervention Program (CHIP) comprised of 12 members, including school administrators, guidance department representative, school adjustment counselors, the school nurse, and four teachers, each representing a grade level. After receiving a referral from a member of the school community, the CHIP team uses a standardized form to solicit feedback from teachers and then partners with the student and family to create an action plan, revisiting the action plan every four to six weeks to evaluate student progress. Interventions for students discussed at the CHIP team meetings include, but are not limited to, courses designated for at-risk students, referral for core evaluation, review of current individual educational or 504 plans, additional guidance services, and referrals to outside community services. The Case Alternative Center for Education (CACE) program and the Autism Spectrum Disorder Roadway at Case High School (ARCH) are both substantially separate programs that provide direct interventions to students. The CACE program accommodates students with behavioral, social, and emotional problems, and the ARCH program provides educational services to students on the Autism Spectrum. There is a full-time school adjustment counselor who serves both of these programs on a daily basis, and students from both programs participate in the school advisory program. In-school suspension and Saturday school are effectively used as intervention strategies to keep students actively involved in the learning process. The Somerset/Swansea community evening school is a resource available at a cost to at-risk students allowing them to work towards their high school diploma in an alternative setting. The career internship program and the school to work program are two additional opportunities for students that demonstrate innovative and adaptable practices

allowing students to become active learners. Because of the implementation of the advisory program, the CHIP Program, the work of the guidance department, and opportunities made available for at-risk students, students at Joseph Case High School are provided with an effective range of directive intervention programs to help them achieve the school's learning expectations. (self-study, teachers, students, school support staff, Endicott Survey)

The school frequently provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. 79% of parents believes the school adequately provides information about available student support services to all families. The principal's newsletter (*Cardinal Notes*), the local newspaper, the One Call Now system for school announcements, and several multi-purpose parent nights all contribute to keeping families informed. The student/parent portal through the X2 student information system was made available to families at Joseph Case High School starting in the 2009-2010 school year, allowing parents to access their children's grades online. The guidance department contacts all families of students in academic difficulty up to eight times a year after progress reports and report cards are issued. Seniors in academic difficulty receive a formal letter sent home after the end of each marking period to alert families of their student's status in working towards graduation. The special education department provides information to families through phone calls, team meetings, e-mail, and informational seminars. The Director of the CACE program regularly contacts family members to highlight examples of their students' struggles and success to establish a working partnership with the families of students most in need. Data on student achievement collected through the CHIP Team is used to inform continued intervention strategies and is reported to parents. Timely information alerting parents to the school's concerns with student tardiness or attendance is also sent home when necessary. In addition to sending communications home, the

principal and director of guidance have made a practice of making home visits to students struggling with school attendance in order to discuss strategies to support the students in returning to school. Because of the range of strategies used at Joseph Case High School to provide information to families, especially those most in need, about available student services, the majority of students and parents feels they are informed as is evidenced by the results of the Endicott Survey. (panel presentation, school support staff, students, parents, Endicott Survey)

Support services staff members use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. The introduction of the X2 student information system has provided a technological basis for guidance counselors, the librarian, and the school nurse to communicate effectively with the students and parents/guardians and to monitor student progress as well as attendance. All support staff members have computer access to this database. Special educators use SEMS Tracker and the nurse uses Health Master. The school librarian facilitates the use of online resources including information databases and subscriptions provided by the state board of library commissioners through the public library. Although library-lending systems are not automated, the librarian ensures that students receive the services to which they are entitled, including public library cards and materials loaned among libraries. The librarian also supports teachers in the use of blogs, wikis, and podcasts as instructional tools. As a result of the effective use of technology, most support services are appropriately implemented in the school. (parents, self-study, teachers, support staff team, librarian)

School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members who deliver a written, developmental program; meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling; engage in individual and group counseling meetings with all students; deliver collaborative outreach and referral to

community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community to improve services; and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. A director of guidance oversees two full-time guidance counselors and one full-time secretary. The current school counselor to student ratio is approximately 287 to 1. School counselors report meeting with every student in their caseload several times a year, and they report that 85% of their time is spent directly counseling students as measured by student log-in sheets and the X2 student information system. This data conflicts with the Endicott Survey where only 22% of students says they meet with their guidance counselor regularly. Discussions with students, however, reveal that many students do not understand how to define regularly when answering this question. A written and developmental school counseling program designed in accordance with the Massachusetts School Model for Comprehensive School Counseling is delivered to all students. The school counselors have initiated a three-part program with the freshman class this year where resources available to students are highlighted, the importance of graduating from high school is discussed, and students sign a graduation promise that is kept on file with their respective guidance counselors. Students in grades 10-12 continue to participate in group counseling sessions with their school counselor on grade appropriate topics ranging from how to make high school count, required college entrance exams, financial aid, and college/career planning. The director of guidance is scheduled to visit the middle school to discuss the course selection process this year for the first time. On the recommendation of the school administration, the school counseling department switched its career curriculum to *My Plan for College* to start the 2010-2011 school year. As of March 2011, passwords allowing students to access the program have yet to be created, creating a gap in the delivery of the school's

developmental counseling curriculum. The school counseling department has strong working relationships with community health agencies and social service providers. It also works effectively with local educational institutions such as Bristol Community College that coordinate closely with the department, providing a dual enrollment program, allowing students at JCHS to take college courses during their high school years. Data such as MCAS results, college placement testing, the school assessment parent survey, the Joseph Case High School graduate survey, and X2 generated reports are all used by the school counseling department to help personalize the delivery of future services to students. After reviewing the results of the Endicott Survey, the director of guidance relocated to the school counseling office, and the office now opens at 7am. As school counseling services are adequately staffed and deliver a wide range of programs for students documented in their developmental curriculum, students are receiving a personalized experience that helps them work towards the school's 21st century learning expectations.(self-study, Endicott Survey, teachers, support staff, students, teachers, student shadowing)

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members who provide effective preventative health services and direct intervention services; use a well-coordinated, appropriate referral process; conduct timely, ongoing student health assessments; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The nurse provides a range of direct and preventative intervention services, assessing health issues, monitoring medications and treatments, administering first aid and emergency care, and providing educational materials. The nurse also assists with psychological and psycho-social/behavioral health issues. For care of chronic

medical conditions, the nurse prepares and maintains individual health care plans. The nurse also takes an active role in health promotion and helps connect students and families with insurance resources, dental and vision screening providers, and community support services. The nurse collaborates with health teachers to reinforce health education and promote healthy choices. For the on-site preschool program (“Case’s Little Faces”), the nurse provides first aid and CPR training for enrolled students and oversees immunizations for the preschoolers. Staffing is adequate, as Joseph Case High School employs one full-time registered nurse for 583 students in compliance with state and national guidelines of one full-time registered nurse for up to 750 students. Staffing is more than adequate in that the nurse collaborates effectively with guidance counselors, special educators, and other specialists and administrators so that the needs of the students are addressed. The nurse coordinates the services of visiting technologists who perform mandated screenings for the entire student body and provides notifications to families as needed. Medication administration is provided under the written order of a licensed prescriber with signed consent by the parent/guardian. The nurse maintains health and immunization records in files secured in a locked fireproof cabinet, as dictated by state and federal laws. The nurse assists families by making referrals to other health care providers, agencies or practices, consistent with federal and state regulations. The nurse participates in nurse-parent/guardian or teacher conferences, open houses, team meetings, weekly CHIP meetings, and 504 and special education meetings when applicable. The nurse also works in conjunction with guidance counselors to request tutorial and transportation services for students unable to attend school for medical reasons. The nurse serves on the crisis team in conjunction with guidance counselors, adjustment counselors, and school administrators. A daily log of student visits and parent/guardian phone calls and contact is maintained by the nurse via the district-wide Health

Master application. Community resources used by the health office include Planned Parenthood, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, and the local department of health, especially regarding immunization issues. The health office uses Massachusetts Department of Public Health resources, sharing website information with students and families on hand-washing, cough etiquette, disease prevention, and immunization scheduling. Interviews with parents, administrators, the nurse, and other support staff corroborate the self-study findings as to the effectiveness of school health services. The nurse collaborates effectively within the school, district, and community, providing health services which support the overall well-being of the school community, supporting student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, parents, support staff)

Library/media services are effectively integrated into curriculum and instructional practices by a certified school librarian without a support staff. The school librarian is actively engaged in the development and implementation of the school's curriculum. The librarian provides a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum, works to keep the facility available and staffed for students and staff members before, during, and after school; is responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning; and conducts ongoing assessment of the library's efficacy, using relevant data including feedback from the school community to improve services and ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. Joseph Case High School and the Swansea public school district as a whole have one certified school librarian. The library/media services are fully integrated into the Joseph Case High School's curriculum and instructional practices. The librarian plays a major role in every academic area, due largely to her initiative in connecting with colleagues and their corresponding openness to

collaboration. The librarian seeks teachers' opinions and invites faculty members to discuss existing collections and new purchases that relate to their disciplines. Students and faculty members have regular and frequent access to library information services, facilities, and programs as an integral part of their educational experience. The library operates on a flexible schedule Monday through Friday between 6:55 am to 2:40 pm. Without paraprofessional or clerical support, when the librarian has the opportunity to teach or co-teach full classes requiring computers, the library space is closed to outside students. During their study hall periods, students access the library by using a sign-in and school pass system. The librarian provides the faculty with monthly schedules of planned library use, and all teachers have opportunities to use the space and its resources. In partnership with the English department, the librarian works directly with all freshmen emphasizing library, research, and writing/formatting skills, and her background in young adult literature supports her reader's advisory efforts and collaboration in development of summer reading lists. As a central member of the school community, the librarian also proctors the Advanced Placement (AP) and Massachusetts Comprehension Assessment System (MCAS) exams, serves as the advisor for the National Honor Society (NHS) and is the designated coordinator for the Virtual High School program. Because she serves as the sole librarian in the district, the established partnership with public librarians is critical. Joseph Case High School's librarian ensures that incoming freshmen register for and receive public library cards, and teaches school community members how to access public library resources including the library network. Diminishing budget allocations have been carefully used to procure resources most needed to support instruction. Some computers have been placed within the confines of the library space to support the Virtual High School (VHS) program and the needs of other students. The librarian develops, plans, and evaluates the library's programs,

policies, services, and collections. The physical library collection currently stands at 6,239 books, 22 magazine subscriptions, and 88 audio-books. New non-fiction and fiction texts are added as funds allow. Older books are weeded out of the collection with an eye to a ten-year collection development period. If a student needs a book that is at another library, the librarian acquires materials through regional inter-library loans. Students have access to consortium resources, such as online databases, through their public library access at school or home. The current budget allocation for the library is insufficient to maintain and update library resources. Despite a fifty percent reduction in funding for the library collection over the last eight years and staffing constraints, it is clear that the librarian is an essential part of the school community, serves the school in a multitude of ways with minimal additional support, and that the library plays a significant role in supporting the students' achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.(self-study, supporting documentation, support staff, student shadowing, administrators, parents)

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members who collaborate with each other and with teachers and administrators to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school improvement plan identifies actions for the development and implementation of programs that ensure quality instruction, high expectations for all students, and emphasize student achievement. The Case High School Intervention Program (CHIP) and the leadership team, with representation from all departments, meet on a weekly basis to highlight students in need and to coordinate services. The assistant principal at Joseph Case High School currently serves as the 504 facilitator for the high school, and referrals are typically made

through team meetings and by the CHIP team. The Joseph Case High School special education department has five highly-qualified special education teachers, six paraprofessionals, and 2.5 school adjustment counselors working within the special education/support service programs. Students on IEPs receive services in the least restrictive environment and are supported through the general education setting, inclusion classrooms, resource settings, two self-contained programs (CACE and ARCH), and in substantially separate classrooms. Special education liaisons collaborate with multi-disciplinary teams in order to ensure progress toward educational plan goals. Paraprofessionals work together with classroom instructors to make learning more accessible for all students. The CACE and ARCH teams regularly evaluate student eligibility for integration into general education classrooms, offering an opportunity for inclusion for students primarily enrolled in a substantially separate program. The special education programs and processes at Joseph Case High School comply with all federal and state laws and regulations. The ARCH program provides educational services to students with a diagnosis on the Autism spectrum. In addition to modified core academic subjects, the program teaches life skills that enable students to participate as fully as possible in all areas of life and to transition to the least restrictive environment in the community. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy are provided according to a student's educational plan. Technology is integrated into the curriculum through the daily use of computers, SMART Boards, and other assistive technology. Community access opportunities include recreational, educational, and vocational field trips. The CACE program is an alternative school-within-a-school program at Joseph Case High School serving students with social, emotional, behavioral and /or academic difficulties. This substantially separate program allows reintegration into the general education setting to the extent deemed appropriate by the team. Joseph Case High School currently has one student

designated as an English language learner and this student is receiving appropriate services from certified support staff. As a result of the scope and services in these programs, there are opportunities for students to remain in their community school while still receiving the benefits of a highly specialized education. (self-study, teachers, support staff, parents, student shadowing, classroom observations)

Commendations

1. The parent access to the student/parent portal allowing access to student academic progress online
2. The variety of specialized special education programs to maintain students within their home district
3. Continual monitoring of identified students to ensure the least restrictive environment and effective inclusion
4. The outstanding library management and service to all students and faculty members

Recommendations

1. Provide necessary technical support and training to implement the web-based career counseling curriculum
2. Increase allocation of funds to support the library purchase of books and an automated circulation system



Support Standard Community Resources for Learning

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

1. The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for:
 - a wide range of school programs and services
 - sufficient professional and support staff
 - ongoing professional development and curriculum revision
 - a full range of technology support
 - sufficient equipment
 - sufficient instructional materials and supplies.

2. The school develops, plans, and funds programs:
 - to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant
 - to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment
 - to keep the school clean on a daily basis.

3. The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses:
 - programs and services
 - enrollment changes and staffing needs
 - facility needs
 - technology
 - capital improvements.

4. Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.

5. The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services.

6. The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.
7. All professional staff actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.
8. The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body provide sufficient funding for professional and support staff and for the majority of school programs and services, but funding for ongoing professional development and curriculum revision is inconsistent. The budget increase for each year in the last three years has been less than 2%. The budget supports a wide range of standard programs and services in addition to and including the Autism Spectrum Roadway through Case High School (ARCH) program, the Virtual High School (VHS) program, and the Case Alternative Center for Education (CACE) program. To improve discipline, funding has been allocated to provide an in-school suspension program and Saturday school which address minor disciplinary infractions and assist students who require time for credit recovery resulting from excessive absences. The professional and support staff is adequate. Most retirement positions have been absorbed by the system in an effort to eliminate the potential for teacher layoffs. Technology is supported and purchased through the school's local budget. During this current school year, a new Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) computer lab was purchased. Additionally, an iPod mobile cart, several student mobile computer labs and a Senteo interactive response system have been added to the computer inventory. The

budget is allocated to the principal by the superintendent, and the principal, in turn, allocates funds to department leaders who request input from teachers to make prioritized purchases. Funding for computer service needs, equipment, instructional materials, and supplies appear to be sufficient. This year, a complete set of chemistry, physics, and music history texts were purchased to fulfill a need. There are only minimal opportunities for teachers to attend outside conferences because of budget constraints. Recent curriculum revision was completed by individuals and departments on their own time, working after school or during the summer. Professional development on the practices of integrating technology into instruction is minimal, however, despite the allocation to hardware. According to the Working Conditions Survey Report of the Endicott Survey, only 15% of the staff reports having somewhat sufficient training to utilize educational technology effectively. While the school has made excellent efforts at having a wide range of technology available with technical support to maintain it, an additional budget allocation for professional development in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and technology would positively impact teaching and learning at Joseph Case High School.(self-study, parents, teachers, administrators, central office administrators, Working Conditions Survey Report of Endicott Survey)

The school has developed and funded a program to clean the building daily and carry out minor maintenance. However, there is no documented long-term capital plan to ensure scheduled replacement of equipment or repairs to the school physical plant. Eighty percent of parents regards the school as clean and well-maintained, and, generally, teachers and students agree. At the start of the 2009-10 school year, the cleaning was subcontracted to M&M Cleaning while maintenance and repairs are handled within the school department. The central administration reports that hiring M&M Cleaning has saved the district over \$250,000. Parents

comment that they are “amazed at what is done with what is budgeted”. Teacher and staff request repairs using an online form processed by the assistant principal and routed to the appropriate repair staff members. Teachers report that they are very satisfied with the system. The assistant superintendent is responsible for purchasing supplies and equipment on an as-needed basis with no purchasing plan in evidence. A formal plan for long term purchasing, maintenance, and capital improvements of the building and school plant, would identify necessary resources to maintain an appropriate learning environment over time. (Endicott Survey, self-study, parents administrators)

The community funds, and the school implements, a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and technology. Student enrollment, attendance, and grade information are available to administrators, faculty and staff members, and parents via X2 software and SEMS Tracker. Beginning in 2009, the school implemented a well- developed technology plan that utilizes mobile computer laboratories, Virtual High School, and a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) laboratory. Teachers, parents, and students report that technology is adequately provided. Seventy percent of the staff does not believe that the school has a long-term plan to address facilities, future programs, services, staffing levels, or capital improvements. In addition, some items on this list have been started, but most have not been addressed. Some of the unaddressed items listed are significant capital investments, including a new gym floor and bleachers and a second entrance to the property. The lack of budgeting, planning, and timetables for completion of capital improvements and staffing may create a situation where the educational process is impeded and subject to interruption as these items are handled on an emergency or as-needed basis.(Endicott Survey, self-study, technology plan, parents administrators)

Faculty and building administrators are not actively involved in the development of the budget, as school administrators and faculty members do not have input into the budget process. The superintendent informs the principal of the portion allocated to Joseph Case High School, and, the principal has the authority to assign funds to department heads at his discretion so there is discussion taking place at this level. Administrators and most faculty and staff members are encouraged by the fact that the budgeted amounts for books and supplies have remained consistent over the past few years. A significant exception to this, however, is the level of funding for the library collection, which has been reduced fifty percent over the last eight years. A building based approach is more conducive to the development and provision of high quality, student-centered programming, personnel, and services.(self-study, administrators, teachers)

Although there are several signs that major capital improvements will be required in the near future in the aging physical plant, the school site and plant still, though inconsistently, support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. The science labs, auditorium, and cafeteria are all aged but functionally maintained. There is adequate classroom and administrative space. The parking lots adequately support the school population, and the athletic fields and fencing are appropriately maintained to support athletic activity. There has been significant discussion and research regarding the construction of a second entrance/exit to the facility for safety reasons, requiring the cooperation of several town departments and the acquisition of the necessary land. In a September 2009 survey, seventy-one percent of the faculty and staff did not agree that the school is an environmentally healthy place to work. The HVAC system has been considerably renovated over the past few months and faculty members believe that the recent work has improved the system. Where the gym floor was buckled and damaged over the previous summer, it has been repaired. The repairs allowed the facility to be

used for the last athletic seasons, and there is a tentative plan for a replacement floor scheduled for the coming summer. The second entrance, HVAC system, and gym floor represent significant capital improvements that have not been planned or budgeted as long-term capital investments. Considering the absence of a capital plan and budget, the capital improvements required to continue the current level of high quality educational programming are of significant concern to the school as the failure of the HVAC system or gym floor would cause a serious disruption to the educational process.(Endicott Survey, self-study, technology plan, Working Conditions Survey Report, parents, administrators)

The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local, fire, health, and safety regulations. The building is inspected each August for safety and compliance by the Town of Swansea. Fire extinguishers are inspected, and there is appropriate storage and disposal of hazardous materials. The building provides adequate access to handicapped individuals, and the staff and administration make accommodations for special circumstances. Safety and regular maintenance problems are addressed through the maintenance request system in a timely manner. The school is in the planning process for the addition of a second entrance/exit from the campus as the existing single entrance/exit presents a safety concern. The building underwent an Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) inspection in February of 2009. An air quality analysis was not part of the AHERA inspection, and over seventy percent of faculty and staff members either disagree or strongly disagree that the environmental quality at the school is healthy. A healthy environment is essential to high quality teaching and learning, and addressing the concerns of the faculty would lead to a change in their beliefs about the

environmental quality in the school. (self-study, AHERA Plan, Working Conditions Survey Report, teachers)

The professional staff actively engages parents and families as partners in each student's education and attempts to reach out to those families who have been less connected with the school. The faculty and administration have multiple avenues to communicate with parents and families. At the beginning of the school year, families are invited to an open house to meet administrators and classroom teachers and to become familiar with expectations of the school and their child's teachers. In order to keep parents and guardians informed, the principal is able to communicate with parents via a listserv, One Call Now, the *Cardinal Notes* newsletter, and the school web page. Teachers inform parents of classroom assignments, projects, and upcoming tests via eBoard which is accessed through the school web page. The X2 program allows parents to monitor student grades, attendance, and behavior referrals remotely via this portal. To celebrate student success, parents and families are invited to award ceremonies such as the Joseph Case High School Academic Awards Night, National Honor Society induction, and the science fair. According to the Endicott Survey, 64% of the staff believes they engage parents and families in each student's education, and 69% of parents believes the staff actively engages them in their child's education; however, only 38% of the staff reports reaching out to families who are less connected to the school. The professional staff utilizes many avenues to actively engage parents and families as partners in the education of students at Joseph Case High School.(self-study report, self-study, parents, teachers, administrators, Endicott Survey, Working Conditions Survey Report)

Joseph Case High School develops parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. Students have the opportunity to participate in

internships in their senior year. This is coordinated through the accounting teacher and/or the child care instructor. Common internships are with the police departments, area day care/pre-school programs, and specialized programs, such as Trinity Repertory Company. Approximately one-third of all seniors participate in this out-of-school internship opportunity. An in-school pre-school program “Case’s Little Faces” provides a pre-school experience for Swansea residents while giving the enrolled high school students the hands-on experience of working with young children. Students also have the opportunity to work at the historical Martin House as docents, acting as persons from the late 17th century. Opportunities are presented to parents to serve on the school council and participate in the various booster programs. Both teachers and parents believe that the school has effective partnerships with parents, community organization, businesses, and higher education to support student learning(60% of staff members, 70% parents). There are dual enrollment agreements with Bristol Community College and University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. Some students participate during the school year, but enrollment in these programs increases during the summer months. The partnerships with parents, community, business, and higher education support student learning and improve the educational experiences of students.(self-study, parents, teachers, administrators, interviews with teachers, students, Endicott Survey)

Commendations

1. The significant investment in technology
2. The implementation of programs like Virtual High School
3. The widespread engagement of parents and families through the use of multiple technological and print avenues

4. Productive partnerships with parents, community, and higher education institutions

Recommendations

1. Provide appropriate professional development in technology
2. Develop and implement long-range plans to ensure scheduled maintenance and replacement of equipment
3. Develop and implement long-range plans for capital improvements
4. Develop and implement a budget process that incorporates the individual needs of all departments
5. Continue systematic replacement of ceiling tiles
6. Conduct appropriate air quality analysis of the building based on faculty concerns
7. Create and implement additional methods to engage those families who are less connected to the Joseph Case High School community

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

This comprehensive evaluation report reflects the findings of the school's self-study and those of the visiting committee. It provides a blueprint for the faculty, administration, and other officials to use to improve the quality of programs and services for the students in Joseph Case High School. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting committee recommendations.

Since it is in the best interest of the students that the citizens of the district become aware of the strengths and limitations of the school and suggested recommendations for improvement, the Commission requires that the evaluation report be made public in accordance with the Commission's Policy on Distribution, Use and Scope of the Visiting Committee Report.

A school's initial/continued accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing valid recommendations of the visiting committee and others identified by the Commission as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. To monitor the school's progress in the Follow-Up Program the Commission requires that the principal of Joseph Case High School submit routine Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports documenting the current status of all evaluation report recommendations, with particular detail provided for any recommendation which may have been rejected or those items on which no action has been taken. In addition, responses must be detailed on all recommendations highlighted by the Commission in its notification letters to the school. School officials are expected to have completed or be in the final stages of completion of all valid visiting committee recommendations by the time the Five-Year Progress Report is submitted. The Commission may request additional Special Progress Reports if one or more of the Standards are not being met in a satisfactory manner or if additional information is needed on matters relating to evaluation report recommendations or substantive changes in the school.

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Commission has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Commission within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Commission's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 15. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Commission office has current statistical data on the school.

The Commission urges school officials to establish a formal follow-up program at once to review and implement all findings of the self-study and valid recommendations identified in the evaluation report. An outline of the Follow-Up Program is available in the Commission's *Accreditation Handbook* which was given to the school at the onset of the self-study. Additional

direction regarding suggested procedures and reporting requirements is provided at Follow-Up Seminars offered by Commission staff following the on-site visit.

The visiting committee wishes to thank all members of the Joseph Case High School community for their warm and gracious hospitality. This, combined with the open nature of all students, faculty members, parents, and administrators, made the task of the visiting committee more manageable and efficient.

Joseph Case High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
March 27 - 30, 2011
Visiting Committee

<p>Laurie Farkas, Chair Hampshire Regional Public Schools Westhampton, MA 01027</p> <p>Lisa Pasonelli, Assistant Chair N. Providence Public Schools N. Providence, RI02904</p> <p>Beth Battey Classical High School Providence, RI02903</p> <p>Katherine Miller Barrington Public Schools Barrington, RI02806</p> <p>Breanne Gillespie Sandwich High School E. Sandwich, MA02537</p>	<p>Kathy Porter Foxborough High School Foxborough, MA02035</p> <p>Harry Taylor Duxbury High School Duxbury, MA02332</p> <p>Peter Wilbur Middleborough High School Middleborough, MA02346</p> <p>Ronald King Carver Middle High School Carver, MA 02330</p> <p>Juanita Suarez-Espino Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Oak Bluffs, MA 02557</p>
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NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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