NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

Middleborough High School

Middleborough, Massachusetts

April 7- 10, 2013

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

THE DISTRIBUTION, USE AND SCOPE OF THE
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

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

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

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

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees which supervises the work of four Commissions: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE), the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS), the Commission on Public Schools which is comprised of the Committee on Public Secondary Schools (CPSS), the 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 Committee. Those Standards are:

Teaching and Learning Standards
        Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations
        Curriculum
        Instruction
        Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support Teaching and Learning Standards
        School Culture and Leadership
        School Resources for Learning
        Community Resources for Learning.

The accreditation program for public schools involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the Committee's visiting committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study and the valid recommendations of the visiting committee and those identified by the

Committee in the Follow-Up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school be reevaluated at least once every ten years and that it show continued progress addressing identified needs.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Middleborough High School, a committee of eight 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.

The self-study of Middleborough High School extended over a period of 11 school months from November 2011 to December 2012.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their adherence to the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's mission, learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Committee, Middleborough 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 the entire professional staff had approved it.

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of 16 evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the Middleborough High School. The Committee members spent four days in Middleborough, 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 Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools from throughout New England, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Middleborough High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials

- 32 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day

- a total of 27 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 in the report was agreed to by visiting committee consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting committee appear in parenthesis in the Standards sections of the report. The seven Standards for Accreditation reports include commendations and recommendations that in the visiting committee's judgment will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better meet Committee Standards.

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

MIDDLEBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SUMMARY

Middleborough High School is located in Middleborough, Massachusetts, and a town in southeastern Massachusetts that is nearly equidistant between Boston and Providence. The town of Middleborough has a total population of 21,375. Of the 3,476 students in the district, 2.0% are African-American, 1.0% are Asian, 3.3% are Hispanic, 90.4% are White, 0.6% are Native American, 0.1% are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 2.6% are Multi-Racial Non-Hispanic. The median family income is $67,472. The majority of the community's population is employed in construction, medical services, trade, or government. While Middleborough is a major producer of cranberries, agriculture accounts for only 0.5% of overall employment. In March 2011, the unemployment rate was 11.2%. In 2010-2011, 30.4% of the district population lived at or below the low-income level. 23.3% of students receive free lunch and 7.1% receives reduced lunch.

In addition to Middleborough High School with its current enrollment of 852 students, the district includes four other public schools. These are the John T. Nichols Middle School with 892 students, the Henry B. Burkland Elementary School with 815 students, the Mary K. Goode Elementary School with 568 students, and the Memorial Early Childhood Center with 330 students. The town is also home to the Chamberlain School, a private school for thirteen-to-eighteen-year-old students with special needs. Also located in Middleborough is the READS (Regional Education Assessment and Diagnostic Services) Collaborative. This institution services students from several surrounding communities as well as from Middleborough who have low-incidence handicapping conditions.

Middleborough School District is ranked 280th out of 393 school districts in the state in terms of per pupil expenditures, spending $11,576 per pupil compared to a state average expenditure of $13,055 per pupil in 2010-11. In FY 2011 state, federal and other resources accounted for 6.6% of all funds received in the district, leaving 93.4% of funds to be obtained through local resources. In the year ending June 30, 2010, 88.3% of local property taxes were allocated to the public schools.

Middleborough High School includes students in grades 9 through 12 with total enrollment of 852 students (438 males and 414 females). There has been a slight decrease in the school population over the past ten years. The ethnic and cultural composition has remained fairly constant with 3.1% (26) African-American students, 1% (9) Asian students, and 2.3 % (20) Hispanic students during the 2010-11 school year. The average dropout rate over the past two years has been 1.15%. The average daily student attendance rate was 94.5% in 2009-2010. The average daily attendance rate among teachers for the same period was 92.2%. The four-year graduation rate for students of Middleborough High School was 93.5% in 2011.

Students in 10th through 12th grades may select from three levels of courses: college technical preparatory (CT), college preparatory (CP), and honors (H) courses. In addition, students in 11th and 12th grade may select from a number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Currently, 37.3% of students are enrolled in college technical preparatory, 33.9% of students are enrolled in college preparatory courses, 19.5 % of students are enrolled in honors classes, and 9.3% are enrolled in Advanced Placement courses. Approximately 16.6% of students received special education services in 2010-2011. All students are required to take four years of English, three years of social studies, mathematics, and science, two years of a world language and one year of both fine arts and technology. The remainder of students' programs is filled with a variety of heterogeneous elective courses. Middleborough High School also offers a variety of co-curricular activities for its students.

Students in special education participate in a Learning Center. Learning Center offers individual attention to these students in order to facilitate success in regular education classes. In addition to special education and the Learning Center, Middleborough High School services students with emotional disabilities through the creation of the LINKS program. This program combines small group instruction with psychological support for students who struggle with academic and emotional challenges.

In the class of 2011, 49% of graduates attended four-year colleges, with 19% enrolling in two-year colleges, 5% attending other post-secondary schools, 24% entering the workforce, and 3% entering the military. College-bound graduates typically choose from colleges and universities such as Bridgewater State University, Massasoit Community College, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, Northeastern University, and Salem State University as well as from many other institutions. Opportunities for adult continuing education are available through Bay State Community College, which offers evening classes at Middleborough High School.

Middleborough High School has established partnerships with local businesses. Juniors and seniors explore extended work experience through internships at local businesses. Middleborough High School has also established a partnership with Bridgewater State University. Juniors and seniors may enroll in one college course for credit each year at no cost to the student. In the 2011-2012 school year, Middleborough High School began the Gateway Program with Massasoit Community College, in which students who are struggling in a traditional academic environment will simultaneously complete their high school graduation requirements while preparing for an associate's degree.

Students' academic accomplishments are celebrated with monthly recognition through the Student Strong program. Students are nominated by teachers in all subject areas and levels in recognition of academic achievement and personal growth within a given subject. Each spring the school honors students from all spectra in awards' assemblies celebrating individual student achievement in academics, music, drama, athletics, and community service.

STANDARD ON CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATATIONS

The Middleborough High School community believes that all students should become life-long learners who can effectively communicate in their world while showing confidence, demonstrating tolerance, and providing service to their community. We challenge students to be informed young adults who will help to solve problems within our global society using creative ideas. A combination of challenging courses, varied instruction, and authentic learning opportunities will provide students with the means to achieve their goals.

We are committed to our graduates being able to:
Solve problems
Acknowledge global issues
Communicate well
Help others
Embrace life-long learning
Make learning relevant
Strive for excellence

The Middleborough High School community has identified the following learning expectations for all students:
To clearly, fluently, and confidently present ideas
To acquire and assess information for a purpose
To apply critical and analytical thinking to solve problems
To collaborate to meet a common goal
To create original products that demonstrate skill and knowledge
To respect the diversity of beliefs, opinions, and needs in the global society
To demonstrate the value of service to the welfare of the community

Teaching and Learning Standard

1 Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Effective schools identify core values and beliefs about learning that function as explicit foundational commitments to students and the community. Decision-making remains focused on and aligned with these critical commitments. Core values and beliefs manifest themselves in research-based, school-wide 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:

In Middleborough High School (MHS), there is some but incomplete evidence that the community engaged in a dynamic, collaborative and inclusive process informed by current research-based practice to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. A committee of ten faculty members was organized in 2010 to develop an updated set of core values. At that time, the small group examined the previous mission statement and learning expectations, and subsequently solicited feedback and input from faculty focus groups, student focus groups, and a parent questionnaire. The entire staff was asked three questions to initiate the process: what are your beliefs about learning; what should a graduate of Middleborough High School know and be able to do; how do we know they met the criteria. The committee of ten faculty members also reviewed educational research in the development of the core values. From the stakeholder feedback and the review of current research, the committee identified seven topics or themes on which to base the core values and beliefs. The core values were then written in a succinct document to facilitate implementation. In the spring of 2011, the core values, beliefs and learning expectations were reviewed and approved by the school council and school committee. The entire staff voted on and approved the learning expectations on January 12, 2012. Despite the chronology above, there is little evidence that the entire faculty was meaningfully involved in the development of the core values, beliefs and learning expectations. Teacher interviews indicated significant inconsistencies regarding the level of faculty involvement in the development of the core values, beliefs and learning expectations. Despite a survey asking parents two questions, parents were not widely involved in the development of the core values, beliefs and learning expectations, and the parents in the parent interview group could not readily identify any of the core values, beliefs or learning expectations. The parents did state that their children were aware of the core values, beliefs and learning expectations, and that posters of these values and expectations could be found in the hallways, in their child's classrooms and in the cafeteria. Parents also stated that the learning expectations were printed on the course syllabi. There is strong evidence that students are knowledgeable about the school-wide rubrics, and, in some cases, can cite the learning expectations for specific disciplines. While there were disparate opportunities for faculty input, there is no evidence that the larger faculty substantively revised the core values, beliefs and learning expectations through a coordinated, clearly defined process for multiple iterations. One or more members of the Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations Committee delivered professional development in January 2010. Given that there is some evidence that the community engaged in a dynamic, collaborative and inclusive process informed by current research-based practice to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning, a deliberate and systematic revision of the core values and beliefs would result in more clearly defined learning expectations which would lead to improved student learning. (self-study, teachers, students, Endicott survey)

MHS has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic and social competencies, most of which are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. MHS faculty members were presented with a 21st century skills PowerPoint in January of 2010, which had been culled from the *Partnership for 21st Century Skills*. In the fall of 2010, an administrator led the staff in a half-day professional development session on 21st Century Skills. The presentation was based on the book *21st Century Skills (*Tilling and Fadel*)*. Faculty members also explored 21st century skills at an all-day professional development session led by a former principal. As a result of the aforementioned professional development activities, along with a literature review that consisted of *21st Century Classroom* (Herff Jones, 2010) and *Breaking Ranks II: Strategies for Leading High School Reform*, the Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations Committee identified seven 21st century learning skills that address academic, civic and social competencies. The core values, beliefs and learning expectations were presented to the school council and school committee for review and approval in spring 2011. An interdisciplinary committee was formed to

develop school-wide rubrics, and on January 12, 2012, the committee presented the drafts of the first five learning expectations at a faculty meeting. On May 24, 2012, the faculty voted to accept the first five rubrics. While the learning expectations exist, MHS still has significant work to do in integrating these expectations into every classroom in the school. The learning expectations are designed in such a way that measuring and observing student achievement is difficult and the Endicott survey results reveals that only 43.6 percent of students, 56.9 percent of faculty and 65.9 percent of parents believe that the learning expectations are challenging, indicating that the school still has work to do in raising the level of expectation for students and the importance of these expectations to the school community. In addition, the two final learning expectations remain in draft form, and are in need of further development. MHS does have challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic and social competencies, most of which are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement; however, the expectations are not fully integrated or defined and as a result, the feedback that students receive on their progress toward expectations is not as specific or meaningful as it could be. Establishing a clearly defined protocol for review and revision of the learning expectations will facilitate the development of learning expectations that are more measurable and well articulated. (self-study, teachers, administrators)

Middleborough High School's recently implemented core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations are reflected in the culture of the school and can be observed in some school-wide initiatives and in some co-curricular activities, but they do not yet drive curriculum revisions and assessments. MHS's stakeholders have been engaged in the process of developing and fine tuning their school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations over the course of the last few years. The process began by revising the mission statement to reflect the school's expectations that are significantly more focused on preparing students to be successful 21st century citizens. The visiting committee's conversations with many students and faculty members revealed that although the members interviewed could not recite or recall the paragraph, most could remember and recite at least portions of the acronym SACHEMS (the school mascot) used to identify the school's beliefs about what graduates from MHS will be able to do upon graduation. The attributes of the SACHEMS are displayed on banners throughout MHS, are noticeably referenced by students and staff members both in and out of the classroom and are visibly present in the actions and in the dialogue with the students and staff. The 21st century learning skills embraced and taught by the faculty have been identified and are visible on large posters created for public display, but they have not yet been embedded in the teaching and learning at MHS. Several staff members and administrators report that the learning expectations are a work in progress and that it has not yet been determined how these skills will become a natural part of the curriculum and daily lesson plans and projects. The teachers who are making an effort to incorporate the rubrics by distributing the school-wide rubrics along with their personal rubrics created for a specific lesson plan noted that while they are handing the rubrics out to students, they are not using them in determining the grade for the student and the performance on the rubrics is not currently reported to the parents or other stakeholders in any formal fashion. The lack of professional development around incorporating the rubrics into daily teaching and learning, and the increasing difficulty for teachers to embrace and employ the rubrics suggest that the rubrics are in need of revision and rewording. Based on teacher and administrative reporting, the anticipated changes will be geared to more accurately identify the 21st century learning skills they have found to be most relevant and most important for their students to master. Additionally, it was stated by the administration that the goal is to create revised rubrics, which are user-friendly while also being more reliable. When there is school-wide buy in and consistent use of the 21st century expectations and their corresponding rubrics, they will drive curriculum revisions and assessments and students and parents will be informed as to student progress in meeting the standards. (teachers, students, School Committee, classroom observations)

MHS does not yet have a process to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources or on district and school community priorities. In 2010, a committee of ten faculty members updated the core values, beliefs and learning expectations. In the winter of 2011, the core values, beliefs and learning expectations were reviewed by staff, voted on, and subsequently passed by a majority of the staff. That spring, the entire staff, organized by department, determined the 21st century skills that would be adopted for departmental use and assessed at the department level. The learning skills rubrics were reproduced on posters and hung in all of the classrooms for easy reference during class activities. During the same semester a group of teachers volunteered to pilot the rubrics. At the opening of the academic year 2012–2013, the administration implemented a policy directing all staff to use the school-wide rubrics. Although the self-study indicates that two committees have been charged with developing and seeking feedback for the revision of the rubrics utilized in measuring the learning expectations, there is no evidence that the committees have met. Interviews with administrators and a faculty member involved in the development of the core values, beliefs and learning expectations reveal that one committee could be identified by name (Learning Expectations Committee), but the second committee responsible for developing and seeking feedback for and revising rubrics for learning expectations could not be identified. The school administration and faculty recognize that there is no formal, coordinated process that evaluates and seeks to revise the learning expectations. Within the two-year plan there is an expectation that the full committees will be organized and a formal process will be implemented within this school year. Given that no data has been derived during the seven months teachers have had to implement a school-wide use of the school's analytic rubrics, there is no qualitative way to review and ultimately revise the core values, believes and learning expectations as the stakeholders have not been able to internalize them or their value. Without this internalization or opportunity to collaborate by department or across the curriculum, there is no way to ensure inter-rater reliability. No or limited inter-rater reliability may result in confusion for the students receiving differing grades for the same level of work that has been graded on the same rubric. When Middleborough establishes reliable and consistent measurements of student work, students will understand how their work is assessed which will help them achieve 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, administration, students and staff)

Commendations:
1. The use of the SACHEMS acronym which plays a significant role in communicating the school's core beliefs
2. The dynamic, collaborative process, informed by current research that the school used to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning
3. The development of school-wide analytic rubrics that are posted in every classroom
4. The wide-spread use of the school-wide rubric as reported by students
5. The commitment of the school to identifying values, beliefs and learning expectations to reflect the school's expectations focused on preparing students to be successful 21st century citizens
6. The acknowledgement of teachers and administrators that the process of identifying the core values and beliefs and the learning and social and civic expectations is an ongoing effort

Recommendations:
1. Develop a deliberate and systemic process for reviewing and revising the core values and beliefs and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources and school and district priorities and including multiple stake-holders
2. Complete and refine the rubrics used to measure the school's social and civic expectations
3. Utilize newly revised learning expectations and rubrics as consistent grading tools that offer real meaning to and feedback for student work

4. Ensure that 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

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 of MHS is not yet purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Although subject areas have been assigned responsibility for different expectations, limited evidence suggests that the school collected and reviewed data and results regarding these learning expectations for use in making decisions to add or delete courses or units from the curriculum. This was specifically observed in some subject areas such as science and math. Infrequently, the curriculum is clear by grade level and course level where students specifically practice the 21st century learning expectations. Although some evidence suggests the use of school-wide learning expectation rubrics in assessment, the clarity of the instructional application in conjunction with the learning expectation is frequently disjointed or unclear. The curriculum guides identify clear objectives on learning, however the connections between course content and 21st century learning expectations are minimal. By assigning three learning expectations to each subject area, students are given multiple opportunities to achieve proficiency. Often students are given a variety of opportunities to meet the 21st century learning expectations in multiple courses in several curricula areas. Teachers understand the 21st century learning expectations they are assigned in each department; teachers integrate them into the classroom curriculum, use them to assess students, and clearly display them in the classroom. Yet, evidence suggests that the application of these expectations in conjunction with the curriculum maps is not clearly defined nor translated verbally or in writing in all subject areas. Because of the extensive opportunities provided in most courses for nearly all of the learning expectations, students can regularly practice and achieve at least three (the school's first, fourth, and fifth) of the 21st century learning expectations. A review of representative student work and classroom observations provided numerous examples of opportunities in each grade level and in almost all courses for students to practice presenting ideas clearly, fluently, and confidently, to collaborate to meet a common goal, and to create original products that demonstrate skill and knowledge. Overall, the learning expectations are practiced in almost all classrooms and content areas. To a lesser degree are these expectations made clear to students before, during, and after instruction. In fact, students have little to no accountability for exceeding, meeting, needing improvement, or beginning the standard. When teachers develop more clarity and understanding of the design of the curricula as it connects to the learning expectations, they will be able to expand the opportunities for each student to practice and achieve the school's learning expectations, thus ensuring the school's commitment to the greater school community. (student work, classroom observations, self-study)

The curriculum is not written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skill, the school's 21st century learning expectations, instructional strategies, and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. The school has a template/common format for writing all curriculum documents, however not all departments utilize the exact template. Some departments have established their own curriculum map that models the template, but do not follow the exact format. There is some inconsistency in many of the headings and order of such in the maps themselves. Most curriculum guides include essential questions, concepts, content, and skills, as well as 21st century learning expectations. Some curriculum guides include instructional practices. Few curriculum guides include assessment practices, and few, if any, guides contain school-wide analytic rubrics and course-specific rubrics. Curriculum guides do exist in all subjects and levels including vocational/technical, but no formal map has been written for alterative learning programs such as FUTURES or LINKS. The development and use of clear, consistent curriculum maps, school-wide analytic rubrics and course-specific rubrics will lead to consistent instructional and assessment practices which will assist students as they strive to meet the school's learning expectations. (teacher interviews, self-study, classroom observations)

The MHS curriculum is evolving in 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, and informed and ethical use of technology. Overall, most teachers provide depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving in most courses and grade levels as observed in some curriculum maps and lesson plans. The variety of Advanced Placement courses offered at MHS is vast and contributes greatly to students' higher-order thinking. In addition, there are some curricula in college preparatory and career and technical level courses that challenge the depth of understanding and application of knowledge through higher-order thinking, but the evidence is limited. Cross-curricular application of knowledge is not currently a formal integration between departments, but is attempted in various course partnerships when teachers arrange to meet on their own time. Some partnerships observed include science and social studies, math and physical education, English and social studies. A lack of common planning time and professional development has hindered the emphasis on depth of understanding and application of knowledge. In addition there has been some attempt within certain departments to align current curriculum to the Common Core State Standards. Again, lack of time and funding obstructs this process from moving forward. Authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school are available to all students. The most active opportunity in which slightly more than half of the senior class participates is the School-to-Career Pathway and internship program. Even though there are various avenues for internships, minimal evidence suggests rigor or connection to the school's 21st century learning expectations. Informed and ethical use of technology is essential to the development of curriculum among faculty and staff, and teacher training of such is significantly lacking. The network folder was established by the District and is at times utilized by students and faculty who use the appropriate security measures as outlined in the student/teacher handbook. Although faculty have been given laptops for teaching and learning which may increase informed use of technology in the classroom, students have limited opportunities to demonstrate informed and ethical use of technology. Limited collaboration between the librarian and teachers does not allow students to evaluate the credibility of websites or how to appropriately cite sources. All professional staff would benefit from additional training in the use of technology in the classroom. When there are more consistent and widespread opportunities for MGH students to apply inquiry, problem- solving and higher-order thinking skills, to experience cross-disciplinary and authentic learning opportunities, and to demonstrate the informed and ethical use of technology, students will be able to demonstrate a depth of understanding and application of knowledge that will assist them in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. (student work, teachers, student shadowing)

At MHS there is limited evidence of clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum. There is no evidence that ensures lesson plans are collected and revised by Department Chairs. There is some evidence that teachers are teaching the curriculum outlined in the documents. The written curriculum is often the delivered curriculum (as the visiting committee observed during classroom visits and student shadowing), however there is no established guideline for the evaluation of curriculum in conjunction with the curriculum maps. Teachers demonstrated in their classrooms and discussed during interviews that most common courses, regardless of level, are instructed using similar texts and/or skills. Departments are working towards alignment that will be formally evaluated. When there is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum, students will have equal opportunity to achieve 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, student work, classroom observations)

There is limited curricular coordination among academic areas and developing vertical articulation with sending schools in the district. Department Chairs at MHS work with professional staff to implement the curriculum. Implementation is limited by a lack of regular, scheduled collaborative time. Curriculum maps and documents are developing after focused professional development in preparation for the NEASC visit. Some teachers create co-curricular learning opportunities for students, but the collaboration is limited and informal. Vertical articulation at MHS is in progress as the development of curriculum documents continues. However, beyond the scope of stated Massachusetts state standards, vertical alignment between sending schools and MHS is nonexistent. The addition of

two district directorships, one of STEM and the other of humanities will provide a more direct connection between sending schools and MHS. Stronger and more consistent curricular coordination among academic areas will afford students the opportunity to delve into various and rigorous learning experiences. (panel presentation, teachers, school leadership)

Staffing levels at MHS are sufficient to effectively serve the students. Instructional materials, technology, equipment, and supplies do not support the full implementation of the curriculum. The resources of the facility and the library are inadequate to support curricular and co-curricular programs. Few classes exceed stated class size limits. Classroom observations provided evidence that the majority of classes are within stated parameters. However, class sizes for the same course are unbalanced in some of the content areas. Instructional materials in the classroom were limited, despite the expenditure of $65,318.12 over the last three years. The majority of classes utilized white boards, photocopied handouts, and few textbooks. A significant expenditure on technology in SY 2011 provided each teacher with a laptop computer to facilitate teachers' work with attendance and grade reporting. A limited number of classrooms are equipped with instructional technology. Teachers have minimal experience in using technology. Student computer stations in the library, including desktop computers and laptops, are in need of upgrade or replacement. The quantity and quality of technology at MHS is insufficient to support the curriculum. Equipment in the form of updated chemistry labs has resolved some safety issues. Faculty and students report difficulties with hardware, software and applications. The library has 25 computer stations for student use. However, the size of the library prohibits additional students from using its resources when the library is in use by a teacher and class. The librarian is frequently called upon to provide photocopies of instructional materials to address shortages. Insufficient instructional technology and dedicated space for its use negatively impacts the delivery of curriculum. Many co-curricular activities, including athletics, require user fees. In SY 2011 there was a drastic cut in funding for co-curricular activities. Thus, many activities, including a very active and well attended Speech and Theatre Workshop, are fully self-funded. Stipends to advisors are the only designated use of these funds. Some teachers volunteer their time and resources as advisors. MHS has seen an increase in funding for instructional supplies, technology, equipment and supplies in recent years in preparation for their NEASC visit, however, the appropriate supports such as professional development and infrastructure improvements are not in place to fully support the implementation of the curriculum. (self-study, classroom observation, teachers)

MHS does not receive adequate time or financial resources to provide for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation and revision of curriculum. Curriculum is reviewed and revised on an as needed basis. Currently, there is no regular curriculum review cycle in place or in development. School Department Chairs, under the supervision of recently hired district humanities and STEM directors, supervised the development of the current curriculum maps. This major curriculum revision occurred from spring 2011 through spring 2012. In preparation for the NEASC visit, a significant increase in professional development expenditures occurred in SY 2011. During SY 2011, teachers participated in monthly half-day professional development in the development of core values, 21st century learning expectations and curriculum maps. However, newly hired staff reports that they have received little or no professional development or support in the implementation of the curriculum. The Endicott survey reports that only 38.3 percent of the professional staff has sufficient time and resources to engage in the formal evaluation, review and revision of curriculum. Departments meet monthly to discuss upcoming assessments, projects and school events. The mathematics and science departments use this meeting time to analyze data and inform revision in curriculum and instruction. Outside of departmental meetings, the limited collaboration occurs during informal meetings of teachers during preparation periods or at lunch.

In order for the students at Middleborough High to have opportunities to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations, a formal process for the collaborative development, evaluation and

revision of curriculum must be developed and implemented with input from teachers, Department Chairs and the humanities and STEM directors. (Endicott survey, teachers, self-study)

Commendations:
1. The development of a common format for written curriculum

2. The establishment of a STEM director and humanities director for grades 6 through 12

3. The monthly early release time for the purpose of professional development

4. Teachers, in a variety of content areas, maintaining membership in professional organizations

5. The Advanced Placement courses offered at MHS which contribute to students developing higher-order thinking skills

Recommendations:

1. Regularly measure student achievement of 21st century learning expectations using well-developed rubrics

2. Integrate the 21st century learning expectations into curriculum while ensuring the consistent and ongoing use of the common curriculum format

3. Establish and implement a process for regular, ongoing evaluation and revision of curriculum

4. Create a partnership for all constituents for informing an ethical use of technology policy

5. Provide resources for the professional staff to collaborate on curriculum coordination and articulation

6. Align student internships to 21st century learning expectations

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:

At MHS teachers' instructional practices are not continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Currently, the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are being implemented in instructional practice for the first time. Based upon classroom observation, core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are referred to sporadically in instruction, and are treated as a separate entity from teacher or department grading rubrics. A small committee within the school designed the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. This group was separate from instruction, curriculum and assessment study groups. Some of these expectations, as written, are not measurable, and this results in staff struggling to find avenues for instruction of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations using the rubrics. Teachers did not receive adequate professional development or guidelines on how to implement, incorporate, instruct, measure and reflect on these core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Therefore, though there have been a few volunteering pioneers, implementation throughout the school and cross-curricula has been inconsistent. Student work does not reflect incorporation of these learning expectations into the school culture. Teachers have large posters of the rubrics in their rooms and show willingness to work with the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, but an understanding of how to use the expectations within their instruction has not been made clear. Sometimes the rubric is attached as an extra assessment for students as teachers evaluate a project. However, the grades on the samples do not correspond to the teacher assessment of the academic work. The students know of the existence of the core values and beliefs, but could not identify exactly how they affected assessment, resulting in confusion and inadequate implementation of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. When there are more professional development opportunities for faculty to examine their instructional practices, not only will there be a more consistent adoption of and incorporation of the school's core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations into instruction, but students will also have a clear idea of how those rubrics affect and enhance their learning goals. (self-study, student work, teachers, teacher interview)

At MHS some teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations but these practices are not applied consistently, either within departments or across the academic tracks used to group the students. Personalization of instruction was rarely observed in classes, and teachers' practices did not appear to include differentiated strategies such as choice of topics or use of learning style inventories. However, teachers were observed providing support while students were doing worksheets and teachers work with students after school on a regular basis. Opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning are limited. Time for planning and implementation of thematic units is not available within the workday. Due to the structure of the schedule, which creates time and place conflicts for faculty and lack of curriculum guides, staff cannot identify topics across content areas. The only school-wide instruction on a theme noted was the development of the SACHEM acrostic in the fall, which allowed students to connect learning and to "think strong", as called for in SACHEM. Generally, students receive instruction through traditional lecture with accompanying notes from textbooks or copies of PowerPoints with worksheets to follow up. While all students were observed to benefit by cooperative teacher techniques, only some students were observed to be active and self-directed learners in certain classes. Students were sometimes seated in groups to complete the worksheets. Cooperative group activities to facilitate active learning and independent research projects were rarely observed. Observed instances of students as active and self-directed learners were teacher or course-level dependent. Essential questions were posted in most classrooms as a lesson guide. Problem-solving and higher-order thinking, application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks were only occasionally observed and not strategically implemented across course tracking levels. Students were sometimes involved in self-assessment and reflection, although, when asked about these teaching techniques, students often mentioned the learning expectations

rubrics. With the implementation of the core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations teachers have begun to explore additional activities in which students may apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. According to the self-study, while teachers in English and history ask students to write for audiences beyond the classroom, the staff needs time and professional development to facilitate opportunities for sharing portfolios, writing for a variety of audiences within and outside school community, and meaningful project work. Over 50 percent of the seniors participate in an internship or externship for credit and have the opportunity to learn and demonstrate application of authentic knowledge and skills. In some classes, students are asked to self-assess and reflect on individual projects. Teachers have begun to use the learning expectations rubrics in some classes this year; however, the assessments are not reported or analyzed at this time. Students do participate in self-reflection and assessment when provided with rubrics, including the new 21st century learning expectations rubrics. At MHS technology is not consistently integrated into instruction. Availability of appropriate technology to enhance instruction is scattered and disproportionate to the number of students. Some rooms have SMARTBoards, interactive projectors, standard projectors, document cameras, overhead projectors, or televisions, though many rooms lack any of the above. Therefore, teachers are not expected to integrate technology into their instruction. This year teachers received new laptops and await professional development on how to use them to enhance instruction. Some teachers use the projectors or boards as a substitute for writing on the board. There are limited opportunities for students to utilize appropriate technology within the lessons due to access and condition of computers, laptops in carts, and iPads. The district technology plan suggests the implementation of infrastructure improvements and the BYOD initiative. However, it is clear that teachers need training in the use of the technology currently available in the building or strategies to integrate it into instruction. With focused, collaborative planning time and formal professional development, Middleborough High School will further refine their instructional skills and expectations and develop instructional practices to improve student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. (classroom observation, student shadowing, teacher interviews, teachers, students, student work, self-study, DESE District Review)

At MHS, teachers seldom adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student in their classes through the use of formative assessment (especially during instructional time), strategically differentiating, purposefully organizing group-learning activities, providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. The lack of training and professional development of effective instruction in the block schedule and 21st century skills hampers teachers' efforts. While the school has had block scheduling for ten years, the teachers did not receive extensive professional development for teaching in the block. In the majority of the over 115 classroom observations, formative assessments were worksheets. Students spent the majority of instructional time in lecture or implementing worksheets. During lectures, many teachers stopped to ask if there were questions on the lecture. While students were working on worksheets, most teachers walked through the classes checking on student work and answering questions to provide feedback and improve student understanding. Teachers would benefit from professional development to create a variety of formative assessments and opportunities to analyze these formative assessments and other information about individual students to help each learn concepts and skills. Departments need additional access to data on individual student performance on state and local testing including specific performance on each standard and question to improve differentiation. Teachers do have access to a variety of paper forms for students on IEPs, 504s and EPPs developed through special education and guidance.
The self-study report on instruction states that some teachers use group-learning activities purposefully. Evidence of group work included PowerPoint ™ presentations, working on worksheets and science labs. While some of the group activities were engaging student interest, measurements of in-depth learning and collaboration techniques were not available. Within the regular classroom, paraprofessionals and special education teachers assigned to the class as "co-teachers" provide extra support and alternative strategies in some classes. Subject-specific charts for content vocabulary and recall to support differentiation are posted in a few classrooms, especially science labs. Teachers at

MHS stay after school regularly to provide extra help and additional supported learning time. Students make use of this time. A grant provided Saturday review classes for AP exams in some subjects. When professional development is offered on current instructional practices utilizing the block schedule, incorporating 21st century skills, modifying instruction based on formative assessment and data analysis, differentiated instruction strategies, and utilizing curriculum maps within/across departments, teacher instructional practices will become richer and more diverse to meet the needs of all students. (observation, student, student shadowing, teacher, self-study, DESE District Report)

At MHS, teachers do not consistently, individually and collaboratively improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessment. Teachers have had limited access to student data from MCAS exams over the last three years, beyond knowing if the student passed the tests. Data from math and ELA test results by student and by question has not been analyzed and used to improve instructional practices, especially in MCAS remediation and preparation lessons. The availability of MCAS math and English remediation classes, Educational Proficiency Plans, and special education modifications are designed to help students who have been identified to be at risk of failure of the MCAS. There is not, however, a regular formal time to meet to review this assessment data that is purposefully designed for such review. Efforts to examine local assessment data/results and to modify teaching practices have started with the development of a reading and writing elective for remediation of at-risk students and the history department road maps to examine student work. With the implementation of the rubrics for 21st century learning expectations students and teachers are starting to review local assessment data. There is not a vehicle for teachers to regularly gather feedback from parents and to make adjustments in their instruction for all students, other than meetings for IEPs and EPPs. With the hiring of two new instructional leadership positions and the delineation of department head roles, time for teachers to share strategies for instructional improvement should be made available in a manner that will be accepted as an important part of the instructional improvement throughout the school and culture. The entire faculty has limited opportunity to read a book on current research and best practice, and to engage in discussion, other than a book selected by the district leadership team: *What Great Teachers do Differently*, by Todd Whitaker. Professional libraries are located in department areas and provide varying degrees of current pedagogical resources. The library maintains a very limited professional display. Instructional practices will be improved when teachers are given formal opportunities to improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data, examining student work, using feedback from a variety of sources, examining current research, and discussing best practices in effective instruction. (classroom observations, shadowing, teacher interviews, self-study, DESE District Review)

MHS teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, are willing to maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practice. Middleborough teachers are respected as "the best of MHS". According to the Endicott survey, 84.7 percent of the staff in 2010-2011 believes they maintain expertise in their content area. Professional development opportunities other than NEASC preparations have been lacking due to inconsistent funding and missing district initiatives. Organization of professional development and shifts in district and school leadership has resulted in unguided or missing professional development opportunities. In the 2012-2013 school year, some teachers volunteered to join Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). There was no training in designing and moderating the PLCs. These voluntary cooperative learning groups could have potential for helping the teachers to become reflective practitioners within content areas. Currently there is no formal process for attending and funding outside school-approved professional development, especially for specialists. The new administration is working on this project, with limited input from teachers and undefined district goals. Some teachers have funded their own professional development and conference attendance. Teachers expressed awareness of free or low cost professional development including those provided by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Providing teachers formal opportunities to maintain expertise in their

content area and in content-specific instructional practice will contribute to their successful maintenance of expertise in their content area and improved instruction to increase student success and engagement. (self-study, teachers, school board, Endicott survey, parents, students, administrators)

Commendations:

1. The willingness of faculty to incorporate core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations into instruction

2. The faculty members who have taken advantage of the technology available and have begun to integrate it into instruction

3. The faculty members who have explored the benefits of forming professional learning communities

4. The caring, supportive faculty members investing in their students by regularly offering extra help

5. The willingness of teachers to fund their own professional development activities

Recommendations:

1. Provide professional development to incorporate core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations into instruction in all curricula

2. Involve staff in the guidelines for integration of core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in instruction where clear expectations are outlined

3. Provide staff with time and professional development to facilitate opportunities for sharing portfolios, writing for a variety of audiences within and outside school community, and meaningful project work.

4. Provide school-wide professional development in the use of the technology and its integration into 21st century learning skills and authentic instruction

5. Provide professional development in effective use of the block schedule

6. Provide departments with additional access to data on individual student performance on state and local testing including specific performance on each standard and question to improve differentiation.

7. Provide professional development to ensure an in-depth understanding of how to implement a variety of formative assessments to inform instruction.

8. Provide professional development time to allow the faculty to collaborate to improve school-wide instructional practices through analysis of current research and data

4 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:

The professional staff of MHS does not yet employ 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. Although five school-wide rubrics were developed by a committee of eight teachers and approved by the faculty in May 2012, and rubrics six and seven were approved shortly thereafter, there is little evidence that the rubrics are being used consistently school-wide. Further, the school-wide rubrics and 21st century learning expectations lack measurability. The process to attempt to assess whole-school and individual student progress is done by teachers on a voluntary basis. Therefore, the school has no formal system of communicating student progress to parents or to the community at large. Although there are some department common assessments, there is little collection and analysis of these assessments. Across the school there is little evidence that students have regular opportunities to be assessed, both formatively and summatively, on each of the school's learning expectations. Although each department has adopted their choice of rubrics that apply to their subject, there is little evidence that the departments are using them with fidelity. Many students report that while the school-wide rubrics are posted in many of the classrooms, most of the teachers use their personally developed rubric to score assignments. The visiting committee's analysis of student work revealed that while the school-wide rubrics were attached to the student work, the grade was based on the teacher-created rubric. Professional development on the writing of rubrics; and formal time for all staff to write, have dialogue, pass and implement the rubrics would greatly improve the likelihood that there will be extensive use of the rubrics. The implementation of a formal process to create measurable school-wide rubrics at Middleborough High School will allow teachers and administrators to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, students, student shadowing)

Middleborough High School's professional staff does not yet have a process to communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families. Although the school is piloting an online grade reporting system, Aspen X2, a software program that includes an online grading and a grade reporting system, it is being used to report grades that are mostly based on the individual teacher's grading policy and does not report students' progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The majority of classes do not report student progress beyond the traditional progress reports and report cards. There is evidence of a plan in which all students' individual progress in achieving the learning expectations will be communicated through Aspen X2, which will allow parents to consistently and directly monitor their children's progress toward achieving these goals. The Program of Studies for the 2012-2013 school year incorporates the 21st century learning expectations and the school-wide rubrics. Middleborough High School hosts a Program of Studies Night at the beginning of the year to discuss with parents the contents of the Program of Studies, including the 21st century learning expectations and school-wide rubrics. When systems are in place to communicate the progress of students and the school in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, all stakeholders will benefit from opportunities to adjust practices and attain expectations. (students, self-study, school board)

The professional staff at Middleborough High School does not formally, on a regular basis collect, disaggregate or analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. The guidance and administrative staff at Middleboro High School uses the results from MCAS and MHS Accuplacer test results to assess individual student progress for the purpose of identifying and responding to inequities in student achievement. However, there is no evidence that their findings impact curricula or instruction. Some teachers informally discuss student work if they have time during the school day or voluntarily after school. For the most part, the teachers do not have common assessments to compare. Sporadically, they give common assessments but many times individual teachers slightly alter those assessments. There is no protocol for assessing student work and no evidence that the results of the analysis are used to address achievement gaps or to modify instruction.

Professional development on the creation, use of and protocol for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) would greatly benefit the teachers' of MHS abilities to effectively respond to the inequities in student achievement. Furthermore, professional development on the creation of common assessment and analyzing the results of the common assessments would benefit the teachers. The implementation and support of common planning time within the school day, of professional development and of PLCs will make it possible for teachers to formally and regularly collect, disaggregate and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. (self-study, teachers, students)

Teachers at Middleborough High School, prior to each unit of study, communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. After more than a hundred classroom observations it became apparent that there is no guaranteed and viable curriculum being delivered on a consistent basis. The school's 21st century learning expectations are new but they lack measurability. Because of a lack of curriculum, there are no consistent unit-specific learning goals. Most social studies teachers follow the curriculum, a "Road Map to Success" that is based upon 21st century learning expectations. Some world language teachers begin units with model questions of verb expressions and unit vocabulary and use these questions throughout the unit to allow the students to obtain different levels of proficiency at the end of the unit. Some English and history teachers pose essential questions for each unit, and refer back to those questions for the duration of the unit.   All Middleborough High School instructors are required to weekly write and submit formal lesson plans to their respective Department Chairs/department heads, however there is no accountability for teachers who fail to submit these lesson plans. There is no evidence of any strategy or protocol to inform the students clearly of the expectations for not only the daily objective(s) but also for the unit-specific expectations. Many students report that when starting a new unit of study they are not given any formal overview or clear expectation as to what the summative assessment for the unit will be and how it relates to the 21st century learning expectations. Some teachers report that they value instruction time on content and do not see the value in articulating to students what they would need to know by the end of the lesson or unit. Most students report seeing the learning expectations posted but do not value or understand them as much as the individual teacher or content-specific rubric. When all teachers at Middleborough High School, prior to each unit of study, implement the practice of communicating to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed, students' learning and achievement will be positively impacted. (classroom observations, self-study, teachers, school leadership)

Prior to summative assessments, many teachers at Middleborough High School regularly provide students with rubrics to clearly communicate how student work will be evaluated.   The Endicott survey indicates that 75.3 percent of students polled understand in advance what work to accomplish to meet teachers' expectations, and 68.4 percent said that it understands the rubrics used. The newly implemented school-wide rubrics are posted in most classrooms. In some cases, teachers refer to these rubrics prior to summative assessments. In some cases, time is spent on clearly communicating details of teacher-generated content-specific rubrics to the students either prior to the summative assessments or in some cases when students receive their grade. Other teachers pass out their course-specific rubrics but do not spend time on ensuring that all students understand them. Although some teachers use exemplars to further explain rubrics, this is not done on a regular or consistent basis. Many teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the current school-wide rubrics and most students could only identify them as the ones that are sometimes hung in classrooms. When time and support is provided for teachers to collaborate in order to review and edit the school-wide rubrics and to determine a protocol for clearly and consistently, across the content areas, communicating how student work will be evaluated, the school can ensure that students receive rubrics which clearly communicate how their work will be evaluated, thereby positively impacting student achievement. (classroom observations, self-study, teachers, students)

Some teachers at Middleborough High School employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Many world language teachers use verbal assessments as well as written assessments. Students' progress is monitored in each of the four skills of language learning: reading, writing, speaking, and listening/comprehension. This progress is evaluated on each summative assessment, including mid-term and final exams. Posters provided some evidence of creative assessments. A few teachers seemed familiar with the practice of periodic check-ins with students to quickly assess their learning and any gaps that may be occurring. There was some evidence that students have opportunities for revision. Students report that they are rarely given opportunities to self-assess or peer assess/edit, although there is evidence that a few teachers employ a range of assessment strategies in their classrooms. After conducting over 115 observations, the visiting committee found little evidence that teachers at Middleborough High School, on a regular basis, use a range of assessment strategies. Ensuring that all teachers employ a range of formative and summative assessments in order to adapt instructional practices for individual student needs and that they provide opportunities for revision of student work will positively impact student learning and achievement. (teachers, classroom observations, students, student work)

There is some evidence that teachers at Middleborough High School collaborate informally on the creation of summative assessments, and that members of individual departments collaborate on summative common assessments. This collaboration is inconsistent and rarely involves the analysis and revision of the summative assessments. Formative assessments are sporadically created and given. Occasionally, monthly department meetings are used to create and revise summative assessments, often taking the form of the common portion of mid-year and final examinations. As for informal collaboration, the faculty of Middleborough High School makes an effort to share everything from lesson plans to assessment binders. The English, world language, and history departments have their curriculum maps and assessments available to the entire department on Google.docs as well as in hard copy. There is evidence that the principal has developed a group school-wide leaders and classroom teachers that meets on a monthly basis with an agenda, but this is done on a voluntary basis and the teachers have received no formal professional development on PLCs. Implementing professional development on PLCs and providing teachers with time to collaborate will ensure that MHS teachers are meeting students' needs. (self-study, teachers, school leadership)

Teachers at Middleborough High School sometimes provide students with specific, timely, and corrective feedback. While there are examples of feedback on student work, the feedback is often general with no apparent use of common vocabulary across the content areas. Many students communicate that they receive feedback but that it is frequently not timely. Some students believe that after receiving feedback they could ask for opportunities for revisions but this depended on the individual teacher. Most students communicate that the timeliness and specificity of the feedback depended on the individual teacher. There is little evidence that teachers review the results of summative assessments and provide feedback to students prior to beginning a new unit of study. Most teachers communicate that they do not have enough time to provide feedback prior to beginning a new unit of study. The implementation of a formal process by which the teachers provide the students with specific, timely, and corrective feedback will ensure that students have opportunities to revise and improve their work. (students, teachers, Endicott survey)

Classroom observations revealed that the use of formative assessment is rare. In two classes, the teachers asked students to make posters of their work and present them to the class. The students asked questions of the work that was being presented by classmates to check for understanding. In an English class, the students were working on one classroom assignment, while the teacher brought up other students to do revisions to recent writing assignments. These examples of formative assessments are not institutionalized and there were no other examples of formative assessment going on during observations. There is no evidence that instruction was adapted from the results of the formative assessments. Based on some student work, it is not clear that the exercises are formative and not

summative. This confusion indicates that professional development around the use of formative assessments to inform instruction is necessary. Because teachers infrequently use formative assessment to inform instructional practice, the students are denied access to a fully informed learning experience. (classroom observations, self-study, student work, student shadowing)

There is little evidence that teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. Teachers and administrators will implement a plan for SY 2013-14 to examine standardized assessments and data from sending schools, but currently that data is not examined. The lack of common planning time and of professional development has made it nearly impossible to conduct this examination of student learning in a meaningful way. When teachers and administrators examine a range of evidence of student learning in order to revise curriculum and improve instructional practice, every student will be well served and guaranteed a high quality education. (self-study, teachers, student work)

The newly implemented school-wide rubrics, designed to measure student progress toward 21st century learning expectations, along with the new online grade-reporting system (X2/Aspen), have not been aligned with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Since the newly implemented school-wide rubrics and the 21st century learning expectations are new, the practice of review and alignment has not begun and there is no current plan for review and revision. Because of a lack of formal planning time, the staff has not met to review the school's grading practices to ensure they reflect the balanced use by all teachers of formative assessments, summative assessments, and common assessments. There have been no changes in the school's grading practices based on the changes in the beliefs about learning. Many teachers have stated that they have not drawn a link between the current grading practices and the rubric assessments. The professional staff has no formal vehicle to insure that grading practices are consistent across all subject areas and by all teachers. The grading practices have not been aligned across curricular areas. The implementation of a formal process to review formative assessments, summative assessments, and common assessments to insure alignment with 21st century learning expectations will lead to all students having a clear sense of how well they have met their goals. The lack of grading and reporting practices that are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning leads to confusion among the school community. The formal implementation of X2/Aspen will lead to students getting feedback in a timely fashion so that they can make meaningful improvements to their learning and to instruction. (self-study, teachers, student work)

Commendations:

1. The plan to fully implement Aspen X2 online grade reporting software in SY 2013-2014

2. The efforts made by teachers to collaborate in order to create common lessons and assessments

3. The efforts by some teachers to provide opportunities for students to revise their work

4. The informal collaboration of teachers on the creation of summative assessments

5. The teachers who communicate, prior to each unit of study, applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement 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. Provide regularly scheduled time for teachers to collaborate in formal ways on the creation, analysis and revision of formative and summative assessments including common assessments

3. Provide professional development on effective use of Professional Learning Communities

4. Provide teachers with professional development regarding strategies for teaching effectively within a block schedule, which would increase teachers utilizing time to provide students with not only 21st century learning goals but also unit-specific learning goals.

5. Provide professional development to ensure that teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning

6. Ensure that grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

7. Provide scientifically research-based professional development in implementing the rubrics to ensure inter-rater reliability among all staff members

8. Collect, analyze and disaggregate appropriate data from the school-wide rubrics in order to effectively report student progress towards meeting the learning expectations and to drive revisions to the rubrics

5 School Culture and Leadership

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

1. The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.

2. The school is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course (English/language arts, social studies, math, science, or world languages).

3. There is a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 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:

Although the school community at MHS consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful and supportive culture that fosters students' overall pride in their school community, shared ownership and high expectations are inconsistent. The staff of MHS has begun to implement programs that intend to foster a strong sense of community and pride. The Finish Strong" program is a newly implemented program intended to improve school climate and foster a sense of pride and ownership in school. There are many examples of activities and clubs that improve school climate, promote high expectations, and foster student responsibility, pride, and ownership. These activities include monthly Make-a-Wish minute fundraising drives, Student Council, Speech & Theater Workshop, The Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), the Key Club, , the Links program for students with emotional disabilities, Cocoa Cram study sessions for exams, and the recycling program sponsored by the YES Club. The abundance of activities available offers a place for any student to exercise and pursue his or her interests. A vast majority of the student community is involved in an extra-curricular activity at the school. In order to communicate the school expectations, handbooks are issued to both students and staff at the beginning of the academic year. The handbook committees meet annually to update policies and to make edits.   The committee consists of one assistant principal and five teachers. The school committee then approves the handbook. These handbooks contain pertinent policies and procedures that teachers and students can readily access, including those pertaining to athletics and discipline. Parents of ninth graders receive a new student information booklet when their child enters the high school, which provides the core values and the 21st century learning expectations and their measurement rubrics. The 21st century learning expectations are referred to in an inconsistent manner in grading practices and in behavior management. The students themselves have contributed to the school's core beliefs during their advisory classes by shaping the acronym SACHEMS; this expression of core beliefs is derived from a core value statement created by a committee composed of adults and stakeholders who will be given a chance to shape and revise them at the end of the school-year. School-wide rubrics for 21st century learning skills have been created and are used intermittently and inconsistently in the classrooms. There is an abundance of student activities in which many students are involved. This involvement has resulted in a sense of school pride and community that demonstrates a "buy-in" from the majority of the student body. When the "buy in" translates into a shared ownership for high expectations for academics and behavior to ensure achievement of the 21st century learning expectations, students and teachers will thrive at MHS. (self-study, parents, student shadow, support staff, student work, teacher interview)

Middleborough High School is not equitable and inclusive, since over the course of the high school experience not every student is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core class (English language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, or world language.) It is evident that the vast majority of the school community does not understand the current issues with the leveling system, and this has been a challenge in trying to secure support for the scheduling change. Opportunities do exist for all students to take an AP course and there was an increase in the number of students who took an AP Exam for the 2011-2012 school year. Physical education as well as other elective courses are heterogeneously grouped courses. Next year's Program of Studies does not have a heterogeneously grouped core class offered, and the Program of Studies has already been approved by the school committee. When students are required to take one heterogeneously grouped core course during their four years at MHS, students' experience will be equitable and inclusive as they strive to attain 21st century knowledge and skills. (principal, guidance, teachers, students)

There is an existing, informal program through which each student might have an opportunity to have an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving 21st century learning expectations. In the summer of 2012, the guidance department developed a scope and sequence for implementing an advisory program with a formal

curriculum. Due to changes in administration, the implementation of this has been delayed until next year. Ten dates had been allotted in the calendar for meetings referred to as advisory but the intended activities included time for report card distribution and other administrative tasks. Teachers in the building expressed that the existing advisory meetings were sporadic and that administrative needs and issues drove the agenda. Guidance said that they would be piloting the advisory program for the juniors during the 2013-2014 school year. This summer the guidance staff will have paid time to help develop the curriculum for the advisory program. The principal has encouraged this curriculum writing and supports guidance in this initiative. Middleborough informally and sporadically has time built into the schedule for an advisory program, but the value of an advisory program has not been fully embraced by the teachers, administrators, and guidance. Due to the absence of a formal ongoing program, children are missing systematic personalization and adult support to achieve the 21st Century learning expectations. (guidance, teachers, principal, students, self-study)

The principal and professional staff engage in professional discourse, use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices, dedicate formal time to implement professional development, and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to improve student learning. The school staff currently sporadically uses the dedicated formal time for professional development to focus on their instructional strategies. The departments meet monthly. The staff is eager to engage in professional discourse that is applicable to their instruction and practice. Overall, the staff does not feel that they have been offered pertinent professional development and they have identified this lack of professional development as a significant area of weakness for the school. Many express that they are encouraged to look for opportunities outside of school and do. Staff has been surveyed for topics that they would like covered during professional development. The principal has a plan for professional development that will focus on curriculum and instruction; this plan has been submitted to the school committee and is awaiting approval. Professional development early release days are built into the district schedule roughly once per month, and there are two full-day professional development days per year. In addition there are monthly faculty meetings and monthly department meetings. These endeavors were implemented by the administration of 2010 -2012. The administrative team for the 2012-2013 school year has also implemented the school effectiveness team and voluntary professional learning communities. All teachers have been encouraged to read the book, *What Great Teachers Do Differently* by Todd Whitaker, which prompted informal discussions and idea-sharing between and among teachers. When teachers meet by department, agendas often include curriculum mapping and development, as well as vertical alignment with the middle school. The schedule that exists offers limited opportunity for common planning time, which affects teachers' ability to engage in professional discourse. When the principal and the professional staff engage in professional development that is well planned and fitted to teachers' needs, instructional improvement will result.

There is a lack of consistency in terms of instructional strategies, use of formative assessments and classroom management. The classrooms are individually driven by the nature, personality and drive of the teacher in terms of behavior, academic standards and engagement in activities; classrooms are not consistently systematic or driven by a common curriculum. There is no guarantee that a student in one class will leave with the same experience as his peers in another class.   With all of the new systems of operation put into place, changes in leadership, and updates of technology, many teachers need structure and guidance that a direct professional development plan will address. As a result of the limited and ineffective professional development, a plan that is specific to application of skills, practices and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment as well as student achievement of 21st century learning expectations has yet to be fully implemented. (self-study, teacher interviews, student shadows)

School leaders at MHS use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. The principal has participated in professional development on the new

evaluation tool this year and the other administrators will do so in the future. The new evaluation tool, TeachPoint, will hold evaluators and teachers accountable and provide for quick feedback that will enable the staff to investigate and improve their teaching practice as required. Currently, the leadership team acknowledges that there is a need for a shift in their evaluation process and that need is being addressed with the implementation of this new system. Staff has been hired to support the administration in their supervision efforts at the district level, such as the director of technology and Department Chairs for humanities and STEM. Members of the building administrative team engage, independently, in graduate level coursework to enhance their effectiveness as leaders. Each of the three building leaders has recently taken coursework related to effective observation and evaluation. Additionally, several department chairpersons have studied evaluation and supervision while pursuing their graduate degrees. The administrative team does acknowledge that there is insufficient time allowed for administrators and department chairs to conduct walk-throughs, as well as formal and informal observations of novice and veteran staff. There was a change in the role of the department chairperson for the 2012 – 2013 school year. The department chairpersons are no longer responsible for teacher evaluation. When focused professional development becomes a consistent priority, the new system to evaluate teachers will be effectively implemented and will result in an improvement in student learning. (teacher interviews, self-study, administrative interviews)

The organization of time does support research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. The time is available for the staff to collaborate, however, it has not been utilized to optimize their instructional practices. The block scheduling does allow the freedom for curriculum planning and implementation. Staff and parents like the current schedule because it allows students to focus on four classes per day. Core courses are a single semester long while electives are a single quarter or marking period. MHS provides block scheduling that allows for 86 minutes of instruction time per class for a semester duration. This amount of time provides flexibility in instruction to include teacher-directed lessons along with student-centered collaborative activities that are expected to increase student contribution and cooperation. This type of scheduling allows for differentiated learning throughout the class to enrich and deepen students' knowledge and understanding of the content being presented during class time. Block scheduling also allows for special presentations and programs that support the overall climate and culture in the school to take place during the school day while still allowing time for academic instruction. The professional staff has had no formal training in the use of block scheduling such as to allow for collaboration to utilize best practices in the classrooms. The faculty is given multiple opportunities to work together during early release and professional development days to better serve the students, the school, and the profession. Monthly department and faculty meetings are scheduled with the intent of gathering with peers to reflect and discuss ways to improve instruction and to continue to meet the educational needs of the students though evidence indicates that this is not regular practice. The block scheduling leaves some students, faculty and parents feeling that the schedule leaves too long a gap between courses that require retention of knowledge, such as world languages. The opportunity for research-based instruction, professional collaboration, and differentiation within the schedule exists, but has not yet been utilized in a productive and focused manner to meet the learning needs of students. (teacher interviews, parents, students, self-study, department leaders)

Student load and class size should enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. Although there are varied class sizes throughout the school, observations revealed no evidence to support that the student load or class size does not enable the teacher to meet the learning needs of the individual student. Interviews with teachers gave them the chance to explain their displeasure with the block scheduling. The reasons for the displeasure did not relate to curriculum and instruction, the reasons were directly related to the long implementation time for student schedules changes each semester and the disruption the process created in teaching and learning. In the absence of formal leadership and authority, the guidance department has had a direct impact on scheduling inconsistencies and the duration of conflict resolution. A team approach to the design of scheduling

and a student conflict resolution process, that would include input from key stakeholders, is needed to enable teachers to meet the learning needs of the individual students. (guidance, teachers, students, administration)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. It is evident through interviews with students and teachers that the principal is working toward upholding every core value, belief and learning expectation that has been created by the school community. The instructional leadership has seen a high turnover in the past decade resulting in a lack of direction. In interviews with department heads, it was evident that they were not clear on their roles and responsibilities. The principal is aware of the need to empower his building leaders with appropriate roles and responsibilities. The principal has a student council and round table that allows and encourages student leaders to have a voice in the school's decision-making process. Interviews with students showed that they consistently praised the relationship that the principal has with them and that their voices are indeed heard. As a result of the principal's strong instructional leadership, students and teacher leaders feel empowered within the school. (principal, teachers, administrators, students)

There are opportunities for teachers, students and parents to be involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promotes responsibility and ownership. There is a student council that meets weekly that the principal utilizes to allow students to take ownership for student driven initiatives. There is a student round table, which includes the presidents of each class as well as the captains of the sports teams. These student Building Leaders meet monthly with the principal to discuss current issues, policy and opportunities for learning and engagement. Based on interviews, the current principal has the approval of all of the parents as well as a high percentage of students and faculty. The principal is a presence around the building and is always willing to speak with the students and the staff. The administrative team is at all four lunches giving them the opportunity to see all of the students. Under the new administration, parents have been involved in the hiring process for the principal and the football coach. There is an active PTSA in which parents have an active role in decision-making in the building. By continuing to involve all key stakeholders in the decision-making process and keeping open lines of communication with the rest of the school and community, student engagement in learning will increase.(administration, teachers, students, parents, self-study)

Some teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school to increase students' engagement in learning. There is a bi-weekly optional meeting run by the principal. The agenda has touched on curriculum and assessment. There has not been any formal PLC training, yet it is referred to as a PLC. Teachers are involved in supervising many events run by the student council and other clubs and organizations. Faculty members have instituted National Honor Society Charters spanning all academic levels in world languages, social studies, mathematics and music. The Finish Strong program highlights the academic achievements of the students at Middleborough. During teacher interviews they acknowledged that the current principal does encourage and support his staff to start and implement new initiatives. It is essential to provide formal training and to establish protocols and structures so that the staff will continue to be empowered to exercise leadership in order to support students. (principal, student shadow, self-study, department heads, student interviews)

The 21st century learning expectations have not been achieved because of the lack of collaboration, reflection and constructive discourse between and among the school board, superintendent, and principal.   The superintendents in the past made infrequent and sporadic attempts to meet with the administrators at Middleborough High School in order to create material to support new initiatives. The district administration staff hired for the 2012 – 2013 school year has endeavored to remedy these issues by holding a two-day administrators' retreat in August. All district administrators were invited to attend this retreat. The newly hired superintendent has two leadership teams that have regularly scheduled meeting time. The first team consists of the principals, three curriculum directors, the

technology specialist, and special education leader and meets weekly. The second leadership team is referred to as an administrative council and includes assistant principals and department leaders. The current superintendent has endeavored to bring many leaders together and has expressed a desire to foster a collegial atmosphere by giving them appropriate leadership training on an annual basis. There is a commitment to developing more open communication with the board and superintendent. A successful implementation of these learning expectations, along with other initiatives, will provide for open communication between all levels of leadership in order to meet the needs of the learning community of Middleborough High School. (self-study, superintendent, central office staff, department heads, support staff, administration)

The school board and superintendent have begun to provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. Due to the constant change of leadership, the relationship between and among the board, superintendent and principal has been dysfunctional in the past. With the current administration, all involved are newly committed to the fair distribution of authority. The majority of staff, parents and students feel that the new administration team has begun a cycle of communication that supports the school in any way that is necessary. Currently, there is no district policy and procedures manual regarding the principal's decision-making authority. Conversations with building administrators indicate that any major decisions and initiatives need to be discussed and cleared by the school board and the superintendent prior to implementation. According to the Endicott survey, 60 percent of staff and 66 percent of parents feel the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient authority to lead the school. The school board does understand its role in providing funding for the school staff, programs, equipment, supplies, and adequate facilities to ensure every student is able to achieve the learning expectations; however, due to fiscal constraints obtaining funding for new programs has been difficult. The turnover of the administrators and of district employees has created a unique opportunity for the district to continue on this initial path of shared respect and balancing power to start fresh on many different levels with Middleborough High School. With informed, consistent leadership, acting in unison across the buildings and grade levels there will be greater curriculum and instructional practices coherence   (central office, administration, teacher interview, support staff, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The staff of Middleborough High School who work tirelessly in order to create opportunities for students to feel involved with the school community
2. The efforts to develop a heterogeneously grouped course and the positive impact that it will have on the overall learning experience of all students
3. The effort made by the guidance counselors in developing a formal advisory program guided by a scope and sequence
4. The faculty's willingness to seek out and engage themselves in professional development that will positively affect their instructional craft
5. The commitment by the administration, board, and central office personnel to improve the communication among all stakeholders
6. The strong instructional leadership of the principal that empowers students and faculty
7. The activities and clubs that improve school climate, promote high expectations, and foster student responsibility, pride, and ownership

Recommendations:
1. Re-visit the core values and beliefs statement to allow for authentic implementation
2. Ensure that parents, in addition to students and teachers, have meaningful input into the decision-making process surrounding the development and implementation of a heterogeneously grouped core course

3. Align the advisory curriculum to the 21st century learning expectations to assure that there is a form of assessment that can monitor the effectiveness of the advisory
4. Provide professional development on major initiatives such as the use of rubrics, the use of technology in the classrooms, how to differentiate instruction, best practices, curriculum design and assessments, how to effectively use instructional time during block scheduling, and PLCs

6 School Resources for Learning

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

MHS has timely and coordinated intervention strategies that support students' 21st century learning expectations. MHS has a Child Study Team that meets once a week to identify and discuss at-risk students, and each student is assigned a contact person. This team consists of guidance counselors, adjustment counselors, special education personnel, nurse, school psychologist, and two assistant principals. For students who are in danger of losing credit for a course due to excessive absences, an attendance contract is sometimes implemented. A shorter schedule and internship opportunities are also offered. If a student does not complete all the credits that are needed for graduation, that student may complete his/her education in summer school or night school. The school has special programs to aid students in becoming successful such as the LINKS program and Futures. The student members of the programs participate in general education classes in English and math through the use of the co-teaching model. Because of the success of these programs, the school has been able to bring back some out-of-district placement students and place them in these programs. The students are encouraged to participate in their own IEP or 504 meetings; the counselors are preparing them to be leaders in the meetings. Because of the timely and coordinated strategies that are employed by MHS, students are identified, serviced and retained in the district providing them the opportunity to work toward the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, teacher interview)

MHS provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. In the fall when students are new to the high school, informational nights are held to assist students and families with the transition from middle school to high school. MHS hosts a Meet the Principal Night, Open House, Parent/Teacher Conferences, and Program of Studies Information Night, all of which serve to provide families with information about available student services. Middleboro High School has concentrated its efforts to provide information to at-risk students on a more individual basis. The Child Study Team (CST) meets weekly to plan and implement supports for those students and their families who are identified as at risk by staff. Middleboro High School has made some efforts, jointly between the school and community agencies, to publicize and make accessible such services as suicide hotlines, birth control and pregnancy support, drug and alcohol prevention, and eating disorder support, particularly through the MHS Parent Teacher Student Association (MHSPTSA). The Middleborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council (MPAC) also meets monthly to help disseminate information and supports for students in need. By providing information to families, especially those most in need, about available student services, the school is insuring that all children have equitable access to school services. (self-study, parents, teachers)

Support services staff at MHS routinely makes use of the limited technology that is available to them to deliver coordinated services for each student. MHS has begun using Aspen X2 on a pilot basis to coordinate services for students. All teachers and staff can access student IEP accommodations, grades, schedules, attendance, and discipline. However, the staff has had little or no training using the X2 software, so it has not yet been fully utilized by the staff. The newest use of X2 is online scheduling for students. The district also has Alert Now to communicate information with parents. Email on upgraded computers is used to communicate with other staff, and IEPs are now created on X2. Kurzweil software and school issued laptops are made available to students who need them. A cart of ten iPads is available to the special education programs. There are computers in the language-based English classroom for special education students to use. Because technology can be used to coordinate services, all teaching staff can access records for a better understanding and delivery of services. (self-study, classroom observation, teachers, staff)

There is staffing in the guidance department sufficient to meet the criteria established by New England Association of Schools and Colleges, but because of cutbacks of previous numbers and reallocation of other building-wide responsibilities, it is difficult for students to get the personalized attention

expected within a high quality high school. Counselors are not meeting regularly with all students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling, and they do not engage in individual and group meetings with all students. MHS counseling services does not have a written, developmental program. Three guidance counselors serve the 852 students at MHS. Each counselor has a student load, spread across the four grade levels, of about 285 students. One school psychologist is available who has a caseload of approximately 23 students and conducts all of the school's testing for IEP students. The three guidance counselors often see a small number of individual students frequently for personal counseling. The guidance department meets with each class as a whole to discuss the Program of Studies in preparation for scheduling, but does not have a plan to meet with each individual student on a regular basis. According to the Endicott survey, 13.8 percent of students say that they regularly meet with their guidance counselor. According to the SRL-S survey, 86 percent of MHS students say that they are not working with a counselor to develop a plan to graduate. With regard to post-graduation plans, 89 percent of MHS seniors and 96 percent of juniors say they are not working with the counselors on a post-graduation plan. The guidance department does deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. Community agencies utilized for referrals include the Department of Child and Family (DCF), WIC, MassHealth Mobile Crisis Team, Taunton High School's School Based Health Center, District Attorney's Office, Middleboro Youth Advocate's liaison for addiction, School on Wheels (for homeless students), Children's Law Center, Healthy Families – Young Parents Program, Taunton Family Planning, PFLAG, and the South Shore Women's Center. A registered nurse from Jordan Hospital in Plymouth comes to MHS every Friday for three hours to provide instruction, information and support to pregnant and parenting students. There is no established method for collecting assessment data to improve services and to ensure each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations, no clear evaluation standards for the counseling services and programs and no systematic way for the school to assess the success of such student learning. There is no regular feedback from students, parents, or teachers as a basis for evaluating and improving student support services. When the guidance department develops a curriculum that includes a plan to collect assessment data it will be able to evaluate its support services and to improve its ability to meet the needs of all students in the areas of academic, career, and college counseling. (Endicott survey, teachers, school support staff)

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff that provides minimal preventative health services and direct intervention services. An appropriate referral process is utilized, and ongoing student health assessments are conducted. However, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts recommends 1.6 school nurses for a school of Middleborough's size, but only one nurse is employed at MHS. The school nurse conducts screenings for vision, hearing, height, weight, and scoliosis in grades 9 and 10. She also maintains a list of all students and staff in the building who have allergies. The nurse's office is in a space shared by two adjustment counselors and one school psychologist, so confidentiality becomes an issue and the nurse must go into a back office and speak softly for privacy. A program for pregnant and parenting students is in place and the nurse coordinates an annual health fair that had over 35 participants/providers promoting a healthy lifestyle. The nurse maintains a monthly review form and attends monthly district meetings with other school nurses. There are care plans distributed to teachers for various health situations. There are no health classes available for students. While the school nurse provides many meaningful and essential services, often well above the norm within the profession, addressing the shared and limited space for preventative and direct interventional services would enhance her efforts. (teacher, panel presentation, observation)

Library/media services are rarely integrated into formal curriculum and are rarely involved in the implementation of the school's curriculum and instructional practices. The library lacks a wide range of materials and technologies, depending instead on Internet sites and the state licensed databases. The library is open in the morning before school, during the day (except when the librarian goes to lunch),

and after school. The school has a state-certified teacher librarian who works alone in the library. The librarian is responsive to students' interests and does conduct some assessment of her collection and library use. The librarian at MHS attends English department meetings and has made presentations to the different departments about her resources. She runs introductory classes for freshmen on information literacy and maintains a web page with web sites for research, readers' advisory, and college and career information. The librarian makes herself available to teachers as a resource when they bring their classes to the library. However, at the present time, teachers bring students to the library to use the computers as a computer lab only, and because of the size of the library, it is difficult to use it for another class simultaneously. The librarian is currently on a committee working on a research guide to be used by the students of MHS. Through the state supplied free resources, the library offers a wide range of databases to the school community.   These can be accessed either from school or home twenty-four hours a day and consist of magazines, academic journals, books, and newspapers. There are computers in the library for student use and a copier for teacher use that is restricted to two copies. The library services are limited to scheduling for time in the library and maintaining the collection. The average age of volumes in the Dewey 500s (science) is over 30 years old. The MHS library also receives a small sampling of newspapers for the students and staff and the Boston Globe may be accessed through Proquest. The librarian is open to suggestions from the staff and students about books to purchase with her very limited budget. Teachers, responding to a survey, believe that the library programs and resources are aligned to the curriculum. The library is open from 7:10 AM until 2:20 PM. If the librarian is working later, she does keep the library open for student use. The library is closed for 30 minutes during the day when the librarian eats her lunch. Once a month during the lunch hours the librarian runs a book club with a different group of students every lunch block. The numbers of students in these clubs are growing as the book club members bring their friends for a chance to eat and drink in the library and discuss literature. This supports independent learning as the student's converse about different books and reach an understanding about the selected titles. The clubs have grown, in the aggregate, to about 24 students. Over four hundred fiction books were checked out of the library last year. The librarian had done some weeding of the fiction books to make it easier for the students to find the books they want. The librarian solicits resource ideas from the staff and then endeavors to order them as budget allows. The librarian also keeps track of how many classes visit the library. When library services are fully integrated into the curriculum and the library contains all of the necessary materials to support student learning, students will be better able to achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, administration)

The school's 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 staffs. These staff members are very engaged and passionate about providing services to all students. There are eight full-time special education teachers, and twelve educational support personnel (ESP). There is one team facilitator who works with the middle and high school staff conducting annual reviews and three-year evaluations for special education students. A director of pupil personnel services coordinates all personnel in the areas of special education, Section 504 of the ADA, English language learners, guidance department, and health services for the district. There is also one certified specialist for English language learners who works for the entire district. He currently services five students at Middleboro High School. There is some collaboration between teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff, but it is not directly linked to the school's 21st century learning expectations. Inclusive learning opportunities exist for all students except Futures students.   There are inclusion classes in English and math that are co-taught by special education and general education teachers. Students in the LINKS program (a therapeutic program for students identified with emotional disabilities) participate in general education classes and receive additional emotional and academic support in a special education setting from a special education teacher and adjustment counselor. The Futures Alternative Education Program is offered to both general and special education students who have not been successful in the general education setting. It is a three-year diploma program with an internship requirement and the opportunity to engage in

twice-weekly YMCA visits, as well as a separate PE program. In the Adaptive Learning Center Program, some students are included in general education classes, however not in core academic classes. Because of the varied programs and adequate staffing of support services available, all identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, are supported in their education. (teachers, self-study, facility tour)

Commendations

1. The timely and coordinated intervention strategies that support students' 21st century learning expectations including the Child Study Team and the LINKS and Futures programs

2. The inclusion of students and parents in transition planning for identified students in special education

3. The librarian's efforts to engage student readers through the development of the book club

4. The low special education teacher-to-student ratios and the quality of services provided by special educators

5. The range of support services for identified students

Recommendations

1. Provide professional development in the use of technology within student services

2. Develop a written, comprehensive developmental guidance program to help students achieve 21st century learning expectations

3. Ensure appropriate leadership within guidance services

4. Ensure counselors work with students to formulate a plan to graduate and a post-graduation plan

5. Create a private space for confidential conversation in the nurse's office

6. Provide appropriate resources for library services

7. Provide support for the collaboration between librarian and teachers for integration of curriculum and instructional practice

7 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 provides funding for ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, provides scarce funding for a wide range of school programs and services, professional and support staff, and instructional materials and supplies, and provides limited funding to support the implementation of technology and equipment. The funds used for professional development each year are sufficient. Teachers are not always granted permission to attend professional development occurring outside the school on school time; when teachers seek professional development outside of the school day they are not consistently reimbursed for their expenses. The staff development programs offered at Middleborough High School are self-sustaining without consistent support from the budget. Sports are primarily supported by pay-to-play and booster clubs, and the theater program rely on funding through ticket sales. Additionally, there are no programs in place for regular education students who need extra support, such as subject-based tutorials. However, the special education program is thriving and these students have a variety of resources to utilize. When technology fails, there is a lack of technology support and issues remain unresolved indefinitely. Teachers and students report that the Internet connection is not dependable for 21st century applications such as streaming video. The projectors that are available on carts are functioning, however, laptops connected to the projectors are slow functioning. A minimal number of science labs have been renovated and efforts have been made to improve some safety issues. Many teachers report there are restrictions on copying materials for students, and that resources for new textbooks and new instructional materials are unfunded. The district does have a budgetary plan to support replacement of some technology equipment and to create a school-wide wireless network this summer. The community and the district's governing body's dependable funding for ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, scarce funding for a wide range of school programs and services, professional and support staff, and instructional materials and supplies and limited funding to support the implementation of technology and equipment is resulting in an ineffective use of technology and innovative instructional practices When the community and the district become fully committed to a budget that provides adequate funding for MHS to be an active, viable and complete institution of learning, students will receive instruction that implements 21st century skills and helps them achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (teacher interview, school support staff, self-study)

The school has inconsistently developed, planned, and funded programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the infrastructural components such as heating and ventilation systems, and the building and school plant, and to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment. Maintenance and repair of the building and plant are limited with many areas in need of attention: ceiling tiles routinely go without replacement, stair treads and tiles are worn to the subflooring, many doors, both interior and exterior are broken or damaged and many blinds and curtains are in desperate need of repair or replacement. There are leaks in ceilings, walls and windows throughout the building. Major upgrades are needed to the electrical system to support the additional power requirements for technology and for window air conditioning upgrades. However, even with a lack of custodial staff, the school, is kept clean on a daily basis, with the exception of some boys' and girls' rooms. The district maintenance department has instituted an online reporting and tracking system called School Dude. This system allows for staff to report situations, such as malfunctioning water fountains, directly to maintenance, and the maintenance staff quickly addresses and tracks them. Although there have been attempts to upgrade, maintain and replace equipment, these efforts are not universal across disciplines. The designated Math and Science subject classrooms have been upgraded with SMARTBoards and/or installed projectors but technology in other areas is inconsistent. During classroom observations held within windowless rooms the visiting committee observed that the air was stale and stagnant; there were floor fans throughout the rooms and when HVAC systems were in use they produced a large noise that often drowned out the teacher and students. There have been attempts to upgrade equipment through grants such as the Foreign Language Lab. Upgrades in equipment in the gymnasium, auditorium, and theater classroom are greatly needed. The gymnasium floor is peeling

and bubbling up, there is no equipment storage, and the locker rooms are in disrepair. The auditorium's stage lighting system is antiquated and the stage lights are in fixed positions high above the stage making it impractical to change burned out lights or to adjust the gels. When there is a theater production, a volunteer brings in his own equipment to control and augment the stage lighting system. Both the theater and athletic programs are funded through non-budgetary sources. The football field is used for practice only as it is not up to par for sporting events, therefore the football team plays its games at a nearby athletic complex. Because the school community only partially provides funding to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant or to properly maintain catalogue, and replace equipment, there is a negative impact on the quality of instruction at Middleborough High School. The overall condition of the school building diminishes the capacity for teachers to teach at their best and for the students to engage optimally in learning, both of which inhibit the attainment of 21st Century learning expectations. (school committee, facility tour, teachers)

The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology needs, or capital improvements in a sporadic and informal manner. There is a long-range plan present for technology that has been implemented from 2009-2013, with an update in 2012 that has been largely followed. The school enrollment has stayed relatively constant in recent years; however, many teaching positions have been eliminated and there is not a transparent plan in place to reinstate these positions. As part of the capital improvement plan mentioned in the progress report, security cameras and access control card readers have been purchased and installation has begun. The funding and implementation of long-range plans that address programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology needs, and capital improvements are sporadic and informal, and until the funding and the implementation becomes consistent, there will not be methodic improvement in class sizes and therefore needs of the school community will continue to not be met. (self-study, facility tour, teachers)

The faculty is provided a limited role in the development and implementation of the budget; however, the administrators are extensively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. Teachers provide input into the use of end-of-the-year funds to their department heads, but the use of the funds does not appear to be focused or systematically determined. The Endicott survey reports that only 18.1 percent of the staff feels that they have any input into other budgetary concerns. The lack of faculty involvement has led to insufficient instructional materials to support teaching and learning in the 21st century. However, the new district administration team, with faculty input, is developing a focused and coordinated plan to implement curriculum cycles and purchasing of aligned instructional materials. The newly anticipated clear curriculum based focus in the development of the budget and in-building expenditures will enable the teachers to deliver a 21st century curriculum that benefits all students in their pursuit to be college ready. (Endicott survey, teachers, self-study)

The school site and plant have limited capabilities to support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. The library/media center is small and not equipped with up-to-date resources. It cannot accommodate more than one class at a time. Interior classrooms, especially, are found to lack ventilation that would provide fresh air and instead have univents that are very noisy and disruptive to the learning process. Due to the shifting educational programs and requirements to meet student needs, there is increasing difficulty in finding and scheduling teaching and learning stations. Additionally, computers and printers are not available in teacher work areas. Spaces are not conducive for teacher collaboration to occur. The health center is shared with adjustment counselors and a school psychologist; the collaborative nature of this area leads to lack of space for private meetings with students and the nurse and, therefore, confidentiality issues arise. Parking is adequate for students and teachers and security cameras monitor parking areas. The gymnasium floor is bubbling and equipment and electrical outlets need updating in science classrooms. The kitchen is large and sufficient for staff to safely store and prepare a variety of food. The size of the cafeteria inhibits the flexibility in building a bell schedule that would minimize the disruption of learning. The school site

and plant have limited capabilities to support the delivery of high quality school programs and services, therefore students do not have adequate access to current research and media, teachers are not able to plan and collaborate effectively and efficiently, and support staff are not able to perform their duties adequately. (facility tour, school support staff, Endicott survey)

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 administration ensures that student safety is a primary concern by conducting the required safety drills and inspections. The maintenance department utilizes various means of tracking and maintaining the school site and stays on top of all required and emergency maintenance problems. However, because the physical plant is over 40 years old, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to replace items like ceiling tiles, light bulbs, and older electrical outlets, specifically in the science labs, with GFI outlets. The attention to maintaining documentation on required federal, state, and local laws and regulations provides a Middleborough High School student with a physical plant in which quality instruction can take place but may not be sustainable in the future because of its age. (self-study, classroom observations, facility tour)

All professional staff actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and occasionally reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. Students choose their own schedules and schedules are then sent home to parents to be signed. Guidance counselors meet with parents to go over schedules and the Alert Now automatic call system and email system are used frequently to notify parents of special events. Administrators call home when students are referred to them for disciplinary issues, however there is no protocol in place for situations in which parents cannot be reached. Faculty and staff agree that there are plenty of opportunities for engagement for parents who want to be involved in their child's education, but there is a lack of reaching out to parents who are not as innately involved. Faculty and staff do not have consistent techniques in place for engaging parents in the educational process of particularly struggling students. Despite some efforts, there continues to be families who are left out of the educational process. Most professional staff actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and occasionally reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school, yet some parents feel as if they do not play a part in their child's education and students continually feel a disconnection between home and school values and expectations. (Endicott survey, school support staff, teachers)

The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning; however, a limited number of students access these opportunities. Although there are many opportunities for students to take advantage of parent, community, business and higher education programs, there is little student participation. According to the Endicott survey, 51 percent of teachers and 63 percent of parents believe there are productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning in MHS. However, there is little student participation in these programs. Fewer than ten students are in the Massasoit Partnership and approximately twenty students are in the Futures program. Middleborough High School has many opportunities for students to gain educational experiences through community resources. However, the school does not effectively recruit students to take full advantage of these opportunities. Parents and community members are active in raising money and providing support for many after school programs to include clubs and athletics. When there is an expansion of productive parent, community, business and higher education partnerships that support student learning, MHS students' educational experiences will be richer and more diverse. (teachers, self-study, Endicott survey)

Commendations:

1. The diligent maintenance and custodial staff that ensures the school is well maintained within budget constraints
2. The cleanliness and safety of the school achieved within budget constraints
3. The productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships developed by the school which provide multiple learning opportunities for students
4. The extensive involvement of administrators in the budget process

Recommendations:

1. Create a plan for remodeling the current infrastructure to support 21st century learning expectations through a variety of technology and facility upgrades and ensure a healthful learning environments
2. Provide adequate financial support for the development of 21st century curriculum
3. Provide the funding needed to ensure that contemporary and future technology needs of implementing a 21st century curriculum are met
4. Ensure that the operational budget provides appropriate levels of funding to allow for the creation of in-building and in-district professional development and off-site professional development activities
5. Ensure faculty and staff are fully integrated in the budgetary process so that proper resources are available for instructional improvement

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 Middleborough High School. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting committee recommendations.

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

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

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Committee has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Committee within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change, which negatively impacts on the school's adherence to the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact, which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Committee's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 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 Committee office has current statistical data on the school.

The Committee urges school officials to establish a formal follow-up program at once to review and implement all findings of the self-study and valid recommendations identified in the evaluation report. An outline of the Follow-Up Program is available in the Committee's *Accreditation Handbook*, which was given to the school at the onset of the self-study. Additional direction regarding suggested procedures and reporting requirements is provided at Follow-Up Seminars offered by Committee staff following the on-site visit.

The committee wishes to express its gratitude to the entire Middleborough community for its support of the accreditation process and for their hospitality exhibited during the visitation. We also want to commend the principal and the entire Steering Committee for their diligence and professionalism as seen in the preparations for the visitation and their calm during the visitation.

Sample High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
March 11-14, 2012

Visiting Committee

Richard Kraemer, Chair Retired Principal, Stowe High School Morrisville, VT 05661	JoAnn McCormack Guidance Counselor Dedham High School Dedham, MA 02026
Marcia McGovern, Assistant Chair Principal Seekonk High School Seekonk, MA 02771	John McHugh Social Studies Teacher Southbridge Middle/High School Southbridge, MA 01550
Anastasia DiFedele-Dutton English Teacher Great Path Academy Manchester, CT 06045	Diane McKamy Media Services North Attleboro High School North Attleboro, MA 02760
Alan Gates Assistant Principal West Springfield High School West Springfield, MA 01089	Marcia Periera Computer Technology Grafton High School Grafton, MA 01519
Gary Highsmith Principal Hamden High School Hamden, CT 06514	Kerissa Roderick English Teacher Smithfield High school Smithfield, RI 02917
John Jannetti Science Teacher Andover High School Andover, MA 01810	Leanne Saravo Social Studies Teacher Mount Pleasant High School Providence, RI 02908
Christine Lander Science Teacher Lynn Classical High School Lynn, MA 01905	Andrea Stone Special Education Teacher Sanborne Regional High School Kingston, NH 03848
Laura Lanza Math Teacher Farmington High School Farmington, CT 06034	Susan White Foreign Language Teacher Reading Memorial High School Reading, MA 01867

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Committee on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

- elimination of fine arts, practical arts and student activities

- diminished upkeep and maintenance of facilities

- significantly decreased funding

- cuts in the level of administrative and supervisory staffing

- cuts in the number of teachers and/or guidance counselors

- grade level responsibilities of the principal

- cuts in the number of support staff

- decreases in student services

- cuts in the educational media staffing

- increases in student enrollment that cannot be accommodated

- takeover by the state

- inordinate user fees

- changes in the student population that warrant program or staffing modification(s) that cannot be accommodated, e.g., the number of special needs students or vocational students or students with limited English proficiency

List of Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations:

1. The use of the SACHEMS acronym which plays a significant role in communicating the school's core beliefs

2. The dynamic, collaborative process, informed by current research that the school used to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning

3. The development of school-wide analytic rubrics that are posted in every classroom

4. The wide-spread use of the school-wide rubric as reported by students

5. The commitment of the school to identifying values, beliefs and learning expectations to reflect the school's expectations focused on preparing students to be successful 21st century citizens

6. The acknowledgement of teachers and administrators that the process of identifying the core values and beliefs and the learning and social and civic expectations is an ongoing effort

7. The development of a common format for written curriculum

8. The establishment of a STEM director and humanities director for grades 6 through 12

9. The monthly early release time for the purpose of professional development

10. Teachers, in a variety of content areas, maintaining membership in professional organizations

11. The Advanced Placement courses offered at MHS which contribute to students developing higher-order thinking skills

12. The willingness of faculty to incorporate core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations into instruction

13. Those faculty members who have taken advantage of the technology available and have begun to integrate it into instruction

14. The faculty who have explored the benefits of forming professional learning communities

15. The caring, supportive faculty members investing in their students by regularly offering extra help

16. The willingness of teachers to fund their own professional development activities

17. The plan to fully implement Aspen X2 online grade reporting software in SY 2013-2014

18. The efforts made by teachers to collaborate in order to create common lessons and assessments

19. The efforts by some teachers to provide opportunities for students to revise their work

20. The informal collaboration of teachers on the creation of summative assessments

21. The teachers who communicate, prior to each unit of study, applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed

22. The staff of Middleborough High School who work tirelessly in order to create opportunities for students to feel involved with the school community

23. The efforts to develop a heterogeneously grouped course and the positive impact that it will have on the overall learning experience of all students

24. The effort made by the guidance counselors in developing a formal advisory program guided by a scope and sequence

25. The faculty's willingness to seek out and engage themselves in professional development that will positively affect their instructional craft

26. The commitment by the administration, board, and central office to improve the communication among all stakeholders

27. The strong instructional leadership of the principal that empowers students and faculty

28. The activities and clubs that improve school climate, promote high expectations, and foster student responsibility, pride, and ownership

29. The timely and coordinated intervention strategies that support students' 21st century learning expectations including the Child Study Team and the LINKS and Futures programs

30. The inclusion of students and parents in transition planning for identified students in special education

31. The librarian's efforts to engage student readers through the development of the book club

32. The low special education teacher-to-student ratios and the quality of services provided by special educators

33. The range of support services for identified students

34. The diligent maintenance and custodial staff that ensures the school is well maintained within budget constraints

35. The cleanliness and safety of the school achieved within budget constraints

36. The productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships developed by the school which provide multiple learning opportunities for students

37. The extensive involvement of administrators in the budget process

Recommendations:

1. Develop a deliberate and systemic process for reviewing and revising the core values and beliefs and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources and school and district priorities and including multiple stake-holders

2. Complete and refine the rubrics used to measure the school's social and civic expectations

3. Utilize newly revised learning expectations and rubrics as consistent grading tools that offer real meaning to and feedback for student work

4. Ensure that 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

5. Regularly measure student achievement of 21st century learning expectations using well-developed rubrics

6. Integrate the 21st century learning expectations into curriculum while ensuring the consistent and ongoing use of the common curriculum format

7. Establish and implement a process for regular, ongoing evaluation and revision of curriculum

8. Create a partnership for all constituents for informing an ethical use of technology policy

9. Provide resources for the professional staff to collaborate on curriculum coordination and articulation

10. Align student internships to 21st century learning expectations

11. Provide professional development to incorporate core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations into instruction in all curricula

12. Involve staff in the guidelines for integration of core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in instruction where clear expectations are outlined

13. Provide staff with time and professional development to facilitate opportunities for sharing portfolios, writing for a variety of audiences within and outside school community, and meaningful project work.

14. Provide school-wide professional development in the use of the technology and its integration into 21st century learning skills and authentic instruction

15. Provide professional development in effective use of the block schedule

16. Provide departments with additional access to data on individual student performance on state and local testing including specific performance on each standard and question to improve differentiation.

17. Provide professional development to ensure an in-depth understanding of how to implement a variety of formative assessments to inform instruction.

18. Provide professional development time to allow the faculty to collaborate to improve school-wide instructional practices through analysis of current research and data

19. Develop and implement 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

20. Provide regularly scheduled time for teachers to collaborate in formal ways on the creation, analysis and revision or formative and summative assessments including common assessments

21. Provide professional development on effective use of Professional Learning Communities

22. Provide teachers with professional development regarding strategies for teaching effectively within a block schedule, which would increase teachers utilizing time to provide students with not only 21st century learning goals but also unit-specific learning goals.

23. Provide professional development to ensure that teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning

24. Ensure that grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

25. Provide scientifically research-based professional development in implementing the rubrics to ensure inter-rater reliability among all staff members

26. Collect, analyze and disaggregate appropriate data from the school-wide rubrics in order to effectively report student progress towards meeting the learning expectations and to drive revisions to the rubrics

27. Revisit the core values and beliefs statement needs to allow for authentic implementation

28. Ensure that parents, in addition to students and teachers, have meaningful input into the decision-making process surrounding the development and implementation of a heterogeneously grouped core course

29. Align the advisory curriculum to the 21st century learning expectations to assure that there is a form of assessment that can monitor the effectiveness of the advisory

30. Provide professional development on major initiatives such as the use of rubrics, the use of technology in the classrooms, how to differentiate instruction, best practices, curriculum design and assessments, how to effectively use instructional time during block scheduling, and PLCs

31. Provide professional development in the use of technology within student services

32. Develop a written, comprehensive developmental guidance program to help students achieve 21st century learning expectations

33. Ensure appropriate leadership within guidance services

34. Ensure counselors work with students to formulate a plan to graduate and a post-graduation plan

35. Create a private space for confidential conversation in the nurse's office

36. Provide appropriate resources for library services

37. Provide support for the collaboration between librarian and teachers for integration of curriculum and instructional practice

38. Create a plan for remodeling the current infrastructure to support 21st century learning expectations through a variety of technology and facility upgrades and ensure a healthful learning environments

39. Provide adequate financial support for the development of 21st century curriculum

40. Provide the funding needed to ensure that contemporary and future technology needs of implementing a 21st century curriculum are met

41. Ensure that the operational budget provides appropriate levels of funding to allow for the creation of in-building and in-district professional development and off-site professional development activities

42. Ensure faculty and staff are fully integrated in the budgetary process so that proper resources are available for instructional improvement