

**New England Association of
Schools and Colleges**



Founded in 1885

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

**Report of the Visiting Committee for
Spaulding High School**

**Barre, Vermont
April 3 - 6, 2011**

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

THE DISTRIBUTION, USE, AND SCOPE OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges considers this visiting committee report of Spaulding High School to be a privileged document submitted by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges to the principal of the school and by the principal to the state department of education.

Distribution of the report within the school community is the responsibility of the school principal. The final visiting committee report must be released in its entirety within sixty days (60) of its completion to the superintendent, school board, public library or town office, and the appropriate news media.

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

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 six Commissions: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE), the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS), the Commission on Public Secondary Schools (CPSS), the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), the Commission on Public Elementary and Middle Schools (CPEMS), and the Commission on American and International Schools Abroad (CAISA).

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

Teaching and Learning Standards:

- Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

- Curriculum

- Instruction

- Assessment of and for Student Learning

Support of Teaching and Learning Standards:

- School Culture and Leadership

- School Resources for Learning

- Community Resources for Learning

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

PREPARATION FOR THE EVALUATION VISIT - THE SCHOOL SELF-STUDY

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Spaulding High School, a committee of 10 members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included two parents and one school board member.

The self-study of Spaulding High School extended over a period of 17 school months from September 2009 to March 2011. The visiting committee was pleased to note that students, parents, school board members, and staff members joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

Public schools evaluated by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their adherence to the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's 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 Commission, Spaulding 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 voted to approve it.

THE PROCESS USED BY THE VISITING COMMITTEE

A visiting committee of 15 evaluators was assigned by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Spaulding High School. The Committee members spent four days in Barre, Vermont, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students, and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school meets the Commission's Standards

for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools and central office administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Spaulding High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 52.5 hours shadowing 15 students for a half day
- a total of about 20 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
- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

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

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

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

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

TEACHING AND LEARNING AT SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL

The recent adoption and implementation of a new guiding document of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations combined with the piloting of two school-wide analytic rubrics to assess writing and reading comprehension show that the school has the capacity to define and refine what is important. However, the school must now review and revise the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to ensure the 21st century learning expectations are challenging, defined by analytical rubrics, and measurable. To do this effectively, SHS needs to involve students, parents, community members, district administrators, school board members, school administrators, and teachers in the planning, writing, and revision of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to ensure a dynamic, inclusive and collaborative process. Once this work is done, the school will need to develop and implement school-wide rubrics aligned with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Overall, it must continually strive to communicate to all stakeholders in a variety of ways the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations to ensure understanding, buy-in, ownership, and shared decision-making. Finally, to keep this document fresh well into the future, the school needs a formal plan to review and revise the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations and to implement the school-wide analytic rubrics beyond the current 2- and 5-year plans.

Spaulding High School maintains a formal process of curriculum review based on a 4-year plan for curriculum development and alignment and has made a commitment to create a K-12 coordinated curriculum in all content areas. The completed K-12 curricula in health, English language arts, and science all follow the recommended comprehensive curriculum format, and as curriculum is developed, it is aligned with state standards. In many cases, there are learning opportunities available to students that extend beyond the classroom. The recent acquisition of Promethean and SMARTBoards will help to implement the curriculum and increase the wide variety of educational opportunities. To improve curriculum, the school must find time within and across departments for common professional

development activities that address curriculum review and implementation. This can be accomplished by developing a focused plan for curricular review that includes all teachers and ensures that all curriculum is written using the district's common template including instructional activities and assessment strategies and incorporating the use of school-wide rubrics. Curriculum guides that include specific suggestions for teaching and assessment strategies for all subject areas and that contain 21st century learning expectations will be most beneficial to teachers and students' learning. All students will benefit from curriculum designed to implement activities that provide authentic application of curricular goals and objectives and develop higher order thinking skills and focus on problem-solving for all students, no matter the course or level. Learning will improve with increased student access to a technology curriculum and by the school's creating and implementing a plan to continue to update technology and provide for continued professional development in technology integration for teachers. SHS must now complete and implement the K-12 coordinated, aligned curriculum by 2012, according to the district plan, implement a plan to analyze the impact of declining enrollment, and ensure that student opportunities to meet 21st century learning expectations are not compromised as curricular offerings and school activities may be reduced.

The SHS instructional expectations are focused on providing professional development in instructional best practices opportunities for all teachers. Teachers make great efforts to personalize instruction as they are acutely aware of the individual needs of their students. There is an emerging integration of technology into classrooms. Some teachers provide instruction that is based on inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills, and all faculty members have access to, and opportunities for, professional reading focused on improved student learning. The school administrators are aware of the need for teacher support in best practice instruction and have created on-campus, continuing education opportunities provided by the administrators in addition to financial support for teachers to participate in professional development through course reimbursement. Now, SHS must implement a protocol that will ensure that instructional practices are consistent with the school's 21st century learning expectations as it continues the development of school-wide rubrics to measure those 21st century learning expectations. The school must continue to engage faculty members in professional development related to use of technology and ways to utilize higher order thinking skills school-wide. As practices change, the school must explain to students and parents the intentional varied instructional techniques and provide teachers time to enhance cross-discipline collaboration in order to incorporate 21st century skills to support effective instructional practices. Through formal opportunities focused specifically on evaluating student data, creation of a formal protocol for evaluating instructional strategies, and

scheduled time for faculty collaboration on instructional practices, the school will realize greater student achievement results. The school has begun the process by adopting the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that give form and place for such discussion and evaluation. The school should also actively research funding sources to support conference attendance and to support membership in professional organizations. Most importantly for instructional improvement, SHS must ensure that all teachers use designated and valued professional development opportunities that are linked to providing students with opportunities to master 21st century learning expectations.

In the assessment of and for student learning, the process of developing the current school-wide rubrics has involved opportunities for teacher input. This process serves as a good model for the activity of the rubrics committee that will create a viable structure for continuous reflection, revision, and development of school-wide rubrics. Many teachers provide rubrics that identify the learning criteria for course-specific summative assessments, and including students in the process of developing appropriate rubrics helps to ensure buy-in and understanding. The technology capabilities of PowerSchool enable ongoing, up-to-date reporting of student performance for parents and students. The school also utilizes standardized test results in a variety of ways to inform changes in curriculum areas. The direct involvement of the curriculum coordinator combines with the formation of PLCs to provide a forum for collaboration on assessment and results. Professional development in Understanding by Design (UbD) and The Skillful Teacher have resulted in a variety of assessments being used in many classrooms. The use of formative assessments by some teachers to check for understanding and inform instruction combined with continuous opportunities provided by some teachers to allow students to demonstrate their understanding form a solid foundation in assessment techniques. The school's writing expectations promote continuous growth in student learning and performance, and the development of common, summative assessments in several courses are sound practices. Finally, the 9th grade academy is focused on supporting all students with the instruction and structure needed to support student achievement.

To better articulate assessment expectations, the school must ensure that its 21st century student learning expectations represent measurable learning targets. The school will need to establish consensus and ensure teachers commit to use school-wide rubrics regularly across all disciplines. This begins with the development of a timeline and plan for establishing school-wide rubrics for each of the 21st century student learning expectations and fully implementing them. Then the school needs a formal process to assess both whole school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations along with a format for reporting to families their student's progress toward meeting the

expectations and the school's progress in having all students achieve the 21st century learning expectations. Attention must be focused on calibrating grading policies and procedures across disciplines and within departments according to the core values and beliefs. With school-wide expectations finalized, it is important to identify the course-specific projects and assessments that will be used to determine the level of achievement for the school-wide learning expectations and to create dedicated, departmental time to develop common assessments based on course-specific outcomes. This will entail structures and guidelines for teachers to meet regularly to analyze assessment results to guide curriculum changes, use of best practices, and student interventions. Finally, it is important to build consensus on effective feedback to students and families and conduct staff development on effectively using formative assessment data to differentiate instruction and on effective feedback techniques.

SUPPORT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AT SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL

The culture of SHS is centered on a strong commitment of all staff members to students and the school. The student-led and organized assemblies and initiatives are highly note-worthy. The school community provides a wide range of extra-curricular offerings, and the available resources for career preparation and college readiness help to prepare students for their future. The school routinely offers professional development offerings tied to improving student learning, and the faculty and staff members are willing to work on improving instruction and curriculum. Now, the school must examine programming to ensure that each student receives an education that is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity. Learning will be further enhanced by the development of additional distance learning opportunities with colleges and universities and by seeking post-graduate support for non-college bound students. The teacher advisory (TA) program must be evaluated and formalized to improve student attendance accountability during the time period at the start of the day and to ensure each student has an adult, in addition to the school counselor, who knows them well and assists them with achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The central office and school board should provide the principal the necessary autonomy to carry out the mission and vision of the school and adhere to clear formal roles and job descriptions for the principal and two assistant principals. Staff evaluation should be made more effective through the creation and implementation of a formal, research-based, evaluation program for faculty and staff members and administrators, and aligning it with the 21st century expectations for student learning, the school's core beliefs and values, the district's guiding principles, and individual

professional development plans. Finally, the school administration must improve communication of purpose and goals to faculty and staff members as it works to achieve scheduling equity in class sizes.

The school resources to support teaching and learning remain varied despite the challenges presented by declining enrollment and staff reductions. There are many intervention programs and procedures in the school community to support student learning, and the coordination of these programs is timely and based on an evaluation of their effectiveness by individual student progress. SHS offers a high degree of outreach to families, particularly in 8th to 9th grade transition. There is current and easily accessible information and data about student records, achievement, and growth. The written, developmental guidance program is an asset to all learners, and there is adequate staffing for all students to meet individually and in groups with their guidance counselors. Excellent access to community-based services supports students to become ready to learn. Health services use the SNAP program efficiently to organize and disseminate information about individual students and available preventative services address health concerns appropriately. There is a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services to meet the needs of the SHS learning community, including an interactive website available 24/7 for student and staff use. The school offers a comfortable, inviting, student-centered atmosphere students want to access, and the creativity and flexibility of staff members and the evolving service delivery model effectively fulfill the current needs of students. To streamline the referral process and target appropriate student needs, the school must create a menu of intervention strategies by grade and student needs including overall information about programs. It must align measurable 21st century learning expectations with directive intervention strategies and support services and must implement a procedure to ensure that all families are able to access student records, achievement reports, and growth information. The school must study and assess the need for a school-based social worker or counselor to support immediate and on-going mental health needs in the student population while it ensures that all students meet regularly with their guidance counselor. The school must develop and implement a formal protocol to evaluate and improve school counseling services utilizing data to inform this process and evaluate and improve health services similarly. Student learning will be greatly enhanced by an increase in the time the library is staffed during after school hours to support the expanded availability of services. The school needs to assess the need for a dedicated technology integration specialist for it to implement measurable 21st century learning expectations and create and implement an action plan to provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students. Finally, it must implement an approved co-teaching model that includes planning/collaboration times for teams of

regular and special education teachers to implement measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students.

The entire school staff is to be commended for working within, and adjusting to, the financial restraints of the local community. While the Town and City of Barre seek to dependably and consistently support SHS, they must do so within their means as the local economy has shifted and changed. The school maintenance department offers a quick and timely response to work prioritized on the safety and timeliness of the concern. The building is clean in spite of its age, and the facilities committee efficiently plans for maintenance and equipment needs. There is tremendous support and funding from the community and outside sources for a wide range of school programs and services, athletic improvements, and roof repair. PowerSchool provides the school with improved communication with parents and gives students a portal to access assignments and work from outside the school. The hands-on electronic approach to student course scheduling provides guidance services with the opportunity to meet one-on-one with students and parents and streamlines the development of the master schedule. The budget development process is common, familiar, and expected each year, while the two open and public meetings during the budget process informs the community of the needs of the school. There is the necessary ongoing effort and funding to maintain and support an older facility, including the installation of a more energy efficient and cost effective wood chip burner to heat the physical plant. Recently, the school repaved and relined the parking lots, and it continues the modernization and renovation of bathrooms, making them handicapped accessible. The main lobby has been renovated, and inspections, system checks, and required documentation are timely. The school community recognizes and appreciates the hard work and efforts of the custodial team. The guidance department is considered by parents to be specifically attentive to each student's current academic life and focused on their preparation for post graduation. The English language learner (ELL), Phoenix Program, special education and life skills program regularly and specifically engage families who have traditionally been less connected with the school. Parents of college-bound students praise the available information and planning tools available through PowerSchool and Naviance, and there is at SHS an extraordinarily generous annual local pool of scholarships, thanks to a school endowment with close to \$8 million to fund scholarships. This demonstrates the steady, long-standing recognition of SHS as a mainstay in Barre community life and explains the continuing loyalty of the SHS alumni that fosters many productive partnerships between SHS and the community.

However, the school must improve technology equipment replacement and upgrade schedule and its service delivery in order to meet its own 21st century learning expectations. With new equipment installation, there should be matching technology training for staff and faculty members for such equipment as the Promethean white-board for all classrooms to help meet the school's mission, core values, and learning expectations. Certificates of inspection of safety, health, and fire codes and regulations must be up-to-date and displayed in a common area, and the school needs a written schedule for maintenance, repair, replacement of equipment, and for system checks and a written catalogue and inventory of all equipment. The school needs a clear, specific, long-range plan whose creation involves all stakeholders to identify the core values and learning expectations that will be met through the equitable allocation of resources, programs, and services to all students. There should be more opportunities for budget input by the faculty and a clear, public budget development process that includes faculty members, department heads, the principal and superintendent specifically to meet the learning needs of students. The school needs adequate meeting space for nursing services and the special education department programs, based on input from all stakeholders involved to ensure that students with special needs have appropriate resources and classroom space. There should also be a formal reporting system allowing the entire educational community to provide feedback on health or safety issues that directly impact instruction and learning. All appropriate documentation must be posted and accessible with back-ups safely stored. The school's connection with the community will be improved by added specific outreach and engagement efforts by all professional staff members, made more consistent by finding ways for teachers to initiate this contact. The school can also create a specific process for parents and families to advocate for academic or systemic change and inform all parents of the process.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROFILE: SPAULDING

Spaulding High School, located in Barre, Vermont, serves the communities of Barre Town and Barre City. The communities are located in Washington County of central Vermont. The majority of the population is employed in government, quarrying, banking, insurance, and real estate.

Barre Town and Barre City have a combined population of 16,893 and are racially, culturally, and ethnically similar. Barre City has a slightly larger population with 9,291 while Barre Town has a population of 7,602. The median family income in Barre City is \$30,393 per household and \$42,660 per family. The median family income in Barre Town is \$46,563 per household and \$53,565 per family. As of November 2009, the unemployment rate reported for the Barre-Montpelier area was 6.1 percent. Barre Town reports a rate of 22 percent on free and reduced lunch, while Barre City has a significantly higher rate of 64 percent.

The Barre Supervisory Union (BSU) is made up of Barre City Elementary & Middle School, Barre Town Elementary & Middle School, Spaulding High School, and Barre Technical Center.

Spaulding High School serves grades 9-12. As of January 2010, 840 students attend the school. For the 2008-09 school year, 37 of those were tuition students. Of those students, 97.6 percent are white, 1 percent are African-American, 0.4 percent are Asian, 0.8 percent are Hispanic, and 0.2 percent are unidentified. School enrollment for Spaulding has decreased steadily over the last seven years from 992 students in 2002. Thirty-five percent of the students at the school receive free and reduced lunch. The average dropout rate for the past two years is 2.69 percent, the average daily student attendance is 89.38 percent, and the average attendance rate among teachers (excluding personal days) is 91 percent.

The Barre Supervisory Union has been below the state average in per-pupil spending in recent years. In 2007-08, the BSU expended \$11,567 per pupil compared to a state average of \$14,076 per pupil. In 2006-07, the BSU expended \$10,735 per pupil compared to a state average of \$13,287 per pupil. In Barre City, 46 percent of local property taxes were allocated to the public schools, while in Barre Town, 57 percent of local property taxes were allocated to public schools.

In the class of 2009, 42 percent of graduates planned on attending four-year colleges, with 11 percent enrolling in two-year colleges, 11 percent entering the workforce, and 2 percent entering the military; 34 percent remained undecided. In the class of 2010, 48 percent of seniors plan on attending four-year

colleges, 11 percent plan on enrolling in two-year colleges, 16 percent are entering the workforce, 4 percent are entering the military, and 23 percent are currently undecided.

Spaulding High School offers a number of avenues for students to participate in school-business partnerships and to access local educational opportunities. Barre Technical Center, which shares the facilities with Spaulding High School, is a well-utilized institute by Spaulding students to gain applied career training and to seek connections with local and state career internships. Spaulding also hosts the Training Interns and Partnering for Success (T.I.P.S.) program, which is designed to give elective credits to students, employment skills training, an internship, and potentially paid positions upon successful completion. Spaulding has established a partnership with Vermont Technical College (VTC) called the Vermont Academy of Science and Technology (VAST), which gives high school seniors “the chance to complete their senior year of high school and their freshman year of college simultaneously” in science- and math-related fields. Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, offers free classes to motivated high school students through the Special Community Student Program, mostly in foreign language and mathematics. The Vermont State Colleges offer dual enrollment where high school students can receive college credit for taking classes at any of the State Colleges while still in high school. Additionally, the Community College of Vermont sponsors an Introduction to College Studies course for high school students. Upon successful completion, students receive a free voucher for college credit. There are also several online programs that Spaulding students can take advantage of in order to earn high school credits or diplomas, including Virtual High School, Keystone High School, and Brigham Young High School.

Spaulding is involved with a number of student recognition programs, including National Honor Society, Merit Scholarships, the Green and Gold University of Vermont Free Scholarship Program, and Spaulding’s own scholarship committee. As well as publishing the various academic honors each quarter, the Spaulding faculty is asked to nominate a student for “The Good Kid Award.” Students who earn this award receive a certificate signed by the principal as well as a free lunch from the school restaurant. There are assemblies coordinated to celebrate student talents and achievements throughout the school year, as well. Ultimately, the goal is to hold one assembly per month, but currently there is one assembly per quarter in addition to the two sports banquets. Additionally, the school holds an awards assembly at the end of the school year to recognize students’ accomplishments in academics, music, drama, athletics, and community service.

MISSION STATEMENT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Spaulding High School seeks to create a safe, supportive environment to promote 21st century learning in partnership with students, educators, parents, and the community. We offer a variety of educational opportunities to meet the needs of all students to enable them to become respectful, responsible, knowledgeable, healthy, and ethical citizens.

We hold the following beliefs about learning:

- Students learn best through authentic, inquiry-based instruction.
- Initiative, persistence, and effort promote meaningful learning.
- Multiple and meaningful formative and summative assessments ensure continuous improvement.
- Diverse curricula engage students.
- School resources -- including technology, facilities, and community -- contribute to effective teaching and learning.
- Clear goals regarding post-secondary plans foster success.

Student Expectations

- Students will communicate effectively in multiple literacies--including information, visual, media, and technological literacies.
- Students will become life-long learners and informed users of information.
- Students will use technology ethically and responsibly as connected global citizens.
- Students will meet state standards in English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, History, the Arts, Physical Education, and Health.
- Students will develop skills in leadership, collaboration, flexibility, and empathy.
- Students will engage in critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and innovation.

Adopted by faculty June 16, 2010. Adopted by the Spaulding High School Board July 6, 2010.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

MISSION AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

CURRICULUM

INSTRUCTION

ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Standards for Accreditation

Teaching and Learning Standards

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

To some extent, the Spaulding High School (SHS) community engaged 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. At the beginning of the 2008 school year, SHS faculty members formed a committee charged with revising the school's mission and expectations for student learning. During the process, the student representative to the school board solicited student feedback and reported student support of the revised mission statement to the administration. The school board voted to adopt the document during its November 2008 meeting. At that time, the SHS administration planned to address any necessary changes at the two- and five-year interval as part of the ten-year revision process. At the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, however, another mission revision committee was created to transform the mission statement into core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. It used research from the Vermont Department of Education and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills as the guiding principles for the creation of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Committee members surveyed staff, students, and parents to ascertain feedback, but the revision committee was comprised of administrators and faculty members only and lacked direct involvement of students, parents, community members, and school board members in planning and writing the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations document, a requirement for a dynamic, inclusive, and collaborative process. Accordingly, the lack of such comprehensive inclusion of educational community members in the process of developing the SHS Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations prevents the school from fully realizing its foundational commitments. (self-study, students, teachers, school board)

The SHS Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations document identifies six belief statements and six learning expectations, some of which contain challenging notions and some of which are simply not measurable. For example, "Students will become lifelong learners..." is not a measurable competency. Also, although some academic expectations are measurable, they are not yet defined by school-wide analytic rubrics, and the social and civic expectations are measurable but are also not defined by school-wide analytic rubrics. Teachers have recently been directed to pilot the use of two school-wide rubrics to measure student achievement in writing and reading comprehension and have also been charged with implementing a variety of other rubrics. Teachers discuss the use of rubrics in their courses and highlight the need to work towards implementing school-wide rubrics in order to accurately and consistently measure student achievement of the learning expectations. According to the two and five-

year plan, SHS will complete development and implementation of school-wide rubrics aligned with the school's 21st century learning expectations with review and updates of those expectations taking place during the five-year review. With challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement, teachers will be able to measure student achievement for the purpose of adjusting curriculum, assessment, and instruction and ultimately improve teaching and learning. (self-study, student work, teachers, administrators)

SHS is in the preliminary stages of actively implementing its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations within the culture of the school and within its curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations are just beginning to be guided by these core values. Faculty members plan to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. The implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) demonstrates that SHS staff members are using the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to drive decision-making and allocation of resources, and the process of developing and aligning curriculum K-12 in all content areas, including 21st century learning expectations in the curricula, and using the Understanding by Design (UbD) curriculum model shows that the school's beliefs are beginning to drive curriculum creation. Professional development opportunities such as The Skillful Teacher and Reading and Writing across the Content Areas have been offered to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment and demonstrate that the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are guiding professional development. In order to ensure that students are prepared for lifelong learning, however, a systemic approach is required for the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, to guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, and to actively influence the culture of the school. (self-study, core values and beliefs subcommittee, teachers, administrators)

SHS periodically reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, and district and school community priorities. However, the process for revision has ranged from administrative fiat without faculty member's input to faculty committees crafting the document without collaboration from other stakeholders. Since 2000, SHS has gone through several versions of its mission statement, with the current core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations document being ratified by the faculty in June 2010 and by the school board in July 2010, in response to revised NEASC standards and in preparation for the re-accreditation

process. As stated in the self-study, SHS will review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations as part of the two-year and five-year review process, but this plan for review should continue beyond the two and five-year review process. A sustained, ongoing plan for reviewing core values, beliefs, and learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, and district and community priorities will allow SHS to implement best practices and ensure student achievement. (self-study, teachers, administrators)

Commendations

1. The adoption and implementation of a new guiding document of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
2. The piloting of two school-wide analytic rubrics to assess writing and reading comprehension

Recommendations

1. Review and revise the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to ensure that all the 21st century learning expectations are challenging and measurable, and are defined by analytical rubrics
2. Involve students, parents, community members, district administrators, school board members, school administrators, and teachers in the planning and writing of the future versions of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to ensure a dynamic, inclusive, and collaborative process
3. Develop and implement a process to ensure the school's core values, beliefs, and 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, and resource allocations.
4. Use a variety of on-going ways to communicate to all stakeholders the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations to ensure understanding, buy-in, ownership, and shared decision-making
5. Develop a formal plan to review and revise the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations and the implementation of school-wide analytic rubrics beyond the current 2- and 5-year targeted plan

Standards for Accreditation and Learning Standards

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 at Spaulding High School (SHS) is not yet purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Although the SHS community is engaged in the process of curriculum development, only a few academic courses (English, World History, U.S. History, World Geography, Civics, Psychology, and Algebra 1) currently have comprehensive written curriculum guides using the Understanding by Design (UbD) model. Teachers of other courses are at varying stages of developing UbD curriculum guides. However, all curriculum guides do not have units and lessons aligned with measurable school-wide 21st century learning expectations so that students are not able to practice and master these. By completing the development of UbD curriculum guides and embedding measurable 21st century learning expectations in the curricula for all courses, the school will be able to ensure that curriculum delivered to students will enable all students to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, program of studies, curriculum documents, teachers, administrators)

Much of the existing curriculum follows a common format using the district's curriculum development model that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content and skills, and assessment practices; however, the school has not yet consistently implemented the 21st century learning expectations and use of school-wide and analytical and course-specific rubrics. The SHS Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations were recently completed in 2010, and some curriculum work was completed prior to the writing of this core values, beliefs, and learning expectations document. Thus, the written curriculum does not consistently reflect the school's 21st century learning expectations, instructional strategies, and the use of school-wide analytical and course specific rubrics. The current format of the written curriculum does not include suggested, varied instructional strategies. While teachers have had some professional development on instructional strategies, they have yet to include suggested strategies in the written curriculum. Without a complete curriculum that is written in a common format including uniform rubrics that measures all students' learning, the school will not be able to move forward to ensure that the learning goals, instructional practice, and assessment techniques meet the needs of all learners, and there will not be accurate data to use to inform curriculum development. (teachers, administrators, student work, self-study, curriculum documents)

The curriculum has inconsistent emphasis on 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. Some observations reveal an emphasis on depth over breadth of coverage and a focus on understanding, but this is not consistent in all classrooms. In some classrooms, students are engaged in activities designed to immerse them in the concepts being studied through inquiry-based instruction and projects. For example, students debate the future of Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant, test the law of supply and demand in economics, and they have real products in photography and art projects. While 79.6% of students agrees that their class content challenges them to think critically and solve problems, only a small number of samples of student work provides evidence of in-depth coverage of topics. There is little formal interdisciplinary work in the school curricula although there are examples of interdisciplinary projects at the classroom level. Only 32% of teachers believe that their curriculum emphasizes cross-disciplinary learning. In spite of this, 68.5 % of students believe that information from one class can be used in another. Teachers use their own time to plan collaboratively and to develop interdisciplinary projects or units that cross two or more disciplines recognizing the learning potential of this relationship. Cross-disciplinary curriculum work is found in student work in History where students also have assignments relating to English where students read and interpret historical fiction. Freshman English and Earth Science teachers combine 9th grade classes for a 2-week unit on alternative energy, where students gain an understanding of alternative energy, while at the same time developing research and presentation skills. Art, history, culture, and geography are a focus through French projects. Therefore, additional opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary work will provide students with more opportunities to make connections between and among multiple subject areas, but these opportunities must be completely documented in curricula to remain consistent in form and value. The SHS students have limited opportunities for authentic learning both in and out of school. Students can attend Barre Technical Center where they learn marketable workforce skills. In addition, there are alternative ways for students to earn credits through independent studies, community service learning and the SHS Training Interns and Partnering for Success (TIPS) programs. Students may also earn physical education credit by participating on an athletic team. Through all of these activities, SHS students engage in valuable opportunities to extend learning both in and beyond the walls of the high school. However, the Endicott Survey reveals that only 37.8% of students believes the school provides learning opportunities beyond the classroom and that 39.9% of parents agrees. There is a Barre Supervisory Union policy regarding the acceptable use of technology, and 80.7% of students and 72.8% of teachers believe they understand the ethical use of technology, but only 40.7% of parents believe their students understand such ethical use. There is only one computer applications course, and the business department staff has been reduced to 0.5 FTE from 2.0 FTE. This has limited the ability of students to

receive instruction in the use of computers and other 21st century skills and results in inconsistent student understanding of the expectations. When the curriculum has consistent emphasis on 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, student will have increased opportunities for learning. (students, teachers, Endicott Survey, SHS Targeted Plan)

There is inconsistent alignment between the written and taught curriculum. Although there is some alignment with the school's core values and beliefs, the stated expectations for student learning, the state curriculum framework, and the school's curriculum guides, the use made of curriculum documents to guide instruction and assessment varies among the departments. Just 35.8% of teachers felt the written and taught curriculums are significantly aligned. For the most part, the limited number of complete curriculum guides provides a framework for that content and are composed mainly in outline form. The guides do not contain effective descriptions of teaching strategies, and the documentation gives only a cursory treatment of assessment methods, providing only a list of the types of assessments such as homework, tests, quizzes, and investigations. With some of the teaching staff being less experienced and a large turnover in the past several years, they need access to a greater variety of suggested resources and strategies to ensure consistency of curriculum delivery within disciplines. Because of the insufficient development of the curriculum the school cannot ensure alignment between written and taught curriculum and the school cannot ensure students have the opportunity to practice and master 21st century skills. (self-study, curriculum guides, teachers, Endicott Survey)

There is acceptable curriculum coordination and vertical articulation between and among some academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in some content areas; however, not all curriculum is written and coordinated. There is a four-year curriculum review and development cycle within the Barre Supervisory Union. This cycle began in 2008-2009 and is projected to be complete in 2012 and provides a timeline for each curricular area to coordinate K-12 alignment, including coordination across the elementary/middle schools. This plan has resulted in curricular changes at all levels. While health, literacy, science, and the English language arts curriculum alignments were fully completed in 2009 and other areas are close to completion, teachers report that much of this work has been put on hold as the district shifts from the Vermont Standards to the Common Core Standards in 2014. SHS is moving toward curriculum alignment, but halting the curricular work at this point in the process decreases the vertical alignment needed for K-12 curricular coordination. Completed alignment

is essential to the coordinated curricular needs of the district and continuity of student learning, and if absent, will limit student opportunities to practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (curriculum documents, teachers, self-study, administrators, curriculum subcommittee)

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are reasonably sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. Board policy states that the recommended number of students is 20 per class although advanced placement, lower level classes, and language classes can range from 10-15 students. Teachers and students report classes with higher numbers of students. A reduction of 21.82 full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty members has taken place over the last three years. Some parents and teachers voice concerns regarding the impact on course offerings as well as class size. Only 40.7% of teachers feel the school has sufficient professional staff members to implement the curriculum. Supplies, materials, textbooks, and equipment available to staff members to implement the curriculum are generally adequate. While 81.1% of students and 51.6% of parents agree, only 48.1% of teachers agree. The early freezing of the budget has created difficulties. Teachers report that many students do not have the necessary materials, and they do not have the resources to provide them. Students report that teachers begin talking about the budget “freeze” in January, and they report that basic instructional supplies such as white board markers and ink cartridges for printing are depleted. While most math and science classes have textbooks, these are not available for other classes such as economics and personal finance. Only 43.2% of staff feels co-curricular programs are adequately funded while 44.4% of teachers and 50.3% of parents feel the facilities fully support the implementation of curriculum and co-curricular programs. Media resources have been deemed sufficient by only 44.0% of parents. There are 54 Kindles, many digital cameras, and digital voice recorders for school use. There is a digital classroom, which was installed in May 2007, and the library has a recently installed a stationary computer lab where computers are available for student use. Several newer stationary labs have been set up in room 208A, English rooms 209 and 210, and business room 122 while the math lab is older and used mostly for math software such as Geometer’s Sketchpad. There are mobile labs located in English, world languages, math, and science departments with equipment from 3 to 8 years old. Unbalanced class sizes, outdated science labs, occasional lack of supplies, and limited consistent technology training hinder full implementation of the curriculum and other learning opportunities. (self-study, curriculum documents, students, teachers, support staff, Endicott Survey)

The district provides the school’s professional staff with minimally sufficient personnel and financial

resources for curriculum work. There is insufficient time for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. Only 13.6% of teachers feel they have sufficient time to engage in formal curricular evaluation, review, and revision work while 72.8 % of teachers describe a need for more time to engage in curriculum evaluation, review, and revision. Teachers and administrators report the curriculum coordinator and curriculum committee have made gains, however, and the curriculum coordinator reviews New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) results. This information has been used to modify curriculum in some areas to improve student achievement. For example, a poetry unit was implemented in English 9 after review of the NECAP data showing lower achievement in this area. There is a formal 6-step process of curriculum review used by the curriculum committee. Teachers and administrators report the director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment is a driving force in recent curriculum development initiatives. While the efforts of the curriculum coordinator have been only somewhat effective in alignment of curriculum K-12, continued progress is limited by a lack of time for teachers to do the work at the department level. Although the school district has some funds to support requests for compensated curriculum work during the summer, there is no formal procedure or process to ensure that all curriculum development efforts are comprehensive and timely. The members of the professional staff have input into the development and revision of curriculum. Steered by the curriculum coordinator and the district's curriculum committee, teachers at department meetings collaborate to design and develop curriculum. It is not clear how teachers evaluate curriculum to identify a need, however, but SHS's in-service day program offers a combination of workshops and seminars both on and off-site. Professional development opportunities provided by the school district within the last three years have focused on several courses in best practices and teaching strategies rather than curriculum-related skills. Time is allotted on release days for teachers to select from a menu of professional development options, and departmental meetings are geared to curriculum work. Department heads play a significant role on the supervisory union's curriculum committee. Insufficient time available to all teachers and the wide range of professional development opportunities that are not focused on curriculum limit the ability of staff members to collaboratively develop, evaluate, and revise the curriculum. (teacher, self-study, administrators, documents, curriculum subcommittee)

Commendations

1. The 4-year plan for curriculum development and alignment
2. The completed K-12 curriculum in health, English language arts, and science
3. The curriculum alignment to state standards and ongoing work related to the Common Core
4. The emerging emphasis on depth of understanding and applications of knowledge
5. The acquisition of Promethean and SMARTBoards to help implement the curriculum
6. The district plan for vertical articulation of curriculum to be completed by 2012

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a plan to ensure the curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. Review and revise the common curriculum format to include the school's 21st century learning expectations, instructional strategies, and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic rubrics
3. Develop and implement a plan to ensure that all curriculum is written in the common format and emphasizes inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross disciplinary learning, and informed and ethical use of technology
4. Provide examples from a variety of areas which demonstrate the alignment between the written and taught curriculum
5. Provide evidence of the completion of the vertical alignment of the curriculum within the school as well as with sending schools in the district
6. Describe the school's plan to ensure the school's professional staff has sufficient formal opportunities to meet and collaborate for the ongoing evaluation, development, and revision of curriculum using assessment results and current research

Standards for Accreditation and Learning Standards

3 Instruction

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

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

CONCLUSIONS

Teachers do not examine their instructional practices for consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. There are 21st century learning expectations, but the majority of teachers do not incorporate them into their instructional practice. Only some school-wide expectations are being incorporated into instruction; these include effective communication in multiple literacies, ethical use of technology, student development of leadership, collaboration, and empathy, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation. Teachers at SHS participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), using a tuning protocol to review student work with the intent of improving instruction. SHS administrators provide professional development opportunities to help teachers improve instructional practices. Many faculty members and administrators have been enrolled in the following courses: Reading and Writing Strategies in the Content Areas, The Skillful Teacher, and Differentiated Instruction. With support for professional development initiatives and the development and consistent implementation of school-wide rubrics, instructional practices can be continuously examined for consistency with the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, self-study, instructional leaders, administrators)

SHS teachers' instructional practices inconsistently support the achievement of the school's 21st Century learning expectations when applied through personalization of 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; and integrating technology. Some members of the SHS faculty deliver personalized instruction using varied strategies. Teachers in math, science, social studies, and English present the content of their courses using instructional techniques based on Differentiated Instruction (DI). These instructional techniques involve performance tasks, working at varied paces, and completing a variety of assessments. On the Endicott Survey, 65.4% of SHS teachers notes that they personalize instruction for students; however, only 39.4% of SHS students and 37.7% of SHS parents acknowledge this personalized instruction. Teachers at SHS informally connect the content of their classes to other disciplines, but there is no formal mechanism to ensure that this happens for every student. There is cross-disciplinary work in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) with the inclusion of physical education skills. Science classes share some common content and skills with various math classes. English and history classes and art and music classes include cross-disciplinary learning. Students in sociology classes work with statistics and components of government

while students in world languages classes explore elements of geography. However, documented interdisciplinary units implemented across the curriculum would enhance the learning process for all students. In some curriculum areas, teachers at SHS engage students as active and self-directed learners. Students engaged in research, writing, and artistic activities are allowed to create their own projects, as noted by 64.2% of students surveyed. Teachers at SHS encourage students to be self-directed through managing and monitoring their work time and products, by requiring students to track their use of time and goals, and by requiring reflective feedback. However, much student reflection is done informally and without the use of school-wide analytical rubrics and there exist many examples of students as passive learners in teacher-centered classrooms where there is often much less full student engagement. But, there are also many examples of instructional practices at SHS that emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills and require students to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, and these practices should become consistent throughout the entire school at all levels. In some math classes, students find the linear and angular velocities of a rotating object, and in social studies classes, students find the optimal expenditure for a community land development project. Students in a world language course role-play family celebrations and create and “work” in mock restaurants. Sociology students investigate a culture and then share with peers what makes that culture unique. SHS students apply skills to authentic tasks by analyzing current topics in the world, such as the closing of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant, to their lives as students in Barre, Vermont. By continuing to focus on developing these skills across and within each curricular area, all students will be able to achieve at a higher level. In some areas of instruction at SHS, students are engaged in reflection and self-assessment of their work, but this is not uniform. In some classes, students use a variety of self-assessment tools to engage in reflection as they evaluate their work habits, knowledge, skills, and performance, and students in some English classes use rubrics to evaluate their writing processes and their overall behavior in class. Students in some social studies classes incorporate reflective writing about their learning while those in some math classes reflect on their learning challenges; however, much of this student reflection is done informally without the use of school-wide analytical rubrics. Many teachers are integrating technology as an emerging part of their instructional practices. PowerPoint is common for presenting material in social studies and world language classes. Students in math classes use technology such as Geometer’s Sketchpad and graphing calculators. SMARTBoards and PrometheanBoards are enabling students to access material differently. Some teachers integrate technology within their classes using websites for investigations, readings and discussions. Most teachers need some technical support and training in the use of this technology. Through consistent and sustained training and support in personalization of 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; and integrating technology, SHS teachers will be able to effectively provide instructional practices which support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, self-study, Endicott Survey, classroom visits, students, student work)

Many of the teachers at SHS informally adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment during instructional time and purposefully organizing group-learning activities. Furthermore, some teachers strategically differentiate and employ instructional strategies to specifically help individuals learn concepts and skills, while additional support is available within the regular classroom for English language learners (ELL) and those students with an individualized educational plan (IEP). Students report that teachers address their individual specific needs, adjusting teaching and review of material based on individual understanding. Teachers often solicit on-going feedback from students using exit slips, oral debriefing, journal writing, anonymous surveys, dip sticks, and review games to meter student understanding of the material being taught. Students in science classes experience differentiation through project choice with respect to multiple intelligences, or assignments may be based on interest and ability. Students in math, English, and social studies classes form mixed ability groupings to enhance learning. Students in social studies classes receive differentiation through projects, debates, panel presentations, and simulations where students are assigned roles corresponding with their interests and strengths. SHS provides additional support and alternative strategies through programs available outside of the regular classroom. The school encourages sheltered instruction where necessary. Classroom teachers work with special education teachers to modify instruction to accommodate students with IEPs. Some classes, such as Math for Living, Math for Living 2, and English 103, regularly include paraprofessionals in addition to the teacher to provide additional support. By creating a more formal and consistent protocol for adjusting instructional practices, teachers will better meet the learning needs of their students and improve student engagement with the material. (teachers, self-study, classroom visits, students, special education personnel, support staff)

Many teachers individually, and some teachers collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments such as pre-quizzes, self-directed assessment strategies, practice exercises, scientific labs, free-write sessions, and discovery-based demonstrations provide teachers with rich data to alter their

instructional strategies in a data-driven, reflective manner. Although individual teachers and departments have used some PLC time to examine student work, school-wide time is not dedicated to this purpose and there is no formal protocol for this practice. Teachers do use feedback from a variety of sources including students' work self-evaluations in many classes that teachers may use to improve instruction. Parents (32.5%) report that on occasion, teachers ask for feedback concerning instructional practices. The administration has implemented a new structure for teacher evaluation that includes "walk-throughs" of classrooms so that teachers can receive immediate administrative feedback. Many teachers complete studies and coursework focused on current research. The SHS instructional focuses include *The Skillful Teacher* by Saphier and Gower, *The Strategic Teacher* by Silver and Strong, *Habits of Mind* by Costa and Kallick, *Classroom Instruction that Works* by Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock, *Understanding by Design* by Wiggins and McTighe, *Results Now* by Schmoker, *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and UbD* by Tomlinson and McTighe, and *Developing More Curious Minds* by Barell. Instructional practices will improve as the school allots formal time for professional development and teacher discussion focused on student work, teacher collaboration, and examination of current best practices. (teachers, self-study, classroom visits, students, special education personnel)

As adult learners and reflective practitioners, teachers maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Teachers acquire knowledge and remain current about instructional practices through their individual professional development plan (IPDP), as required by the State of Vermont. Three of the required credits must be specific to the content area while the remaining six must be pedagogically-based and related to professional goals. Many teachers engage in a variety of programs, course work, and workshops to maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Some examples include: the AP Institute, professional development in the Skillful Teacher, Reading and Writing in the Content Areas, the US Army Ethics Course, the US Army Safety Course, Critical Friends Groups activities, the Women's Rights Movement, and conferences in ELL, Calculus, Teaching American History, VT Business Teachers' Conference Cross Cultural Communication, and TI Technology. Through focused time on professional development and best practices with added dedicated time for teacher reflection on content-specific pedagogy, student learning will improve. (teachers, self-study, administrators)

Commendations

1. The school focus on providing professional development opportunities in instructional best practices for all teachers
2. The personalization of instruction by teachers
3. The emerging integration of technology into classrooms
4. The emphasis by some teachers on inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills
5. The creation of on-campus continued education opportunities by the administration
6. The financial support of teachers to participate in professional development through course reimbursement

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a protocol to ensure that all instructional practices are consistent with the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. Engage faculty members in professional development related to consistent use of technology in teaching and learning
3. Develop and implement a plan to ensure students are engaged in the use of higher order thinking skills in all courses
4. Provide teachers with formal opportunities for collaboration about their instructional strategies for the purpose of improving student learning
5. Use student work and feedback from students, parents, colleagues and supervisors to improve instructional practices.
6. Develop and implement a plan to ensure that professional development opportunities are utilized by all teachers and are linked to 21st century learning expectations

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

Spaulding High School (SHS) is in the process of developing school-wide analytic rubrics that are based on a newly adopted set of learning expectations, and the school does not currently employ a formal process that will assess individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Completing and implementing this rubrics system and the assessment process has been identified as a need in its two-year plan for targeted areas, with revision included as one of the five-year targets. As written, the learning expectations and 21st century learning expectations are not all currently measurable. In 2010-2011, sample rubrics were presented at a faculty meeting, they were placed on the Teacher Tide link, and they were given out for teachers to pilot across the curriculum. Administrators encouraged teachers to use these rubrics and to give their input to help guide the school's final rubric development. These rubrics cover persuasive writing, oral presentation, narrative account, report writing, reflective writing, narrative procedure, participation in class, and active reading. The English and social studies departments whose content and teaching strategies suit many of these aspects of learning have been implementing some of these rubrics more frequently than other departments. There has currently been insufficient time devoted to the development, implementation, and revision of school-wide analytic rubrics, but there is a rubric team in place to continue this work and establish formal procedures and processes. The consistent use of school-wide analytic rubrics that accurately define the criteria for success for the 21st century learning expectations will give all students and teachers the focus they need to guide learning and instruction. (Core Values statement, teachers, documents, self-study)

There is no systemic process for the school's professional staff to communicate progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations, either for individual student progress to students and their families or as a school to the school community. Information about individual student progress in achieving course expectations is mailed mid-quarter in a traditional, grade-based progress report and at the end of the each quarter in a grade-based report card. A few teachers are including in the progress report a comment on a participation in class assessment using a piloted rubric that connects with the 21st century learning expectations. Administrators report to the school board the number of Ds and Fs assigned during a quarter, and the administration presents a report to the school board that contains the school NECAP assessment results with strategies for improving student performance. Some teachers and departments have begun to embed the SHS 21st century learning expectations into the curriculum, although lack of time to complete this work formally is a source of teacher concern. The school's

redesign of reports on individual and school progress will support the needed shift from content grading to standards-based achievement assessment. When the school develops and implements a process to inform students and the community of individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, they will realize greater focus on the school's core values and improved student learning. (self-study, documents, parents, teachers, administrators)

Some professional staff members collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. However, there are insufficient data sources, too few teachers directly involved, and insufficient formal collaboration. The SHS NECAP results are shared with and utilized by faculty members of the three tested disciplines, the English, math, and science departments. The leadership team comprised of the department chairs, school administrators, and a variety of other school leaders (maintenance director, athletic director, and head of guidance), look at the negatives and positives to determine potential areas of improvement. The curriculum coordinator meets with the English, math, and science department members to review the publicly released items as well as the overall results. These discussions affect some instructional practices in these specific curriculum areas as when ninth and tenth grade teachers include the released items into their curriculum and monitor results to determine improvements. In November 2010, the 9th grade PLC team discussed student failures. They looked at data and concluded that homework policies should change. In their PLC teams, teachers look at course specific, student work and provide each other with suggestions that may improve instruction and student achievement. Increasing the frequency and involving all stakeholders, enhancing the structure or providing a protocol, and improving the implementation of data-driven dialogue about student work and assessments will continue to improve curriculum and inform best practices. (self-study, documents, assessment of and for student learning subcommittee, panel presentation)

Although many teachers regularly provide their students with unit-specific learning goals to be assessed, the school has not embedded the applicable 21st century learning expectations into daily instruction. At the beginning of each unit, many teachers identify for their students the unit-specific learning goals, essential questions, and assessment tools that will be used. Some further break down the unit goals into bi-monthly, weekly, and in a few cases, daily learning goals. Methods of sharing these expectations include course websites, student calendars, and handouts. Some teachers are using strategies learned in professional development in "Understanding by Design" (UbD) and The Skillful Teacher and are developing their course curriculum and lesson designs with more clarity of learning expectations in their course-specific standards. Continuously communicating to students the clear learning goals as defined

in the 21st century learning expectations through a variety of means gives the students a target that focuses their efforts and enhances their understanding; This clarity is needed in both course-specific and school-wide learning expectations to promote success for all students. (faculty survey, self-study, teachers, parents)

Because there is no adopted, clear set of school-wide analytic rubrics, SHS teachers cannot share these learning criteria prior to summative assessments. However, many faculty members are utilizing course-specific rubrics that are not fully linked to school-wide learning expectations and that communicate the criteria for success prior to summative assessment. As the rubrics remain a work in progress, teachers cannot incorporate the school-wide rubrics to help guide student achievement of the school's learning expectations although 71% of the teachers indicates they frequently use rubrics to identify and describe the unit-specific learning goals. Students describe consistent use of rubrics by most teachers, and they say they are given the expectations for their learning before the assessment. Several teachers involve students in the development of the rubric as well. The communication of and consistent use of both school-wide and course-specific rubrics promotes student achievement by creating a clear target for student learning and by providing clear reasons for success with guidance for improvement. (self-study, observation, students, Endicott survey)

In many units of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Depending on the individual teacher, there is a different schedule of assessment. While a few teachers report that they do not employ a range of formative and summative assessments or do so only monthly (20%), most teachers assess weekly or daily (80%). Specific strategies for both formative and summative assessment are diverse, including quizzes, writing assignments, journal responses, daily entrance questions, exit cards, debates, projects, trials, and unit tests. There is no common, faculty-wide agreement regarding the meaning, purpose, and use of formative assessment or agreement about expected assessment practices. A notable exception to this, however, is the formative assessment process developed and consistently followed in the English department to support improved writing across the various genres. Teachers report that about 50% of school faculty members has received The Skillful Teacher training, providing a strong foundation for aligning assessment practices. Assessment practices and professional development that support improved student learning combined with a process to define school-wide expectations regarding the use of formative and summative assessment would ensure greater equity for student learning. (Endicott survey, self-study, teachers, students, parents, classroom observations)

Teachers at SHS do not collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. There has been insufficient dedication of time for all teachers to collaborate formally on the specific topic of assessment creation, analysis and revision. As a result, across the curriculum, there are few common assessments used, and formative and summative assessments are not used to equitably measure student performance. Teachers have spent some time learning about formative and summative assessment through The Skillful Teacher, but additional professional development is necessary. A few departments have focused some time on the notion of formative and summative assessment, but there is limited evidence that formative assessments are used to drive instructional change. In the math department, most of the final assessments are common, and the three World History teachers have created a common assessment for the Rome unit as well. Dedicated, scheduled time for all teachers to collaborate on assessment practices and results for course-specific and school-wide learning expectations will benefit the instruction and learning that takes place for all students in all disciplines. (self-study, assessment of and for learning subcommittee, student work, documents)

Some teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure that students revise and improve their work. Most teachers (88%) reports that they do this. Training in The Skillful Teacher has supported school faculty members in embedding frequent assessments into the learning experience. However, evidence that this practice of ensuring that students revise and improve their work is not well documented. A few classes have built peer review into the writing process, and some teachers provide students with the opportunity to revise and resubmit work if they want to improve their grade. The English department has developed a common writing/revising process used across grades and courses to provide structured feedback and expectations for improvement. It appears to be a common practice to use frequent assessments to communicate the student's level of achievement, rather than providing feedback for the purpose of student revision and improved work. School-wide agreement on the use of feedback to ensure revision and improvement of student work would support a shift in student focus from getting a grade to becoming proficient in learning. (Endicott survey, self-study, teachers, parents, students, student work)

Teachers do not consistently use formative assessment to adapt their instruction, but they do use formative assessment to inform them how students are responding to their instruction. Most teachers are using some variation of formative assessment that gives them the information they can use to direct the

instruction in their courses, and 95% of SHS teachers claims they use formative assessments to adapt their instruction. Teachers are not using formative assessments to help drive school-wide change in instructional strategies that address whole-school student achievement in learning expectations, however. Teachers describe formative assessments as activities they do throughout the course of study to see whether the student “got it”. Teachers say that formative assessments also help them develop more effective teaching strategies. Teachers are using daily warm-up activities and questions, exit cards, quizzes, homework, observation, and questioning to determine the level of understanding. In some classes, students may make corrections, retake quizzes, redo projects, and retake tests until they show an acceptable level of understanding. In some such cases, students are expected to get extra help before resubmitting any work. What is not clear is how formative assessments are changing instructional strategies rather than just giving students more time to learn on their own. The English department’s writing process is a clear example of using formative assessments to help provide the student with information to direct their learning with effective feedback. When used appropriately and effectively, formative assessments are powerful strategies that are teacher-generated but student-driven in use. When the information obtained through formative assessment drives instruction it fosters learning for all students in all classes across all disciplines. (self-study, Endicott survey, students, assessment of and for learning subcommittee, student work)

Although teachers and administrators individually and collaboratively examine a range of assessments of student learning, this is not a consistent school-wide practice, nor is the information fully used for revising curriculum and improving instruction. The SHS Freshman Academy was developed in 2006 in response to data on student retention and identification of lagging skills that were hindering student achievement. Support groups such as the educational support team (EST) and special education department’s IEP teams review and respond to data, especially regarding individual student progress, and they adjust curriculum and instruction to better support learning. NECAP data is analyzed and used to revise curriculum, and the National Honor Society survey of recent graduates provides rich and important information. The formation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) was intended to provide an opportunity for grade level, interdisciplinary collaboration, but these groups have served primarily as a critical friends group, with members taking turns bringing a lesson plan, challenge, or student work to share with the group in order to receive feedback. Teachers have expressed concern that these meetings often do not address the need to align curriculum, develop common assessments, and embed the newly adopted 21st century student learning expectations in instruction. While some data is being used, such practices are not widespread or consistent nor do they inform revised curriculum or

improve instruction. Some teachers provide students with an end-of-course survey although there is no significant use of those surveys documented, neither what the teacher learned about the effectiveness of their instruction nor how the curriculum was revised in response to the results. In the Endicott Survey of school faculty members, 64% of teachers says that they examine common course and common grade level assessments. Teacher conversations note, however, that there is not sufficient time dedicated to collaborate with colleagues systematically. Research indicates that when teachers regularly collaborate around student work, school-wide learning expectations, common and standardized assessments, data from both sending and receiving schools, and survey data from current and former students, the greatest impact is made on student achievement. (Endicott survey, self-study, teachers, administrators)

Grading and reporting practices are not regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. This year alone, there has been a focus on homework policy that has generated a proposed change to bring about more consistency around practice, but the plan does not make connections with the newly adopted core values and beliefs about learning. Over the years, the school board members have brought up concerns about the use of extra credit. They have raised questions about how it is used and whether it may be over-used as a way to compensate for a lack achieving core knowledge. In addition, grading practices within the same department are often different as teachers independently use a variety of indicators to determine a student's performance level in a variety of ways. Some teachers count participation, some do not; some grade homework, others do not; and there is no common understanding or use of formative assessment. Should teachers issue grades on formative assessment or simply give effective feedback to the student? There is little consensus on how a grade is derived and what that grade actually means. PowerSchool is currently being used to report student grades that are primarily based on individual course expectations. Grades have little to no connection with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, and there is no consistent teacher format or practice for grading although the PLCs would be an effective way to create consistency. A calibrated grading policy aligned with the school's core values and beliefs and consistent teaching and assessment practices will help ensure equity in learning for all students while also providing more accurate information about student performance levels in all classes and courses. (self-study, school board, assessment of and for learning subcommittee, students, principal)

Commendations

1. The committee working on school-wide rubrics creates a viable structure for continuous reflection, revision, and development of school-wide learning
2. The inclusion of students by some teachers in developing appropriate rubrics for assessment
3. The use of PowerSchool to provide ongoing, timely reporting of student performance
4. The utilization of standardized test results to improve curriculum in some curricular areas
5. Professional development in UbD and The Skillful Teacher that supports consistent assessment practices
6. The variety of means and assessments used by teachers to communicate course learning objectives and to provide road maps for student learning
7. The formative assessment opportunities provided by some teachers for a student to demonstrate his/her improved work and understanding

Recommendations

1. Review and revise the school's 21st century student learning expectations to ensure they are measurable
2. Implement consistent use of school-wide analytic rubrics across all disciplines
3. Develop and implement a formal process based on the use of school-wide rubrics to assess both whole school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
4. Develop and implement a process to communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's learning expectations to students and their families, and the school's progress to the school community.
5. Provide formal opportunities for teachers to collaborate to develop common assessments based on course-specific outcomes
6. Adopt or create a protocol for teachers to use in PLCs to analyze assessment results to guide curriculum changes, use of best practices, and student interventions
7. Provide all teachers with professional development on effective use of formative assessment data to differentiate instruction
8. Across disciplines and within departments, calibrate grading policies and procedures according to the school's core values and beliefs

SUPPORT STANDARDS

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

SUPPORT STANDARDS

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

The members of the Spaulding High School (SHS) community consciously and continuously build a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. Students can access a variety of courses ranging from basic levels to Advanced Placement and dual registration with local colleges as well. The school has a student newspaper and a quarterly parent newsletter to inform constituents, to recognize student and teacher achievements, and to publicize school events. There are many clubs with different interests that meet after school and during the TA time block, and there are many athletic teams. There is a student-led assembly program that highlights student and faculty accomplishments. The newspaper and this assembly program are particular sources of pride for the school. Student work is exhibited throughout the building. The positive culture in the school provides a great capacity for initiating and supporting effective changes within the school. However, a safety concern was noted with the management of the current teacher advisory (TA) time that must be addressed because there is no established protocol by which the entire student body is accounted for during that time. When a school has a positive and supportive culture, student achievement is enhanced. (observations, program of studies, students, teachers, administrators)

This school is not equitable and inclusive in that there are no heterogeneous core curricular courses offered where, over the course of four years of high school, all students are certain to be enrolled in some heterogeneous classes. Students are placed in the course levels according to their ability as established in previous grades and testing and through teacher recommendation, however, students and families are allowed to challenge themselves academically by choice. Spaulding has a variety of English language learner (ELL) supports and interventions. Placement test scores initially group students in grade 9 Math and English courses, and after that the groups are further refined based upon teacher recommendation. It is fairly common in core courses to use external testing results to group by ability level and to refine this further by teacher recommendation. Courses that are not grouped by ability level include physical education, health and wellness, technical education, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), music and visual arts, history electives, and foreign languages. Of these, only physical education, health/wellness, and fine arts are required for graduation. Thus, SHS does not offer all students equal access to all curriculum, limiting the opportunity of some students to meet the school's 21st century learning expectations. (program of studies, central office administrators, self-study, teachers)

There is no formal, on-going 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. The absence of such a formal program is reported in the self-study as an area of need. Both students and teachers indicate that they believe every student would feel more comfortable and benefit from an on-going relationship with an adult in the building. Despite the lack of a formal program, 76% of students reports feeling safe at school, so that almost one quarter of the students does not agree or feels some amount of discomfort. The current teacher advisory period practices are not creating a meaningful interaction between staff members and all students: Rather the period at the start of the day has been interpreted as a study hall, private social time, or opportunity to remain at home, resulting in a growing number of students not even bothering to come to school for teacher advisory time. In the past, the school had a better advisory program that many believe was made less effective through changes, and most staff members and students report that the advisory used to be more effective. Thus, the lack of a formal, accountable advisory program is currently failing to address student needs and assist to implement the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teachers, facility tour, Endicott Survey, self-study, students, main office staff, school board members)

The principal and professional staff are fairly focused on improving student learning through professional discourse, the use of outside resources, dedicated formal time for professional development, and improved curriculum, instruction and assessment. SHS is beginning to implement Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that are charged with providing teachers with a place and time for meeting to collaborate and to engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning. The intended purpose of PLCs is to provide a systematic approach to improvement of student performance with a secondary purpose of encouraging collaboration between disciplines. These goals must be more clearly communicated to the teachers by the administration, and a formal protocol must be introduced to guide and inform professional management of time and opportunity, so that PLCs can function in the intended manner. While SHS is currently following a professional development plan that has offered a number of courses such as Research for Better Teaching and Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum either during the school year or over the summer, not all faculty members have participated in these offerings or are working to improve curriculum and instruction. SHS does access some resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices including: three graduate level courses in curriculum development, Skillful Teacher training, and Critical Friends training. Teachers may access other graduate coursework with district

funding provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Current in-house offerings allow faculty members to access professional development both on and off site. These resources are helping to improve curriculum and instruction at SHS, but all faculty members must access these opportunities to improve teaching and learning and implementation of 21st century goals. SHS dedicates formal time to implement professional development, but this time is not well-structured. The PLCs provide a consistent time for professional development, but the groups do not have clear leadership to be productive. There is ample professional development at SHS, and it is equitable and available throughout all program areas and is focused on improving pedagogy. More leadership in the direction and use of these times is needed to achieve a professional focus on meeting 21st century learning expectations. Most SHS teachers apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained through professional development to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Teachers use teacher-designed rubrics, expectations posted on blackboards, and common cognitive word maps for questioning, all of which are widely accepted as best practice, but there are classes using assessments that have no connection to standards. Ensuring that all staff have access to and participate in quality professional development that is focused on professional discourse, uses outside resources and dedicates formal time to improved curriculum, instruction and assessment will have a positive impact on the school's professional culture. (observations, teachers, administrators, parents, central office personnel, self-study)

School leaders do not consistently and systematically use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. Current evaluation for first-year teachers consists of two observations over the year and is completed in a timely fashion. There is a template evaluation sheet for this process. Some teachers have been placed on improvement plans and are observed more regularly. Other teachers are observed using walkthroughs that are partially linked to the Danielson model, but some faculty members report they have not been observed in several years. Thus, there is no formal school-wide research-based assessment of all faculty and staff members. Support staff members also report the absence of evaluation, and some claim not to know the name of their supervisor. This absence of a consistent and constructive evaluation system to provide faculty and staff members and administrators with information about teacher performance does not provide a clear focus on improving teaching and learning and addressing 21st century goals. (evaluation documents, administrators, teachers, support staff, self-study)

The school's schedule (organization of time) partially supports research-based instruction, professional

collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. Teachers meet each Tuesday afternoon for various reasons: PLCs and department and full faculty meetings. There are graduate courses and seminar offerings available throughout the year or on professional development days. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis for college coursework and workshops. Teachers feel they do not have adequate time for interdisciplinary planning and curriculum development. One department uses lunchtime for touching base among department members while another department meets one afternoon weekly to work on departmental needs. Both of these examples show teacher desire for more time for meaningful contact with their colleagues. It is difficult to arrange common planning time for all teachers, but this should be a consideration for future scheduling decisions. The current schedule does not allow sufficient time for professional collaboration to meet the learning needs of all students. By maximizing organization and time, teachers will be able to collaborate on research-based instruction to ensure that students achieve 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teachers, administrators, master schedule and school calendar documents)

Student load and class size do not always enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students, as the balancing of classes has presented some challenges due to shifts in overall student enrollment. Recent policy changes at the school board level regarding class size and staffing have been necessitated by changes in enrollment as the school has lost close to 22 teachers over a 4 year period of time. Furthermore, there are issues with balance since class sizes are inconsistent from course to course and from section to section. For example, half-way through a year, two AP English classes were combined into one section because of perceived low enrollment. This necessitated students to shift their schedules and drop other classes in order to remain in that high level class. There are observed large variations in class section sizes, with one section possibly over 20 and another section under 10. This usually happens when another desirable or necessary class conflicts with one of the sections. Only five classes have exceeded the 25-student maximum while thirty-four (34) core classes have between the 20-student recommended size and the maximum of 25. The current master schedule and course selection system creates inequity in class size and diminishes the ability of teachers to meet the individual learning needs of students. (teachers, self-study, support staff, observations)

The principal sometimes works with other building leaders to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The assistant principals are almost exclusively responsible for both daily discipline and curriculum work to implement school-wide initiatives. Only fifty-seven percent of students feels that the principal clearly communicates what he

wants the school to accomplish for all of the students, and fifty-eight percent of staff members feels the principal and other school-based administrators provide instructional leadership that is consistent with the school's core values and beliefs and learning expectations. The hierarchy diagram of the SHS Leadership Team shows the principal as one member of a thirteen-person leadership team including the assistant principals, guidance director, director of special education, six department heads and two grade-level facilitators. However, faculty members do not feel they have meaningful input into or clear direction from the leadership team. By working together, the SHS principal and other school leaders can progress to a coherent application of the school's identified core values and beliefs about learning to effectively implement its 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, administrators, teachers, central office personnel, Endicott Survey, leadership documents)

Teachers, students, and parents are not involved in meaningful, defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Students, parents, and teachers are asked for input into various decisions, but there is no clearly understood systematic method of active participation. Examples of faculty input include the hiring of an athletic administrator, scheduling electives, and a recent safety survey. However, more than fifty percent of students, faculty members, and parents feels they have no meaningful input into decisions. Parents report that there is no clear process for them to implement change or address concerns with administrators. Students feel the transition from sending schools to SHS is quite smooth as all counselors meet with incoming 8th graders and their parents. However, some parents did not think that the system of transitioning to SHS was adequate as some students coming from small schools to a much larger school admitted to their parents that they were overwhelmed. Some parents feel the use of PowerSchool has isolated parents from teacher contact as teachers are less likely to directly contact student homes since parents and students can see the grades themselves. However, other parents value the ability to check in on student progress consistently and privately. As a result of various details of a perceived lack of protocol to communicate and provide direct input, faculty members, parents, and students feel disenfranchised with school decision-making affecting school change. When teachers, students, and parents are meaningfully engaged through defined roles in decision-making, the school will realize greater responsibility and ownership. (students, parents, teachers, Endicott Survey, school support staff)

There is a core of teachers who exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase student engagement in learning. However, a whole system approach to initiatives would create a greater and synergistic sense of ownership, collaboration, and adherence to a common

vision. A number of teachers leads and takes initiative within their programs, emphasizing the strong contributions they are making in the culture at SHS. Programs such as the Phoenix program, JROTC, and the Spaulding Health Advisory Committee positively impact the SHS community and engage students in learning both in and out of the classroom. There are many positive initiatives taking place within the walls of SHS, but unless the administrative team empowers the entire faculty to take risks in developing new programs, activities, and initiatives, the committed core of active teachers and their effective practices will diminish. (teachers, self-study, students)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are struggling to be collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Only twenty-eight percent of the staff feels there is collaboration between the school board, superintendent, and principal. The SHS self-study reports that there are examples of where it appears the school board takes command, making limited use of administrative recommendations of research and best practice; This includes decisions that have been made about the value of a Teacher Advisory period or shifting classes mid-way through a school year. Class size and teacher schedules, topics usually reserved to building management, have come under close scrutiny by the school board and result in a sense that the school board maintains tight control over Spaulding High School. This belief was confirmed through interviews with teachers, support staff members, and central office personnel. When the system can achieve true collaboration between the school board, superintendent, and principal, SHS will be able to more consistently address and meet its identified 21st century learning expectations. (Endicott Survey, self-study, teachers, support staff, central office personnel, school board members)

The school board and superintendent have not consistently provided the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school, and there is an apparent tension between the three entities. The school board is increasingly involved in building management decisions such as class offerings, class sizes, and the scheduling of classes, even making changes to the high school schedule in mid-semester. Decisions for altering job responsibilities and duties and other decisions that affect school-wide initiatives have been made without following established protocols for affecting change. The school board eliminated additional preparation time provided for department chairs to work on budgeting and teacher evaluation. This loss of time for additional duties has created a situation where faculty members are reluctant to take on the responsibility, leaving some departments with high turnover in the leadership positions and has resulted in a lack of sustained focus of direction for the departments and school. The decision that the two assistant principals have to split duties between day-to-day

discipline and curriculum oversight and teacher evaluation was made without following the established protocol for change, and has caused staff at the high school to question and ponder the rationale behind the changes. The self-study reports that the superintendent did not respond to requests for information about school board policies related to “collaboration” and authority. The relationship between the school board, central office and school building administration has contributed to a lowered morale of the faculty, staff members and administrators, which is hindering the achievement of 21st century expectations. (school support staff, administrators, teachers, self-study, school board members, central office staff, documents)

Commendations

1. The commitment of faculty and staff members to students and school
2. The various student-led and organized assemblies and initiatives
3. The professional development offerings that support improvement in student learning
4. The faculty and staff members’ willingness to work on improving instruction and curriculum

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a plan to ensure equitable, inclusive grouping that 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)
2. Provide a system of student attendance accountability during the teacher advisory period
3. Revise and implement the teacher advisory program so 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. Provide the principal sufficient decision making authority to carry out the mission and vision of the school
5. Adhere to clear and formal roles and job descriptions for the principal and assistant principals
6. Create and implement a formal, research-based evaluation program for faculty and staff
7. Align professional development with 21st century expectations for student learning, the school’s core beliefs and values, the district’s guiding principles, and the needs of individual teachers
8. Improve communication of purpose and goals to staff members by the administration
9. Create scheduling equity in class sizes

SUPPORT STANDARDS

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

Spaulding High School (SHS) has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at risk students, that support each student's achievement; however, SHS itself lacks school-wide measurable 21st century learning expectations. The school has many and varied programs for all students, including at risk students. For example, SHS has implemented a homework club, math tutorial, academic mentoring program, and the Phoenix program, all of which focus on students who are at risk for dropping out of school. These services are designed to meet the needs of students stressed by challenge, grade, and specific situations. Support service personnel ensure these services are implemented in a timely and coordinated manner through a structured procedure used by the administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers. Parent involvement is encouraged and included in this procedure whenever possible. Support service personnel initiate the process, participate in its implementation, and evaluate the effectiveness of these intervention strategies. Defining levels of achievement and establishing post secondary goals that are aligned with measurable 21st century learning expectations will improve the support that is provided to all students, including identified and at-risk students. (self-study, parent and student handbook, students, administrators, guidance counselor, special education personnel, parents, nurse, facility tour)

SHS provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services: However, this information is often provided through a technology that may not be available to all families, especially those most at-risk. The school provides students and families with documentation, community outreach, transition support, activities and information about the services and opportunities available to all students through its website. Survey documentation shows a disparity in the perception of the effectiveness of the communication system in place: only 42% of parents as compared to 70% of staff members believes the school provides information to families. The school examines assessments, feedback, grade reports, technology interactions, and surveys with teachers, parents, and students. The system in place provides current information and data as it is updated in real time and is available to those with the technology to access it. SHS provides information to all technology-connected families, but until other means are utilized some of the families most in need may not be aware of necessary information and this would hinder achievement of 21st century learning expectations. (Endicott Survey, self-study, parent and student handbook, teachers, students, guidance counselors, nurse, parents, observations, facility tour)

Many support services staff members at SHS use technology to deliver a range of coordinated services for each student: However, there is concern about the effectiveness of this practice because of the lack of technology access by many local families and the lack of direct communication that arises as a result. The school utilizes PowerSchool, Naviance, SpedDoc, and SNAP programs among others, to address the needs of all students. All staff members have access to some of these programs to gain knowledge of students. When technology is available, parents and students have access to some of these programs to review grades, attendance, and establish individual goals. Support services staff members utilize these programs to review information about individual students, make judgments, and provide interventions as necessary through services, support, and follow-up meetings. It is a common practice that staff members communicate with each other through email. The staff is also able to view student and parent access to these programs for monitoring of interactions. Because SHS commonly uses technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student, staff members, students, and parents are able to monitor the progress of each student and adjust to the needs of the individual student. (self-study, websites, parent and student handbook, teachers, students, parents, administrators, guidance counselors, nurse, observations, facility tour)

The SHS school counseling services have an adequate number of certified/license personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental program; meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling and engage in individual and group meetings with students; deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and use on-going, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student's achievement. The developmental guidance program is organized by grade level and by time of the year. It provides a check-list to guide students to achieve their individual goals. The staff ratio exceeds the NEASC guidelines for counselors per student (at approximately 1:200). The staff also implements a technology-based program (Naviance) that is aligned with the developmental program in place. This program focuses on college-planning and post secondary goals. Guidance counselors provide individual and group meetings with their caseload of students throughout the school year. The written, developmental program states that each student meets with the guidance counselor quarterly although there is no established procedure to ensure that every student attends meetings with guidance counselors. Endicott Survey data shows that only thirty-two percent of the students says they meet with their school counselor regularly. Thirty-nine percent of parents believes that their son/daughter meets regularly with school counseling personnel. In contrast, fifty-one percent of staff members believes that school counselors meet regularly with students.

Counselors are aware that not all students attend their group sessions where important information is disseminated and student goals are discussed. Guidance counselors communicate with state and county mental health agencies to deliver collaborative outreach and referral to providers, but since the school lacks a mental health counselor, school-based services are delivered by guidance counselors for students who need immediate and periodic mental health support: There is no licensed school social worker or counselor to respond directly to student mental health concerns or emergencies as they arise or to tailor services specifically toward mental health. All guidance counselors allocate their time primarily to the academic issues of individual students. Guidance counselors collect and examine available data regularly to evaluate services provided to students, including grade reports, intervention strategies, and information about students' post-secondary goals and their achievement, however the school needs a formal protocol for using this data to improve services. Once the school defines desirable levels of student achievement and establishes measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students they will be able to provide even greater support to all students. (self-study, program of studies, parent and student handbook, students, department chairs, guidance counselors, parents, observation)

SHS has health services delivered by an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members who provide preventative health services, direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, conduct on-going student health assessments, and use on-going relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure student achievement. Two FTE nurses for approximately 800 students, meeting the appropriate state guideline ratio of 1:500, staff the SHS health services. The health services space provides for confidential and direct intervention services, and there is an established referral process. The health services staff members provide preventative services through use of medical records, health screening, and school-wide trainings and informational days. The health services staff members inform the school community periodically of important health information and tips through emails. The health services staff members use the computer program School Health Management Software for Nurses (SNAP) to organize and disseminate information about individual students in a comprehensive, accessible way. There is an SHS School Health Advisory Committee, and there are surveys completed to provide on-going feedback to further improve and enhance the services that are provided. The health services staff members gather and report information quarterly about daily occurrences in the health office. Although on-going relevant assessment data is gathered, there is no formal protocol to evaluate the health services program to improve those services. Because the health services staff members provide preventative health services and direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, conduct on-going student

health assessment, and use on-going relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, services are evaluated and improved through the existing informal process to ensure student care and achievement, but this system is not currently aligned with measurable 21st century learning expectations. (self study, students, guidance counselors, nurse, parents, observations, facility tour)

The SHS library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices, the school has an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff members who are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum; who provide a wide range of materials; ensure that the facility is available to staff and students before, during, and after school; are responsive to students' interests and needs; and conduct ongoing assessment of the services available. However, SHS lacks measurable 21st century learning expectations to fully guide such services. There is a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services provided to support curriculum. Computers, Kindles, subscription databases, and a collection of materials that is updated to meet the curriculum needs and interests of students. The librarian has developed an up-to-date information-packed interactive website. Students can search the catalog, connect to electronic databases, and add information such as book trailers; teachers are able to use the website to check on the availability of the library for scheduling classes. In addition, a digital classroom has been added with new computers and an interactive whiteboard that can be reserved for use by a teacher and their class. The library/media center is open from 7:00 am until 3:30 pm. Support staff members cover hours before and after school. During the school day, the librarian, two full-time assistants, and student volunteers ensure that the library runs smoothly. The collection has expanded to reflect student interests by the acquisition of a wide array of current reading material, including an extensive collection of graphic novels, Kindles, iPods, CD players, and digital cameras that are available for student use. The library offers computers, comfortable seating, eye-catching posters, and a clean and welcoming space. The library hosts the SHS Art Show twice a year and provides book discussions that are open to staff and students throughout the year. There is ongoing assessment using relevant data including feedback from the school community used to improve services. Data collected show that many staff members and students (75-90%) feel that the library media center meets their needs regarding open hours, materials available, and a staff available to help with research. However, only a minority of parents (42%) feels the library offers a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services to support student needs. Although measurable 21st century learning expectations have not been established, the library/media center offers a wide variety of print, electronic, and technology choices to support the learning needs of students. Defining and measuring levels of achievement through 21st century learning expectations will improve the

support and challenge provided to all students by the library/media center. (self-study, Endicott Survey, library media specialist, students, teachers)

SHS provides support services for identified students and has an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel: However, the school lacks measurable 21st century learning expectations; does not practice inclusion for all students; does not sufficiently allow for collaboration among all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff members; and has insufficient evidence to determine how the assessment of data and feedback from the school community improves services and ensures student achievement. SHS provides certified/licensed personnel and support staff to provide services for identified students, including special education designated students, 504 qualified students, and English language learners. These include special educators, speech and language pathologists, a life skills program coordinator, substance abuse professionals (SAPs), an educational success counselor who provides case management for students who are at risk for failure or dropping out, and an employment specialist to work mainly with special education students with learning impairments. Contracted psychologists or counselors are available to provide individual and group therapy inside and outside of school as indicated by student need. There is some collaboration between SHS support services personnel with a great majority of teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff members to promote student achievement, but the school lacks measurable 21st century learning expectations to guide all such activities and services. The irregular collaboration that takes place between teachers, counselors, and service providers tends to be more spontaneous than regularly scheduled, although scheduled meetings do take place. This irregularity is a result of no common planning time or established meeting time for teachers in the daily schedule. The SHS support services department provides some inclusion learning opportunities for some students, but observation, interviews, and documentation indicate that inclusive learning opportunities are not provided for all students. There has been an adjustment of service delivery models and staffing, and the school continues to discuss future improvements in inclusion opportunities for students. The school does not yet provide inclusion for all identified students. SHS support services provide on-going assessment as required by state and federal law, but the school lacks measurable 21st century learning expectations to guide the assessment. SHS uses SpedDoc to document adherence to state and federal law as well as on-going assessment of students. There is no defined source of school community feedback to improve services, and data shows that only forty-four percent of staff members believes that support services personnel use assessment data to improve services. It is difficult to determine if any changes have been made in response to examination of assessment data to improve learning for identified students. The

school cites a comprehensive system to address intervention strategies, but there is no clear information about how that process defines and practices inclusion for identified students. Although it is staffed with an adequate number of licensed personnel and support staff members, because there is no formal time to collaborate, there are varying definitions of inclusion, and there is a changing service delivery model and the SHS support services are not providing inclusive learning opportunities for all identified students. Therefore, defining levels of achievement and establishing post secondary goals through 21st century learning expectations and establishing relevant definitions and processes for inclusion will improve the support that is provided to all students and particularly to identified special needs students. (self-study, special education personnel, guidance counselor, teachers, observations, teachers, students, administrators, Endicott Survey, parents, school support staff)

Commendations

1. The timely coordination, development and implementation of many intervention programs and procedures to support student learning
2. The outreach provided to families, particularly in 8th to 9th grade transition
3. The documented developmental guidance program for all students
4. Adequate staffing in guidance that ensures all students an opportunity to meet individually and in groups with their counselors
5. Access to community-based services where necessary
6. The use of the SNAP program to efficiently organize health records and appropriately disseminate information about individual students
7. The myriad preventative services that appropriately address health concerns
8. The wide range of media center materials, technologies, and other information services that meet the needs of the SHS learning community
9. The interactive website available 24/7 for students and staff member use
10. The comfortable, inviting, student-centered atmosphere of the library that makes it a place the students want to access
11. The creativity and flexibility of library staff members and the evolving service delivery model based on current student needs

Recommendations

1. Provide inclusive learning opportunities to all students
2. Create and communicate through a multitude of means a menu of intervention strategies available at SHS by grade and student needs to target the appropriate support for all students
3. Align directive intervention strategies and support services with the implemented measurable 21st century learning expectations
4. Implement a procedure to ensure that all families are able to access student records and student achievement and growth information
5. Research and report to the school community on how the school supports both immediate and on-going student mental health needs
6. Ensure that all students meet with their guidance counselor regularly
7. Implement a formal protocol to evaluate and improve school counseling services utilizing data to inform this process
8. Implement a formal protocol to evaluate and improve health services utilizing data to inform this process

SUPPORT STANDARDS

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 district's governing body provides Spaulding High School (SHS) adequate and dependable funding for many programs while remaining mindful of the community's financial challenges. There is currently a wide range of school programs and services provided, but some budget reductions over the past three years have resulted in service impact. In the speech and language programs, new and replacement equipment has been eliminated; in the special education department, teaching material, equipment, and in-service training programs have been reduced or eliminated; the school has completely eliminated the Mythos Program and Latin instruction; and the driver's and business education programs have been reduced. As a result, 48% of staff members disagree or strongly disagree that dependable funding is provided for a wide range of programs and services. SHS does have sufficient professional and support staff members in relation to decreased enrollment and community fiscal restraints, however. The following positions have been eliminated within the last three years: 21.82 teaching positions, 2 paraprofessional educators, and 1 administrator. Teachers currently have an imposed contract with a salary freeze. Ongoing professional development and curriculum revision is adequately and dependably funded, however, in fact, such funding has increased over the past three years. In one case in mainstream special education, in-service training was eliminated. Also, in general, the scheduling of training in new technology does not always precede the arrival and installation of the new equipment. Although the staffing for technology seems to be adequate both at the school and district level, technology support and equipment are considered inadequate by all teaching departments responding to the Endicott Survey. Troubleshooting, equipment replacement, and utilization training are not timely. A number of classrooms lacks an adequate number of computers or wireless access for the number of students in these classes. However, some office staff members have requested and received timely and sufficient technology help from the district IT team housed in the superintendent's office building across from SHS and from the network administrator and help desk within the SHS building. While instructional materials and supplies have been reduced by budget cuts, in most cases the current amount is considered sufficient, and 67 % of staff members respond in the Endicott Survey as "agrees", "strongly agrees" or "are undecided". The community and the district's governing body do provide dependable funding even though local fiscal restraints and recent decreased enrollment have impacted morale through staff reductions, loss of programs, and an unpopular contract imposition. (community resources for learning subcommittee, self-study, panel discussion, parents, facility tour, classroom visits, student shadowing, central office personnel, Endicott Survey)

Spaulding High School (SHS) consciously maintains a pleasant, clean, and safe environment that positively impacts learning and instruction. The principal and school board support the facilities budget after careful consideration of the community's limited resources. Maintenance staffing levels are adequate for the size, age, and extent of use of the building. A supervisory level custodial staff member on the first and second shift better ensure work timeliness and completion. A facilities committee meets monthly to discuss, identify, and prioritize facility needs. The facilities committee is an active participant in all issues that concern the operation of the school plant. The facilities committee is made up of the maintenance director, members of the school board and community, and an assistant principal. The maintenance director has clear expectations and adequate staffing to ensure daily, adequate cleaning of the entire school building. While that staff does adequately attend to the maintenance, repair, and cleanliness of the building, it does not systematically inventory the plant assets nor have a written schedule of repair and maintenance. (observations, student shadowing, facility tour, self-study, teachers, maintenance director, community resources for learning subcommittee, school board, parents, documents, classroom visits)

Spaulding High School (SHS) has a long-range plan that addresses many areas, but the long-range plans for programs and services, technology needs, capital improvements, and decisions that affect enrollment changes and staffing need to be more specific, detailed, and transparent and must support curriculum, instruction and assessment. SHS has yearly action plans that target specific goals and action steps around literacy, mathematics, science, technology, and school climate. Funding for technology improvement has been acquired from the school budget, the government, and private grants although technological support and equipment have been rated as inadequate by all departments. Faculty and staff members cite three particular areas of concern: computer upgrades, slow repairs by the support staff, and a need in the classrooms for more computers to assist with teaching and learning. Teachers are encouraged to use interactive whiteboards in their daily classroom activities and instruction, but only 25% of the classrooms has Promethean boards. The district voters have approved a long-term roof maintenance fund, but there are no short-term goals or a plan of action. A private community group is working on major renovations and upgrades concerning the outdoor athletic facilities that include outdoor lights for football and lacrosse fields and management of a riverbank-flooding problem. Several bonds will be retired in the next few years and it is anticipated that this money can be put into riverbank stabilization, the roof project, and upgrading the science labs. While SHS has developed goals in all

areas and adequate funding is provided for programs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements, until a clear-cut, transparent, long-range plan is developed and all stakeholders share in that process, students will not be able to work effectively to achieve the core values and learning expectations set forward by the school community. (facility tour, self-study, teachers, maintenance director, athletic director, school board, classroom visits)

Department heads and school leaders, including the facility director, develop and defend their portion of the budget to the principal and later implement the budget upon final approval by the school board, however some 47% of staff members disagrees or strongly disagrees that they have input into the development of the budget. At the initial budget development process, department heads seek budget requests from teachers or staff members in their departments. In turn, the department heads give their department's budget request to the principal. The principal and the superintendent discuss, prepare, and present an overall budget to the school board. The finance committee of the school board holds open budget deliberations and returns to the entire school board with its members' proposed budget for a vote. The principal and school board host a public meeting for the community to explain and defend the proposed budget. After the adoption of the budget, faculty and staff members submit requisitions for the principal's approval. Department heads may request reports to determine the balance of their portion of the budget. The faculty and building administrators develop and implement the budget within a recognized hierarchical framework, but greater involvement by faculty members beyond the initial development stage would lead to a greater opportunity to ensure that the budget supports 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, documents, teachers, administrators, facility tour, Endicott Survey, community resources for learning subcommittee)

SHS's facility partially supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services. SHS is a 40-year old facility that has undergone numerous additions and renovations. The building is very large (210,000 square feet) and all floors are handicap-accessible. During the past 10 years, the high school has seen numerous improvements, which provide the students, community, and faculty with a better working and learning environment. During the summer of 2009, the school remodeled the main entrance and math hallways. The floors, walls, and lighting were all replaced to add a modern approach at the entrance to the facility, and bathrooms in this area were remodeled and updated. Improvements to classrooms include an interactive teacher classroom with 20 computers, a projector, and a screen in the library. In 2009, the school renovated a chemistry classroom, and facilities for both physical education

and extracurricular sports teams have also received improvements. The gymnasium lights were replaced, the gym floor was resurfaced, and the smaller band room was converted into a wrestling room. An athletic trainer's room was created from unused space in the girls' locker room. The weight room has been moved into an area next to the gym, increasing the size and ease of access for the physical education department. Other improvements include the repaving and relining of the parking lots, which has added more parking spaces. The Endicott Survey provided mixed results on perception of the facility: 70% of students feels that the school facility adequately supports its programs and services while fewer than 50% of the teachers agrees. Only 43.7% of the parents agrees that the building provides adequate support. There are concerns in the following areas: the food service department delivers an adequate program, but the cafeteria space is crowded; the nurse's area does not have space for private meetings involving students, parents, teachers, and nurses; the athletics department lacks sufficient meeting space for physical education classes, and outside field space is insufficient for the number of athletic teams. Academically, the English department shares classrooms while the math class spaces are not optimal for the size of the classes; the science department lacks a separate planning area from classroom space, and this is a disruption to other classes. The special education department does not have enough meeting space, and there are numerous meetings that special educators need to schedule throughout the day that require simultaneous, private space. There are also safety concerns about the classroom space provided that must support specific academic and behavior levels. Special education programs are highly specialized and not all students can get the same things from the same programs. Each special education program focuses on the individual needs of that student. For example, one student may have specialized reading needs while another needs to practice life skills, such as cooking. The life skills program does have cooking area in its space, but the teachers believe they need more room for the number of students they have. There is no access to the tech center for specialized classes such as those needed by the special education department. The students can use the cafeteria food prep area if needed, and there is sharing of resources if people seek out creative solutions. The office space is very tight for special education staff members, and there is little available space for collaboration. While SHS delivers high quality programs and services, the facility and allocated space do not adequately sustain and support the working and learning environment needed by all staff members and students. (observations, self-study, Endicott Survey, special education personnel, facility tour, teachers, students, community resources for learning subcommittee)

Spaulding High School (SHS) maintains appropriate documentation that shows it is meeting all applicable federal and state laws and is in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

All fire extinguishers, fire blankets, and eyewash stations (in science classes) are clearly visible and accessible. All chemicals in the science labs are stored in a locked space, and the fire door has a 0.75-hour rating. All gas valves in the chemistry labs are secured and clearly labeled. All flammables are stored separately from chemicals. There is a separate gas balance for all science classrooms and each has a separate shut-off. While all unit ventilators meet minimum basic requirements for air quality and heat, improvements are needed. Unit ventilators have not been upgraded since 1964 and do not meet modern standards of ventilation. The exhaust fans on the roof have some deficiencies and should be replaced. There are reports of outside odors coming into the building because of inadequate exhaust fans. Staff and students report that the building temperatures are comfortable and do not distract from teaching and learning. Fire drills take place once a month although SHS should ensure that all emergencies have been practiced at scheduled and unexpected times of the day. All students have evacuation procedures in place, but these need to be revisited. The special education population does participate in the monthly fire drills, but there should be professional development for those aides who are not trained in this procedure. Evacuation chairs are present on all three floors. School lock-downs are also practiced once a month, and all classroom locks have been changed to an interior button system. All parts of the building are handicapped accessible; there is one elevator that accesses all three floors. Not all bathrooms are handicapped accessible, but there is at least one bathroom on every floor that is handicapped accessible. The school plans to bring every bathroom up to code with future bathroom renovations. Unsafe conditions and repair and equipment needs are brought to the attention of the maintenance director on an as-needed basis via phone calls, direct contact, or e-mail. All faculty, staff members, and students praise the outstanding custodial staff that works as a team and provides a very clean and safe place to learn. Before faculty and staff members depart for the summer, they are able to provide the maintenance director requests for any classroom needs (i.e. painting, bulletin board, shelves). There is no formal process, however, for voicing comments and concerns about school maintenance as it relates to issues of health or safety from students, staff, and community members. While there is an appropriate system of documentation that meets all applicable federal and state laws and is in compliance with fire, health, and safety regulations, a formal system should be developed that allows students, staff members and community members to comment on health or safety issues that directly impact instruction and learning. (self-study, facility tour, maintenance director, teachers, students, community resources for learning subcommittee)

Some professional staff members engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out generally and specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. Outreach efforts include: SHS Grade 9 Step-up Night, fall open house, spring parent-teacher conference night and Endicott Survey, informational mailings and newsletters, and online access identified through PowerSchool and Naviance. Eighty-two percent of teachers contacts specific parents by phone on an as-needed basis. Some teachers may not have specified time allotted or an outlined method for regularly engaging their student's families. Some parents could not describe an entry point or system for advocating for academic or systemic change. While SHS has a generous number of outreach efforts in place, in all cases the parents and families must initiate the contact by logging onto a school website, by driving to school for an event, or by picking up and reading written information. Only when regular educators perceive a need, do they directly initiate contact and reach out specifically to the families, especially those who have been less connected with the school. When the staff begins to reach out to all families, then the students will be better able to achieve the school's expectations for learning. (self-study, parents, administrators, panel discussion, community resources for learning subcommittee)

The school consistently fosters productive business, community, and higher education partnerships, which create opportunities and enhance student learning. Local businesses and clubs support the school with scholarships such as the Rotary Club and Barre Partnership; and dinners for scholars and the honor society by the Kiwanis Club and the American Legion. Formal partnerships that create opportunities and enhance real life student learning include SHS Community Service Learning, Training Interns and Preparing for Success (TIPS), Vermont Academy of Science and Technology and Barre Technical Center, Central Vermont Medical Center's Job Shadow Program, the LACE Focus on Occupational Development Training Program (culinary skills), and Spaulding School-to-Work Program. In addition, an Army Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps and the Phoenix Program link classroom learning with real life, authentic applications. Parents participate in the following groups: SHS Boosters, the facilities committee, interview committees for administrative candidates, and the athletic advisory committee. An estimated 60 scholarships, \$150,000 to \$200,000 in total, are given each spring at the SHS Alumni Scholarship Awards Night. SHS has a number of community partnerships to support and supplement its regular school program: New Directions for Barre, Transitional Living Program, and Central Vermont ARC. Partnerships with local colleges other than Community College of Vermont are available but not formally established because of a lack of proximity of the campuses to Barre. Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities is a possible resource this school year

through a five-year federal grant awarded to the University of Vermont. There are college partnerships for faculty professional development at the college level through Saint Michael's College. In addition, professional development relationships are active with Research for Better Teaching, Lamoille Area Professional Development Academy, Stern Center for Language and Learning, and the Chittenden Central Supervisory Union. SHS consistently maintains long-term and productive partnerships with local businesses, the community, and higher education partnerships to create opportunities and enhance student learning. (self-study, parents, facility tour, panel presentation, administrators, department chairs)

Commendations

1. The entire school staff for working within and adjusting to the financial restraints of Barre
2. The Town and City of Barre for dependably and consistently supporting SHS within their means
3. The cleanliness and maintenance of the building, in spite of its age
4. The support and funding from the community and outside sources for a wide range of school programs and services, athletic improvements, and roof repair
5. The implementation of PowerSchool to provide the school with improved communication with parents and students, providing a portal to access assignments and work from outside the school
6. The installation of an energy efficient and cost effective wood chip burner
7. The continued modernization and renovation of bathrooms, making them handicapped accessible
8. The generous annual local pool of scholarships
9. The multi-generational loyalty and identification with the SHS alumni that fosters productive partnerships between SHS and the community

Recommendations

1. Improve technology equipment replacement, upgrade schedule, and service delivery
2. Precede new technology equipment installation with appropriate staff training
3. Ensure that all certificates of inspections regarding safety, health, and fire codes and regulations are up to date and displayed in a common area
4. Create a written catalogue and inventory of all equipment
5. Create a written schedule for maintenance, repair, replacement of equipment, and for system checks
6. Involve all stakeholders in developing clear, specific, long-range plans related to staffing, programs, capital improvements and technology

7. Use the school's core values and learning expectations to determine equitable allocation of resources, programs, and services to all students
8. Ensure that the budget meets the learning needs of students through a transparent development process among the faculty, department heads, principal, superintendent and school board
9. Develop adequate meeting spaces for nursing services and special education with input from these departments
10. Ensure that students with special needs have appropriate resources and classroom space
11. Implement a formal reporting system to allow the educational community to provide feedback on health or safety issues that directly impact instruction and learning
12. Implement a system of regular outreach by all professional staff members that does not rely upon parents and families initiating the contact
13. Create a process for parents and families to advocate for academic or systemic change, and inform all parents of the entry point

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

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

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

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Commission has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Commission within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Commission's Substantive Change Policy is included on page 74. All other

substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Commission office has current statistical data on the school.

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

The visiting team would like to extend its appreciation to all members of Spaulding High School for their great hospitality. We are most grateful for the steering committee's attention to detail in preparing for our visit. The visiting team was able to work effectively and efficiently due to the quality of the self-study and other work completed prior to our arrival. We appreciate the efforts to prepare the school community for the accreditation process, and we believe the school will be equally efficient in continuing school improvement.

SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL VISITING TEAM

Michael R. Jette, Chair	Merrimack Valley High School Penacook, NH 03303
Kyle J. Alves, Assistant Chair	Athol-Royalston Middle School Athol, MA 01331
Kate McDonald	Essex High School Essex Junction, VT 05452
Kimberly Ezen	Stevens High School Claremont, NH 03743
Christopher Moreau	Lisbon High School Lisbon Falls, ME 04252
Colleen Wedge	Champlain Valley Union High School Hinesburg, VT 05461
Robin Hood	Winooski Public Schools Winooski, VT 05404
Amy Thivierge	Mount Anthony Union High School Bennington, VT 05201
Jenny Lane	South Royalton School South Royalton, VT 05068
Beth Larsen	Randolph Union High School Randolph, VT 05060
Donna Herlihy	Woodsville High School Woodsville, NH 03785
Leon Wheeler	Mount Abraham Union High School Bristol, VT 05443
Cheryl Marvinney	Maranacook Community High School Readfield, ME 04355
Casey O'Meara	Middlebury Union High School Middlebury, VT 05753
Kristine Schoembs	Milton High School Milton, VT 05468

**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES
COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

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