

**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND
COLLEGES**

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

Oliver Ames High School

Easton, MA

October 26 - 29, 2014

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning.

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

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Oliver Ames High School, a committee of 15 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 stakeholders from across the Oliver Ames High School educational community.

The self-study of Oliver Ames High School extended over a period of 15 school months from February 2013 to September 2014. The visiting committee was pleased to note that students, citizens, parents, and school board members joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

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

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

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

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 45 hours shadowing 15 students for a half day
- a total of 25 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility
- individual meetings with 30 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

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

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

School and Community Summary

Oliver Ames High School is a public high school located in North Easton, Massachusetts, which only serves North and South Easton residents. The town of Easton, which is divided into North Easton and South Easton, is located thirty miles south of Boston and is surrounded by Brockton, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, Raynham, Mansfield, and Sharon. Easton is called the shovel shop town, and the high school was named after Oliver Ames, the former Governor of Massachusetts.

With a combined population of 21,752, North Easton and South Easton are racially, ethnically, and culturally similar. The primary language is English and is spoken by 99.6% of the student population, but there are households where Portuguese, Creole, and French are spoken. The population of North Easton is 12,564 and has a median family income of \$103,494. The population of South Easton is 9,188 and has a median family income of \$79,595. In South Easton, 3% of the families were living below the poverty level in 2011. In North Easton, 1.6% of the families were living below the poverty level in 2011.

Over the last couple of years, the racial, cultural, and ethnic makeup of the Easton school district has remained stable. For the 2011-2012 school year, the composition of Easton Public school students consisted of 4.4% African American, 3.2% Asian, 3.5% Hispanic, 0.2% Native American, 85.9% White, 0.1% Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and 2.7% Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic.

There are five elementary schools in Easton. Three of those schools serve Pre K-grade 2 students, and they are Center School, Moreau Hall and Parkview Elementary school. FL Olmsted School and HH Richardson School are the other two elementary schools which are for students in grades 3-5. Easton Middle School consists of grades 6-8, and Oliver Ames High School has students from grades 9-12. There is a vocational high school in Easton which is called the Southeastern Regional Vocational High school.

The total enrollment of Oliver Ames High School is 1,152 students which consist of 574 males and 578

females. The school population has remained stable over the past couple of years. In 2010, the per-pupil expenditure was \$10,201 which was below the state average (\$13,055). In 2011, the per-pupil expenditure was \$10,922 and again was also below the state average of \$13,361. The ethnic, racial, and cultural makeup of Oliver Ames has remained constant over the last couple of years. The percentage of local resources spent on public education was 61%. The percentage of local taxation spent on schools is 63%. For the 2011-2012 school year, the composition of Oliver Ames students consisted of 4.6% African American, 3.4% Asian, 3.6% Hispanic, 85.4% White, 0.3% Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and 2.7% Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic. In the class of 2012, 95.7% of the students graduated from Oliver Ames. The average dropout rate for the past two years was 2.15%. The attendance rate of students is 93.11%. The attendance rate of teachers is 95.1%.

There are 84 teachers at Oliver Ames High School, creating a ratio of 16:1. In addition, there are eight paraprofessionals, two school psychologists, an adjustment counselor, four guidance counselors, a school nurse, two assistant principals, and a principal. Students attend school for 180 days. Oliver Ames Students must take seven courses each year. They must pass four (4) years of English, three (3) years of social studies, three (3) years of science grades 9-12, four (4) years of math, two years of physical education, one (1) year of one or combination of Music, Industrial Technology, Art, Family and Consumer Sciences, one (1) year of business/technology education. A total of 18 courses are required as part of the graduation requirements and students may choose 8 electives grades 9-12.

In the class of 2012, 83% of the graduates attended a four-year college, with 9% enrolling in a two-year college, 2% enrolling in other post-secondary school, 2% entering the workforce, and 2% entering the military.

Oliver Ames High School has established a local partnership with the FEEE organization. The Foundation for Excellence in Education in Easton (F.E.E.E.) is established by the School Committee of the Easton Public Schools for the purpose of soliciting and accepting funds, gifts, products, service contributions and other resources for the Easton Public Schools. The goal of F.E.E.E. is to educate the community to the purposes, functions and needs of the school system and to raise funds to enhance and extend programs selected by the

school system. Oliver Ames High School has also established partnerships with four of the local institutions of higher education. There is a dual enrollment program with Stonehill College, Bridgewater State University, Massasoit Community College, and Bristol Community College where Oliver Ames students can take college courses and receive credit.

There are a variety of different student organizations, musical groups, and sports teams at Oliver Ames High School. Many of our students participate in at least one of these organizations, groups, or teams. Students at Oliver Ames High School are recognized for their academic, co-curricular, musical, and athletic talents and accomplishments. There are various awards ceremonies and organizations such as Student Council awards night, where students are recognized for their participation in extracurricular activities. Monogram awards night is a ceremony where Oliver Ames athletes are recognized for their performance in sports. Boys and Girls state is an organization that selects high school juniors who are leaders in the school to attend a week long leadership conference. The National Honors Society is a service organization that recognizes high scholastic achievement, leadership, service, and outstanding character. The students in the society work on two different service projects and put on the Mr. Easton competition each year. The Tri M musical honor society recognizes the musical talents of their students. There is a positive principal's phone call where the principal calls home to the parents of Oliver Ames students who have done something good at the school.

Oliver Ames High School's Core Values

Learn collaboratively

Express creativity

Act with integrity

Demonstrate responsibility

Embrace curiosity

Respect each other

Strive for excellence

OLIVER AMES HIGH SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The Oliver Ames High School community of faculty, staff, students, parents, and residents believe that in order to fulfill its mission of excellence and equity in education, we must embody the ideals of a comprehensive high school. We will work together to create a safe, nurturing, and stimulating learning environment. Students will become **critical thinkers, problem solvers** and independent learners who contribute in many ways to our ever changing world. We recognize the need for a variety of **educational** experiences that extend beyond the classroom and promote intellectual curiosity, individual responsibility and respectful interaction. By achieving goals and overcoming adversity, students will be encouraged to reach their potential and be prepared to assume meaningful roles in society.

21st CENTURY ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

OA students will ACCESS information in a variety of ways, including:

A1. Actively and critically reading, listening and observing

A2. Initiating appropriate questions

A3. Conducting independent and collaborative research

A4. Using appropriate technologies and networks to locate and retrieve information

A5. Demonstrating initiative while seeking information

OA students will PROCESS information in a variety of ways, including:

- P1. Assimilating and organizing information
- P2. Recognizing patterns, evaluating trends, and making comparisons
- P3. Drawing inferences and making conclusions
- P4. Responding and adapting quickly to unexpected challenges
- P5. Creating and designing solutions to problems and challenges
- P6. Applying appropriate form and technique to performance tasks

OA students will COMMUNICATE information in a variety of ways, including:

- C1. Writing and speaking clearly and purposefully for a variety of audiences
- C2. Presenting creative products in a variety of formats
- C3. Using technology to present information
- C4. Demonstrating leadership while promoting individual and collaborative activities

OA students will DEVELOP themselves in a variety of ways, including:

- D1. Demonstrating a sense of curiosity by considering alternative perspectives
- D2. Gaining a better understanding of their learning process through consistent self - reflection

Social/Civic Expectation for Student Learning

OA students will act responsibly for themselves and others in a variety of ways, including:

- SC1. Working cooperatively and collaboratively
- SC2. Respecting and understanding cultural differences
- SC3. Participating with a local/global perspective

OA students will act respectfully to themselves and others in a variety of ways, including

- SC4. Interacting appropriately with all members of the community
- SC5. Honoring school policies and procedures
- SC6. Understanding and demonstrating academic integrity

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

**CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING
EXPECTATIONS**

CURRICULUM

INSTRUCTION

**ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT
LEARNING**

Teaching and Learning Standard

1

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

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

Conclusions

The Oliver Ames community has been engaged in a largely collaborative and inclusive process to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. A small group including teachers, guidance counselors, and department chairs initially revised the mission statement and learning expectations in 2010 which included a study of current research-based practices. Representatives from each department agreed to the revised mission statement and core beliefs. In 2011, a representative group of community stakeholders added the indicators which address curiosity and self-reflection to the learning expectations. The school publicizes the core values through the acronym of LEADERS - Learn collaboratively, Express creativity, Act with integrity, Demonstrate responsibility, Embrace curiosity, Respect each other, Strive for excellence. Students created a logo representing the LEADERS core values and beliefs. Students and teachers report a strong connection to the school community which is based on the core values. The principal strongly represents a proud and positive school culture where every member is highly valued. Because of their inclusive process, the Oliver Ames community has a genuine sense of ownership to the core values and learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, parents, teachers, students, principal, school leadership)

The Oliver Ames community has developed school-wide rubrics that have been implemented across all content areas which, when applied, measure high levels of student achievement. Oliver Ames High School collaboratively developed academic, civic and social learning expectations which prepare students for the challenges of 21st Century learning. The school-wide rubrics have been implemented in all content areas and are used to assess the achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. The rubrics are designed to measure achievement levels in the identified competencies of: accessing information, processing, communicating, developing and achieving social/civic responsibility. Students are provided with criteria necessary to achieve success based on a rating scale of advanced, proficient, needs improvement and failing. Once a semester, students participate in a self-reflection

activity which is intended to serve as a cornerstone for the portfolio assessment process. This process enables students to reflect on their achievement of the school's learning expectations. While the learning expectations align with the core values and beliefs about learning, it is unclear how the process of self-reflection and the rubrics inform achievement outcomes for students and how the assessment results inform the instructional process. While parents and guardians may be aware of the use of the school-wide rubrics and portfolio assessment system, results are not reported out in a public manner though there are plans to do so. Until the faculty uses the school-wide rubrics to effectively measure student achievement of the academic expectations in a manner that is clear and consistent to all stakeholders, students will not be able to determine their success in achieving all of the 21st century expectations. (self-study, parents, teachers, panel presentation, student work)

Oliver Ames' core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, informally drive curriculum revision and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations in some areas. The core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are displayed in every classroom; a core value is reinforced every morning during announcements and teachers can point to how their own beliefs about education are reflected in the LEADERS acronym. Students are aware of the core values and report that they feel safe and comfortable in school. The spirit of the LEADERS core value statement is embodied in the advisory period that was added in 2012. One policy developed to support the mission was the development of an advisory program where each student has the same advisor for his/her entire tenure at the school who collaborates with them to monitor academic progress, goal setting, and provide social emotional support if needed. Inclusive classrooms with modified instruction reflect the belief that students of all physical and intellectual abilities are valued members of the community. Many assignments reflect creativity with hands-on project based learning. Every student has a portfolio of work that is compiled over the course of his/her high school career that is connected to the

21st century learning expectations. Every assignment in that portfolio follows the school-wide rubrics that are an expression of the school's learning expectations, however, student portfolios are not used to inform changes to curriculum, instruction or assessment. A process for analyzing the data generated from the portfolio to inform changes to curriculum, instruction and assessment is still needed though some teachers report that they discuss student achievement related to the portfolio assignments informally in departments. The core values and beliefs are strongly reflected in the school culture, and teachers use the core values and beliefs to revise curriculum and impact student learning. While these positive attributes contribute significantly to the culture of Oliver Ames, a process needs to be developed to analyze and disaggregate student portfolio data which will further support student achievement. (self-study, teachers, students, student work, teacher interviews)

The school 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. The faculty has started to develop processes that enable them to evaluate the consistency and continuity within the instructional program to support student achievement of the 21st Century learning expectations and reflect the core values and beliefs about teaching and learning. Teachers have been actively working to revise curriculum, using the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework, and aligning curricular objectives to the core values and learning expectations. Though common planning time is limited, there are plans to incorporate processes to analyze school-wide student achievement data using the portfolio submission process. In order to ensure that they continue to reflect the values of the community and best educational practices to inform improved student achievement outcomes, the school must develop and implement a consistent framework for reviewing and revising the core values, beliefs and 21st Century learning expectations. (self-study, Endicott survey, panel presentation, student work, parents, school leadership-principal)

Commendations

1. Teacher, student, and community involvement in the process used to identify and connect to a set of core values and beliefs about learning
2. Teacher, student, and community awareness of the core values and beliefs
3. The strong influence of core values and beliefs on the school culture
4. The development of programs such as advisory as a response to the mission and core values
5. The initial effort to link student learning expectations to a graduation portfolio

Recommendations

1. Develop a process to analyze and disaggregate student portfolio data
2. Communicate to all stakeholders the purpose of the school-wide rubrics and indicate how and when they are used to measure student achievement outcomes

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 Oliver Ames High School is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The 21st century learning expectations are clearly linked to the school's four academic expectations of accessing, processing, communicating, and developing. While a formal process for collecting and reviewing data to make decisions related to adjusting curriculum does not yet exist, the master rubric and all departmental derivative rubrics are aligned with the expectations, and are employed routinely across all academic disciplines. Multiple courses in each curriculum area offer learning experiences related to each of the school learning expectations. The Program of Studies identifies specific learning expectations for which each curriculum area has assumed responsibility though departments are not limited to addressing those specific learning expectations. The 21st century expectations are clearly linked to the school's expectations, but establishing a formal process for collecting and reviewing data will ensure that all students are given the opportunity to practice and achieve each of the expectations in their course work. (curriculum, teachers, classroom visits, self-study)

The curriculum is being rewritten in a common format that includes units of study, concepts, content, skills, essential questions and the 21st century learning expectations, along with instructional strategies and assessment practices that use school-wide rubrics. Oliver Ames has modeled its curriculum template on the Understanding by Design (UbD) model and has begun the revision process. The UbD updated template includes instructional and assessment practices along with 21st century learning expectations. The framework also provides for information related to content, concepts and skills as well as essential questions. Documents predating the adopted template need to be adjusted in order to unify all subject areas with a common language and format. School wide, analytic rubrics integrating Oliver Ames' 21st century academic expectations for student learning as well as social/civil

expectations are universally employed. Departments distribute course specific derivative rubrics that allow educators to both select the appropriate expectations for each assignment and determine a commensurate set of measurable skills. Rubrics are integral to measuring the curriculum viability and effectiveness, and provide an important source for curriculum revision. When Oliver Ames completes its curriculum revision process to a common format based on the UbD template that includes all key elements, it will provide all teachers with a tool for planning instruction that best meets the needs of its students. (curriculum, teachers, classroom visits, self-study)

The curriculum at Oliver Ames High School emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge and provides for inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, authentic learning opportunities in and outside of school, and the informed and ethical use of technology, but provides limited opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning. Inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking are frequently emphasized at Oliver Ames. 90% of the teaching staff believes that the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge and 89% of the students report that the course content challenges them to think critically and solve problems. The increase in AP courses is evidence of Oliver Ames commitment to challenging students. Higher order thinking is addressed in the written curriculum and classroom instruction. The Oliver Ames faculty is taking steps to promote cross-disciplinary learning. An interdisciplinary committee consisting of teachers and administrators has been working to promote curricular integration across the disciplines through evidence of actual collaborative projects is limited. Oliver Ames consistently offers authentic learning opportunities through the written curriculum articulated in the classroom as well as outside the classroom beyond the school day. 90% of the student body and 94% of the staff agree that the curriculum emphasizes informed and ethical use of technology. A program is in place for incoming freshmen to participate in an orientation with the school media specialist concerning the school's technology guidelines and policies; incoming freshmen are also required to sign an acceptable use

policy acknowledging their comprehension of these policies. Each year in September, English teachers conduct orientations to students on turnitin.com. Additionally, the school-wide master rubric and departmental derivative rubrics measure ethical and appropriate uses of various technologies. While the school's efforts to revise the curriculum have increased the emphasis on depth of understanding and application of knowledge, ensuring consistent opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning as well as authentic learning outside of school will give all students equitable opportunity to achieve the schools' 21st learning expectations. (Endicott survey, classrooms visits, self -study, student shadowing)

There is a clear and consistent alignment of the written and taught curriculum across departments. According to the Endicott survey, 96.6% of staff agrees that the written and taught curriculum is aligned. Updated curriculum documents and school-wide rubrics identify the school's 21st century learning expectations. These expectations drive and guide each discipline's instructional practices. Content areas are given some latitude as to which methodologies are the most appropriate to facilitate instruction; however, across all disciplines stipulated units and common assessments are present. These units and assessments articulate the learning expectations specific to that discipline and then subsequently measure student proficiency in meeting those expectations. The clear and consistent alignment of written and taught curriculum at Oliver Ames creates opportunities for students to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (Endicott survey, teachers, classroom visits, teacher interviews)

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exists between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district. The common curriculum template, based upon the UbD model, facilitates vertical and horizontal alignment among academic areas. Curricular integration is driven by a curriculum leadership team that convenes monthly to review alignment and facilitation. The committee, chaired by the Assistant Superintendent, consists of 27

curriculum leaders from across the district; members span all the grade levels and include classroom teachers and school administrators. This leadership team oversees the vertical alignment of the curricula and works to organize curricular units based on the UbD model. Monthly department meetings convene during a designated common planning period that features a specific agenda designed for faculty members to share best practices related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Department chairs function as liaisons between teachers and administrators, and ensure that the integrity of curricular policies and procedures are maintained. The effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all stakeholders ensures students will achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teachers, central office personnel, department chairs)

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, 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. According to the Endicott survey, 84% of the faculty agree that the present level of staffing is sufficient to implement the curriculum. Some class sizes, particularly in honors courses, are large but described as manageable. Oliver Ames High School facility ensures that all students have access to appropriate technologies that in turn augment the instruction provided by teachers. The level of financial support is adequate for the purchasing of book, materials and the supplies to deliver the curriculum, and there were no observed or reported deficiency in these areas. The Oliver Ames facility boasts a state of the art auditorium, several music practice rooms, and music classrooms that accommodate classes during the school day as well as co-curricular programs after school. Adjacent to this wing is the art department, which also provides a digital laboratory using Apple computers. Oliver Ames also features a media production studio which contains cable ready television technologies, two gymnasiums, a cardio-weight room, a dance room, comfortable locker room, team meeting rooms, and spaces for the athletic trainer and occupational

therapist. Adequate staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/ media center enable Oliver Ames to effectively implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. (Endicott survey, teachers, self-study, students)

The district provides the school's 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. The Assistant Superintendent has implemented a cross-curricular initiative based on the UbD model. The district has allocated two full days from the 2014-2015 school calendar for the sole purpose of training faculty in the backwards design model. Teacher feedback on the first day of training was generally positive. Teachers also had the opportunity to participate in paid professional development during the summer of 2014. The Assistant Superintendent is also spearheading a revamped curricular revision process that prioritizes collaborative development. Curriculum leaders from schools around the district convene regularly to examine the curricular and provide suggestions. The district has implemented a regular five year review cycle to evaluate and revise curriculum on an ongoing basis. Curriculum leaders and faculty members who partake in the actual formal writing of curriculum are compensated with a stipend. Additionally, the district provides \$950 per year to any teacher seeking reimbursements for an approved course. In the past, administrators have purchased the following books for the faculty members: Tony Wagner's *The Global Achievement Gap*, the Buck Institute for Education's Project Based Learning Handbook, John Saphier's *The Skillful Teacher*, Research for Better Teaching's *Activators & Summarizers*, and Wiggins & McTighe's *Understanding by Design*. The Superintendent's office also funds the "Easton University" professional development program which offers in-district courses to teachers free of charge. Easton Public Schools provides teachers with extensive access to the latest research in curriculum to support

the curriculum revision process which in turn helps to ensure that the Oliver Ames curriculum meets the academic needs of its students. (teacher interviews, central office personnel, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The opportunities provided in the curriculum for students to practice and achieve the schools 21st century learning expectations
2. The adoption of a common curriculum template based on the UbD model
3. The commitment of the faculty to embrace and implement the UbD curriculum model
4. The universal employment of school wide, analytic rubrics integrating Oliver Ames 21st century academic expectations for student learning
5. The orientation for incoming freshmen facilitated by the media specialist about the schools technology guidelines and policies
6. The clear and consistent alignment of the written and taught curriculum across departments
7. The focus on implementing and facilitating strategies to ensure vertical alignment of the written and taught curriculum
8. The updated facilities which are used to enhance the overall educational experiences for all students
9. The financial commitment of the district to implement the UbD curriculum model
10. The leadership of the assistant superintendent in spearheading the UbD curriculum model development.

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a process to collect and review data to make decisions related to adjusting curriculum

2. Ensure that all curriculum documents are rewritten using the common curriculum template based on the UbD model
3. Ensure consistent opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning
4. Ensure opportunities for interdisciplinary curriculum coordination between academic areas

3**Instruction**

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

1. Teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.
2. Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by:
 - personalizing instruction
 - engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning
 - engaging students as active and self-directed learners
 - emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking
 - applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks
 - engaging students in self-assessment and reflection
 - integrating technology.
3. Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by:
 - using formative assessment, especially during instructional time
 - strategically differentiating
 - purposefully organizing group learning activities

- providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.
4. Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by:
- using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments
 - examining student work
 - using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents
 - examining current research
 - engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.
5. Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

Conclusions:

Teachers' instructional practices across the school are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. All teachers are clearly familiar with Oliver Ames High School's identified core values, beliefs and learning expectations, and use these values to drive instruction. Oliver Ames' mission statement was re-written in 2011 so that core values and beliefs better aligned with 21st century learning and instructional practices. The core beliefs are posted in each classroom, and the school has created an acronym, LEADERS, to emphasize the core beliefs and ensure student awareness of the beliefs. Teachers post daily objectives that are tied to Oliver Ames High School learning expectations. School-wide rubrics reflect the school's learning expectations, and are used extensively by teachers in all disciplines. Core values are naturally, if not always explicitly, incorporated into instruction. For example, in a class discussion, students demonstrated collaborative learning, curiosity, and respect for each other. Students were also observed interacting respectfully and delegating tasks during group activities. Collaborative learning was observed in many classrooms, and is a regular facet of instruction at Oliver Ames. Students are encouraged to employ creative thinking, and are afforded many opportunities to work collaboratively. Group projects, such as a biology project, in which groups of students create a three-dimensional themed model to represent the cell and its functions, and a history debate, in which students researched a position as a colonist or a British loyalist, are designed to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge in a creative manner. Students are afforded many opportunities to work collaboratively, from daily classroom activities to longer term projects. Teachers regularly employ the Socratic method to encourage critical, high-order thinking. Students are afforded the opportunity for regular self-reflection through a portfolio assessment process. Once each semester, each class selects an assignment for careful student self-assessment and inclusion into the student's portfolio. Oliver Ames' teacher evaluation process is grounded in its core values and beliefs, and teachers regularly receive feedback on their instruction from peers, administration and department leadership. Because

teachers align the instructional strategies with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, students benefit from effective, well-designed instruction. (teacher interviews, student work, panel presentation, student shadowing, self-study)

Most teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking, applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, and integrating technology, but there is inconsistent evidence that instruction regularly engages students in cross-disciplinary learning, and active, self-directed learning. The majority of teachers at Oliver Ames make efforts to provide personalized instruction for all students. Students are regularly given the opportunity to investigate in-depth research on topics of interest to them. Many teachers circulate throughout the class providing one-on-one support, and are willing to give supplemental instruction and support to students who seek it. In several classes, student work is self-paced. Teachers engage students in a wide variety of classroom activities, involving students through different learning styles, and allowing students to demonstrate knowledge and mastery in many ways. For example, in one foreign language class, students were engaged in direct instruction, a partner activity, and a group activity involving movement around the room. Students indicate what they like best about Oliver Ames is that teachers vary instruction to maintain student engagement and interest. Many teachers provide students opportunities to correct or revise work to ensure students grasp key concepts. Beyond the school day, over 50 clubs and organizations and 25 athletic teams provide students with the opportunity to customize their high school experience. Some teachers independently provide instruction consciously designed to encourage students to see connections between disciplines. Industrial technology relies on mathematical measurements in the execution of projects. Teachers in the mathematics department make connections to visual arts in their geometry classes. Though not structured, some teachers collaborate across content-areas resulting in cross-disciplinary lessons in some cases. The social

studies and art departments collaborate on a lesson about the use of visuals to promote political ideologies. Teachers recognize the need to enhance their instruction by incorporating more cross-disciplinary connections. The Interdisciplinary Committee, a teacher led initiative, encourages teachers to work together to create units and lesson plans designed to highlight connections. Informal collaboration and/or teacher-led initiatives are the main avenues through which teachers can plan and implement such lessons. There are many individual examples of teachers providing instruction deliberately designed to encourage active, self-directed learning, but across the school there is a lack of consistent evidence that all teachers are engaged in this practice. Students indicated that some, but not all, teachers do an excellent job requiring students to be active learners. In some areas, self-directed learning is an essential part of instruction. In disciplines including music, art, science, industrial arts, physical education, and family and consumer science, success is dependent on student engagement as active learners, and instruction is purposely designed to support and encourage active learning. Classroom activities often encourage students to independently or collaboratively identify patterns and make connections. In some classes, students participate in Socratic Seminar-style discussions. Teachers are aware of a need for improvement in this aspect of their instruction, and professional development dedicated to active learning will benefit all teachers. Many teachers employ instructional strategies consciously designed to activate higher-order thinking, with emphasis on inquiry and problem-solving. Several teachers described lessons involving open-ended questions. Students are often asked to answer a scientific question without being provided a procedure, and are required to design an experiment to answer the question. Writing prompts in English classes regularly require students to analyze text. Instruction in many areas encourages students to synthesize information and make evaluations based on evidence. Across the school, students were observed engaged in higher order thinking, problem solving, and inquiry. Teachers at Oliver Ames frequently ask students to apply their knowledge to authentic tasks. All disciplines engage in this instructional practice to different degrees. English teachers work with students to create college essays and persuasive

arguments. Real world applications are incorporated into science and mathematics classes. Foreign language teachers ask students to write letters and converse in the target language. Students participating in the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Program at Bridgewater State University participate in career counseling to prepare for competitive employment. Social studies students are engaged in projects that emphasize the relevance of civics and government to current events. Teachers across the school make efforts to ensure that learning tasks are meaningful and authentic. Some teachers at Oliver Ames regularly ask students to reflect on their own learning. This practice is more prevalent in some disciplines than in others. Formally, all classes require students to closely examine a piece of work once a semester. Students analyze their efforts on a project or piece of work for inclusion in a portfolio of work spanning their K-12 academic career. Across the school, teachers are in the early stages of incorporating self-assessment into their instruction, and there is evidence that when self-assessment occurs within the context of dialogue between teacher and student, there is a positive impact on student achievement. English students are regularly required to critique their own writing. Students in many classes are asked to analyze their performance on tests and identify factors associated with their success or failure on test items. Teachers across the school regularly integrate technology into their instruction. From formative assessment to project-based learning, teachers make effective use of the technology resources available to them. Many teachers use Google Docs to allow students to collaborate. Mimio Voters allow teachers to take a snapshot of student understanding of concepts being covered. Students are regularly asked to do online research or to complete exploratory activities designed to ignite student interest. Virtual labs and simulations are employed in science classes to enhance student understanding. There is strong evidence that technology is integrated into instruction effectively by most teachers. While a strong foundation of excellent instruction exists, especially through personalized instruction, activation of higher order thinking, engagement of students in authentic tasks, and incorporation of technology, when teachers are provided with time to develop cross-disciplinary learning tasks, and engage in active, self-directed learning, Oliver Ames

High School students will be better able to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

(students, student shadowing, school publications, student work, self-study, teachers)

Most teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by purposefully organizing group learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom, however, only some use formative assessment, especially during instructional time, and strategically differentiate based on formative data. Some teachers regularly assess student learning through the use of formative assessments, including pre-tests in math and informal whole-class survey in several classes. Technology resources are available for formative assessments. The English department encourages students to pre-submit essays on Google Docs so that teachers can provide immediate, specific feedback. Mimiovote is utilized by some teachers to assess understanding and collect data, however, teachers do not use formative assessments across the school that are consistent and effective. There was little evidence of teachers utilizing formative data to inform instruction. All teachers differentiate instructional strategies for individual students based on IEPs and 504s. Teachers review summative mid-year and final exam data in order to inform future instruction. They differentiate based on many factors such as when the class meets, the length of time of the class and course level, however, teachers infrequently differentiate instructional strategies based on formative assessment to specifically help individual students learn the concepts and skills.

Teachers across the school plan purposefully organized group learning activities. Teachers organize groups based on observed student ability both homogeneously in order to differentiate the material according to their level and heterogeneously to encourage peer support and student success. A variety of group learning activities are utilized throughout the school, such as socratic seminar, think-pair-share, and projects. Most teachers offer additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Students report feeling supported by their teachers. Many teachers provide time outside of class for extra help. Most teachers also use technology to provide additional support such as

Google Docs, TurnItIn, Moodle, and Twitter. Teachers communicate with support staff and other faculty regarding specific student needs and strategies to meet them. Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet students' needs by purposefully organizing group learning activities and providing additional support, however, when teachers establish consistent, effective formative assessment methods and strategies for using that data to inform instruction, students will receive better instruction individualized to meet their specific learning needs. (classroom visits, self-study, student shadowing, teacher interviews, student work)

While teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by examining student work, using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, and supervisors, examining current research, and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, use of student achievement data from formative and summative assessments could be used more consistently. Collaboratively, all teachers review summative mid-year and final exam data and draw conclusions regarding future instruction. Departments employ meeting time to examine MCAS data and identify areas of strength and weakness. English, math, and science department heads then provide a list of suggestions for targeting weaknesses to the full faculty. Individually, formative assessment data are often used to inform instruction for the next year. For example, the Latin teacher administers monthly assessments on an overarching language skill. The teacher accumulates and reviews the students' data to identify areas of student growth and to inform future instruction of the course. Teachers do not formally reflect on a variety of assessments, though teachers are in the process of developing more common assessments through the implementation of the UBD initiative. Student work is examined regularly to gain understanding of student retention and comprehension of material. Teachers consistently review student performance on classwork and homework to inform future instruction, including reviewing, re-teaching, and reinforcing concepts through direct instruction, additional practice, and spiral review. In an AP Psychology, Scantron is

used to compute a question analysis of student performance on each test. The results are used to assist students in self-reflection to identify sources of error from study and test-taking skills to understanding of material. The teacher reflects on this data to identify areas of instructional gaps or need of spiral review during the remainder of the course. The questions on which students performed below expectations are then aligned with questions on the final in order to gather summative data on student improvement based on instructional modifications. Most teachers at Oliver Ames use feedback from a variety of sources to improve their instruction. Many teachers displayed “walk-around” posters of student goals and instructional preferences. Some teachers informally utilize Google forms to gather immediate student feedback on instruction at the end of a unit or project. Some teachers have chosen to participate in a peer observation program in which teachers set specific instructional goals and are observed by a peer in order to receive feedback on their instruction. The school’s formal evaluation system is also an opportunity for teachers to receive feedback. Parents are rarely asked to provide feedback on teachers’ instructional practices. Teachers informally examine current research on instructional practices. Many teachers stay current on research and best practice through subscription to content-specific research articles. While faculty meetings include presentations of best practices and the UbD initiative has provided opportunity to examine research-based practices collaboratively, teachers have expressed a desire for increased time for reviewing and discussing current research. All teachers participate in professional discourse focused on instructional practices. Teachers speak enthusiastically of the collegial atmosphere that exists at Oliver Ames. Teachers frequently engage in informal discussions focused on instructional best practices; all teachers participate formally through faculty meetings and professional development. There is a best practice presentation by teachers at each faculty meeting, allowing teachers opportunity to see and discuss instructional practices. This year, a new district initiative, UbD, has provided opportunity for collaboration on curriculum and instructional practices for implementing that curriculum. UbD has been offered at the district level so that teachers not only within the high school but across all grade

levels can engage in professional discourse regarding instructional practices. While teachers are examining student work, using a variety of feedback, reading and discussing current research, and engaging in professional discourse related to instruction, when the process of reviewing student work includes a wider variety of assessments and a clear process for drawing conclusions from data, students will receive instruction that is intentionally focused on meeting their specific learning needs. (classroom visits, self-study, teacher interviews, student work)

Most teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Teachers indicate that most of their professional development is currently focused on instruction, a direct result of Oliver Ames' adoption of the UbD model for curriculum development. Many teachers independently review content-specific literature to maintain expertise, and many subscribe to content-specific newsletters to gain access to recent, relevant articles. Individually, several teachers are enrolled in graduate-level courses for the purposes of degrees, licensure, and continued education. In disciplines ranging from history to science, graduate level work is being undertaken by teachers at Oliver Ames. Advanced Placement teachers regularly take advantage of the College Board's AP conferences, which often focus on instructional strategies. Foreign language teachers recently attended the MAFLA conference. Easton University, a district-led initiative, provides teachers opportunities to hone instructional practices. Topics presented range from Google Drive and Google Docs to Creating a Multi-Learning Environment in the Classroom. Teachers at Oliver Ames are aware of the requirement to obtain SEI endorsement and are in the process of meeting this requirement. Eighty-seven percent of students, ninety-five percent of staff, and seventy percent of parents agree that teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and maintain expertise in their subject areas. When teachers are dedicated to reflective practice and life-long learning, students benefit from strong instruction and are able to achieve Oliver Ames High School's

21st century learning expectations. (Endicott survey, self-study, teacher interviews, documentation of enrollment in and completion of graduate courses)

Commendations

1. The use of Oliver Ames' core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations to inform instructional practices
2. The personalization of instruction through the use of various instructional strategies and emphasis on addressing individual learning needs
3. The opportunity to create a customized high school experience through an extensive catalog of clubs, organizations, and athletic teams
4. Instruction that is purposely designed to require student engagement in higher order thinking, problem-solving, and inquiry
5. Regular opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks.
6. Effective integration of technology into daily instruction
7. Commitment to additional student support, especially through effective use of high-quality technology resources
8. The culture of ongoing pedagogical improvement and collaborative reflection
9. Teachers' ongoing involvement in a wide variety of opportunities to maintain content-area expertise and improve instructional practices
10. The Easton School District's commitment to providing teachers with quality professional development focused on improving and enhancing instructional practices

Recommendations

1. Provide time for teachers to work collaboratively on cross-disciplinary lesson development.
2. Continue to offer professional development in the area of active learning

3. Continue to strengthen the use of formative assessment and differentiation across the school by developing consistent, school-wide strategies for assessing student learning through formative assessments and using formative data to inform individualized instruction
4. Improve the process of reflection on student achievement data to include a larger variety of assessments beyond midterm and final exams and MCAS, and develop a process for drawing meaningful conclusions regarding instructional practices
5. Continue to improve instructional practices by providing teachers with more access to current research of teaching practices and time to conduct professional discourse focused on instructional practices

Teaching and Learning Standard



Assessment of and for Student Learning

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

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

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

Conclusions:

All professional staff at Oliver Ames High School consistently employ a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, however, there is little evidence that the rubric has been implemented to measure the whole school's progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. The 21st century learning expectations are posted in every classroom and around the school building. Once a semester, teachers choose one previous assignment for students to complete a self-reflection based on the applicable 21st century learning expectations. After students review and complete a self-reflection form, these assignments, along with the graded rubric, are collected and stored in a student portfolio. Recently, a formal process has been identified and functionality has been added to the X2 on-line gradebook to collect achievement on the specific 21st century learning expectations. There is a plan for this information to be reported out to stakeholders. Currently, there is no process to assess whole school progress. With the added functionality of X2, the school hopes to be able to move forward to assess whole school progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. With the implementation of a formal process based on the school-wide rubric to assess whole school progress, Oliver Ames High School will be able to determine if there is progress toward school-wide achievement of 21st century learning expectations. (student work, teacher interviews, principal, panel discussion)

The professional staff at Oliver Ames High School is in the beginning stages of communicating individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families, but at this time, does not report the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community. Although the process of assessing student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations has been in place for many years, a reporting mechanism has only recently been implemented. In April of 2014, the principal sent a letter

to parents which explained how to access their child's progress on the 21st century skills. The access page in the X2 Portal clarifies the measurement scale used to identify the degree of achievement on 21st century learning expectations. While the school continues to develop the reporting program, no benchmark dates have been identified yet. When the staff of Oliver Ames High School communicates individual student and whole school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to stakeholders, there will be clear understanding of strengths and areas for improvement for students and teachers will be better able to adjust curriculum and instructional practices to meet student needs. (principal, teacher interviews, student work, school expectations, school-wide rubrics, online grade book)

The professional staff at Oliver Ames High School collects, disaggregates, and analyzes limited data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement for some groups but not all. MCAS results for students with disabilities was the only data source cited to analyze identified inequities in student achievement. In September of 2013, in a special education department meeting, a plan was developed for each student with an IEP to strengthen areas of weakness. There is limited evidence that data for other groups are disaggregated and analyzed to respond to educational inequities. Teachers do review and analyze results on midterm and final exams, but they do not disaggregate and analyze inequities. By using a variety of data sources (i.e. attendance data, grades, course placement decisions and drop-out data) and increasing the frequency in which assessment data is disaggregated and analyzed, increased achievement opportunities for all students will be realized. (teacher interviews, principal, common planning time meeting minutes, self-study)

Prior to each unit of study, most teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. It is common practice for teachers to regularly post learning expectations prior to and during units of study. The 21st century

learning expectations are posted on the wall in each class. During classroom observations, teachers referenced which learning expectations would be addressed in the unit of study. There is a school-wide policy that all teachers clearly communicate the 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed at the beginning of each unit of study. There is agreement among students and parents that this is a consistent practice. Additionally common language exists within the school to communicate learning expectations. By consistently communicating the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed to students prior to each unit of study, students have a clear understanding of criteria for success and an increased understanding of the connection between what is being taught in class and the 21st century learning objectives. (Endicott College Survey, self-study, student interviews , teacher interviews)

Distribution of rubrics prior to summative assessments is widespread and the use of rubrics is clearly evident in student work samples. Rubrics used are varied by department; at least once a semester in each class students are also assessed on the school-wide rubrics to assess achievement on the 21st century learning expectations. Nearly 90% of students report that their teachers use rubrics to assess their work and 82% report that they understand the rubrics. By consistently providing rubrics prior to assessments, students in all classes understand in advance how to demonstrate achievement of both course and school-wide learning expectations. (Endicott college survey, self-study, teacher interviews, student work, student interviews)

In each unit of study, some teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. The use of varied types of summative assessments with rubrics is common place with the teachers at Oliver Ames High School but the use of formative assessments is inconsistent. Student work samples included varied types of summative assessments. Although teachers use different methods of formative assessments, such as dipsticking, questioning and exit

tickets, these practices were not always used effectively. There were minimal examples of formative assessments that address higher order thinking skills observed. Teachers were observed using exemplars for various assignments. By increasing the frequency of formative assessments, along with maintaining the strong use of varied types of summative assessments, students will have targeted areas for improvement and a variety of ways to demonstrate understanding. (teacher interviews, panel discussion, student interviews, student work)

The vast majority of teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of summative assessments, including common assessments but there was no evidence of collaboration on formative assessments. Teachers engage in common planning on a monthly basis. This has provided some opportunities for teachers to collaborate on creation, analysis and revision of assessments. This practice is evidenced by multiple examples of revised summative assessments in multiple content areas. Teachers have developed and revised common midterm and final exams during these meeting times. Teachers also collaborate to revise assessments during prep periods, and after and before school; however, there is no evidence that this work is being done to create common formative assessments nor is it part of the curriculum revision process. By systematically collaborating on common summative and formative assessments, student achievement of course-specific and school-wide learning expectations will be measured with consistency. (department meeting minutes, principal, teacher interviews, student work, self-study)

Most teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. 76% of students responded that teachers provide students with suggestions that help improve their work, and 67% of parents concur. Teachers were frequently observed providing feedback to students in classes. Some teachers add comments and suggestions on papers, and others give verbal feedback to the students to help them revise their written work. In English classes,

students are given feedback on their papers, and then they are allowed to rewrite the assignment to improve performance. Some teachers were observed implementing formative assessments, such as exit tickets, dipsticking, and review quizzes on interactive white boards. Increasing the opportunity for students to receive specific, timely and corrective feedback ensures students will revise and improve their work which increases their opportunities to achieve course and school-wide 21st century learning expectations. (teacher interviews, student interviews, student work, Endicott College survey)

Some teachers use formative assessments in a limited way to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Teachers at Oliver Ames High School were observed using exit tickets, quick checks and dip sticking during class visits. Teachers reported using Moodle, quizzes, classroom clickers and pre-tests. While many teachers are using these practices to check for understanding, there is no formal process to ensure consistent and ongoing formative assessments to reach every student. Minimal evidence exists to suggest that formative assessments are used to inform and adapt instruction. No time is specifically devoted for the purpose of reviewing formative assessment data to make changes in instructional strategies. The development of a consistent and robust system for using formative assessments to adapt instructional strategies within each lesson will help ensure the teacher can tailor the instruction to best meet the needs of each student. (Survey data, teacher interviews, panel meeting, classroom visits, student shadowing)

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, occasionally examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including, student work, common course assessments, and standardized assessments; however, they do not examine school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, survey data from current students and alumni, or data from receiving schools or post-secondary institutions. Standardized assessments, such as MCAS and Advanced Placement exams, are

examined to identify needs in curriculum or changes to instruction to close achievement gaps. For example, English, math, and science department members analyze MCAS data during meeting times to find the areas of the test where students did not perform well. With this information, teachers tailor their teaching to areas of student weakness and alter their instructional practices. AP teachers use the results from the AP exams to change the sequence of the information that is taught to the class and implement revised assessments. Departments meet and analyze both midterm and final exams to determine where students are proficient and where more instruction is needed. Despite all of these practices, the school does not have a mechanism to evaluate this information to revise curriculum and improve instruction. Survey data from current students, alumni, receiving schools and postsecondary institutions is not used to revise curriculum and improve instructional practices. While the analysis of student work, common course assessments, and standardized assessments is taking place in some departments, teachers and administrators will be better able to revise curriculum and improving instructional practice when they use data sources that also include school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, examine survey data from current students and alumni, and examine data from receiving schools, or post-secondary institutions. (student work, teacher interviews, panel presentation)

Grading and reporting practices are in the process of reviewing and revising to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. There is a plan in place to begin to report individual achievement on the 21st century learning expectations. Functionality was added to the X2 on-line gradebook to allow teachers to document achievement of specific 21st century learning expectations. While there are common midterm and final exams, the school plans to increase common assessments to include common unit assessments. There is not a regular review of schools grading practices to ensure they align with the school's core values about beliefs about learning. The development of a regular process to revise and review grading and reporting practices to ensure

alignment with the school's core values and beliefs would further ensure that these practices are aligned to the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, principal, on-line grade book)

Commendations:

1. The establishment of school-wide rubrics to assess individual student progress on achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
2. The communication of learning expectations and alignment to the 21st century learning expectations to students
3. The widespread use of rubrics across content areas
4. The use of varied types of summative assessments with rubrics
5. The examination of standardized assessments, such as MCAS and Advanced Placement exams, to identify needs in curriculum or changes to instruction to close achievement gaps

Recommendation:

1. Develop a formal process to assess the whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
2. Implement a process to communicate progress on achieving 21st century learning expectations to stakeholders.
3. Implement a strategic process to collect, disaggregate and analyze data from a wide range of assessments to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement and to adjust instruction
4. Implement a plan to ensure use of formative assessments, including formative assessments that address higher order thinking skills to adjust instruction.

5. Provide an update on the plan to regularly review grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning
6. Examine survey data from current students, alumni, and post-secondary institutions to revise curriculum and improve instructional practices
7. Explore strategies to allow teachers time to collaborate to develop common assessments, to review, analyze and share assessment data to inform the instructional program

SUPPORT STANDARDS

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

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 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. There are many methods by which the school community fosters a positive environment. For example, the student and faculty handbook includes the Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Core Values and Beliefs, and Academic Expectations, which outline the expectations for student behavior and learning. In addition, the morning Words of Wisdom, as well as Mr. Paul's Twitter account, Weekly Faculty Newsletter, and Positive Parent Phone Call, all contribute to an environment that is respectful and supportive. Past school-wide assemblies addressing the topic of bullying and future assemblies addressing dating violence contribute to the conscious building of a positive and compassionate school culture. Along with these more formal efforts, Oliver Ames pride is easily apparent through routine spirit events and personalized displays of encouragement throughout the campus. In terms of the physical building, a strong sense of collective ownership is apparent through exceptionally clean facilities, numerous student created murals and inspirational quotes, displays of athletic achievements, and signs promoting tolerance, awareness, and understanding. As a result of a tragic loss, the Oliver Ames community instituted the Day of Kind-Ness, a community service day devoted to various beautification projects within the local area. All of these efforts have created a culture that is inclusive for both teachers and students, as there is a tangible sense of "Tiger Pride" in the hallways, classrooms, and beyond. Due to a positive, respectful, and supportive culture in which shared ownership and pride are the norm, students are effectively prepared to embody the Core Values and Beliefs of Oliver Ames High School. (self-study, student shadowing, principal, teacher interviews, facility tour, panel presentation)

The school is somewhat equitable and inclusive, due to the limited degree of heterogeneous core courses (English/language arts, social studies, math, science, or world language) that are available to students over the course of their high school experience within the current curriculum. As evidenced by the Program of

Studies and Self-Study Report, the only core discipline that has unlevleed courses is world language. As of 2014, ninety-seven percent of freshmen at Oliver Ames were enrolled in such a class. Three percent of the freshmen class are not enrolled in a heterogeneous course, due in part to special education classifications and resulting course placement considerations. It is unclear how many heterogeneous courses in which the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade populations are enrolled as relevant data is not available. While there are several electives that are unlevleed, such as Foods, Theater Arts, Writing Seminar, and some music courses, most these courses are not considered a part of the core disciplines. The Program of Studies does not explicitly identify courses that are heterogeneous within the individual course descriptions, however, the narrative introductions touch upon various prerequisites required to enroll in specific course opportunities. The principal referenced his focus on identifying opportunities to move students to more challenging levels of coursework as a result of their successful performance, which is supported through the course selection recommendation process. While there has been an increase in challenging curriculum through AP course offerings, these courses still do not provide students with opportunities to participate in unlevleed classes. By offering more heterogeneously grouped core courses, students will be better able to meet the Core Values and Learning Expectations in all areas of the curricula. (Self-Study, principal, teacher interviews, school website, school publications)

There is a formal advisory program in need of more structure 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 entire student body has a daily advisory period from 9:33 to 9:45, during which students are placed in peer groups of 12-16 students, all of whom meet with the same teacher throughout their high school career. All teachers, as well as two school psychologists, one school adjustment counselor, one assistant principal, and the school principal, are responsible for an advisory period. The relationships formed in the advisories cultivate a culture where students have an adult in addition to the school counselor who can provide personal and scholastic

support, academic and co-curricular advice, and assistance in developing 21st century skills as defined by Oliver Ames High School. While nearly all students and staff surveyed recognized and appreciated the value of the advisories, many acknowledged a lack of consistency throughout the building in terms of daily process, topics, and curriculum. A wide range of approaches to advisory were observed, some of which included advisors helping students with homework, checking in informally, reviewing academic anxieties and strengths in individual conferences, and discussing the prolonged absence of a student. Less structured approaches to advisory were also observed. In addition to the advisory program, there are other mechanisms to support student connections to faculty outside of their school counselor, such as the administration's presence in the student parking lot and daily greetings, the faculty presence in the hallway, and staff presence at extra-curricular events. The implementation of the advisory program at Oliver Ames High School supports students in achieving core values and 21st century learning skills, by fostering a relationship with a supportive adult; however, increased and consistent expectations across advisories would strengthen the program. (self-study, school leadership, teacher interviews, school publications)

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, as well as use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices; however, the principal and professional staff need to dedicate more formal time to implement professional development and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. There are monthly meetings at both the building and district levels for department chairs and curriculum leaders with the principal, as well as central office administrators. In the fall of 2014, there was a shift to replace the four half-days set aside for professional development with two full days, resulting in a more focused and efficient delivery of philosophy, resources, and instructional practices related to Understanding by Design (UbD). There is consistent use of this methodology as teachers develop individual and team Professional

Practice Goals. A monthly meeting of a Faculty Senate also affords staff another opportunity to reflect and analyze aspects of teaching and learning with the principal. Outside resources have also been procured, specifically presentations to staff by Kim Marshall on his evaluation rubric and Wiggins and McTighe on UbD. Once per month, the advisory period is cancelled and students report to the auditorium for an assembly that lasts from 9:33 to 10:54. During this time, each department is afforded the opportunity to meet. This monthly meeting serves as the sole opportunity for common planning time, application, and analysis of skills and practices aimed at improving curriculum, instruction, and assessment. In these meetings, midyear exams, final exams, and MCAS data are analyzed and cross-curricular collaboration and general departmental planning takes place. While nearly all members of the faculty appreciate the value of this time, the stakeholders interviewed – teachers, department chairs, building and district administrators – acknowledge that more than one hour and twenty minutes per month is necessary to implement professional development and analyze pedagogical skills. Additionally, there is pressure to address numerous state, district, and school-wide teaching and learning expectations. When the allotted time for professional development and common planning is increased and aligned more closely with the needs of student achievement, curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices will become more coherent school-wide. (self-study, teacher interviews, principal, department leaders, superintendent)

Over the past two years, school leaders have begun to use multiple research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. In 2013, the Easton Public School System adopted the Massachusetts Model System for Education Evaluation Method and made an effort to link instructional practices to learning. In 2013, the school's web portal, X2, enabled educators to access evaluation feedback rapidly. Beginning in 2014, the district shifted to using the Kim Marshall rubric in lieu of the state model and has utilized Teachpoint software for easier accessibility and communication between staff and evaluators. The expectations set by the administration have been clearly defined and communicated to staff as evidenced by the fact that most teachers have essential questions, warm up, and

closing activities as components of their lessons. All evaluators have been trained in Research by Better Teaching's Observing and Analyzing Teaching, sections I and II. The initial training for evaluators was led by the assistant superintendent who reviewed SMART Goals, rubrics, and teacher observations. Additional training was provided by Tony Wagner, Kim Marshall, and representatives from Teachers 21 in coordination with Easton University. Evaluators reviewed the process with staff at faculty meetings. These presentations and subsequent meetings focused, in part, on goal setting, the process and timeline for evaluation feedback, educator plan development, evidence collection, and additional support for new staff. As staff and evaluators continue to work together and grow more familiar with the rubrics put in place, their ability to positively impact student learning will increase. (self-study, assistant superintendent, principal, teacher interviews, PD day meeting agenda and support materials)

The organization of time partially supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. Departments are afforded an opportunity to meet together once per month for the purposes of common planning time, review of assessments, and curricular planning. Through a collaborative process between staff and building administration, a new schedule was created to uniquely address the needs of the Oliver Ames community. The modified block schedule established in the fall of 2012 allows for increased flexibility for teachers to work with students and increase engagement. This flexibility also prevents the same section or period from continually losing instructional time to assemblies. The addition of two 65 minute blocks in the schedule promote increased student engagement and in depth exploration of topics. Within the last year, district administration has created curriculum leaders. These curriculum leaders are stipended positions that meet monthly to increase vertical alignment of the curricula from PK-12. There are instances of cross-curricular collaboration when teachers' free periods happen to coincide, however, there is no formal opportunity for inter-departmental collaboration. While some teachers meet informally to collaborate, most expressed a desire to meet collaboratively, which would add to the ability of staff to implement additional meaningful changes to

further their work in UbD, common assessments, and calibration and use of building wide rubrics. If an effective plan is put into place to address the time needed for staff to collaborate, staff would have an increased ability to meet the learning needs of all students. (self-study, teacher interviews, central office personnel, panel presentation)

Student load and class size are distributed somewhat inequitably, occasionally making it difficult for teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. Currently, there are 84 teachers at Oliver Ames High School and a total student enrollment of 1,152 students, creating a ratio of 16 students to 1 teacher. Over the past few years, the faculty size has not increased due to a relatively stable student population and budgetary limitations. Although the school-wide student to teacher ratio is quite low, there is great variance in class sizes across disciplines. For example, Honors Algebra II has class sizes that range from 22 to 32 students. In the area of English/language arts, class sizes ranged from 15 to 31 students. In OSHA regulated science courses, some classes were upwards of 30 students, exceeding the OSHA recommendation of 24 students per class. The principal has noted that his educational strategy has been to keep the class sizes of the Standard and College class levels smaller, which has often resulted in larger class sizes for Honors and Advanced Placement level courses. In 2014, for example, the Advanced Placement United States History course has two classes above 34 students, AP Calculus AB has 30 students enrolled, and the Advanced Placement Environmental Science has 31 students enrolled. Additionally, the focus on maintaining comprehensive course offerings in the areas of industrial arts, family and consumer science, business and technology, art, and music also impacts class sizes in other areas. Teachers have reported that such large class sizes, particularly in the upper level courses, make it difficult to meet the learning needs of their students. However, 71.6% of teachers (as well as 66.3% of parents) responded that their student load and class sizes enable them to meet the learning needs of individual students. In regards to elective course offerings, typical class sizes were smaller than in most academic core courses. For example, the Family and Consumer Science courses ranged from 18 to 21 enrolled students and the Art courses ranged from 8 to 19

students. In the 2013-2014 school year, there were twenty-six inclusion classes offered to students in a variety of disciplines, including English, math, social studies, science, art, and business & technology. Although many class sizes are within a reasonable range, a concerted effort to reduce the class sizes of upper level core courses will further support teachers' abilities to meet the learning needs of individual students. (self-study, teacher interviews, principal, class size data, classroom visits)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. In April of 2010, Oliver Ames High School began the process of connecting 21st century learning expectations to the school's mission statement. The revised mission statement resulted in the pervasive and effective use of building-based rubrics that reflect a consistency of expectations across curricula. The principal models this focus on core values by leading an advisory period during the day, maintaining a strong administrative presence at all extra-curricular events, and providing regular opportunities for formal and informal parent meetings. The mission for Oliver Ames High School is to provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating learning environment for students. The principal hosts monthly student-principal breakfasts to discuss how to improve school culture. Opportunities exist for faculty to relay concerns or comments to the principal through the Faculty Senate. 84.3% of students agree that their principal is clear about what he wants the school to accomplish for all of the students. Interviews with teachers confirm a healthy working relationship among the principal and the two assistant principals who help to support a consistent message aligned with the core values, expectations, and beliefs. As a result of the open and communicative leadership style of the principal and building leaders, both Oliver Ames High School teachers and students feel they have a voice and receive relevant feedback and support from administration as they continue to pursue the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. (self-study, Endicott Survey, teacher interviews, student interviews, community member interviews).

Teachers, students, and parents are somewhat involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. There are numerous outreach efforts to involve teachers in the decision-making processes on a formal and informal basis. In a formal sense, there is a Faculty Senate which meets monthly. Prior to these meetings, staff members are urged to complete a form (anonymously or not) outlining concerns regarding school culture, school administration, and/or classroom administration as well as solutions, which are ultimately presented at the Faculty Senate. Throughout the course of the 2013-2014 school year, the Faculty Senate has discussed and resolved concerns relating to the final exam schedule, common planning time, use of cell phones, and comments on report cards. More informally, the principal sends out emails to staff to elicit feedback regarding issues that arise throughout the year. 70% of teachers are also club advisors or coaches, allowing them to influence the school culture and promote responsibility and ownership through their various organizations. There are numerous mechanisms in place that allow the student body to identify and share areas of need and concern with the administration. Informally, the administration welcomes all students into the school every day which provides an opportunity to initiate a friendly conversation. In the 2013-2014 school year, the principal scheduled eleven Student/Principal Breakfasts, where students were invited to join the principal from 7:35 to 8:20 a.m. to discuss concerns or initiatives they would like to put forth. Along with the faculty and some support staff, the principal has a daily advisory of 14 sophomore students, which allows him the opportunity to follow these students over the course of four years and form a strong relationship with them. As the principal and administration supervise all three lunches every day, students have the opportunity to informally discuss concerns. Students feel that they have a mechanism through student government to participate in decision making, such as during the recent revision of fundraising policies. The principal also has a very active Twitter account, in which he published almost 6,000 tweets and has over 2,000 followers. The tweets' topics range from reminders regarding upcoming events, updates on sports teams wins and losses, words of encouragement, and personalized responses to school-related questions and concerns. In the recent past, students have worked with the principal to initiate the

inception of numerous clubs based on interest, such as the Oliver Ames Sign Language Club and the Multicultural Club. The principal hosts three coffee hours throughout the school year to invite parents into the school to discuss pertinent issues and concerns. Although these coffee hours are not well attended, the opportunity for open discussion is most certainly provided and encouraged. Additionally, a few parents participates in the School Council which meets approximately eight times per year. In the areas of music and athletics, parent organizations such as TEMPO (The Easton Music Parents Organization) and the Athletic Booster Club allow for opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. Through the X2 portal, parents are able to access daily school announcements, grades, and teacher comments, as well as make course selections for the upcoming school year. Due to some technological setbacks, individualized student progress on academic, social, and civic expectations has yet to be reported out to parents and other stakeholders at this time. He also noted that he felt that training would be required to enable parents and stakeholders to decipher the grading rubric and interpret it in a way that was useful to their student's progress. Finally, parents, teachers, and students were members of the hiring committee for the most recent assistant principal position. Although there are informal and formal opportunities for students, parents, and teachers to participate in decision-making at the school, it is important to note that only 53.3% of students and 52.7% of parents feel they have opportunities to be involved in important decisions made at the school. While there are many opportunities for students, parents, and teachers to participate in the decision-making at Oliver Ames, increased awareness of such opportunities will result in more students and families taking advantage of them and further engaging in the Oliver Ames High School community. (Faculty Senate minutes, twitter account, Endicott survey, panel presentation, parent interviews, student interviews, teacher interviews)

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership in many different capacities essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. Parents and students report that teachers are available to assist students who are struggling academically. To this end, many faculty members arrive

early and stay late to facilitate student help sessions each day, as well as provide flexibility with assignments as needed. Instances of teacher initiatives, leadership, and shared responsibility for student learning include the student advisory whereby school staff members mentor the same small group of students throughout their high school experience, as well as the strong involvement of teachers in the over 50 extra-curricular activities and various athletic offerings as coaches and advisors. These opportunities allow teachers to lead students in an alternate capacity than their role as classroom teacher and connect with them in a different but powerful way. In a more formal sense, the faculty recently initiated a teacher-led peer observation program, which allowed colleagues to observe each other in the classroom and provide feedback on ways to improve instruction and connect it to the 21st century learning expectations. An Interdisciplinary Committee has volunteer members who meet monthly to collaborate on cross-curricular projects, such as Hamlet in a Hurry – a joint venture between the special education and English departments. There is also collaboration between the physics and music faculty analyzing the physics of sound. Additionally, department heads and curriculum leaders collaborate with faculty from the middle and elementary schools to ensure proper vertical alignment of courses and curriculum. A recent initiative – Easton University – provides a formal structure for professional development opportunities for district employees with minimal out of pocket costs. The most recent professional development work has focused on implementing the Understanding by Design (UbD) curriculum methodology and preparing for the NEASC visit. Throughout the past few years, the initiatives related to adjusting the master schedule, incorporating a formal advisory program, and aligning the curriculum with the UbD model, all included teacher feedback and recommendations and have ultimately helped to improve the overall climate and life of the school. Finally, the Faculty Senate not only asks for teacher concerns or issues but for solutions to the problems that are raised, which helps in keeping the process positive and collaborative. Due to extensive initiative and leadership shown by teachers and staff, an increase in student engagement and learning has been achieved relevant to the school while working toward 21st century learning expectations. (teacher interviews, self-study, assistant superintendent, student interviews)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Frequent communication occurs between the superintendent and principal at bi-weekly meetings as well as monthly meetings with all district administrators. The principal presents regularly to the school committee on various issues concerning building based updates. The current superintendent joined the district on July 1, 2014; the principal and former superintendent benefitted from the familiarity of a thirteen year working relationship. This year the superintendent has made his presence felt in a positive way since early September; he has visited classrooms regularly, and attended building faculty meetings. The school committee and superintendent have spoken of the need to develop a new strategic plan, as 2014-15 is the final year in the current five year strategic plan. The assistant superintendent has also reflectively and constructively collaborated with building administration and school committee throughout the aforementioned transition period to improve the vertical alignment of district curricula and implement the UbD model. Continued meaningful communication among school committee, superintendent, and principal will further support the school's focus on the achievement of its 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, central office personnel, school committee, teacher interviews).

The school board and the superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. There has been significant transition with district and building level administration over the past few years. The superintendent began in the 2014-2015 school year, the assistant superintendent began in the 2013-2014 school year, and one of the high school assistant principals began in the 2013-2014 school year. As a result, the district and building level administration has relied upon the long tenure and experience of the principal to effectively lead the high school in these first months of transition. Recent decisions that the principal has spearheaded include the creation of a new modified block and drop schedule, a formal advisory program, a focus on increasing Advanced Placement course offerings, and the

collaboration with the faculty resulting in the school's Core Values and Beliefs and 21st Century Academic, Social and Civic Expectations. Additionally, the principal has worked with the faculty to ensure that these expectations are tied into the actual teaching and learning that occurs in the classrooms through the creation and pervasive use of relevant rubrics in all disciplines. As the district spends less per student than the state-wide average, the principal has been instrumental in crafting the School Improvement Plan and helping to identify budgetary needs for the school. The principal had autonomy in leading the hiring process for an assistant principal for the 2013-2014 school year, as well as the hiring of positions in various departments stemming from retirements. 88.6% of staff and 67.7% of parents felt that the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. As the majority of this data was collected under the tenure of the previous school superintendent, it will be important to continually reassess the principal's ability to make decisions going forward under the new leadership to retain the impressive building-wide focus on core values and beliefs. (Endicott Survey, principal, teacher interviews, superintendent, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The principal's dynamic and inclusive leadership which creates a climate that fosters students' responsibility
2. The shared sense of community among students, staff, and community stakeholders
3. The building culture in which all staff actively work to support student needs and well-being
4. The active involvement of a majority of the staff in one or more of the 50 plus clubs and 25 sports teams
5. The connection fostered between many students and their advisors
6. The continued effort by all staff to maintain two-way communication through transitions between various evaluation rubrics

7. The commitment of district and building administration to obtain meaningful outside professional development
8. The collaborative process used to create a schedule unique to the needs of Oliver Ames High School
9. Regular and meaningful opportunities for school stakeholders to have a voice in perpetuating Oliver Ames High School core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
10. The principal and building administration's personal mission to connect with and involve every student in the Oliver Ames High School community
11. The many formal and informal opportunities afforded to students to participate in the decision-making process
12. The regular communication between principal and school committee during a time of central office transition.
13. The assistant superintendent's dynamic and knowledgeable approach to developing meaningful support for curriculum and instruction
14. The autonomy given to the principal to make effective decisions for the school and community

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a plan to address the lack of heterogeneously grouped courses in the core disciplines
2. Establish and formalize the expectations for students and staff participating in the advisory program
3. Develop and implement a plan to provide additional time for professional development, as well as common planning around focused school-wide goals
4. Provide additional opportunities for institutional and formalized opportunities for inter-departmental and departmental collaboration.

5. Develop and implement a plan to increase the equity of the class sizes, particularly in the honors and Advanced Placement levels.
6. Consider ways to address the disconnect between the available means for parental involvement and the perceived lack of opportunities
7. Continue to identify professional development opportunities for staff based on specific needs within the school.

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:

Oliver Ames has implemented 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. Oliver Ames supports the student body, including students identified as at-risk, through collaborative interaction among the guidance department, health services, special education, and teaching staff. The guidance department, staffed with four full-time counselors, one who additionally acts as director, has established a process to identify students at-risk for academic, emotional, and physical needs. Through the Instructional Support Team (IST), students who have been identified by staff or their families as being in need can be referred through a formal referral process coordinated by the guidance department. This interdisciplinary team composed of educators, administration, school counselors, adjustment counselor, school psychologist, and additional qualified personnel, meet bi-weekly to address learning, behavioral, and socio-emotional concerns. In addition to IST, Oliver Ames identifies students who may have disabilities that require increased intensive supports which they document through the development of Individual Education Plans, Section 504, and when needed, Curriculum Accommodations Plans. Oliver Ames staffs one full-time nurse who provides for the direct health needs of the students, including triage, illness, and first aid. Furthermore, the nurse participates as necessary in support-based team meetings, including IST, special education, section 504, and additional meetings to identify and support at-risk students. The nurse, in collaboration with the school psychologist and school adjustment counselor, maintains a list of resources that staff, students, and families can use to access community resources to support both physical and mental health needs of the students. Special education services, through a combination of inclusive support and pull-out programs, provides academic, behavioral, and adaptive skills specifically designed for the intensive needs of some special education students during the school year and in extended school year programs. There is much to celebrate in the support these areas provide

to the student body, and particularly to those students who are at-risk, including the implementation of timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies. However, the support staff articulated that due to the limited level of staff, they recognize there is a lack of on-going evaluation and analysis of data for the improvement of services and the support of the school's 21st century expectations. The significant contribution provided by the support staff will be enhanced through the consistent collection and review of data, in the areas of guidance and health services, which will allow for the assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency within current services and planning for future needs, which will support the students' ability to appropriately access and achieve 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, student interviews, school committee meeting, leadership team meeting, standards committee meeting, central office staff meeting)

Oliver Ames High School support personnel provide information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. The nurse, guidance counselors, adjustment counselor, psychologists and other support personnel are available to families in need on an ongoing basis to offer services within the school and to suggest referrals to professional services outside the school. The Instructional Support Team (IST) meets on a bi-weekly basis to address students who are most in need and provide consultative support to staff and families through a prevention-oriented approach. In cases where the counselors feel students need further support, families are contacted directly and informed of available services, such as the 504 Plan and Individualized Instruction Plans, or services outside of school such as therapy or hospitalization. The Oliver Ames website serves as an information resource readily accessible to families. Links to documents such as the Easton Public Schools Bullying Prevention Plan, The WIC Nutrition Program, and Student Accident Medical Insurance plans are accessible from the website homepage. The nurse maintains a webpage which provides links to the Massachusetts Department of Health's Fact Sheets for families to gain information about public health concerns such as the seasonal flu and the enterovirus. The nurse

webpage also provides links to the Oliver Ames Student Health Services Handbook which describes the school health policies and services available to all Oliver Ames High School students. Forms, policies and services provided by the school nurse are further highlighted on the webpage. Likewise, the school psychologists' and school adjustment counselor's webpages describe the roles and services offered for at-risk students in both the regular and special education programs. The guidance department website focuses on career and college services with links to pertinent websites. The special education website informs families about the curriculum programs offered to support special needs students, including Specialized Reading, Academic Support, and Project Opportunity. Because the school support personnel make a concerted effort to communicate with families and provide them with a variety of resources in varied formats, parents are able to help their children be better prepared to achieve 21st century learning expectations. (school website, self-study, parent interviews, school support staff)

Oliver Ames support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. The guidance department facilitates 24 hour access to Aspen grading software for students and parents, and parents can access up-to-the-minute attendance records along with academic information. The Counseling and Career Center (CCC), which seats eighteen students, is equipped with six desktop computers with access to the internet. In addition to the computers, the CCC also has an interactive white board for group presentations. Each counselor is also equipped with a laptop computer with access to the internet and the new Naviance platform. The library has an array of technology resources. The library hosts one computer lab with thirty computers and one interactive white board. Additionally, the library features eight computers which are available for students to use throughout the school day. There are also an iPad lab with thirty iPads and a Chromebook lab with 30 chromebooks. Faculty can reserve two mobile wireless labs that house a total of twenty-seven laptop computers. For research purposes, students have access to databases that facilitate their quest for

online information. These databases include EbscoHost, Gale, and Bloom's Literary Reference. Within each of these databases, the school community can access in-house and remote magazines, journals, and e-books. There is also an online catalog, Destiny, that provides access to all school libraries, grades 3-12, in the district. The library also utilizes its own twitter handle, @oalibrary, in an effort to better communicate with students. The Oliver Ames library provides its own website with access to all of the above mentioned resources. The Aspen software provides the nurse with the ability to maintain confidential electronic health records and allows the faculty to view relevant health alerts of a student in a discretionary manner. The technology helps the nurse standardize her documentation and easily access a student's status, visits, and trends. Through the utilization of technology the nurse submits data for grant applications and documentation to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The technology enables the nurse to provide pertinent student health information to the parents/guardians and receive relevant non- health information from the parents/guardian giving the nurse a more holistic view of the student. Technology supports the psychologists, adjustment counselor and special education teachers. The Aspen software helps the two school psychologists and one adjustment counselor track student progress. The eight special education teachers each have two computers in their classrooms for student usage. The special education teachers access various teaching/tutorial computer programs, for instance, EasyTeach and Dragon Naturally Speaking Program, to assist in their teaching strategies. The Aspen software helps the special education teachers and the students in tracking student progress. Assistive technology for visually and hearing impaired students is provided through the special education department. Closed Circuit Television, portable hand held magnifying devices and a computer with reverse color (black on white keys) as well as a scanner and printer are available to support students with disabilities. FM Trainer/Microphone enables teachers to communicate with hearing impaired students. Information pertaining to a student's Individual Educational Plan, 504 Plan, and medical issues/conditions is available via Aspen for appropriate school personnel, while maintaining confidentiality for students. The effective use of technology

provides an array of access to resources that assist students in their attainment of 21st century expectations. (self-study, guidance counselor interview, librarian interview, student interviews, facility tour)

Oliver Ames has an adequate number of certified guidance personnel but because the staffing ratio is well over 250 students per counselor, it limits their ability to 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 to area social services and health agencies, use ongoing relevant assessment data consistently to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The guidance department website provides information regarding the college process for families and students to access. The guidance department has not recently updated their developmental guidance program.

Documentation provided shows that the "developmental binder" contains information from 2005 and 2008. Each counselor, with the exception of the director, has a student caseload that approaches 300 students. The director, in addition to a caseload of 265, is responsible for the supervision of counselors within the middle school and high school, creation of the master schedule following the input from staff and administration, maintaining an accurate list of scholarships and their donors, writing and organizing the script for the annual Class Scholarship Night, and aligning the department's plan to meet 21st century expectations. Guidance counselors struggle to maintain ongoing individual and group meetings with all students. Counselors attempt to meet with each student at least twice a year and more often with juniors and seniors due to college related issues. The department inconsistently provides in-class, small group and individual meetings with students in order to share information regarding transitioning to high school, learning about graduation requirements, course selection, informing about co-curricular activities, and instruction on the availability and use of the Aspen system and the newly implemented Naviance platform. Counselors provide college counseling with

students and parents through evening hours from October to February. Counselors plan and conduct two college information nights for parents. They disseminate scholarship information to seniors and parents via the school website and are members of the selection committee for certain scholarships. In addition to the academic supports, counselors attend IST meetings, designed to assist students who are struggling with daily adjustments in classes (attendance, failures, social adjustment). They are members of the school's Crisis Team, which requires them to be on call for any tragedies that may occur within the school community, and they serve as members of the Emergency Response Team, who respond to immediate needs within the building. Counselors' responsibilities extend beyond the academic and social well-being of students. Counselors collaborate with various agencies such as the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Lutheran Social Service, Education Inc. (home tutoring), hospital and inpatient programs, the College Board regarding services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), and local SAT preparatory programs. The guidance department has one licensed school adjustment counselor who services a caseload of over 100 students. The adjustment counselor provides mental health services to a weekly caseload of fifty-eight students, monitors an additional forty-nine at-risk students, and attempts to be accessible for walk-in needs as they arise. As of April 2014, multiple students had been placed on a waiting list for appointments due to the lack of space in the adjustment counselor's schedule. The adjustment counselor reports that current caseload reduces the ability to maintain timely and effective mental health support services to student. Within the counseling department there is one guidance administrative assistant supporting the four counselors with clerical duties including answering the telephone, setting up appointments with students, parents and outside social agencies, registering students for standardized testing and other high stake testing, and attending to the daily guidance routines. While the use of new technology has been helpful in assisting guidance counselors to meet the needs of students and families many tasks remain incomplete. Students and families are sometimes unaware as to the process of accessing guidance services or what types of services may be available to them. Over half of students surveyed reported

not having regularly met with their guidance counselor. On an annual basis, the guidance director gathers data from various sources to generate the school's Academic Profile which provides the percentage of students attending colleges, entering the workforce, or enrolling in the military. Results from standardized tests such as the AP/SAT/ACT's are reported to validate the school's college preparatory curriculum. Currently, data collected is infrequently used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the guidance services and is recognized by counselors as an area of need. While the school profile focuses on college preparedness, it falls short in addressing the career education curriculum, due to the elimination of a half-time career counselor last year. The current number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff limits the evaluation and direct servicing of timely and consistent personal, academic, career, and college counseling that allows students to develop the necessary 21st century skills. (Endicott Study, self-study, student interviews, leadership team meeting, standards committee meeting, central office staff meeting, support services meeting, principal)

The school's health services have a limited number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff to provide preventative health services, direct intervention services, ongoing health assessments and clerical duties. Oliver Ames High School health services department is managed by one full-time registered nurse who provides services for all students and faculty. The nurse sees approximately fifty students a day for direct care. Students are triaged based on their needs. During heavy traffic times, such as the lunch period, students frequently have to wait to be seen by the nurse or are referred to other support personnel for assistance. Direct care involves first aid, nursing assessments, referrals, medication administration, management of chronic health conditions such as diabetes, and emergency care. Students typically are treated and return to class 86-90% of the time to ensure optimum class time. The remainder of students are referred to other members of the support team or dismissed. The nurse makes appropriate referrals, often in conjunction with the IST team, to services, programs, and facilities in the community. Physicals are completed in a timely fashion and pertinent information is

shared with appropriate staff. A concussion policy has been implemented and documentation is overseen and maintained by the nurse. The nurse ensures that students and staff adhere to updated policies and procedures that provide for the students' health, safety, and education. Student learning is optimized as much as possible as a result of these proactive measures. In addition to direct student care, the nurse often consults with parents or guardians and communicates with them via telephone and email. Documents for all students, such as physicals, doctor's notes, and data from screenings are reviewed by the nurse, entered on X2, and placed in students' health files. Pertinent information on students' life-threatening conditions such as allergies, asthma or seizure disorders are entered as alerts to appropriate faculty members on X2 to ensure student safety. Confidential student health documents may only be processed by a certified nurse. The nurse conducts, and is in compliance with, Massachusetts Department of Health (MDPH) mandated screenings and assessments. Postural, Body Mass Index, hearing and vision screenings are conducted by the nurse for students in grades 9, 10, and 11. Data is reported to MDPH and parents are notified of any issues as per MDPH regulations. The nurse works collaboratively with other departments including the school adjustment counselors and physical education teachers and is an integral member of the Crisis and Instructional Support Teams. The nurse is actively involved in annual school-wide presentations on suicide prevention and other health-related issues. As part of a preventative health services program, the nurse educates faculty at the beginning of each school year conducting Epinephrine pen (Epi pen) training and disseminating vital health care information on universal precautions, field trip guidelines, symptoms of life-threatening allergy situations, medical emergency and seizure protocols, and the school wellness policy. The nurse maintains a webpage on the school website to disseminate updated health information for students, their parents/guardians, and teachers. Sporadically, the nurse uses 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. For example, the nurse has used data on a reduction in the rate of concussions at the school to support the need for continued,

effective education on how to avoid concussions. Although the nurse is able to provide dynamic support, she, the faculty, and administration express the need for additional support in the area of health services. Substitute nurses are used, when available, to cover school nurse absences, to assist with Department of Public Health (DPH) mandated screenings, and to assist with clerical support and paperwork. The nurse reports that she is often unable to attend student meetings or actively involve parents in their student's health needs due to lack of time caused by disproportionate student load. With the consistent and growing volume of various student health issues, prescribed state mandates and regulations, and involvement in general wellness programs, having adequate nursing resources available plays a vital role in ensuring the health and well-being of students so they may be better able to achieve the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, facility tour, standards committee meeting, central office staff meeting, support services meeting, principal)

Library/information services have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff, 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 student learning; however, the library services are underutilized and are only partially integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices, and occasionally 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. The library media center staff at Oliver Ames consists of one full-time, licensed library media specialist (LMS), who also serves the district schools as department chair, and one full-time library paraprofessional. The resources at the library media center are available for the entire school community and the facility is seen as a "hot spot" of activity, particularly before and after school, and during lunch. The LMS strives to be actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum and supports the need for a fully integrated information

literacy based curriculum. The LMS utilizes Tools for Real-Time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (TRIALS) online assessment program with all freshmen to assess students' information literacy and research skills during what is planned to be an annual freshman orientation to the library media center. Some teachers bring classes or send students to the library media center throughout the day for independent work or formal instruction, however, there is no formal curriculum integration of information literacy skills for all students, grades 9 to 12. The LMS is readily available on an as needed basis to teach 21st century research skills (use of databases, keyword searching, website evaluation, proper MLA citation practices, and ethical use of information) to support the school's 21st century learning expectations that students will be "discerning and able users of information." A wide range of library materials, technologies, and online information services support the school's curriculum and meet the needs and interests of students. The library media center has a strong on-line presence with links to 46 databases, eBooks and the online Destiny catalog which searches the print collection of over 12,000 books. The library media website serves as a 24/7 portal reaching out to students via the "Ask A Librarian" link and LibGuides created by the LMS. Wireless access and the Bring Your Own Device policy increase access to information in the library media center and throughout the school. Due to the increase in both the use and quantity of chromebooks, iPads, and laptop carts available for classes to borrow, and the increased demand for scheduling several computer labs consistently throughout the day, the role of the library media paraprofessional has greatly expanded. In addition to laptops and desktop computers, the library media center has two interactive whiteboard boards and a document camera available for class instruction in the library media center. Strong staff and student support exists for the library media center, its staff and resources. By providing a wide range of library media resources and services that are fully integrated into the curriculum, students are better able to achieve the 21st century learning expectations and goals. (self study, school support staff, student interviews, teacher interviews)

There is an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations, provide inclusive learning opportunities, and perform ongoing assessment using relevant data. Oliver Ames identifies students who may be at-risk for academic, emotional, behavioral, and health needs. Through informal collaboration and formal evaluation processes, students are identified for intervention services, including the development of Curriculum Accommodation Plans (CAP), Section 504 Accommodation Plans, and Individual Education Programs (IEP). Within special education there are 181 students receiving IEP services. There are eight full-time special education teachers, eight paraprofessionals, one adjustment counselor, two school psychologists, one specialist for English Language Learners (ELL), who also provides some literacy assistance for students in need, one clerical support person and the district Director of Special Education (located at the central office), who coordinates all personnel in the areas of special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English Language Learners. Currently, the principal serves as the special education department head and the school psychologists chair all IEP and department meetings, including initial evaluations, reevaluations, and annual review meetings. There is a protocol in place for newly identified ELL students called English Language Learners Protocol for Easton Public Schools. Students are assessed to determine the reading, listening, and comprehension of the identified student. The ELL Protocol Home Language Survey needs to be adjusted to accommodate all ELL students. ELL training is available for classroom teachers as required by new state guidelines. In order to meet the rising demands of a burgeoning ELL population, Oliver Ames High School has hired one ELL teacher who works 20 hours per week. Additionally, Oliver Ames High School has enrolled in an ELL graduate program and will train one teacher who will be a full-time ELL teacher. Two English teachers and the high school principal are currently enrolled in the state mandated ELL training program. Some formal levels of collaboration exist between support services, including guidance, special education, and regular education, to provide an opportunity for students to achieve 21st century expectations. The

special education department has substantially separate support classes in language-based learning and adaptive life skills that allows for the inclusion of students with significant disabilities into their school's environment and community. Students are accommodated and provided academic support within classrooms and there is an emphasis by support staff, teachers, and administration on maximizing the student's individual abilities to achieve at a high academic level. The variety of specially designed instruction allows students to meet 21st century expectations. Although there is evidence of some regular support for students who are struggling (directed study, teacher content seminars, and extra help sessions before and after school), special education staff members who have been instrumental in the development of the IST program are hopeful that future provision of appropriate instructional and intervention strategies for regular education teachers will result in greater success for students. Since there has been an increase in the number of students found eligible for special education due to social, emotional, and behavioral diagnoses, staffing levels are constantly monitored. Ongoing assessment of special education is documented through IEPs and through state level coordinated program reviews. While Oliver Ames shows a positive performance based on the state required mandates, there is an identified need for coordinated, consistent, and intentional evaluation as to the effective use of data to determine the efficiency with which special education decisions and services are implemented. The guidance department acknowledges that there is a need to consistently collect and evaluate data to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the services they provide and in the determination of the areas in need of improving. While there is adequate staffing to address students' direct needs, staff efficiency and services would be improved by the examination of roles and responsibilities devoted to better coordinating the organization of case-loads, facilitation of IEP meetings and student testing, intermediating between district and school needs, and assessing department effectiveness through the collection and analysis of data. (self study, school support staff meeting, student interviews, teacher interviews, central office meeting, curriculum, classroom visits, student shadowing)

Commendations

1. The dedication of the guidance who support students with limited resources
2. The effective collaboration between support personnel and school faculty
3. The commitment of the school nurse to provide services to support students' health and wellness
4. The dynamic and inviting library media center that is fully equipped to support the curriculum and meet the needs and interests of staff and students
5. The ongoing initiatives of the library media specialist to reach out to staff and students and provide resources that support the 21st century learning expectations of all students
6. The variety of specially designed instruction allowing special education students to meet 21st century expectations

Recommendations

1. Evaluate data to be proactive in identifying the current and future needs of the student body in relation to academic, social, and health related concerns
2. Assess the effectiveness of current guidance counseling support services in providing adequate supports to student with academic, emotional, and college/career needs
3. Ensure that students with social and emotional needs are receiving adequate counseling services
4. Develop a formal process to regularly collect data and update the developmental guidance program
5. Design and implement a plan for a formal, integrated library information literacy skills program designed to support 21st century learning skills for all students

6. Create a plan to ensure that the nurse is able to more effectively 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



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 served by Oliver Ames High School and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient equipment, as well as sufficient instructional materials and supplies; however, further steps must be taken to ensure that sufficient professional and support staff, a full range of technology support, and ongoing professional development are provided. Over the past three years, Oliver Ames High School's budget has increased consistently, starting in FY 2011-2012 by 2.98%, by 1.58% in FY 2012-2013, and FY 2013-2014 by 4.39%. With this funding, Oliver Ames High School is able to offer a wide range of school programs and services. The school has increased the student user fee for sports participation from \$125 to \$150 per sport with family caps of \$375 increasing to \$600. There has been a \$100 surcharge added per student for ice hockey and gymnastics due to the higher per player participation cost. There is an additional \$150 student activity fee, which covers participation in performance arts. This extracurricular fee has not increased during the 2013-2014 school year, however, the family cap has increased from \$375 to \$600. Parent booster organizations (such as athletics, music, and drama) also support students in a variety of ways and through various fund raisers and private donations. The school prides itself on providing and maintaining a comprehensive high school experience through diverse course offerings, including numerous electives and a recent increase in AP course offerings. The Oliver Ames Program of Studies illustrates the high degree of student choice. Oliver Ames also thoroughly supports Project Opportunity for students with special needs. These classrooms are a naturally cohesive part of the building which foster daily positive student interactions and understanding. Additionally, students with disabilities are welcomed and supported in the allied arts courses and many science labs. Besides academics, programs including job coaching, summer programs, and participation in the spring Special Olympics provide students with experiential learning opportunities. The school also boasts a large variety of clubs and sports driven by student interests, thus demonstrating support for the school's core values, beliefs and expectations for learning. These

programs are well supported by many organizations within the community. The inclusive nature of the school helps to develop a high student investment and interest in co-curriculars which is beginning to outstrip the number of spaces accessible after school. The school administration is currently exploring options to fully and efficiently utilize the existing facility and site space to support the continued growth of student driven co-curriculars as needed to help maintain this high level of student engagement beyond the classroom. Throughout the school, Oliver Ames provides sufficient equipment as well as sufficient instructional materials and supplies. Each classroom is equipped with an interactive white board and projector, and many also have access to document camera for easily sharing note taking strategies or student work examples. Oliver Ames High School has implemented a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy and upgraded the wi-fi system. This allows students to use their own electronic device to take notes, create projects, and gather information. Additionally, iPad and Chromebook carts are accessible, and are scheduled through the library. The school offers wood, metal, and small engine repair shops, business courses, and fine arts. The wood and metal shops are outfitted with sufficient equipment, including CAD stations and drafting/ design desks, as well as proper safety equipment and posted protocols. The music department provides some school provided instruments, has instrument storage rooms, and a music composition lab for students to engage in all aspects of the musical process. A Mac lab for visual arts and design is also readily available. The business classes have access to a web design lab. The school has well-equipped science labs, containing the proper safety equipment, posted protocols, Vernier for probes and software, and locked chemical storage. There is also one language lab with 30 stations and four general computer labs. A media room outfitted with Dreamweaver software and Mac computers provides students with the opportunity to inform school and community members on a variety of topics. This wide range of available technology enhances teaching and learning throughout the disciplines. Additionally, the physical education classes include the use of a well-maintained fitness/weight room, dance studio, two gyms, locker rooms, and fields, including a multi-purpose turf field. The family and consumer

science courses utilize sewing machines and kitchen spaces to develop real world competencies. The wide range of visual, performing, and industrial arts coupled with the family and consumer science and physical education courses provide students with opportunities to express creativity and develop a curiosity that enhances their educational experience at Oliver Ames High School. Generally, the student population is adequately serviced by the existing professional and support staff. Class sizes within the core disciplines and many electives, especially those at the AP and honors levels are large but there has been a continued commitment to providing a comprehensive range of course offerings. There have been no recent reductions in teaching or support staff due to budgetary concerns. There is a full-time school resource officer who monitors a video security system in conjunction with administration to maintain a safe learning environment. There is a health office staffed by one nurse. The nurse reports that the current demands of health issues, including concussion protocol, presents a drain on the health office staffing. Although a full range of technology is available to teachers and students through the BYOD policy and school provided resources, there is only one full time technology director who, though housed in the high school, is responsible for providing technology support for the entire district. There is also a .5 IT support staff member, who is primarily located at the middle school, whose focus is supporting the Mac computers. The school administration reports that they are continuing to monitor the efficiency of technical support to ensure that recent improvements in technology availability are adequately supported. The school department has made a significant financial commitment to ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, with a district-wide focus on Understanding by Design (UbD). Collaborative professional development is also available through Easton University, which is teacher driven, and through Norfolk County Teachers Association professional development courses. Additionally, common planning time is utilized in departments once a month. These meetings are utilized to develop common assessments, analyze mid-year and final exam data, and collaboratively developing curriculum. While there are many professional development opportunities available, due to the increase in instructional

technology, teachers report that there is a need for continued support in professional development in the integration of technology to enhance teaching and learning and support 21st Century learning expectations. The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient equipment, as well as sufficient instructional materials and supplies which support both teaching and learning; however, continued examination of budget allocations should be made to ensure that sufficient professional and support staff, a full range of technology support, and ongoing-professional development are provided to support student needs and 21st Century learning expectations. (facility tour, self-study, assistant superintendent, classroom observations, teacher interviews, assistant principal)

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 and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. Oliver Ames High School has a formal, electronically submitted schedule which illustrates how maintenance of the building and repairs to the building occur. Basic facility maintenance and repair requests are communicated to the custodial staff through schooldude.com, and 90.9 percent of the staff reports that needed repairs are completed in a timely manner. Larger, system specific maintenance and repairs, including plumbing, HVAC, electrical, carpentry and landscaping are contracted to the town through the Town Department of Public Works through myschoolbuilding.com. Work order completions are logged electronically, and all boilers, generators, water tanks, elevators and freezers are regularly maintained and up-to-date with inspections. There is a specified budget designed to support the materials necessary to maintain the school building and plant and a specific schedule of activities that are carried out by the custodial staff on a daily basis, overseen by the town director of operations. According to the Endicott survey, 100 percent of parents feel that the school is clean and well maintained. The plan that has been developed to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant is highly effective in maintaining a clean and

efficient facility. (facility tour, assistant principal, Endicott survey, parent interviews, teacher interviews, director of operations)

The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. The school improvement plan identifies steps used to address enrollment changes, staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. The district relies on a five-year capital improvement plan designed by the school board, administrators, and teachers with input from parents, students, and community members. Oliver Ames High School relies on data from the guidance department to address enrollment changes and scheduling changes. The guidance department also provides information on course enrollment numbers and department staffing to provide data necessary for teacher planning. Oliver Ames High School utilizes a multi-year technology plan to address the needs, costs, and strategic purchasing of technology. The technology plan is implemented, reviewed, and revised on a semi-annual basis by the school's technology coordinator and the district's technology director. Through the funding of the long-range plans, the school is able to support programs and services; evidence of budgetary increases over the last few years positively indicates continued support for the funding of these plans. (teacher interviews, director of finance, superintendent, assistant principal, panel presentation, school board interviews, self-study)

Building administrators, and faculty, through department heads, are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. Instructional materials and supplies have been level funded over the last three years. To eliminate waste and redundancy, the district has recently centralized purchasing to the Easton superintendent's office. An informal request system exists for the collection of input from faculty by the department heads which is then delivered to the administration.

Following these initial requests for funding, a series of discussions between the principal and department heads are held to discuss suggestions for budget requests. The principal must comply with a budget development timeline that includes submission of a preliminary budget to the superintendent. A public hearing is then held prior to the school committee's vote on the proposed budget. If reductions are required, the superintendent seeks input from school administrators to identify areas where additional adjustments can be made. After final approval by the school committee, Oliver Ames High School's budget becomes part of the overall town budget to be voted on at the town meeting. Principals are ultimately responsible for allocating and spending the designated money but strive to address needs highlighted by department heads. For example, the math department requested and received class set of TI *inspire* CX CAS calculators and an iTutor subscription. Teachers report there is a concerted effort to equitably spread the budget funds throughout the departments. Within departmental budgets there is an allowance for individual discretion, for instance, the industrial arts department has the flexibility to make decisions on the allocation of their budgetary funds, choosing to purchase green wood which they plane in-house in order to save money in this area to spend in another. All purchase orders, with the exception of special education, for the building-based budgets are submitted from the department head to the principal for approval. These purchase orders are then submitted to the Superintendent's office for approval. School instructional leaders and administrators are given up to date information on the status of budget allocations throughout the school year, however, 55.7 percent of staff reports that they do not have input into development of the school budget. Building administrators, and faculty, through department heads, are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget, and with a system of formalized faculty input, Oliver Ames will continue to support its 21st Century learning expectations. (Endicott survey, teacher interviews, facility tour, department head interviews)

The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. In the summer of 2008, a state-of-the-art renovation and expansion of the school was completed, providing ample space to ensure the full implementation of the educational program. Specifically, the new auditorium is described by students, faculty, and the community as a source of pride and 90 percent of all stakeholders report that the school site and plant adequately supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services. General classroom space is adequate, and the administration makes efforts to maximize the space. The school site and plant provides for numerous opportunities for students to participate in a variety of programs, beyond the core disciplines, including the visual and performing arts, physical education, family consumer sciences, industrial arts, as well as business and technology offerings. The school has four computer labs, a language lab, a music composition lab, visual arts and design lab, multiple mobile technology carts, and a television studio. The library is appropriate in space, set up in a “maker’s space” style designed to allow students to study comfortably, and is adequately equipped, including the largest computer lab in the school with 31 computers. Oliver Ames High School hosts Project Opportunity, an intensive special needs program, inclusively within the building. The cafeteria and food preparation area are sufficient in size and adequately equipped. The auditorium, gymnasiums, and locker rooms support the needs of various programs. All of the student support services - administration, guidance, a school nurse, and special education - have adequate space and facilities, including conference rooms, small private testing spaces, and separate spaces for students to ensure confidentiality and student privacy. The school provides adequate parking for faculty and students. The exterior of the school provides five well-maintained practice fields for all athletic teams and physical education classes, a fully-equipped, code-compliant stadium, and multiple tennis courts. In the fall of 2013, a mile-long walking path, completely privately funded, was added to the field complex, and is frequently utilized by students, faculty, and community members. The newly renovated school site and plant, by design, effectively support the delivery of high quality school programs and services as well as the health and well-being

of all occupants. (Endicott survey, facility tour, assistant principal, self-study, head custodian, librarian, nurse, food service director)

The school maintains all documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations. The principal, assistant principals, athletic director, and custodial staff conduct regular walk-throughs of the building and grounds to identify and address any irregularities. The town Fire Department performs regularly scheduled inspections of the sprinkler system in compliance with the fire code. Emergency exits and routes are clearly marked. The town fire and building departments perform inspections and forward reports to the Director of School Operations on any items to be addressed. The Town Director of Operations coordinates inspections on boilers, fire extinguishers, elevators, air quality, and sprinklers. Elevator maintenance certificates are posted in the elevators and boiler and hot water inspection certificates are posted on each boiler and hot water heater. The food services department has been inspected by the Board of Health and monitors daily freezer temperatures. Safety regulations and procedures are consistently and clearly posted in the kitchen and in all shops and science labs. Occupancy permits are located at the school department's central office as well as the town hall. The building complies with all aspects of safety and accessibility required by the Massachusetts building code. An emergency generator provides backup electric power during outages. If the building cannot be occupied due to an emergency, the school has and practices an evacuation plan to move staff and students to satellite locations. This protocol has recently undergone an evaluation by Synergy. Given the fact that the school has been well maintained since its renovation, there have been no issues raised during inspections. Continued adherence and compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations will maintain a safe learning environment for all students. (self-study, facility tour, head custodian, School Crisis Immediate Response Staff Handbook)

The professional staff are willing to engage parents and families as partners in each student's education, however, the vast majority of contact is initiated by the parents themselves. Oliver Ames High School has a number of established programs to engage parents and families as partners, including a fall open house, parent conferences, Principal Coffee Hours, School Council, I.E.P. meetings, telephone calls, and emails home by teachers, the principal, and the nurse. Oliver Ames High School also maintains a website and student data software system. The school website has all school policies posted and accessible, lists of organizations and offerings, the school calendar, daily announcements, as well as faculty and staff contact information. Easton also uses an automated call system to update parents on any necessary information. Parents also have access to the student handbook, which provides parents and students with information about rules, calendar, schedules, and participation in extracurricular activities. School administrators and the athletic department regularly use social media to inform and update parents, students, and the community. Parents can also be involved with the school council, which meets monthly with administrators, students, community members and teachers. Additionally, an electronic events sign at the school's entrance alerts students and parents to upcoming events. Teachers report that they consistently encourage parents to contact them at any time. As a result, 92 percent of staff report that staff actively engages parents and families as partners in each student's education, however, only 68 percent of parents agree with this statement. Parent interviews nevertheless indicated that while outreach was limited, faculty and staff are very receptive and responsive when parents initiate outreach. While there is a large resource base available for parents and families to access, and a willingness on the part of the professional staff to partner with families, until a close examination of outreach efforts and protocols is completed and a plan implemented to bridge this gap between staff views and those of parents and families, families who have been less connected with the school will continue to be disengaged.

(Endicott survey, teacher interviews, parent interviews, self-study)

The school deliberately develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships which support its core values and student learning expectations. Parents regularly serve as partners on committees such as the school council, Athletic Boosters, FEEE (Foundation for Excellence in Education in Easton), TEMPO (The Easton Music Parents Organization), and the Friends of Easton Community Athletic Complex, all of which collectively support the school's educational program and co-curricular services. The music department provides approximately 20 community engagements per year to showcase student achievement. The Safe Grad Night committee is a community-run organization comprised of parents that collects donations, provides volunteers, and organizes a culminating event for graduating students. The students of Oliver Ames High School volunteer in numerous community events throughout the year. Each spring, all seniors participate in an annual community service event called the "Day of Kind-Ness" in which they assist members of the community with various projects. Members of the National Honor Society, the student council, athletic teams, and various other clubs and organizations also find and create volunteer opportunities. Amnesty International club's "meals on wheels" for homeless individuals and the Boston Children's Hospital club which travels to the hospital to volunteer are two more examples of student volunteer initiatives. A newly formed STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Committee, which includes the assistant superintendent, math, science, industrial arts department chairs, teachers, and the school librarian has initiated a collaboration with the public library and other community leaders to educate and involve community members in STEM-related activities. High school juniors participate in a Science Olympiad in Easton and develop and implement lessons and activities for elementary school students. Additionally, the guidance department works with local businesses and community members to annually support student learning, offering over 80 scholarships to graduating seniors. Oliver Ames has also responded to current social issues by providing a wide range of student assemblies. Arbella Insurance Company provided a Distracted Driving Simulator and presentation by the District Attorney's office; Chris Herren presented on substance abuse issues; Calvin Terrell and

Josh Gunderson and Rachel's Challenge presented on bullying; and Hoan Do presented on college success, leadership development and stress management. The school has created business and industry partnerships which provide students with opportunities for job shadowing, mentoring, internships, apprenticeships, and summer employment. Oliver Ames High School holds a Career Day during when volunteers from the community come in to talk about their professions. The guidance department informs students of job opportunities including summer employment. Members of the community assist with the Robotics team and the Mock Trial team. The Future Educators of America formed a relationship with elementary students during 2012-2013 and visited the elementary schools to read with students. The Project Opportunity program has several partnerships in Easton and surrounding communities. The goal of this program is to provide students with skills necessary to gain competitive, paid employment. Local partnerships include Hannaford Supermarket, TJ Maxx, the Town Clerk's Office, the Special Education Administration Office, and New England Sinai Hospital in Stoughton. Some of the Project Opportunity students attend a grant-funded program at Bridgewater State University, the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment program, which allows students to audit a college level course, participate in peer mentoring, receive career counseling, and participate in a monthly career group. Students also work in the Oliver Ames cafeteria and volunteer in the Oliver Ames main office. The Project Opportunity Program is also closely linked with the Best Buddies program; Oliver Ames hosted the Best Buddies Prom this past year. The industrial arts department has worked diligently to establish and maintain relationships with community members and several local business that are willing to donate materials to the school. This relationship has provided students with materials, leadership, tools, industry insights, and community service opportunities, and support in internships. The industrial arts department in turn provides services and supplies back to the community, including the donation of kindling and sawdust to community members and farms, as well as completing small engine repairs. This reciprocal relationship is supports the achievement of 21st century civic and social expectations for student learning. Oliver Ames High School has also

developed relationships with several local colleges. Students have the opportunity to take courses at local colleges and universities. Dual enrollment is available to Oliver Ames students at Bristol Community College, Massasoit Community College, Bridgewater State University, and Stonehill College. This program allows students to earn college credits, which are also applicable toward high school graduation requirements. Student participation in this dual enrollment program has declined, partially due to the adoption of a rotating schedule but also as a result of the increased AP offerings. Local college partnerships are also established to support professional development programs at the high school level for faculty members through training opportunities and the awarding of credit for professional development experiences. The vast number of partnerships Oliver Ames High School has established with local business, community organizations, and the higher education community, provide numerous authentic real-world opportunities which supplement the education of Oliver Ames students and help them achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (assistant principal, self-study, athletic director, teacher interviews, student interviews, parent interviews)

Commendations:

1. The widely varied programs and courses offered which support the vision of a comprehensive high school
2. The increased availability of technology through BYOD and school-supported programs
3. The impressive work of the custodial staff to maintain an immaculate school building and site
4. The variety of high quality school programs and services that the physical plant enables the school to offer
5. The ability to work within the available budget to adequately support programs and services
6. The supervision of an effective and efficient process through which the school documents and remains in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations

7. The close relationships established between Oliver Ames High School and community organizations which supplement the education offered to students and support the core values of the school

Recommendations:

1. Investigate ways to adequately support the increase of technology
2. Develop and implement a plan to fully utilize existing space to maintain support for and continued growth of student co-curricular development
3. Develop a more formal process for soliciting concrete staff input into the development of the school budget
4. Examine faculty outreach efforts and implement a plan so that 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.

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

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

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

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Committee has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Committee within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts on the school's adherence to the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Committee's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 108. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Committee office has current statistical data on the school.

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

The visiting committee would like to express our appreciation for the hospitality extended to us by the entire school community. The accommodations, workrooms, and technological support were all exceptional. The students, faculty, staff, school committee members and parents were friendly, courteous, and helpful during the entire length of the visit.

**Oliver Ames High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
March 11-14, 2012**

Visiting Committee

<p>Bob McCarthy South Kingstown High School South Kingstown, RI 02879</p>	<p>Laura Bothwell Southwick-Tolland Regional High School Southwick, MA 01077</p>
<p>Maureen Sabolinski Franklin Public Schools Franklin, MA 02038</p>	<p>Deborah Jordan Walpole High School Walpole, MA 02081</p>
<p>William Klements Sharon High School Sharon, MA 02067</p>	<p>Anja Wade Shepherd Hill Regional High School Dudley, MA 01571</p>
<p>Caitlin Shepherd Sandwich High School Sandwich, MA 02537</p>	<p>James Casagrande Norwell High School Norwell, MA 02061</p>
<p>Lisa Hurtubise Belmont High School Belmont, MA 02478</p>	<p>Antonio Pina Silver Lake Regional High School Kingston, MA 02364</p>
<p>Sheila Bernard Uxbridge High School Uxbridge, MA 01569</p>	<p>Keith Comeau Dedham High School Dedham, MA 02026</p>
<p>Mary Gardner Minnechaug Regional High School Wilbraham, MA 01095</p>	<p>Stephen Centerrino Hingham High School Hingham, MA 02043</p>
<p>Kendra Cantrell Tantasqua Regional High School Fiskdale, MA 01518</p>	

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Committee on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

- elimination of fine arts, practical arts and student activities
- diminished upkeep and maintenance of facilities
- significantly decreased funding
- cuts in the level of administrative and supervisory staffing
- cuts in the number of teachers and/or guidance counselors
- grade level responsibilities of the principal
- cuts in the number of support staff
- decreases in student services
- cuts in the educational media staffing
- increases in student enrollment that cannot be accommodated
- takeover by the state
- inordinate user fees

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

Oliver Ames High School

Commendations

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

- Teacher, student, and community involvement in the process used to identify and connect to a set of core values and beliefs about learning
- Teacher, student, and community awareness of the core values and beliefs
- The strong influence of core values and beliefs on the school culture
- The development of programs such as advisory as a response to the mission and core values
- The initial effort to link student learning expectations to a graduation portfolio

Curriculum

- The opportunities provided in the curriculum for students to practice and achieve the schools 21st century learning expectations
- The adoption of a common curriculum template based on the UbD model
- The commitment of the faculty to embrace and implement the UbD curriculum model
- The universal employment of school wide, analytic rubrics integrating Oliver Ames 21st century academic expectations for student learning
- The orientation for incoming freshmen facilitated by the media specialist about the schools technology guidelines and policies
- The clear and consistent alignment of the written and taught curriculum across departments
- The focus on implementing and facilitating strategies to ensure vertical alignment of the written and taught curriculum
- The updated facilities which are used to enhance the overall educational experiences for all students

- The financial commitment of the district to implement the UbD curriculum model
- The leadership of the assistant superintendent in spearheading the UbD curriculum model development.

Instruction

- The use of Oliver Ames' core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations to inform instructional practices.
- The personalization of instruction through the use of various instructional strategies and emphasis on addressing individual learning needs.
- The opportunity to create a customized high school experience through an extensive catalog of clubs, organizations, and athletic teams.
- Instruction that is purposely designed to require student engagement in higher order thinking, problem-solving, and inquiry.
- Regular opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks.
- Effective integration of technology into daily instruction.
- Commitment to additional student support, especially through effective use of high-quality technology resources.
- The culture of ongoing pedagogical improvement and collaborative reflection.
- Teachers' ongoing involvement in a wide variety of opportunities to maintain content-area expertise and improve instructional practices.
- The Easton School District's commitment to providing teachers with quality professional development focused on improving and enhancing instructional practices.

Assessment of and for Student Learning

- The establishment of school-wide rubrics to assess individual student progress on achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations

- The communication of learning expectations and alignment to the 21st century learning expectations to students
- The widespread use of rubrics across content areas
- The use of varied types of summative assessments with rubrics
- The examination of standardized assessments, such as MCAS and Advanced Placement exams, to identify needs in curriculum or changes to instruction to close achievement gaps

School Culture and Leadership

- The principal's dynamic and inclusive leadership which creates a climate that fosters students' responsibility
- The shared sense of community among students, staff, and community stakeholders
- The building culture in which all staff actively work to support student needs and well-being
- The active involvement of a majority of the staff in one or more of the 50 plus clubs and 25 sports teams
- The connection fostered between many students and their advisors
- The continued effort by all staff to maintain two-way communication through transitions between various evaluation rubrics
- The commitment of district and building administration to obtain meaningful outside professional development
- The collaborative process used to create a schedule unique to the needs of Oliver Ames High School.
- Regular and meaningful opportunities for school stakeholders to have a voice in perpetuating Oliver Ames High School core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

- The principal and building administration's personal mission to connect with and involve every student in the Oliver Ames High School community
- The many formal and informal opportunities afforded to students to participate in the decision-making process
- The regular communication between principal and school committee during a time of central office transition.
- The assistant superintendent's dynamic and knowledgeable approach to developing meaningful support for curriculum and instruction
- The autonomy given to the principal to make effective decisions for the school and community

School Resources for Learning

- The dedication of the guidance who support students with limited resources
- The effective collaboration between support personnel and school faculty
- The commitment of the school nurse to provide services to support students' health and wellness
- The dynamic and inviting library media center that is fully equipped to support the curriculum and meet the needs and interests of staff and students
- The ongoing initiatives of the library media specialist to reach out to staff and students and provide resources that support the 21st century learning expectations of all students
- The variety of specially designed instruction allowing special education students to meet 21st century expectations

Community Resources for Learning

- The widely varied programs and courses offered which support the vision of a comprehensive high school
- The increased availability of technology through BYOD and school-supported programs

- The impressive work of the custodial staff to maintain an immaculate school building and site
- The variety of high quality school programs and services that the physical plant enables the school to offer
- The ability to work within the available budget to adequately support programs and services
- The supervision of an effective and efficient process through which the school documents and remains in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations
- The close relationships established between Oliver Ames High School and community organizations which supplement the education offered to students and support the core values of the school

Recommendations

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

- Develop a process to analyze and disaggregate student portfolio data
- Communicate to all stakeholders the purpose of the school-wide rubrics and indicate how and when they are used to measure student achievement outcomes

Curriculum

- Develop and implement a process to collect and review data to make decisions related to adjusting curriculum
- Ensure that all curriculum documents are rewritten using the common curriculum template based on the UbD model
- Ensure consistent opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning
- Ensure opportunities for interdisciplinary curriculum coordination between academic areas

Instruction

- Provide time for teachers to work collaboratively on cross-disciplinary lesson development.
- Continue to offer professional development in the area of active learning.

- Continue to strengthen the use of formative assessment and differentiation across the school by developing consistent, school-wide strategies for assessing student learning through formative assessments and using formative data to inform individualized instruction
- Improve the process of reflection on student achievement data to include a larger variety of assessments beyond midterm and final exams and MCAS, and develop a process for drawing meaningful conclusions regarding instructional practices
- Continue to improve instructional practices by providing teachers with more access to current research of teaching practices and time to conduct professional discourse focused on instructional practices.

Assessment of and for Student Learning

- Develop a formal process to assess the whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
- Implement a process to communicate progress on achieving 21st century learning expectations to stakeholders.
- Implement a strategic process to collect, disaggregate and analyze data from a wide range of assessments to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement and to adjust instruction
- Implement a plan to ensure use of formative assessments, including formative assessments that address higher order thinking skills to adjust instruction.
- Provide an update on the plan to regularly review grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning
- Examine survey data from current students, alumni, and post-secondary institutions to revise curriculum and improve instructional practices
- Explore strategies to allow teachers time to collaborate to develop common assessments, to review, analyze and share assessment data to inform the instructional program

School Culture and Leadership

- Develop and implement a plan to address the lack of heterogeneously grouped courses in the core disciplines
- Establish and formalize the expectations for students and staff participating in the advisory program
- Develop and implement a plan to provide additional time for professional development, as well as common planning around focused school-wide goals
- Provide additional opportunities for institutional and formalized opportunities for inter-departmental and departmental collaboration.
- Develop and implement a plan to increase the equity of the class sizes, particularly in the honors and Advanced Placement levels.
- Consider ways to address the disconnect between the available means for parental involvement and the perceived lack of opportunities
- Continue to identify professional development opportunities for staff based on specific needs within the school.

School Resources for Learning

- Evaluate data to be proactive in identifying the current and future needs of the student body in relation to academic, social, and health related concerns
- Assess the effectiveness of current guidance counseling support services in providing adequate supports to student with academic, emotional, and college/career needs
- Ensure that students with social and emotional needs are receiving adequate counseling services
- Develop a formal process to regularly collect data and update the developmental guidance program

-Design and implement a plan for a formal, integrated library information literacy skills program designed to support 21st century learning skills for all students

-Create a plan to ensure that the nurse is able to more effectively 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

Community Resources for Learning

-Investigate ways to adequately support the increase of technology

-Develop and implement a plan to fully utilize existing space to maintain support for and continued growth of student co-curricular development

-Develop a more formal process for soliciting concrete staff input into the development of the school budget

-Examine faculty outreach efforts and implement a plan so that 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.