

**New England Association of  
School and Colleges, Inc.**

**Commission on Public Schools**



**Committee on Public Secondary Schools**

**Report of the Visiting Team for  
Kennebunk High School**

Kennebunk, ME

December 03, 2017 - December 06, 2017

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# STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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## 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 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 this school in terms of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Neither the total report nor any of its subsections is to be considered an evaluation of any individual staff member but rather a professional appraisal of the school as it appeared to the visiting committee.

# **STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION**

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The Committee on Public Secondary School's Standards for Accreditation serve as the foundation for the accreditation process and by which accreditation decisions are made. The seven Standards are qualitative, challenging, and reflect current research and best practice. The Standards, written and approved by the membership, establish the components of schools to ensure an effective and appropriate focus on teaching and learning and the support of teaching and learning.

## **Teaching and Learning Standards**

### **Core Values and Beliefs About Learning**

#### **Curriculum**

#### **Instruction**

#### **Assessment of and for Student Learning**

## **Support Standards**

### **School Culture and Leadership**

### **School Resources for Learning**

### **Community Resources for Learning**

# CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

*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 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. Each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define 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.

# CURRICULUM

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

*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 specific and measurable criteria for success, 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.

# INSTRUCTION

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

*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.

# ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

*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 to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics
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 specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.
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.

# SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

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## Support Standard

*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 and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.
3. There is a formal, on-going program(s) or process(es) 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.

# SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

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## Support Standard

*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.

# COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

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## Support Standard

***The achievement of the school's mission, core values, beliefs about 21st century learning expectations requires active community, governing board, and parent/guardian 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 community, through the district school board, sets and implements district and school policy to ensure a learning environment that supports high levels of learning for all.
3. The school community develops, plans, and funds programs to:
  - ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant
  - properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment
  - keep the school clean on a daily basis.
4. 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.
5. Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.
6. The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services.
7. The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal, state, and local laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.
8. The area, menus, and equipment for food services ensure that the well-being of the students is a priority and is in compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
9. Appropriate school transportation procedures are in place to ensure the safety of the students and in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

10. The professional staff actively engage parents/guardians and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.
11. The school develops productive parent/guardian, community, business, and higher education partnerships that encourage mutual cooperation and good citizenship and support student learning.

# School and Community Summary

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## School and Community Summary

Kennebunk High School, home of the Rams, is a public high school serving the students and families of Kennebunk and Kennebunkport; students in Arundel have a choice of high schools. Kennebunk is located on the southern coast of Maine in York County. The town is approximately 25 miles south of Portland, the state's largest city, and 80 miles north of Boston. Kennebunk has one exit off the Maine Turnpike and U.S. Route 1 runs through the center of Kennebunk.

According to the most recent census data available, the population of the town of Kennebunk is 10,798; the town of Kennebunkport is 3,474; and the town of Arundel is 4,022. The racial and ethnic makeup of Kennebunk High School's students is homogenous, with 93% of the students identified as Caucasian/white, 4% Asian/Pacific Islander, .9% Hispanic, 2% African-American/Black, and .1% American Indian/Native Alaskan. Although Kennebunk High School's population indicates a relative lack of racial and ethnic diversity, the district does contain a measure of socio-economic diversity; the percentage of KHS students qualifying for free and reduced lunches in 2015-2016 was 17.7%.

The RSU 21 School District is served by six public schools with the following enrollments for 2016-2017: Kennebunk Elementary School (grades K-3, 404 students); Kennebunkport Consolidated School (grades K-5, 187 students); Mildred L. Day School (grades K-5, 228 students); Sea Road School (grades 4-5, 237 students), Middle School of the Kennebunks (grades 6-8, 564 students); and Kennebunk High School (grades 9-12, 668 students). The enrollment for KHS as of October 1, 2017 has increased to 712 students. Students in Arundel have high school choice to attend any non-parochial high school but they all attend The Middle School of the Kennebunks.

RSU 21's per pupil expenditures are above the state average. In 2014-2015, the district's per pupil spending was \$12,332, while the state average was \$ 10,990.51. Furthermore, per pupil spending at Kennebunk High School in 2014-2015 was \$13,613.89, while K-8 per pupil spending was \$ 11,723.56. RSU 21 ranked 78th in the state on per pupil expenditures, out of 242 districts in 2014-2015. The most recent town tax data reveals that Kennebunk spends 63% of tax revenues on education; Kennebunkport spends 55.1%, and Arundel spends 72%. In addition, the Education Foundation of the Kennebunks and Arundel, founded in 2006, provides grants to teachers to fund innovative educational projects and initiatives that fall outside the standard budget and support the curriculum. In the ten years of its existence, the Foundation has funded \$780,000 in grants.

Recent graduation rates have remained stable. The graduation rate for 2015-2016 was --94.71% while the 2016 dropout rate was 1.63%. The student attendance rate for 2016-2017 was 95%; the teacher attendance rate, excluding professional days, was 96%. The majority of Kennebunk High School graduates continue their education after high school, with 69% of the Class of 2017 attending four-year colleges and 13% matriculating at two-year colleges. Seventeen percent engaged in a gap year program or entered the work force, while 1% entered the military. There are 51.36 teachers at Kennebunk High School for the 2017-2018 school year, creating a student-teacher ratio of 14:1. During the 2015-2016 school year, 97.39% of core academic classes were taught by highly qualified teachers. Students attended school for 178 days in 2016-2017; teachers had 182 days.

Students enrolled in Chorus, Band, Physical Education, Business Technology, Industrial Technology, Robotics, and Engineering are in non-leveled classes. Proficiency standards for graduation in eight content areas are embedded in the grade 9/10 curriculum. Students in grades 9-10 may select from three levels of Common Core, college preparatory, and/or honors. An RTI program provides tier one (extra help from teachers) and tier two (guided study halls, a learning center for all students, and after-school homework help) support so that students can move into college prep classes. The PLATO on-line program is available for students to recover course credit, as long as their final average is at least a 60. A part-time gifted/talented teacher provides support for identified students in the humanities, and .5 of a full-time math position is considered G/T. Approximately 18% of students receive special education services. All students are required to take four years of English, 3.5 years of

social studies, 3 years of math, 3 years of science, 2 years of foreign language, 1 year of visual or performing arts, 1 year of physical education, and ½ year of health. The remainder of students' programs are filled with elective courses. Beginning with the Class of 2021, per state statute, students have to meet the proficiency standards for graduation in four core subjects: English, math, science, and social studies and the Guiding Principles. A student's individualized education program (IEP) may determine the performance tasks required to show proficiency.

Kennebunk High School offers a variety of co-curricular activities for its students. During the 2016-2017 school year, 88% of students planned to participate in at least one athletic or co-curricular activity. During the 2016-2017 school year, there are 46 team offerings with 24 at the varsity level, as well as 24 clubs from which to choose.

Students have many opportunities to learn beyond the walls of Kennebunk High School. Juniors and seniors may apply to the Biddeford Regional Center of Technology (BRCOT) or the Sanford Regional Technical Center (SRTC); special education students may attend the Portland Arts and Technology High School (PATHS). An apprenticeship program allows students to work with community mentors. The cooperative education program matches students with businesses in the community and provides classroom instruction in work place skills. Each year, seniors in good academic and behavioral standing can participate in the Senior Project during the last two weeks of school; these students work with community mentors in careers of interest. Eighty-two members of the Class of 2017 completed Senior Projects. York County Community College (YCCC) offers one or two after-school courses at Kennebunk High School for qualified juniors or seniors each semester; in addition, KHS also offers a Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) English course during the school day for dual credit. Other students take courses on the campuses of YCCC, SMCC, the University of Southern Maine, and the University of New England. AP4All courses are available for courses not offered at KHS or for courses that will not fit into a student's schedule.

The KHS Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Program affords students the opportunity to graduate as STEM Scholars; thirty-seven students in the Class of 2017 were designated as STEM Scholars. Twelve students in the Class of 2017 were International Baccalaureate Diploma Candidates and 13 were AP Scholars. Thirty-seven members of the Class of 2017 earned National Honor Society status; 3 were members of the National Technical Honor Society; and 9 were members of the Tri-M Music Honor Society.

Students are recognized for their accomplishments through a number of locally sponsored scholarships. Each June, more than \$140,000 in local scholarships are awarded to seniors, in addition to scholarships from outside colleges and organizations. Juniors receive college book awards at an Honors event held each May. All-State music awards, the MPA Principal's Award, the Western Maine Good Citizenship Awards, and an Athletic Awards ceremony each season recognize individual students. Three students were recognized as National Merit Finalists during the 2016-2017 school year. The Board of School Directors invites selected students and their families to school committee meetings to recognize their achievements publicly.

# Introduction

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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 Committee on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), and the Committee on Public Elementary and Middle Schools (CPEMS), and the Commission on International Education (CIE).

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

### Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

### Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

The accreditation program for public schools involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the Committee's visiting team, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study, the valid recommendations of the visiting team, 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 Kennebunk High School, a committee of six members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned 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 twelve students, six parents, four central office professionals, one school board representative, and one citizen.

The self-study of Kennebunk High School extended over a period of thirteen school months from September 2016 to November 2017. The visiting team was pleased to note that certified and non-certified staff members

from the school and district 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 alignment with the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's core values, beliefs, and 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, Kennebunk 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 Team**

A visiting team of fourteen (14) members was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Kennebunk High School. The visiting team members spent four days in Kennebunk, 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 aligns with the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the members of the visiting team represented classroom teachers, guidance counselors, library/media specialists, school administrators, and central office administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Kennebunk High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 42 hours shadowing 14 students for a half day
- a total of 7 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 28 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

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

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

The visiting team extends its appreciation to all members of Kennebunk High School for their hospitality. We are most grateful for the steering committee's attention to detail in preparing for our visit. The visiting team was able to work effectively and efficiently due to the quality of the self-study and other work completed prior to our arrival. The faculty and staff of KHS followed a transparent process that resulted in an honest and thoughtful self-study. We appreciate the efforts to prepare the school community for the accreditation process, and we believe the school will be equally efficient in continuing its journey of school improvement.

# Standard 1 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The Kennebunk High School (KHS) school community is engaged in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. The current belief statement was adopted in 2015 after a review process that involved the entire faculty. The draft work from the faculty work groups was later finalized by the staff, students and parents who serve on the KHS Senate. While this latest work is aligned with the current expectations of NEASC, it is also the most recent manifestation of the school's mission that was originally developed in 1995. Each revision has been true to the tenets of the original mission, while also being developed through a dynamic, collaborative and inclusive process. When the Maine legislature set the graduation requirement that students meet Maine's Guiding Principles, KHS was in a good position to align its previous and ongoing work with the requirement. As shown in the Endicott survey, the majority of students (84.3 percent) and parents (87.2 percent) surveyed are familiar with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. As the school continues to align practices with the beliefs statement and guiding principles and purposefully promotes the beliefs and principles to the school community, even greater unity of purpose will be realized by students and staff.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Kennebunk High School has identified challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which by design address academic, social, and civic competencies. While each expectation is formally defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, there is a need for school leaders to conduct an overview of the various formats and descriptors of success used for the competencies. This overview should identify inconsistencies in point scales, inconsistencies in levels of success and inconsistencies in format.

The five Kennebunk High School Guiding Principles (social and civic expectations) are in use in all classrooms and impact all students. The Guiding principles all use a 3-point rubric to define success, and the language of the Guiding Principles is consistent and unified. In contrast, the academic expectations or "proficiency power standards" have been developed mostly at the department level. As such, the language of, and the proficiency rating scales for, the academic expectations vary by department. This is confusing to students and parents. For example, science uses a four-point rubric to measure student proficiency while music uses a five-point rubric to report on their proficiencies. The literary analysis rubric also has five levels, including two levels that exceed expectations and two levels that are below expectations.

When the school uniformly describes challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies defined by consistent, specific and measurable criteria for success, then it will be clear to students how to achieve at high levels.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teachers
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are extensively reflected in the culture of the school, consciously drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in many classrooms, and to a great extent guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.

Examples of ways in which the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are reflected in the school's culture include the varied and rigorous academic programs along with the wide variety of extra-curricular and athletic opportunities. The proficiency standards for graduation are embedded in the curriculum for grades 9 and 10; there are three levels of classes (Common Core, college preparatory, and honors) for these grades in addition to non-leveled courses in visual and performing arts, physical education, business technology, industrial technology, robotics, and engineering. In grades 11 and 12 there are multiple programs from which students may choose (International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, STEM Scholars program, early college courses, apprenticeships, Sanford Regional Technology Center, Portland Arts and Technology High School, and the alternative education program which has recently been revamped). There is a clear effort on the part of staff to meet the needs of each student in order to help each meet with success. There are 46 team offerings, and there are 29 clubs, some of which are student-driven and student-directed. The Endicott survey results indicate that the vast majority of students (87.4 percent) and parents (67.1 percent) as well as staff (90.4 percent) are familiar with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

Response-to-Intervention practices and structures (now redesigned and called Multi-Tiered System of Support), restorative justice practices and procedures, and the role of the senate (comprised of students, faculty, the principal, parents, and a community member) are additional examples of ways that the core values, beliefs, and 21st learning expectations are evident in the school's culture. Much work has been accomplished and is ongoing to align curriculum in all areas with the academic, social, and civic 21st century expectations. Agendas of the weekly professional learning communities (PLCs) include discussions of ways to improve instruction and develop assessments in line with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Students are evaluated on not only the academic expectations in classes, but are also evaluated in each class on the social and civic expectations, referred to as the Guiding Principles, in every class at least quarterly. The Endicott survey results also indicate that most staff (65.4 percent) feel that decisions made regarding changes to school policies and procedures and regarding budget allocations are guided by the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations; however, in conversations with teachers, it was expressed that the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations provide more of a rationale or backdrop to decisions rather than a driving force. Nonetheless, the following are examples of decisions about school policies and procedures that were guided by the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations: the work that was done recently to establish greater equity in the Rtl process across the district, resulting in the district-wide Multi-Tiered System of Support; the recently adopted policy regarding cell phone usage during classes that originated with the recently established climate and culture committee; and the discussion that has begun regarding a possible change in school start time.

Because the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are extensively reflected in the culture of the school and consciously drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment, it is clear that the core values, beliefs, and 21st century expectations are important to all stakeholders; when the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are clearly and explicitly used to guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, they will more effectively drive all components of the school.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study

- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

The school regularly reviews its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations informally, and plans to more formally review and revise these based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities. The district core planning team (CPT) was formed in 2015 to investigate and develop statements of mission and core beliefs for the district. The eighteen members created a five-year strategic plan with four focus areas, and set twelve goals and eleven key objectives. They engaged the community and the staff in the planning process and reported to the school board monthly. It has been stated that a plan will be developed to review and revise the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, but since the current language is relatively new and is still in the early stages of implementation, it is believed that it will take time before a formal review would be of value. The CPT has used data from other schools in their discussions, and the self-study reports that the school plan for review will use research, multiple data sources, and district and community priorities in its review. The school and district adopted Maine's Guiding Principles (which had been developed by the state department of education from the input of many students, parents, business leaders, community members, and educators from around the state) as the civic and social expectations components of their 21st century learning expectations. There is discussion of assessment results in professional learning communities (PLCs) as time permits. The principal regularly includes in her messages to staff information about articles and research that pertain to the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. The school's 21st century learning expectations align with the objectives outlined in the newly developed district strategic plan. As the school continues to review its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and community priorities, and makes any necessary revisions, the effort to have every component of the school be driven by these values, beliefs, and expectations will be better served.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- school board
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Commendations

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## Commendation

The continuity of purpose provided by the current beliefs statement and Guiding Principles from 1995 to present

## Commendation

The dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning

## Commendation

The Guiding Principles rubric which serves as a template for consistent language and format

## Commendation

The senate comprised of students, faculty, the principal, parents, and a community member which provides an avenue for a collaborative and inclusive voice

## Commendation

The school's 21st century learning expectations that align with the strategic plan objectives

## Commendation

The emphasis on and effort to provide students with a variety of academic programs and activities

## Commendation

The reflection of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in the culture of the school, and the conscious effort to ensure these aspects drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in many classrooms

# Standard 1 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop a consistent rubric format throughout the school, similar to that of the Guiding Principles rubric, that takes a unified approach to define targeted high levels of achievement

## Recommendation

Use the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations more explicitly and more widely to guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations

## Recommendation

Design and implement a plan for continuing the regular collaborative review of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations using research, multiple data sources, and district and school priorities

## Recommendation

Design and implement a plan for continuing the regular collaborative review of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations using research, multiple data sources, and district and school priorities

# Standard 2 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The curriculum for Kennebunk High School (KHS) 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 for Kennebunk High School are derived from the State of Maine Learning Results Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles at Kennebunk are also called the social and civic expectations. The Guiding Principles are communicated to the students and parents in the annual student handbook, displayed in many classrooms, and to the larger community on the school's website. The academic expectations are addressed through each course being aligned to an established standards document, as identified in the course description templates that are located on the school website.

All teaching staff are expected to use an established, school-wide rubric to report on each of their students' attainment of the Guiding Principles at least quarterly at grade report times. This rubric is written in student-friendly language and is written so that each of the expectations could be applied to any class. Some departments have clarified these expectations further by adding descriptors that apply to particular departments. Some staff involve the students in self-assessing attainment of the Guiding Principles. The students are held accountable for meeting the 21st century learning expectations by having at least a score of a two in any given quarter to attain honor roll status, senior release, and to qualify for the National Honor Society. The assistant principals review data on how students demonstrate the Guiding Principles, but this data is not yet used for remediation. At this point, attainment of the Guiding Principles does not affect graduation status. Many of the students are able to reference how they meet the 21st learning expectations, but there is an inconsistent approach by the faculty in addressing the Guiding Principles in their courses.

The academic expectations are based on recognized standards documents that have been selected by individual departments. Each department has identified a set of proficiency standards and a subject pathway that will allow students to meet minimum proficiency by the conclusion of two-years study at the high school. Student achievement of academic proficiency standards are assessed through the use of common assessments. Any students who do not achieve proficiency in the first two years are given remediation time as needed for the following two years.

As the school staff continue to implement the school's 21st century learning expectations into classes and graduation requirements, students will better understand that these qualities are important aspects of being a productive member of society, and will be able to further demonstrate evidence of how they meet these expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- students
- school leadership
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

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; and assessment practices. The curriculum does not yet include instructional strategies or the school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics.

The school department has developed a common curriculum template, called their course description, for each course taught at Kennebunk High School; these are available on the school's website. However the Endicott survey indicates that only 51.9 percent of teachers agree that "there is a common, formal, curriculum template that is used in all subject areas." The course description includes the essential questions, concepts, content and skills. The degree to which this information has been filled out varies by department. In addressing the 21st century learning expectations, the curriculum template only addresses the academic component, with the social and civic aspects being covered by the school's Guiding Principles. In addressing the academic component, each department has chosen a recognized content standard to align to. This leads to a diverse set of standards including the Common Core, Maine Learning Results, Next Generation Science Standards, National Core Arts Standards, the International Society of Technology for Education Standards and the International Baccalaureate Standards. This leads to the use of incongruent terms such as proficiency standards, learning standards, and power standards. Upon examining the curriculum documents, very few have included instructional strategies. The faculty have done a thorough job of listing common assessments; however, there are no specific or measurable criteria for success, such as rubrics, contained in the curriculum documents. Much work has been done in developing and using rubrics as these were used in classes and students were able to quickly access them using Google Classroom. Teachers reported that work is being done to create Google folders where common rubrics for the assessments can be stored and accessed. The format of the curriculum template does not clearly delineate how the various components of the template relate to each other; for example, which essential questions, strategies and assessment practices provide evidence of a student demonstrating proficiency of a particular standard. The health curriculum template was different than the other courses, but was the clearest presentation of task-to-standard alignment.

When the curriculum is written in a common format that includes instructional strategies and assessments, including rubrics, teachers will be better able to deliver instruction in a uniform manner and students will clearly understand the learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The KHS curriculum extensively emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology.

The inclusion of the International Baccalaureate Programme (IB) is a driving influence positively impacting the areas of inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking and cross-disciplinary learning. There are IB and Advanced Placement (AP) programs available in six of the eight core content areas. Although IB limits availability of Diploma Programme (DP) courses to students in the junior and senior year at KHS, students are engaged in the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) at the Middle School of the Kennebunks. Additionally, the high school staff used backward planning in developing student tasks for grades 9 and 10 where concepts from the IB programs are embedded in the curriculum to bridge the transition from the IB MYP to the IB DP. This prepares students to be successful in taking upper level IB classes, if they choose, as well as to develop into integrative thinkers. Student work collected and observed in the classroom showed that 32.6 percent of the samples engaged students in middle order thinking and 46.5 percent at the higher order of thinking as defined in Bloom's taxonomy. The new facility includes a STEM lab that has materials to support the curriculum that uses some of the newer technologies such as robotics, 3D printing and design software. These technologies are utilized by the architectural design, mechanical design and Solidworks students to work through a number of design problems and to build packages that include the research, design, construction and evaluation of their products. In the process to modernize the facility, the school consciously supported maintaining the traditional tools for material processing, such as a basic table saw and a metal-cutting band saw. The Endicott survey supports that students are engaged in critical thinking and problem solving as 84.6 percent of staff agree that "the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge" and 81.9 percent of students agree that "the content of the courses I take challenges me to think critically and solve problems."

Some cross-disciplinary learning is occurring such as math and science teachers working with English teachers to develop students' ability at technical writing. World languages tasks engage students in understanding some of the historical background and geographical considerations of foreign countries. As indicated previously, the IB program engages students in cross-disciplinary learning as described in the curriculum template that says students "will immerse ourselves in the Areas of Knowledge exploring the uniqueness and similarities between mathematics, natural & human sciences, history, the arts and ethics." The Endicott survey shows that 67.7 percent of students agree that "teachers include topics from other subject areas in my classes" while only 40.4 percent of staff agree that "the curriculum emphasizes cross-disciplinary learning" and 34.6 percent of staff is undecided. Being involved in a new facility construction and transition phase since the spring of 2016 has been a barrier to staff cross-disciplinary planning.

Authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school is a vibrant aspect of the education at KHS and is made available to all students. The Teen Trendsetters course is a literacy-based program associated with the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy in which students work as reading mentors in weekly one-on-one sessions with first grade students at Kennebunk Elementary School. Students in the Alternative Education program are engaged in a variety of hands-on projects that have benefitted community groups including the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust, the Kiuna Community Garden, and the Seashore Trolley Museum. There is a Cooperative Education (Co-Op) program that provides classroom instruction, combined with work experience, to enhance job and life skills. Students in the Co-op program receive two academic credits for successfully completing four quarters of work experience that consists of at least twelve hours of work per week. The Environmental Studies classes conduct research that is reported to the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust and the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. The music and theater programs have an active presence in the community through performances at events and hosting concerts and drama productions. The physical education classes engage the students in lifelong activities such as ice skating, biking, and canoeing that cause them to interact with community resources. KHS also sends students to the Sanford Regional Technical Center that offers courses and experiences in the technical fields. Students are given the opportunity to design independent studies to

pursue their own areas of interest. One example observed was computer animation.

The informed and ethical use of technology permeates through all areas of the curriculum at KHS. Each student is assigned a Chromebook and must agree to abide by the school district's Acceptable Use Policy. Students also have the option of bringing in their own devices. In order to reduce classroom distractions and educate students on appropriate use of technology, the school provides a copy of the cell phone policy to students indicating that students cannot have their phones out during instructional time. To support this, each classroom has a phone parking lot where students can securely place their phones upon entering the classroom. To further inform the ethical use of technology, the school library staff regularly remind students about copyright infringement and all third-year English students prepare an assignment through Common Sense Media that greatly enhances their awareness of their digital footprint and its possible impact on their opportunities for the future. The success of these efforts are supported by the Endicott survey in which 91.4 percent of students indicate they are knowledgeable about the ethical use of technology. There are several course curricula that specifically engage students directly in application of technology such as engineering, robotics, upper level math courses, and the business and technology courses. Teachers across the disciplines engage the students in using technology to apply knowledge and to create demonstrations of understanding as supported by classroom observations and the review of student work samples.

The extensive emphasis of depth of understanding and application of knowledge across the curriculum gives all students the opportunity to use community resources to develop meaningful connections between and among various academic contents and to be responsible digital citizens.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum across the school. Kennebunk High School has the conditions in place to help ensure the written curriculum is taught. "Late Start Wednesdays" allow professional learning communities (PLCs) to meet and focus their time on curriculum, common assessments and to share best practices. The Teacher Professional Growth Model uses the Danielson Framework for Teaching and annual teacher goals must include one goal from Domain 2: The Classroom Environment and one from Domain 3: Instruction. Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are developed and monitored through self-evaluation, as well as administrative and peer observations to help ensure the delivery of curricula meets the needs of the learners. Annual evaluative observations are done for new teachers in their first, second and third year of teaching, as well as the third year of teaching for continuing contract teachers. The principal also meets with the content-area department heads monthly. To ensure that the written curriculum is the delivered curriculum, the school and various content-area departments use a common template with agreed upon content-area standards. The Late Start Wednesdays are a valued time for content-area departments to meet and engage in curricula and instructional best practices and to develop and review common assessments to ensure alignment of the curriculum. According to the Endicott survey, 78.8 percent of staff agree and only 5.8 percent disagree that "There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum." The clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum across the school ensures continuity across the content areas so that students can demonstrate proficiency in meeting the 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exists sporadically between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with the sending schools in the district. While curricular coordination within Kennebunk High School is focused and strong within the departments, vertical articulation is practiced sporadically. Math and science teachers have gotten together with their colleagues at the middle school to hold discussions regarding content, and the self-study credits the vertical alignment of health, music, fine arts and world languages programs as having a strength in this area. The faculty spends time in collaborative activities, such as PLCs, largely through the creation of Late Start Wednesdays. There are opportunities within this time for teachers to meet within grade level or content areas. Collaborative activities across content areas are done occasionally and organically. Within the IB program, Theory of Knowledge class is offered to those students taking two or more IB classes. IB and AP curricula has been back-mapped to the freshman and sophomore classes to prepare students for that pathway, as identified in the self-study. Science and math teachers are working with English teachers to incorporate technical writing within their content areas. However, there is an identified need, through the self-study, for more vertical alignment work between the high school and middle school. There is not a clearly identified curriculum review cycle; it happens within departments through the natural collaborative process and professional discussions, but not in a prescribed manner. When effectively planned coordination of curriculum and vertical alignment exists between and among all academic areas within the school, as well as with sending schools, the results are improved teaching and learning leading to attainment of 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

Students at Kennebunk High School benefit from a high level of support of staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center that fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.

Kennebunk High School has reported its average staff-to-student ratio of 1:14. Classroom observations confirmed this average to be accurate, however teachers expressed concern about the occasional larger size of Common Core classes and that college preparatory classes are typically larger with approximately 16-18 students per class. In looking at upper level classes (honors, IB & AP) the class sizes are smaller. The budget provides necessary funding to support sufficient instructional materials, equipment, and supplies to support the curriculum. A significant majority of staff (91.3 percent) confirm that this is true for their needs. Teachers confirmed that they usually get whatever instructional supply needs they have. Budgetary funding is consistent as shown by the school budget being passed at local referendum annually with only one attempt.

There is a variety of technology available to students and teachers. Each student and teacher is provided with a Chromebook, and upon completion of the building renovation project, every classroom will also have the latest interactive projector technology. There is a STEM lab area that contains three computer labs and multiple 3D printers. This technology allows teachers to use content-specific tools to fully implement their curriculum. The school makes use of the Google Classroom platform to provide a dynamic, digital support for teaching and learning. There are two technology staff who assist teachers and students with programming and hardware issues.

The library is staffed by one full-time staff member, who is also the library administrator for the district, and one full-time ed tech. The self-study indicates that the school subscribes to nine online databases, daily newspapers, and roughly 20 magazines, in both English and non-English versions. At the time of the site visit, the library was nearing the end of construction, so the collection of print resources could not be verified. The Endicott survey suggests that the library may be under utilized as only 45.7 percent of students agree that teachers assign work that required them to use information and do research in the library. This may have been reflective of the condition of the library before the renovation project. Upon completion of the construction project, the library proper will be equipped with two interactive projectors, be able to accommodate 20-25 students, have two study rooms and a maker space with room for an additional 20-25 students.

Kennebunk High School has an extensive list of extracurricular, co-curricular, and athletic offerings that are supported financially as demonstrated by the current existence of 29 extracurricular clubs, seven fall sports, nine winter sports, and five spring sports offered from the varsity to freshman level, as indicated in the KHS "Viewbook." The school reports that 88 percent of students participate in at least one club or sport. It is obvious that the school seeks to support students' interests as a member of the student panel indicated that when they were freshmen, they were told that in order to start a club, all they needed was to "find one friend and a staff advisor." Each school board accepted club advisor receives a stipend and there is a transportation budget to cover some travel expenses. Each club can have an activity account for monies raised. According to the Endicott survey, 61 percent of staff are in total agreement (13 percent totally disagree, 25 percent are undecided) that co-curricular programs are adequately funded. The athletic director has expressed concern that there is not enough available athletic field space to accommodate the number of teams.

The previous KHS facility did not support delivery of 21st century learning. The Endicott survey of 2016 showed this to be a widely held opinion by 67.3 percent of faculty and 59.8 percent of parents. At this point, KHS is undergoing a \$42.8 million renovation project to be completed for the 2018-2019 school year that is designed to fully support a 21st century education. Because the school and district provide appropriate staff, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center that fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities, in a state-of-the-art facility, an optimal learning environment is created in which students can achieve the 21st century learning

expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- Endicott survey

# Standard 2 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

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. The RSU 21 assistant superintendent of schools oversees the district curriculum and its articulation. It is up to the high school principal to oversee the curriculum and to help with its articulation from the middle school. This is done at KHS through the various content areas under the direction of the department heads and content-area teachers. There are opportunities for paid summer work toward curriculum, and freshman and sophomore teachers are supported with IB and AP training.

According to the self-study, Kennebunk High School provides ample time for curriculum development, evaluation, and revision as part of the professional development of all staff members. According to the Endicott survey, 69.2 percent of the staff strongly agree or agree they are "directly involved in curriculum evaluation, review, and revision work." Professional development activities provide support for the development and implementation of curriculum. During weekly Late Start Wednesdays, professional learning communities meet from 7:25 a.m. until 8:50 a.m. During these meetings, department members review curriculum, analyze assessment data and models, and plan implementation of best practices; also, common assessments are developed, reviewed, and revised.

The RSU 21 assistant superintendent acknowledges that while district-wide conversations have started with regard to curriculum review, there has not yet been a review cycle put in place. There are sufficient funds expended by the district for professional development around curriculum, evaluation, and revision. Because 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, the students of Kennebunk High School benefit from an articulated, current, curriculum.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Commendations

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## Commendation

The purposeful design of the curriculum to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The written curriculum in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's 21st century learning expectations; and common assessment practices

## Commendation

The identification of applicable content standards in each department

## Commendation

The provision of late start Wednesdays for faculty to work in PLCs to discuss curriculum and instruction, and develop and review common assessments

## Commendation

The partnerships with many diverse local organizations that provide authentic learning opportunities

## Commendation

The International Baccalaureate Programme (IB) that ensures students practice inquiry, problem solving, higher order thinking and cross-disciplinary learning

## Commendation

The creation of a makerspace to promote student ingenuity and creativity through problem solving

## Commendation

The clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum across the school

## Commendation

The multiple curricular pathways for students to meet their needs and foster their interests

## **Commendation**

The high level of financial support for staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center that fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities

# Standard 2 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop and implement interdisciplinary opportunities as part of the written curriculum

## Recommendation

Ensure that the written curriculum includes instructional strategies and applicable rubrics for each course

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to ensure vertical articulation with other schools in the district

## Recommendation

Establish a curriculum review cycle to ensure timely revision of all curriculum

# Standard 3 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

At Kennebunk High School, teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

Teachers at Kennebunk High School are clearly familiar with the school's identified beliefs about learning. In conversations with teachers, students, parents, and staff, all mention the commitment of KHS to an environment and culture promoting learning, respect, responsibility, and safety. In addition, all stakeholders also stress the importance of the variety of rigorous academic programs, resources, extracurricular, artistic, and social opportunities for students. Teachers, staff, and students also report the new facilities support the school's mission, goals, and beliefs. Students report that at KHS there is truly something for everyone to become involved in within the academic school day and beyond including the course offerings, clubs, athletics, community service, and others. Students also report the importance of the safe and caring environment and how they have an option at the beginning of the school year to sign a form to be an ally to everyone. The school has continued to support this environment by hanging up the signs around the school. KHS also has mixed grade-level advisories, which was promoted by students, where teachers can check in with students, celebrate accomplishments, support students course planning, and participate in community service projects. Teachers and students report the time dedicated to advisory has changed several times over the years and is within adequate time allocation this year. In addition, the administration and guidance department at KHS support students starting in 8th grade with discussions about placement and course planning and providing access to parents through informational nights. School counselors continue to support students through different programming in grades 9 through 12.

From examining student work samples and common assessments at KHS, it is evident that students are regularly involved in inquiry-based learning experiences. Teachers provide students with specific feedback related to their learning and assessments through rubrics, comments on assessments, and sometimes direct conferencing. Eighty-seven percent of staff agree they emphasize inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking to support the achievement of the school's learning expectations. Staff also examine data to improve instruction and teaching performance. Through review of the NWEA, Accuplacer, PSAT, SAT, Maine Science Augmentation Test, IB, and AP results, staff in various content areas can adjust instructional practices to meet curriculum and student needs.

Kennebunk High School uses the Danielson Method for Teacher Evaluation which aligns with the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations to help ensure a focus on instructional practices and the classroom environment. This method provides a standardized format through which teachers can reflect on instructional practices with administration and ensure they are aligned with the core values, beliefs and Guiding Principles. KHS has some staff members trained as evaluators using the Danielson method to act as peer observers, and staff have been trained in applying it to the classroom. Staff has reported some inconsistent feedback through the Danielson Method of evaluation. Based on the Endicott survey, 73 percent of staff agree they continuously examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, however, a transparent explicit connection between the examination and consistency of instructional practices is needed. Staff also report the value of peer observation within the three-year evaluation cycle for authentic feedback and critique on a non-evaluative basis. Staff share the importance of the PLCs and common planning blocks for collaboration and, in addition, staff report specific examples of adjusting instruction, curriculum, and assessment based on direct feedback from students and collaboration with colleagues.

Because teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined through reflective practice to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, learning is flourishing in a safe and caring environment supportive of students achieving academic, social, and civic expectations to develop into responsible members of the global community.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The vast majority of teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of Kennebunk High School's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning and as active self-directed learners, emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills, applying knowledge to authentic tasks, engaging students in self-assessment and reflection, and integrating technology.

Kennebunk High School provides students with multiple course pathways and program opportunities that allow access to personalization of instruction. Within the regular school curriculum students have a variety of course levels to choose from ranging from Common Core classes, college preparatory classes, honors classes, International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), and STEM courses. In addition, students have access to a wide array of elective courses in the different content areas; however, there may be a need for more electives at some levels. Students can also access early college programs, apprenticeships, gifted & talented programs, alternative education, dual enrollment, cooperative opportunities, and career and technical education programs. Within classes at KHS, students have access to opportunities to participate in challenging academics. In addition, KHS creates additional opportunities for students beyond the regular course offerings. For example, some teacher-assistant positions for students have been created to further challenge themselves in the areas of robotics and science. Based on the Endicott survey, 71 percent of students agree they are allowed to choose topics in learning for some assignments. In IB classes, students are given choice of topics to investigate further through the research assignments. Within class instruction, teachers use specific grouping to meet student needs, provide students with opportunities for support during study halls, teacher prep periods, before school, and even after school. Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies including revisiting material in a different way to ensure understanding, modeling, providing multiple options of materials for practicing skills, and providing some student choice on assessments. Sixty-one percent of students on the Endicott survey agree teachers spend one-on-one time with them and only 13 percent disagree.

Teachers engage students in cross-disciplinary learning in several avenues within the multiple pathways of course options. In some departments, instruction includes topics from other content areas. For example, English and social studies teachers collaboratively design lessons involving Socratic seminars and synthesis projects. IB Spanish has some interdisciplinary units. Math and science include some formulaic writing through collaboration with English teachers. STEM and IB classes have some formal and informal cross-disciplinary connections. Staff reports the need for more opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning for students and instruction for teachers.

Students at Kennebunk High School are actively involved in the learning process. Teachers prepare lessons and learning opportunities which promote student choice, inquiry-based learning, and hands-on investigations of material which challenge their thinking. Students are provided with a variety of instructional strategies to be active participants in small group activities, presentations, lab investigations, discussions, debates, and self-directed portfolios. Teachers facilitate the learning process and act as coaches for students during small group work, with individual focused work, and even whole class activities. Students report benefiting from small group instruction or collaborative work in their learning process. In addition, students are provided the opportunity to choose the level of courses and programs that meet their individual interests and needs. Students can choose from a variety of course levels within the regular school program as well as from additional programs that explore careers. For example, each year approximately 33 students participate in the internship or co-op program at different businesses. Students are also provided opportunities to be active and self-directed learners through activities, clubs, and competitions that extend beyond the classroom instruction.

Kennebunk High School teachers consistently emphasize inquiry, problem solving and higher order thinking skills in their instruction. Many teachers are provided the opportunity to attend IB and AP training in their subject area resulting in instruction that focuses on creativity, curiosity and inquiry learning. Students in science classes design their own labs, collect and analyze their own data, and make their own conclusions that they can support with evidence. English and social studies teachers collaboratively design lessons that involve Socratic seminars and synthesis projects that draw upon analysis and application of learning. Nearly 50 percent of classroom

observations and review of student work indicates that lessons are focused on inquiry and higher order thinking skills.

In many areas of the school, teacher instruction incorporates student application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. Through the STEM, IB, and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) programs, students are involved in applying knowledge to other experiences or situations and beyond the classroom. In art classes, students create displays and portfolios demonstrating their skills and knowledge on authentic tasks. Students in math and science classes investigate real-world applications through lab investigations and problem solving. Through the required 30 hours of community service and the alternative learning programs, students are involved within the community in a variety of ways; for example, the building of learning trails, Teen Trendsetters working with students at elementary schools, collaboration with architects on the new school facility, and collaboration with the conservation trust. In addition, the co-ops, apprenticeships, and career and technical programs provide experiences for students to engage in meaningful work and interactions with audiences beyond the classroom.

Across the school, many teachers actively engage students in self-assessment and reflection through the use of a paper reflection sheet or rubric on the 21st century skills (KHS Guiding Principles) midway through each academic quarter and at the end of each quarter. Teachers then compare the student self-assessment to the teacher assessment. Students and teachers can then use this document as a means to conference and discuss student performance and growth. Teachers engage students in frequent self-assessment based on scoring guides prior to submitting assignments. In addition, as part of many assessments, teachers ask students to write a reflection about their final work as a required component. Students are also engaged in peer evaluations and providing feedback in certain areas of the curriculum. In addition, through instruction with the school counselors, students participate in assessments using the Naviance program to survey their career interests that support course planning, transition planning, and reflection. Special education students are also supported by case managers or classes focused around goal setting related to the proficiency standards and transitional plans.

At Kennebunk High School, teachers are using appropriate technology to enhance instruction. Teachers routinely involve students in using technology to demonstrate learning and for group collaboration during learning activities. Each student and teacher is equipped with a Chromebook laptop computer that can also be utilized as a tablet. Teachers are using Google Classroom as a means to communicate assignments, post supportive materials, and for students to complete and submit assignments, as well as to receive feedback. The Chromebooks are used in a variety of classes for data processing, word processing, accessing apps, as well as collaborative student work through Google Docs. Some students report that if the school did not provide the Chromebooks, they would not have access to this technology outside of the classroom. Students report the technology in the classroom is adequate, accessible, and up to date. When construction is complete, every classroom will be equipped with an interactive whiteboard. Many teachers have a website for students to access, and teachers are integrating diverse media to enhance instruction in the classrooms in the various contents. Additionally, RSU 21 employs a member of the technology team who functions as the technology integrator, STEM coordinator, and Google Educator. This role provides classroom support technology training for both students and teachers. Students with learning challenges are provided access to different programs to support and enhance their learning experience. In addition, the course offerings also support the integration of diverse media and technologies appropriate for the content. Based on the Endicott survey, 95 percent of students agree teachers integrate technology in their assignments. With technology integration, teacher instructional strategies support the 21st century learning expectations.

As a result of the supportive learning environment and authentic instructional opportunities that foster personalization, self-direction and reflection, technological integration, and higher order thinking, students will develop the critical skills to be prepared to navigate the academic, social and collaborative expectations of being a responsible citizen in a dynamic world.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- panel presentation

- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- school support staff
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 3 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

At KHS, individual teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by continually using formative assessment, sometimes strategically differentiating, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and extensively providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.

Guided whole-class homework practice coupled with small group work, a variety of questioning strategies, and one-on-one brief check-ins were observed in various subjects as formative strategies to ensure students were on track, understanding the concepts and invested. One teacher in a senior math class used homework review of quadratic equations to start the class and shifted his focus to factoring of polynomials when students were not reaching the correct answers. In a health science class the teacher employed direct questioning strategies to every student in the room at least once to check for focus. A learning center teacher was observed engaging in one-on-one check-ins with each of the six students in her room. Another math teacher reports having altered the way she begins her classes and organizes homework expectations based on student reactions during the first month of the school year. IB students report that their teacher has revamped her lead up to the external assessment based on formative feedback from them. Additionally, students report that some teachers ask for informal self-assessment of the guiding principles mid-quarter to gauge student awareness of achieving those standards.

Teachers at KHS differentiate instruction in a variety of ways. In English classes some common Shakespeare texts are offered in differentiated lexile levels for a range of readers. The STEM classes allow for leveled exams to meet the needs of varied learners. The gifted and talented teacher designs alternative assignments and assessments to challenge students and learning center and Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) staff offer individual support and alternative forms to succeed on common assessments. Many teachers report offering a variety of alternative methods to gauge learning such as taking assessments orally, and allowing student design of summative projects. One English teacher reported that group scoring of student essays during professional time in PLCs allowed her to differentiate writing instruction via scaffolding between her Common Core and college prep classes. While these are excellent examples, it is unclear how consistently differentiation occurs across the school.

The Endicott survey indicates that 86 percent of students report teachers organize group learning activities in their classes. Some examples include engineering students being grouped in pairs to complete the iPad project; teachers using learning stations based on the "Learning by Design" model; English teachers employing literature circles or Socratic seminars; science labs conducted in pairs or small groups to collect and analyze data; History teachers organizing students via the "jigsaw puzzle" practice; and drafting students being organized into threes to build a 3D bridge via solely digital communication. Within some English courses, students are purposefully broken into learning groups based on progress. Some students are put into a group for reading while others to begin analyzing texts.

Administration, teachers and support staff consistently provide a comprehensive level of support and a range of alternative strategies for all students. Guided study halls, the learning center, and the Alternative Education program are formal structures in the school where students can access additional support and/or alternative learning. Identified students receive academic support as appropriate in the regular classroom through the special education department. Ed techs support the delivery of instruction in regular classrooms and alternative settings, and report that the Chromebooks and Google Classroom platform have greatly enhanced their ability to support students. All teachers offer additional extra-help time and post these times in their classrooms and/or on their websites. Students consistently praise teachers' efforts to make themselves available for support across the school. Likewise, the school board and high school administrators attest to the collective efforts of teachers to offer additional support before school, after school, and during their prep times. The Endicott survey indicates that 89 percent of parents report teachers offer additional support to their son or daughter. The pervasive efforts of staff to go above and beyond to meet all students' needs is clearly a hallmark of the learning experience at KHS.

Because teachers consistently use formative data and differentiation to inform their instruction, and continue to employ a variety of group and alternative learning activities while consistently offering additional support, the vast majority of students are experiencing quality learning and high achievement in their pursuit of the 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

The vast majority of teachers at Kennebunk High School, 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; and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.

Most staff at Kennebunk High School use student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments. The KHS Guiding Principles rubric is currently the only school-wide rubric being used by teachers. Within content areas, some common assessments and rubrics are used to collect student achievement data. Staff within departments and then within specific courses do examine the common assessment data to make adjustments to instructional practices. Staff also examine data to improve instruction and teaching performance through review of the NWEA, Accuplacer, PSAT, SAT, Maine Science Augmentation Test, IB, and AP results. Based on the Endicott survey, 71 percent of staff report improving their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments.

The schedule of KHS provides the opportunity for teachers to regularly meet within their content areas to examine and discuss student work. Teachers meet weekly in course-specific PLCs to review formative and summative common assessments, plan, and discuss instructional strategies. Teachers work on uniformly scoring common assessments and adjust formative activities to promote better student success on summative assessments. The results of scoring common assessments are brought to department meetings and discussed collectively. Many teachers also have common planning blocks to support instructional planning and unit design. From the Endicott survey, 69 percent of teachers have formal opportunities to examine student work to improve their instructional practices. Opportunities for teachers to regularly meet across content areas to look at and discuss student work are infrequent.

Kennebunk High School uses feedback from students in some classes. For example, some teachers ask students for feedback through evaluations, surveys, and student responses. Some teachers ask for written reflection feedback on assignments and use this information to improve instruction. Some individual teachers report that asking for student feedback has directly impacted and helped to improve their instruction. For example, a debate protocol was used in a class and students who were part of the debate team gave direct and specific feedback to the teacher on how to improve the process next time which the teacher shares will be applied to the experience. Some teachers ask for feedback on specific assignments, assessments, or class formative activities which is then used to modify or adjust teaching practices. However, 45 percent of students on the Endicott survey report teachers ask for their ideas/opinions to improve how they teach.

The district of RSU 21 supports instructional rounds of all district administration/supervisors providing for observation of classes and instruction at all levels. Administrators report this has helped to strengthen communication, promote district culture, and impact a variety of areas including instructional strategies. Staff are receptive to these instructional round observations and there is valuable reflection by observers.

Parents and administration report further examination of the homework policy with input from all stakeholders is needed to analyze if current student work loads outside of school support instruction. Parents report they would like to see continued expansion or support of the STEM programs currently offered to students. Thirty percent of parents report on the Endicott survey their son's/daughter's teachers have asked for feedback about instructional practices.

Most of the faculty of KHS have received professional development from outside resources and are supported in individual professional development. In addition, staff are supported in attending any conferences, professional trainings, and there is even a committee that reviews teacher grants for professional development within the district. Teachers report reviewing current research and best practices through their own professional research

and literature. Many teachers participate in AP and IB training and share this information within their departments. Included every day in an email to staff, the principal provides "food for thought" which includes a brief explanation of an example of current research and the primary source.

All teachers at KHS are engaged in professional discourse focused on instructional practices. On the Endicott survey, 71 percent of teachers report improving their instructional practices by engaging in informal opportunities for professional discourse focused on instructional practices. Teachers are engaged in PLCs, common planning time, department time, monthly full faculty meetings, and informal one-on-one or small group discussions that are adequately supported by the school schedule and promote professional discourse around improvement of instructional practices. In addition, informal observations of peers included in the Danielson Framework Observation Schedule allows teachers to visit the classrooms of other educators across and within disciplines.

District and school administration communicate an expectation that improving instruction is important and that professional discourse within the district contributes to improvement. Some KHS teachers participate in vertical PLCs where they meet with middle school teachers to align the middle and high school curricula. Several administrators report the need to continue the 6-12 vertical teams to examine curricular needs, instruction, and student needs and have set aside two Late Start Wednesdays for this. Through the core literature committee teachers from all grade levels (elementary through high school), meet once a month to adjust and align the district's list of required reading for English classes.

When teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices using feedback from a variety of sources and engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, the quality of instruction improves and promotes students' achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

The vast majority of Kennebunk High School teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

KHS teachers, by contract, are reimbursed for up to 12 credit hours at the University of Southern Maine rate. Many teachers avail themselves of this professional development money to maintain expertise in their content areas in addition to attending conferences, workshops, and alternative professional growth experiences. For example, 45 teachers have attended IB level two training and 14 have attended at least one AP training in the last several years. Additionally, teachers have attended recent workshops on writing, preparing students for the new SAT exam, and served as AP readers on various subject tests. Formal structures are in place for KHS teachers to reflect on best practice with their colleagues during Late Start Wednesday PLC time as well as at bi-monthly Thursday afternoon department meetings.

Informally, the principal sends out a daily email to staff, "Food for Thought", which often includes professionally written articles or papers regarding best practices or habits of mind about current education research. Yet, there is no formal time for teachers to discuss these articles. Lastly, as part of the new teacher supervision and evaluation model, teachers engage in peer observations within and outside of their content areas with a focus on improving instruction.

Teachers as reflective practitioners and experts in their content field is indeed a hallmark of Kennebunk High School. The Endicott survey certainly supports this strength as approximately 87 percent of the students, 90 percent of the staff and 76 percent of parents agree that teachers maintain expertise in their content area and content-specific instructional practices. It is also notable in the survey that only one percent of students and four percent of parents "disagree" with this statement.

As a result of teachers focusing professional development and review of current research on best practice and content-specific pedagogy as well as on expertise in their content specific areas, students benefit through improved instruction.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- students
- school board
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 3 Commendations

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## Commendation

The efforts of teachers to examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The multiple course pathways and program opportunities that allow access to personalized instruction for all students

## Commendation

The consistent emphasis on inquiry, problem solving and higher order thinking skills in instructional practices

## Commendation

The use of student self-assessment and reflection within many content areas and in relation to the Guiding Principles

## Commendation

The provision of a staff member who is the technology integrator, STEM coordinator, and Google Educator to support teacher's use of technology in the classroom

## Commendation

The effective use of appropriate technology to enhance instruction which allows students to use technology to demonstrate learning and for group collaboration during learning activities

## Commendation

The pervasive efforts of faculty and staff to offer additional support to students

## Commendation

The efforts to analyze student achievement data to inform instructional practices and common course assessments

## Commendation

The instructional rounds conducted by district administration that provide opportunities for observation of classes and instruction at all levels

## **Commendation**

The opportunities for student feedback that have helped to improve teacher instruction

The faculty commitment to engage in reflective practice and maintain expertise in their content area

# Standard 3 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Ensure consistent use of differentiation in all classes

## Recommendation

Increase opportunities for professional development and training on technology for all faculty

## Recommendation

Ensure opportunities for students and parents to give feedback to teachers on instructional practices

# Standard 4 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The professional staff of Kennebunk High School continuously employs a formal process to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics. The professional staff of KHS are beginning to implement a formal process to assess whole-school progress in achieving the expectations. Kennebunk High School adopted a school-wide rubric in the fall of 2015, entitled Kennebunk High School Guiding Principles. This provides a formal process for assessing whole-school and individual student progress in achieving 21st century learning expectations in social and civic responsibilities. At the end of every quarter, teachers assess students on the five standards and enter these ratings into PowerSchool as a measure of individual progress relative to the Guiding Principles. All five Guiding Principles are assessed in every class. In some cases, teachers do this on a more frequent basis, anywhere from daily to several times a quarter. Additionally, half the teachers report having students self-assess to encourage them to be more aware of where they stand and to get them thinking about how they can improve their performance. The world languages department has created a more detailed checklist with the nine descriptors for each standard so that students receive more specific feedback on areas needing improvement. The Endicott survey in early spring 2016 indicates that 85 percent of students are familiar with the school-wide rubrics which teachers use to assess assignments and other class work, 87.2 percent of parents are familiar with the 21st century learning expectations adopted by the school, and 84.6 percent of the staff think that the 21st century learning expectations are challenging and measurable for all students. The academic expectations are largely driven by departments and programs such as IB and AP. Rubrics for these are developed in departments. While these are used on common assessments within departments, they are not school-wide, and vary in format. As a result of the formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, students know where they stand on achieving these important targets.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school's professional staff regularly communicates individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families, and is beginning to communicate the whole-school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community. Students and families are able to use PowerSchool to find the quarterly grades on each of the five Guiding Principles along with the students' content standard grades. Student and parent use of the portal is tracked; for example 91.6 percent of KHS students or parents logged in to view grades in the semester that the self-study was completed. The student handbook provides information about content grades, but not about how the Guiding Principles are graded. There are other opportunities for parents and students to be informed of progress such as Open House, parent-teacher conferences, and email contacts. On the other hand, communicating the school-wide progress in achieving the school's Guiding Principles does not yet have a formal process, although the school has begun to access the data through the efforts of a data specialist, and it is made available to the school staff, and reported by the principal at the beginning of the year at the "State of the School" presentation. The communication of the results allows individual students to assess their progress toward meeting the Guiding Principles, to get feedback from their teachers, and to see where they need to improve. When the school-wide process to communicate data is in place, it will help all members of the school community understand the progress of the whole school towards these important benchmarks.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The professional staff is developing a process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. The Assessment Subcommittee discussed at length how inequities in student achievement are focused on in the different course levels, such as Common Core (CC), college prep (CP), honors (H), and Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate (AP/IB). Individual teachers analyze student data to find ways to address the inequities that students at those levels have in common. The Endicott survey indicates that less than 40 percent of teachers responding agree with the statement that they use data to respond to inequities. The self-study identifies using the data that is collected as a critical need. This identifies an opportunity for improvement, although other evidence supports the idea that work is still being accomplished in this area. Teachers in all departments are given data, and time to examine it, that is broken down and clearly represented that includes middle school NWEA scores, PSAT scores, among others, depending on the student and the course. Examination of other data, such as AP Instructional Planning reports, Accuplacer scores, and the results from the state science exam, is also evident. This data is collected and broken down by the district data specialist who provides regular reports. According to the administrators of the sending schools, ninth grade teachers meet with middle school teachers to discuss individual students and groups of students at the beginning of each school year in order to better understand their strengths and needs. When the whole school consistently collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data, teachers will be provided with the tools to identify student needs, both for providing challenging instruction and addressing deficits.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Prior to each unit of study, most teachers at KHS communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and most communicate related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. According to discussions with students during shadowing, students are regularly given rubrics and detailed product descriptors at the beginning of almost all units of study in most of their classes. In interviews with individual teachers which included viewing student work, it was evident that content-specific expectations were clearly communicated, often with exemplars or rubrics, and that discussions about the Guiding Principle rubrics are consistently happening. Product descriptors that were seen from multiple departments included not only unit and content-specific rubrics, but also used language that described what achievement on the Guiding Principles looks like on the given assignments. In panel discussion with students, it was made clear that students frequently are given these resources long before the projects are due as a way for the students to know what they are working toward and what success looks like. When all KHS teachers communicate with students about the Guiding Principles and unit-specific expectations, with discussions throughout the school year and at the start of individual units, then all students are able to have clear understanding of the goals and levels of achievement for which they are responsible.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Prior to summative assessments, KHS teachers provide students with a variety of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement. Many common assessments have rubrics attached to show students the criteria for success, and some projects included class time for examination of exemplars. Students and teachers are very aware of the Guiding Principles and how the rubrics will be used in class, as well as know when a summative assessment will include a grade from the Guiding Principles, such as the problem-solving rubric. Students and teachers regularly discuss the indicators on rubrics together, sometimes one-on-one and sometimes full class, including those on the Guiding Principles and those on the content- and unit-specific rubrics. This was reported during discussions with students and teachers. During discussions with teachers, it became apparent that there were questions about the value of rubrics that were limited to meeting proficiency as opposed to exceeding the standard. At the district level, it was determined that rubrics should be limited to only three levels whenever possible in order to ensure that students know how to meet proficiency and are not stressed by trying to exceed the standard. When students understand, prior to being assessed, what they will be assessed on, and perhaps more importantly what success looks like in terms of meeting and exceeding standards, they are more able to prepare for high achievement.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

In each unit of study, most teachers frequently employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Teachers in many observed classes used a variety of informal checks for understanding before proceeding further in a lesson; re-teaching of necessary information was evident. Teachers use a variety of summative assessments to judge students progress on unit-specific content. Examples were observed across a number of learning areas, such as poster projects, 3D models, and creative writing assignments posted in rooms. Many students have been able to cite a variety of types of assessments used by teachers, and were able to discuss examples of their own work, what content standards were being assessed, and how they were progressing toward achieving the relevant Guiding Principles. Using a variety of assessment types helps students to remain engaged, creative, and challenged. Formative assessments that are targeted and frequent can take many forms and happen at many times, giving teachers and students important information about how they are progressing within a unit or toward meeting the Guiding Principles. As teachers' knowledge of the role of formative assessments evolves, then performance on summative assessments will improve.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Most teachers collaborate regularly, during professional learning community (PLC) time and department meetings, in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. The minutes from different department meetings indicate that time is spent during PLCs on Late Start Wednesday creating and revising both formative and summative assessments. These minutes indicate that teachers collaboratively develop assessments for the units they teach in the same courses. Common assessments in the same course are used in different levels, such as Common Core (CC), college prep (CP), and honors. On the Endicott survey, 49 of 52 (94 percent) of teachers agree that they meet regularly and formally to improve both formative and summative assessments. From conversations with teachers, both individually and during a panel discussion, it was evident that regular meetings to create and revise common assessments has been a valued part of their practice for many years. They also say that more time in the future is planned to be devoted to analysis of common assessment data through collaborative scoring, across the different levels at which a course is offered. Because teachers spend time in a regular and formal fashion creating, analyzing, and revising formative, summative, and common assessments, all learners are impacted positively by having aligned curriculum and assessments.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

Teachers regularly provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. Based on examining examples of student work, students are regularly given multiple opportunities to meet the same standard within a unit, after feedback has been provided on the previous assessment. These examples include different classroom assignments on the same topics, and multiple drafts of one report, with original and revised grades evident, with comments. Students reported that they regularly receive feedback on their completed work and are often given the chance to revise and resubmit work for more credit. Outside of the core requirements, students in STEM and art classes do practice projects and make adjustments based on models and feedback. Many teachers have a protocol or procedure in their classrooms for students to follow in order to be able to improve their work. Giving students opportunities to revise and improve their work is an important part of the learning process, and helps students learn about how to take their understanding and performance to a higher level. Receiving feedback that is based on clear expectations, and is timely enough to be useful, helps students make the most of these opportunities.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teachers
- students

# Standard 4 Indicator 9

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## Conclusions

Teachers continually use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. During classroom observations and in discussions with teachers, it was evident that teachers use a variety of formative assessments to measure student learning and then adapt their instruction based on the results. Questioning and answering, writing prompts, individual conversations with students were a few of the methods observed. Students report that formative assessments are frequently used. The Endicott survey indicates a high degree (100 percent) of agreement among the teachers that they use formative assessments, and 94.2 percent agree that they meet regularly to discuss and improve formative assessment strategies. When asked about formative assessments, many teachers referred to the common assessments, although the idea of formative assessments refers to any checks for understanding that are used to inform subsequent instruction and assessment. Across the board, teachers are using these checks for understanding, just not referring to them as such. When teachers use formal and informal measures to assess student learning, it provides them feedback as to what has been learned and what needs further explanation or practice.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey

# Standard 4 Indicator 10

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## Conclusions

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, regularly examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice including 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, and survey data from current students and alumni. Teachers examine a variety of student work including class work, homework, formative, and summative assessments. During PLC time, teachers within common courses, although different levels, examine student work on common assessments for evidence of student learning and use the results to revise curriculum and improve practice. Based on student feedback, teachers individually examine students' self-evaluations on the Guiding Principle rubrics. Teachers are beginning work on examining school-wide progress on the Guiding Principles. Teachers use assessment results in their student learning objectives (SLOs) as part of the evaluation process, basing their own evaluations on student progress or improvement over time by students on the SAT. This is true for all teachers, even those who do not directly teach ELA and Math. The ACCUPLACER test, which is administered to 11th graders, and the results from the state science assessment are analyzed by the respective departments and used to adjust curriculum. Teachers use data from the various receiving schools associated with the district to assess student preparedness for these programs. These include the Portland Arts and Technology High School, the Sanford Regional Technical Center and the Biddeford Regional Center of Technology, and college level courses taught at KHS through cooperative agreements with York County Community College and Southern Maine Community College. NWEA scores from the Middle School of the Kennebunks are used by the reading specialist to determine levels of intervention. Each year KHS collects data from current students and alumni from the University of New England and the University of Maine in Orono. Further information concerning curriculum and instruction is collected through returning student forums or anecdotally. Guidance counselors speak with college recruiters to gather information on recent KHS graduates who are at the institution, and seek such information when doing campus visits which is then relayed to the appropriate departments. However, on the self-study, a need was identified to use more of the data collected in a consistent manner. By using a wide range of sources to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, administrators and teachers ensure that students will receive a high quality learning experience.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 11

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## Conclusions

Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised by all teachers to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Over the past three years, KHS has engaged in discussions on, and has subsequently revised policies and beliefs on, grading practices affecting their 21st century learning expectations resulting in creation of the Guiding Principles, a consistent late work policy, weighted grades, and the weighting of midterm and final exams. Core values are evident in school documents, although they have been inconsistently seen to be directly connected with students work and assessment. Based on a perceived need for more time to collaborate, the school now uses Late Start Wednesday time for PLCs and common planning time. Additionally, each department has been working on common assessments and rubrics to address proficiency standards related to the discipline. There is a perceived need to have more cross-curricular planning; currently math teachers regularly meet only with math teachers, for example. By regularly examining and updating the school's grading and reporting practices, the professional staff ensures that they are adhering to core values and beliefs about learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Commendations

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## Commendation

The formal process, based on specific and measurable criteria, to assess and communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The students' familiarity with rubrics for the Guiding Principles, and their comfort self-assessing their progress using the indicators

## Commendation

The regular communication with students about their progress on achieving the Guiding Principles

## Commendation

The practice of providing students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, prior to summative assessments

## Commendation

The district data specialist who develops data-driven reports which are provided to teachers to assist them in informing their instructional practices

## Commendation

The practice of communicating to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals prior to each unit

## Commendation

The teachers' willingness to revise common assessments, to improve rubric language, and to provide feedback to help students improve

## Commendation

The frequent use of formative assessment across the school

## Commendation

The development of a range of assessments to challenge and engage students across all departments

## **Commendation**

The ability of the staff to be reflective practitioners and examine their grading practices

# Standard 4 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop and implement a process to communicate the results of whole-school assessment of the Guiding Principles to all stakeholders

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a formal process to collect, disaggregate and analyze data to respond to inequities in student achievement

## Recommendation

Include information explaining assessment of the Guiding Principles in the student handbook

## Recommendation

Include inter-departmental meetings during common planning time to ensure that grading practices are consistent across curricular areas

## Recommendation

Review and revise the content specific proficiency power standards to ensure there is consistent language between academic departments

## Recommendation

Review and revise the rubrics used to assess the content specific proficiency power standards to ensure the defined targeted levels of success are consistently described by the various departments

# Standard 5 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The Kennebunk High School (KHS) 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. KHS provides a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture as evidenced by numerous activities, policies, procedures, and reported data. Endicott survey and MIYHS data indicate that more than 84 percent of students feel safe in their school. In addition, the majority of staff (78 percent) and parents (87 percent) feel the climate at KHS is safe, positive, and supportive. A high number of students (79 percent) also feel respected by teachers. Currently, students feel comfortable seeking out teachers and other staff members for help and are empowered to start initiatives around areas of interest. When interviewed, the majority of students stated they can approach faculty, particularly the principal, about any issue. It is clear that KHS faculty is very supportive and flexible; however, there is always a continual need to develop and nurture this culture with all faculty. The student handbook outlines specific expectations for student behavior under a variety of conditions. The handbook also provides a list of core values, a list of expectations for behavior, and a specific discipline continuum. The recent addition of restorative discipline practices is another vehicle to create a positive, respectful, and supportive culture.

The variety of multiple pathways for learning that students can pursue at KHS creates the opportunity for students to take responsibility for the direction of their learning through individual choices. A high number of faculty and parents agree that the culture supports students taking responsibility for their own learning. The availability of support, whether it is before or after school, during advisory, or in guided study halls or learning centers encourages students to become active and self-directed learners. In addition to the multiple pathways and options for support, KHS has policies and practices in place to help students become responsible for their own learning such as the Academic Honesty Policy and the Guiding Principles. Assessment of the Guiding Principles measures student responsibility for learning and other civic and social behaviors.

The abundance of clubs and other extracurricular activities at KHS supports a culture of shared ownership and pride by all members of the school community. KHS has many clubs that support a positive school climate such as Gay, Straight, Transgender Alliance (GSTA), Civil Rights, Peer Helpers and Interact. Over 80 percent of the student body participates in a club or activity. The Endicott survey indicates that over half of the student body indicate bullying is not a problem at KHS, although a fair number of students (26 percent) are unsure about whether or not bullying is a problem. Student reports indicate that incidents of vandalism in the old building happened only on a small scale. KHS's mission statement indicates rigorous academic programs for all. Students accessing honors level courses, IB and AP classes clearly indicate high standards are the norm. Most of the students in Common Core (CC), college prep (CP) classes, and alternative programs indicated that the level of challenge provided matches their individual needs. The block scheduling of eight classes per year and 24 credits to graduate communicates the high expectations for achieving in a variety of areas. The community service requirement supports the idea that achievement is not only academic and supports the civic expectations of the school. Challenging course options of honors, IB and AP classes are open to all, indicating the school supports students in challenging themselves. Because the entire school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning, shared ownership, pride, and high expectations, students benefit from attending a school where they feel supported and challenged.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour

- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school is designed to be equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Students are more often than not grouped heterogeneously across the board for electives and noncore courses. The school's courses are organized into Common Core (CC), college prep (CP), honors, International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Students self-select groupings when signing up for courses each year. Student-to-teacher ratios average 14:1 with a reported range of as high as 26 students to as low as 3 students. As juniors and seniors, students are also able to participate in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of their choice. Students also have access to Alternative Education programs, apprenticeships, and internship experiences as well as early college experiences in multiple forms. Special education students are routinely included within regular classroom settings whenever possible with educational technicians embedded the regular classrooms to assist teachers in providing IEP-specific programming. Additionally, students who may begin in CC courses can move up to take CP courses, AP students are able to take IB courses, and students who may begin in CP are able to take honors, IB or AP courses. KHS has a strong system to offer multiple pathways for student learning although students and teachers report that students participating in the CC pathway sometimes have limited options. For example, currently CC students who want to take a fourth year of science are unable to do so because of limited electives. When students, regardless of ability level, have access to high quality and challenging learning experiences, all students are able to achieve the school's learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- community members
- department leaders
- school leadership

# Standard 5 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Since 1999, Kennebunk High School has had a formal, ongoing advisory 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 Guiding Principles. According to Endicott data, there is solid agreement among students, faculty and parents that there is one adult who knows each student well. Multi-age/grade advisor groups meet for 25 minutes, four days a week and group size is from 10 to 14 students with one adult. Advisors report that they guide students toward clubs of interest and other various resources in the building. Advisors have access to PowerSchool for advisees and many review grades with students every four weeks. There is no set curriculum for advisor groups, and there is no clear agreed upon common purpose or mission for advisory time other than to know students well. Many advisor groups voluntarily complete "We Care" projects around the holidays. Announcements are provided during advisor time, as well as at other times during the day and attendance is taken. When asked, students describe the advisory program as a "social study hall," and stated they mostly use this time to just "chill" or to complete homework. They do say that the advisor typically takes the time to circulate among them and asks how school is going. They feel their advisor knows them well. Current 8th grade students complete an interest inventory to be matched with an advisor with similar interests. Once assigned, students have the ability to switch advisor groups for a variety of reasons. There is a protocol of meeting with the principal to advocate for an advisor group change and this happens with some regularity. Parents can also request a particular advisor. As a result of the formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school who knows the student well and provides assistance in achieving the school's guiding principles, students are more connected and have more ownership in their overall school program.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school website

# Standard 5 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and the professional staff at Kennebunk High School 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; and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Significant time to engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry and analysis of teaching and learning is provided to the KHS faculty through the Late Start Wednesdays (LSW), which are used for professional learning communities (PLCs). While the principal oversees the PLCs to direct the professional discourse, teachers have a great deal of autonomy to create their PLC groupings, either by common courses or common grade. This time has been used to identify standards, design common assessments, share instructional strategies, examine student work, and revise curriculum. The calendar for the focus of the PLC time is created over the summer by the administrative team with input from the leadership team. While the goal is on planning equal time for each identified need, shifting priorities and needs during the school year cause the calendar to have some fluctuations that can be challenging. The Wednesday morning after the monthly leadership team meeting is used for full-faculty meetings. Twice a month department meetings take place on Thursday afternoons to review budgets, discuss test scores, or work on common assessments. The school leadership team, comprised of administration, and department heads, meets monthly. For the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years, the district was provided with two professional development days. The principal's "Morning Message" is a daily email listing events for the day as well as providing a professional reading for staff to consider. A professional library for faculty is maintained and the librarian hosts two book talks a year on a professional book, which is purchased by the district for teachers who wish to participate. The assistant superintendent also provides professional development materials whenever a need is identified. Interviews with faculty and administration reveal that the time provided to improve student learning is adequate to meet the needs of the high school.

Teachers at KHS have a variety of resources outside of the school available to them to maintain currency with best practices. They are reimbursed for up to 12 credit hours per year. It has become standard practice that all KHS teachers are trained in IB practices within a year of hire. AP trainings and content area conferences are supported. During both the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, over 30 teachers attended various conferences of their choosing. Informal interviews with teachers indicate that PD opportunities outside of the school are generously supported. High school staff have attended NEASC accreditation visits to keep current with best practices. The district provides training to support specific programs chosen for implementation, such as the Danielson Framework and Restorative Justice practices. In addition, the district will hire contracted service providers to deliver onsite professional development, such as hiring WestEd to train teachers in the Danielson evaluation system and to work with teachers on aligning assessments and rubrics to standards.

KHS teachers apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment in a variety of formats. They have the opportunity to collaborate with the technology integrator to implement new technology into classrooms or to attend a district level technology training. Teachers at KHS may also apply for paid summer work to engage in collaboration with curriculum work. A number of the various programs available to students, such as alternative education, apprenticeships, co-op education, and senior projects allow for faculty collaboration with community partners. This collaboration provides authentic real-world experiences to support best practices in the classroom. A newly created format has one academic program, such as Alternative Education, highlighted each month at a full-faculty meeting so teachers can see the variety of instruction in their school. They engage in committee work, such as a recent improving literacy committee whose purpose is to improve literacy throughout the high school curriculum. District K-12 curriculum committees work on vertical alignment of curriculum. After receiving training, teachers and evaluators have implemented the Danielson Framework for a more effective teacher evaluation process. Skills learned on NEASC visits and at various national conferences such as "Learning and the Brain" are brought back to the district and implemented in classrooms. Currently, teachers are expected to share their learning from conferences but report they often do

not have a formal mechanism for sharing. Formally, mutual planning time sometimes is able to happen for same-content teachers to support application of skills, practices, and ideas to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Informally, teachers engage in this collaboration and reflection as they are able.

Dedicated time for professional development opportunities that allow teachers to engage in professional discourse, maintain currency with best practices, and apply the skills, practices and ideas to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment will continuously improve student learning.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership
- school website

# Standard 5 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. The new evaluation process was implemented in 2014 per state statute and has been thoughtfully designed in order to improve instruction. The new evaluation system is based upon the work of Charlotte Danielson and is an approved, research-based evaluation and supervision system as defined by the Maine Department of Education. Professional development in the implementation of the system was provided to administrators and lead teachers and continuing PD has been provided via use of a consultant from WestEd. Probationary teachers are required to have two formal observations per year while continuing contract teachers receive two formal observations every three years. All teachers set annual goals (to include a self-assessment process) based on the Danielson rubric with the administration. The goal-setting and observation process, however, is not yet fully integrated into the instructional improvement processes of the school. Common challenges identified via the evaluation system are not regularly discussed across departments or via leadership team meetings in order to identify common themes, set goals, and brainstorm ways in which improvements can be made. The student learning objectives (SLOs) that are a required component of the system require individual teachers and teams of teachers to set student achievement goals and to monitor progress toward meeting these goals, but there seems to be no consistent methodology through which this information is shared across staff to aid in whole-school work to improve student learning. When school leaders and school staff regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes and connect those processes to the instructional improvement conversations of the school, teacher practice improves as does student learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

Kennebunk High School's organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.

Kennebunk High School utilizes an eight block alternating schedule that allows for collaboration between students and staff. Class blocks range from 75 to 80 minutes with one 25-minute advisor block four days a week and two 25-minute lunch blocks. Block scheduling allows for more in-depth study and varied instructional practices such as peer collaboration, active application of concepts, inquiry-based instruction, and one-to-one meetings with teachers. Most teachers teach five of the eight blocks, have one study hall block and one daily preparation block. KHS has one faculty position dedicated to PowerSchool scheduling who continuously reviews the schedule and makes adjustments regarding sections as needed throughout the year. Attention is given to making sure that the master schedule supports the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

The school day runs from 7:45 a.m. to 2:11 p.m. Currently, there is a committee formed to explore later school start times. Start times could affect the relationship with area receiving schools. Most teachers have posted office hours with before and after school availability each week. The library is open from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every day except Friday.

KHS has arranged its schedule to allow for collaboration through weekly Late Start Wednesdays. The majority of the 75-minute blocks are dedicated to professional learning communities (PLCs) that are organized within each department. Groups are arranged based on content while others are arranged by grade. While no cross-content PLC groups formally exist, some small groups of across-content teachers have met regarding school concerns. The PLC work focuses on identification of content standards, the creation or modification of assessments and rubrics, evaluation of student work, and review of instructional practices. The professional calendar of PLC time is flexible and allows for adjustment as needed to meet the needs of KHS.

KHS is organized primarily by departmental structure. There is an awareness about the need for a formal structure to support interdisciplinary curriculum design. Currently, the STEM area is the only interdisciplinary structure, with plans for a future humanities interdisciplinary structure. Informally, the math and science departments have met to collaborate on math needs in higher level science courses and science and English have collaborated on scientific readings in the English curriculum.

In order to enhance personalization, KHS offers multiple educational pathways for students to pursue. Once the core curriculum is completed at the end of sophomore year, students can pursue IB or AP classes, two different Career and Technical Education schools, dual enrollment with two different community colleges, and courses at two local universities. Students who need more personalized instruction have access to alternative education, learning centers, guided study halls, and Common Core classes. Online options are provided through PLATO, used for credit recovery, and AP4ALL, for AP classes not offered at KHS. While many of the pathway options take place within the traditional school day structure during the traditional school year, the online and college classes allow students options that allow for a different schedule and/or to work at their own time and pace. Students also have the option to pursue co-op learning, apprenticeships, and senior projects which are completed with various flexible schedules for students. RSU 21's Adult Education program offers a variety of classes in the areas of personal enrichment and academic achievement that take place at night. Evidence does not suggest that these offerings are integrated into the myriad pathways for student success at KHS, but school board policy does indicate this option can be used for credit recovery for seniors.

Because the organization of time supports research-based instruction and professional collaboration among teachers, the learning needs of all students are met.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school website

# Standard 5 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Student load and class size at KHS enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. RSU 21 school board policy recommends class sizes ranging from 18-22 students. Typical class sizes in core courses range from 14-26 students, with some classes well below the minimum. Board policy acknowledges that class sizes in fine arts, physical education, instrumental and/or choral music will be larger than the recommended maximum. A variety of factors can influence class sizes including subject area, nature of the learning needs of students, availability of space, instructional methods and practices, experience of the teacher, support staff, and budgetary constraints. Results from the Endicott survey indicate that the majority (90.6 percent) of students agree that their class size is reasonable. In addition, 78 percent of students state that teachers are able to spend one-to-one time with them. The majority of parent respondents (86.5 percent) agree that the number of students in classes allows teachers to provide one-to-one support as needed. In special education teacher-student caseload ratios are in compliance with state regulations, ranging from 8 to 24 at KHS. Special education skill centers typically have five or six students at any given time. The majority of the time class sizes allow teachers to meet the learning needs of students and when there is difficulty, the master schedule is examined for options. In order to meet individual student or programmatic needs, some of the more specialized courses run with very few students: for example, Multi-Variable Calculus with three students and IB Biology HL with four students, which can create increased class sizes in other areas such as a Common Core class. Student course selection drives the schedule and there is also an effort to run every class that a student selects. On average, teachers carry a class load of 85 students, with a range from 65 to 110 students. There is a concentrated effort by the building leadership for all teachers to have three or fewer class preps. The majority of teachers teach five out of eight blocks over the two day schedule, with one study hall block and two teacher preparation blocks (one each day). This schedule arrangement allows teachers to personalize learning in a variety of ways. The culture at KHS and the schedule allow for a "whatever it takes" approach to meeting student needs. Because student load and class size are appropriate, teachers are able to meet the learning needs of all students.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

The principal, working with other building leaders, at times provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.

The principal's time is primarily focused on working with students and staff in small groups to meet the individual needs of each student, although teachers report the need for the principal to take a stronger role as the instructional leader of the school in a more collaborative manner. Several teachers report that they would like to see the principal more often in their classrooms outside of formal evaluation processes, but that she is always extremely responsive to their needs in terms of providing resources and support for their ongoing work with students.

The principal models the core values found in the school's mission primarily through the creation of a safe and caring environment for all students. The principal is very visible to students. She routinely greets students each morning, can be found in the cafeteria during student lunches, functionally maintains an "open door" policy for students, and can be seen cheering for students during various school events. Her mantra for staff and students is "whatever it takes." This means that she is willing to do whatever it takes to help students reach their fullest potential and this mantra is shared by all school staff. The principal also provides clear communication to staff on a daily basis with her "morning messages" that go out to staff each day, and the principal's administrative assistant composes a weekly Wednesday morning message that goes out more broadly to staff, parents, and students each week.

Although Kennebunk High School has a clear set of core values outlined in its student handbook, it is not highly visible in their core documents nor is it transparently linked to decision-making structures used by the principal. The principal does have a highly effective administrative team with two assistant principals, an athletic director, and a fully developed guidance office and other supporting administrative structures whose focus is clearly on ensuring the needs of each student is met. The administrative team regularly meets to review student achievement and checks in with students who may be in danger of failing. For example, when a senior is identified as being in jeopardy of not graduating, the administrative team meets with the student and family to develop an explicit agreement detailing what needs to happen for the student to complete graduation requirements through the collaborative development of a written action plan. When asked to identify the strengths of the high school, administrative assistants reported unanimously that it is the willingness of the staff and administration to do "whatever it takes" to respond to and meet the needs of the students and their parents.

Important decisions are made with some input from various stakeholder groups. The KHS senate operates as an important advisory group to the principal in the decision-making process. This group is comprised of all key stakeholders with staff, students, and parents actively involved. KHS also has a staff leadership team that is used as an advisory group by the principal in some decision-making processes. Additionally, a new committee initiated by KHS Faculty, the school's climate committee, has recently been formed by the district and school administration in order to aid in creating a clear voice for staff in the decision-making process and to aid the principal in creating a more open and transparent decision-making process.

Traditional faculty meetings have always occurred on a monthly basis at KHS. However, teachers report that there is not a regular time for the whole staff to gather together for purposes other than professional development and desire more opportunities for collegial discussion. Each Wednesday is a late start day. These days are more often than not used as PLC time focused on professional development. Occasionally some of this time is used by the principal to gather staff together to address timely issues of importance. Additionally, every other Thursday is used for additional meeting time. One Thursday each month is typically used for the teacher leadership team to meet while the time on the second and fourth Thursday of each month is typically used for department-level meetings and work time. Agendas are typically provided in advance of all PLC meetings, department meetings, and leadership team meetings. Finally, the principal meets regularly with a variety of students through formal meetings with student organizations, informal conversations in the hallways and lobby as students enter and exit

the school, and via regular attendance at student events.

When the principal, working with other school leaders, including teachers, provides instructional leadership focused on student learning and rooted in the core values, beliefs about learning, and learning expectations, the school's stakeholders can be confident that all students will have excellent learning opportunities designed to help them reach their individual potential.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- community members
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 9

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## Conclusions

Parents are consciously involved, and teachers and students are occasionally involved, in meaningful and defined roles in decision making that promote responsibility and ownership.

The principal is highly visible to students and maintains an open door policy when it comes to meet the needs of students and staff. Students report feeling as though they can go to the principal directly with any concern they may have and that they trust and respect the principal. The principal and administrative team are almost always in the lobby to greet students each morning from 7:00-7:45 a.m. The principal meets regularly with the KHS senate (comprised of all community stakeholders such as parents, community, students and staff) and the KHS student council comprised of student leaders at KHS. Additionally, the RSU 21 School Board has two student member positions who actively engage in an advisory role to the school board. These are three formal groups designed by the school to offer students meaningful and formal roles in decision-making processes, which may explain the results of the Endicott survey whereby 48 percent of students report they have a voice in decision-making processes at KHS. However, the principal regularly is informally present with students. She can be found at all student events ranging from activities put on by student clubs, from drama events and musical performances to student athletic competitions and everything in between. Additionally, students are encouraged by school administration to advocate for their own needs. One example is the manner through which students are supported by the administration to take initiative in creating clubs that are meaningful to them such as the environmental club.

Many parents report feeling as though the principal has a true open door policy. Several parents reported that whenever they had an issue they wanted to talk about, the principal readily made herself available to them to talk one on one and that they feel they are heard and their voices are valued in decision making at the school. Additionally, parents reported regularly receiving information on various committees that they could join to be part of the decision-making process. Results from the Endicott survey back this up with 69.7 percent of parents reporting that they agree that they have meaningful roles in the decision-making processes at KHS. In the Endicott survey, staff report that 63.5 percent agree that they have a meaningful role in the school's decision-making processes.

Many staff report feeling as though the principal maintains an open door for them to report concerns or to have conversations about their needs, and that the principal regularly provides support and resources for them in these areas when they are communicated. Survey data suggests, however, that formal voices in decision-making processes at the school are not as readily offered to staff in a meaningful way. Existing formal structures to aid in giving voice to staff in decision-making processes include membership on the KHS senate which is an advisory group to the principal, membership on the school's leadership team which meets monthly with the principal, and just recently, membership on the newly formed school climate committee. Several teachers report that the recent work of the climate committee has demonstrated that they now have a meaningful role in the decision-making processes at the school with recent examples being the new cell phone procedures that were developed by this committee and now consistently implemented by staff across the school. Teachers report that they hope to see more discussions and joint decision-making efforts occur such as this and are hopeful that this work will continue. Finally, the administrative team frequently uses brief surveys to students, staff, and parents to better understand perceptions from these various stakeholders regarding decisions made by the school.

When teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision making, responsibility and ownership of these decisions is clearer and the whole school comes together behind the school's mission, beliefs, and core values.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- community members
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 10

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## Conclusions

Kennebunk High School faculty exercises initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. The KHS Faculty frequently exercises initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school. One major vehicle is the professional learning communities (PLCs) that take place weekly. PLC groups have played a large role in decision making in areas such as creating the mission and beliefs statements, civic and social expectations, identification of learning standards, and development of common assessments.

The departmental structure by content area also lends itself to leadership. Each department has a department head who meets with administration on a monthly basis. This structure allows departmental concerns to be brought forth in a proactive manner. Department meetings take place the week after the building leadership meeting in order for department heads to communicate any needed information.

The KHS administrative team, comprised of one principal, two assistant principals, and an athletic administrator has an open-door policy in regard to faculty concerns and initiatives. Teachers at KHS are empowered to bring forth new ideas and have done so frequently. Recently, faculty initiatives have resulted in a civil rights team, feminist club, art club, a Teen Trendsetters class, and a Unified Basketball team. Administration seeks out faculty input on some matters such as how snow days affect B/W days, or how much midterms and final exams are weighted.

Other leadership initiatives from the faculty that increase student engagement in learning include the acquisition of grant funding from a variety of sources including the Educational Foundation of the Kennebunks and Arundel, Corning, and the Perloff Foundation. Faculty is encouraged and supported to pursue any professional development opportunities in which they are interested. Recent leadership efforts from faculty have resulted in articulation agreements with a local university and community college courses being taught on the KHS campus. These types of initiatives all increase student engagement in learning.

The committee structure in RSU 21 allows for frequent faculty input on a variety of topics. KHS educators sit on the curriculum design committee, the wellness committee, and the educator effectiveness committee. In response to a recent faculty concern around building climate issues, a school climate committee was formed, providing a vehicle for addressing building climate concerns and communication between the building administration and staff. When teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school, they are more invested as educators and leaders.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers

# Standard 5 Indicator 11

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## Conclusions

The school board, superintendent, and principal are often collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Results of the Endicott survey show that 65.4 percent of faculty agree that the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in helping the school achieve the 21st century learning expectations. The school board reports that they have a strong relationship with the superintendent of schools and understands that their role is not to operate the school but to ensure that they are operated well. They work closely with the superintendent to develop policy and procedures that assist the superintendent in working with the principals to ensure goals aligned to meet 21st century learning expectations are met. Teachers report that they feel supported by the school board and superintendent, especially in terms of appropriate resources being provided to them, particularly in the area of professional development. In one teacher's words, "I don't know of anyone that has ever been denied a request to go to a conference." This emphasis on the provision of high quality professional development to staff is pervasive throughout the school.

The high school worked collaboratively with other members of the district's leadership team and the broader community to finalize its social and civic expectations around the use of Maine's Guiding Principles and to create an effective rubric that can be used across grades K-12 to assess students' growth and understanding in these areas. Members of the district's educational leadership team report that the superintendent provides ample opportunity and support for district school-based administration to work together to develop K-12 understandings. Each month principals from all district schools meet on a rotating basis at each school to conduct instructional rounds where principals go into classrooms at all grade levels and make observations in agreed-upon areas and then debrief afterward to offer collegial support in addressing identified needs.

The middle school principal reports a strong relationship between middle school administration and high school administration that aids in providing a smooth transition for students from the 8th grade to the 9th grade, although more work can always be done in this area. It was reported by teachers and administrators that at least two late start days will be devoted to allowing middle school and high school staff to meet together to discuss vertical alignment of academic and civic/social standards between the two schools.

The district has a strong strategic plan and the superintendent expects all principals, including the high school principal, to create and monitor "data dashboards" in an ongoing manner. These data dashboards demonstrate movement toward meeting the goals outlined in the district's strategic plan. The strategic plan is a result of almost two years of community-wide and school-wide work that ensured a broad spectrum of stakeholders' voices in its development.

Additionally, the district has worked together to create agreed-upon benchmarks at grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 that assist the staff and administration in monitoring student progress toward meeting 21st century learning expectations. The superintendent works with school administration to conduct student, parent, and community surveys used to monitor progress in the achievement of strategic plan goals, which are discussed at least four times per year at the school board level.

The superintendent is tasked with the evaluation of the effectiveness of school level and program level administration and aligning this evaluation process to the district's strategic plan. While direct documents were not observed, it was made clear that an evaluation process does exist for all administrators.

When the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive the school is more able to work together to ensure student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- school board
- community members
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 12

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## Conclusions

By design, the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. When members of the school board were asked how they provide the principal with decision-making authority, school board members referred to their main role as being that of policy development and oversight of the superintendent and that it was the role of the administration, with the superintendent as its head to lead the school system. The school system's policies align to these statements and make it clear that the principal is to be the "educational leader of the school" and that it is the principal's role to "administer and supervise his/her school in such a manner as to improve instruction, help each teacher grow professionally, and to build the morale of the school staff." The superintendent meets on a monthly basis with the principal to try to maintain open lines of communication and to mentor the principal in the dual roles of both the educational leader of the school and as the builder of morale and positive school climate. The principal's job description also makes it clear that she is given the authority to "supervise the entire faculty, staff, and students of the high school" and that she has the ability to "initiate, design, and implement programs to meet the specific needs of the students." When central office administration supports the high school with challenging issues it is vital to ensure that the leadership of the principal is considered, included and balanced in decision making. In order to honor the necessary autonomy of the principal, it is important that school staff view the principal in the role of building leader at all times. When the school board and superintendent formally and informally provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school, the principal is able to work to establish a shared vision for the school and to guide in the implementation of the mission statement, the core values, and beliefs and learning expectations outlined by Kennebunk High School.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- school board
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- school website

# Standard 5 Commendations

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## Commendation

The efforts to build a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture and the strong sense of school pride, as expressed by the slogan: Belonging to the KHS "Ramily"

## Commendation

The sense of ownership for the overall climate from all key stakeholders including teachers, students, food service, custodial, support staff, administration, parents

## Commendation

The recent addition of restorative justice practices as a way to turn discipline situations into learning opportunities

## Commendation

The strong emphasis on student choice allowed by the multiple pathways supported by the school

## Commendation

The multi-age arrangement of the school's advisory program and the plan for each student to have the same advisor and counselor for four years of high school, in most cases

## Commendation

The principal and school's mantra of doing "whatever it takes" to meet the needs of students

## Commendation

The district-level support for a wide variety and availability of professional development opportunities, both within and outside the district

## Commendation

The class sizes that enable teachers to meet individual needs of students

## Commendation

The provision of high quality professional development in the implementation of the evaluation system for

administration and staff

## **Commendation**

The principal's open door policy for students, staff, and parents

The creation of the school climate committee to provide staff a meaningful role in the decision-making processes at KHS

The collaborative, reflective and constructive relationship between the school board, superintendent, and principal as evidenced by the school board's awareness and understanding of their primary role as policymakers and vision setters

# Standard 5 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Broaden structures to allow for greater student and staff input into decision-making processes in both small working groups and whole-school groups

## Recommendation

Increase the principal's role in providing instructional leadership by creating more time for formal and informal conversations with faculty members about teaching and learning

## Recommendation

Reflect on and re-evaluate the goals of the advisory program to ensure common advisory experiences and to increase advisor/advisee connections

## Recommendation

Examine existing class sizes and schedule to ensure consistency between the sometimes competing needs of CC, CP, honors, AP, and IB courses

## Recommendation

Strengthen pathway options for Common Core students by providing additional electives

# Standard 6 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The school has multiple programs which provide timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that support each student's achievement of the 21st century learning expectations.

Kennebunk High School has a comprehensive guidance program which is developmental in nature. There are three guidance counselors, each with approximately 235 students. A social worker meets with students with significant issues. There are two support staff who coordinate counselor schedules along with a variety of other duties supporting guidance programs. Guidance works closely with a full-time PowerSchool scheduler/test coordinator responsible for developing and monitoring the master schedule. Guidance counselors provide small group success seminars for the 9th grade students during advisory and career exploration lessons during the 10th grade health class. All students meet with guidance counselors by grade level in classrooms to review the program of studies and program pathways so that students can make informed decisions regarding their studies. Juniors and seniors meet with their guidance counselor individually for transcript review and college planning. The guidance department has a web page which offers extensive information for students and parents.

The student services team provides added review and evaluation of students who are at risk including those with attendance issues. The team consists of the guidance counselors, social worker, nurse and administration and meets weekly. Interventions are determined and implemented immediately including parental contact, study support or referral to other services. The school resource officer (SRO) provides support services as needed by students and faculty. His presence around the school allows students to feel safe for learning.

Students with ongoing, identified mental or physical disabilities which are impacting their academic performance may be referred for consideration of a 504 Plan. 504 case managers (guidance counselors or school nurse) share 504 Plans with the teachers and parents, updating them on an as-needed basis and/or annually. Students who have not been successful in the regular education setting may be referred to alternative education, if appropriate. Students have the opportunity to visit and interview to consider this program's suitability for their needs. Students can access alternative education for part or full days. The Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) provides interventions for identified students who are not being successful. The interventions are documented and become more extensive as necessary. The MTSS is used as a pre-referral process for special education.

Kennebunk High School offers special education services for students with identified needs or disabilities. Within the special education setting, Kennebunk High School offers inclusive and flexible educational programming. This includes three skill center classroom programs for students with mild to moderate disabilities. Generally, these students attend regular education classes and use the special education staff for academic support and remediation based on individual needs. Special education students also have access to a social worker to address individual needs. Students can be referred for psychological evaluations by families and/or a team made up of school personnel (administration, guidance, teachers) for proper identification and placement within the school setting. Evaluations help determine needed services, student identifications, and can provide risk-assessment analysis.

The nurse is a member of the student support team and provides assistance with acute and chronic health-related needs of students. The nurse is in frequent contact with parents, school personnel, students, and health care providers to coordinate ongoing assessment and services. The nurse is also the 504 case manager for some students with medical conditions. The concussion team includes the concussion management coordinator (an assistant principal), school nurse, guidance, teachers, coaches and the athletic trainer. The team collaborates with the student, parents and healthcare providers to determine the needs of the student. The team clarifies academic accommodations for each stage of recovery and monitors student progress in recovery.

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. As

the programs described are applied, they will ensure that all students have access to support services that enhance and improve student learning and well-being.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- school support staff
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Kennebunk High School provides consistent and pertinent information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.

Student support services are available through the school counseling program, special education department, health office, and administrative offices. The services are listed in the online student handbook and the primary communication tool in providing information to parents is through the school website and email. The PowerSchool parent portal provides a daily update of attendance and student progress. Approximately 97 percent of families in the district have Internet access. Families without Internet access can make an appointment in the guidance office. The guidance office counselors and administrative assistants are a key resource to families. Health services refers students and parents to a variety of available resources in the school and community. Students may be referred to health care specialists, emergency care centers, reproductive health centers or mental health practitioners. Referral information is usually provided at the time of need, but brochures and information about available services are located in the health services office as well as in the guidance office. Many teachers have websites which parents can access to get information about the curriculum and student assignments. The student support team, which consists of administrators, guidance counselors, health services and special education teachers, identifies students most in need and provides the appropriate information and intervention strategies on a case-by-case basis. According to the Endicott survey the majority of students (78.7 percent) know who to ask for help and staff (88.5 percent), and parents (71.8 percent) feel that the school provides information to families, especially those most in need, about available support services. The school provides a wide variety of support services for students and parents that are communicated to students on a case-by-case basis, but there is no one place where parents can access a comprehensive list of available services.

As the school continues to provide information to all families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services, then students and families will be better supported and prepared to be engaged in learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- students
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The support services staff extensively use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Every student and staff member is provided a Chromebook. The guidance department works with students using Naviance, a college and career readiness software program. Students are introduced to Naviance in their freshman and sophomore years and use it extensively during their junior and senior years. PowerSchool, a software application for online grading, attendance, and student information, is used to share student-based information with teachers, parents, and students. Email is also used to send students information on upcoming events and information, while students share college essays using Google Docs with guidance counselors to receive input and feedback. The guidance department also uses Powerschool for students to sign up for classes. Students are provided with a course selection worksheet to guide discussion with parents and teachers. After thorough consideration with parents and teachers, students enter their requests in the on-line portal during advisory. This has streamlined the class registration process. Special education uses Adori, a web-based IEP software management program. Health services stays in contact with parents and teachers through email and phone calls and also provides access to health information and resources, including the ability to download permission forms, through a website. The library is currently undergoing construction, but staff and students have 24/7 access to the virtual library resources through the library website. The website includes a variety of database resources for research as well as access to eBooks and audio books. Access to these information resources is strengthened since every student and staff member is provided with a Chromebook. The school website provides a central information hub for all these resources. As Kennebunk High School continues to integrate technology to deliver effective coordinated services, it will have a positive impact on delivering student support services.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- students
- school support staff
- school website

# Standard 6 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

This school has counseling services and has an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver developmentally appropriate guidance and counseling services and who utilize resources to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Kennebunk High School has a developmental guidance curriculum and meets with all students, grades 9-12. The KHS guidance counseling department consists of three full-time certified school counselors who serve over 700 students. Each counselor is responsible for students in grades 9-12 within a specified alphabetical split. One full-time (regular education) licensed social worker/licensed alcohol and drug counselor works out of the guidance office. One full-time, year-round administrative assistant and one academic-year administrative assistant provide clerical support for the guidance staff. The guidance department is also supported by one full-time PowerSchool scheduler/test coordinator. Counselors regularly monitor the progress of individual students toward their academic goals (graduation requirements and post-secondary goals). The guidance office schedules meetings with college admissions counselors to provide information to interested students. Assistance with the college application process is provided on an as-needed basis and includes review of college essays, assistance with applications and financial aid informational evening meetings, college "On-The-Spot-Admissions" (college admissions counselors visit the high school and review college applications, giving an immediate admissions decision to the student). Information on early college/dual enrollment programs and scholarships is provided to students.

Individual appointments and walk-in appointments are available to all students as needed. Individual formal meetings take place with all juniors along with their parents to begin the college exploration/application process. Individual formal meetings occur with each senior to assist as needed with the post-secondary planning. Guidance counselors meet with groups of 9th graders during advisory for an orientation and success seminar. Career exploration is done during 10th grade within the health classes. Counselors reach out to the 8th grade to assist in the transition planning for high school. Counselors with middle school counselors during the transition process to identify potentially at-risk students.

The counseling office maintains updated information on community resources including mental health agencies and social service providers. There is utilization of crisis (counselors enter the school to do evaluations regarding student self-harm) as a part of the community resources.

The guidance department utilizes various types of assessment data including analysis of student outcomes through grade reviews, standardized test results including PSAT, SAT, ACT and Accuplacer, graduation rates, percentage of graduating students with a post-secondary plan, two-year and four-year college acceptance rates, FAFSA completion rate, and the Mitchell report (Report from the Mitchell Institute which tracks college admission and college persistence in Maine). Counselors regularly monitor the progress of individual students toward their academic and post-secondary goals. KHS regularly receives informal feedback from recent alumni, parents, and college representatives regarding students' college readiness and preparation that helps to guide transition services provided by the department. Communication regarding guidance services is available on the school website and information on current programs is emailed to students and parents.

The ongoing delivery of counseling services with this adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who utilize developmentally appropriate guidance and counseling services will ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study

- student shadowing
- teachers
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Kennebunk High School's health services has an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who consistently provide preventative health services and direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, conduct ongoing student health assessments, and 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.

Kennebunk High School employs one full-time certified registered nurse who has secretarial support from the administrative assistant in the central office and also the school's main office administrative assistants. There are several nurses available to substitute if the full-time nurse is absent and there is also nursing support from the five school nurses located at the other district schools.

Health services strives to provide a warm and welcoming environment for students and according to the Endicott survey, 82.7 percent of students are comfortable going to the school nurse. The school nurse is responsible for addressing the many daily health issues as they arise as well as provides routine medications, assistance with acute and chronic health-related needs of students, collects health information on students, and provides assessments. According to the Endicott survey, staff (78.8 percent) and parents (69.6 percent) are in strong agreement that the nurse provides preventative health and direct intervention services. The nurse intervenes with appropriate first aid responses for immediate health issues such as injuries, medical emergencies and mental health crises. The school nurse is involved with ongoing vision, hearing, and other screening procedures which can be conducted any time a parent, student, or staff member has a concern. The nurse dispenses medication to students according to district policy which is documented either electronically or in paper form. The school nurse addresses student allergy issues in a way that will have the least impact on students and allergy plans are encouraged and emergency medication maintained. The nurse works closely with the concussion management team to minimize short- and long-term adverse effects of concussion. The nurse also provides support for students with chronic health problems such as diabetes and seizures and works with these students, families, and medical providers to develop individualized plans to encourage students to be as independent as possible, promote long-term health, and minimize disruption to their academic program.

The nurse educates and communicates with staff about emerging and ongoing student health concerns, acting as a liaison between students, family members, healthcare providers, and school staff. The nurse is involved with formal procedures such as Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans, and case manages some 504 Plans, and is also responsible for less formalized plans for short term and/or less impactful issues. In conjunction with the school counselors, any suspicion of child endangerment is reported to the Department of Health and Human Services and/or the school resource officer, administrators, and/or other appropriate agencies. The nurse also promotes support services for students dealing with mental health or substance abuse issues and makes referrals as needed.

Through individualized assessment, planning, interventions and reevaluation, the nurse works to minimize adverse impacts of health issues on student learning. The nurse maintains a permanent health record for each student. Records for incoming 9th grade students are reviewed and newly enrolled students' records are requested from sending schools and/or created as needed. The nurse ensures that immunizations are complete or an annual parent request for immunization exemption is on file. Health information is entered and/or updated in the PowerSchool system. Nursing assessment and actions for student health office visits are also documented in PowerSchool. The electronic documentation allows tracking of health issues on the individual and school level.

The nurse helps to develop and implement policies and procedures to ensure a safe and healthy school environment. The school nurse's frequent contact with parents, medical providers, and students provides an opportunity for ongoing assessment. The school nurse submits annual reports on issues such as immunizations and screening referrals which are compared to statewide data to identify areas that need improvement. Through these ongoing assessments the school nurse identified a need to improve the process of updating student health

issues with sports physicals. Sports physicals are collected through the athletic program and parents are encouraged to contact the health office with any health changes, but the health office does not actively seek student health updates. A plan to coordinate these records will be developed. Another area of feedback that the school nurse has received from parents and students regards the current procedures for over-the-counter (OTC) medications and the nurse is developing a new plan to address these concerns.

As a result of the consistent and effective health services at Kennebunk High School, the health needs of students are supported to assist them in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- students
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

# Standard 6 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

Library/media services at Kennebunk High School are mostly integrated into the 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; and informally 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 Kennebunk High School library is staffed with one full-time certified library media specialist, who has a Master of Library and Information Studies degree and is also the district library coordinator, and one full-time library educational technician II. The library media specialist meets with department heads on a regular basis and is aware of curriculum changes to ensure that library resources align with the curriculum. The library media specialist is also the district library coordinator and teaches a Teen Trendsetter class. The library media specialist is the chairperson of the RSU 21 core literature committee which selects the trade books for the district's six schools that are curriculum, grade/age and maturity appropriate to support and enhance classroom instruction. The library media specialist provides group instruction on accessing and evaluating websites to some classes, although only a small percentage of students (9.4 percent) feel the library is used often by classes. The library's collection of materials, available technology and instructional programs are designed to help students achieve academic success. According to the Endicott survey, the majority of staff (94.2 percent) and students (67.7 percent) feel that the library provides a wide range of materials, technology and information services.

The library was still under construction during the NEASC team visit which prevented a full evaluation of the library collection and technologies available. The library provides extended hours beyond the regular school day (M, T, Th, F, 7:45 a.m. - 2:11 p.m. and W, 9:00 a.m. - 2:11 p.m.) and would not be possible without the library educational technician position. After construction is complete the library will be open and staffed Monday, Tuesday, Thursdays, 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; Fridays, 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., and the library website provides 24/7 access to online databases, ebooks, and audiobooks. The library is open before and after school as well as during the lunch blocks. During study hall blocks, students obtain passes from a member of the library staff and teachers may also send students from an academic class into the library at any time. The library media specialist receives feedback from staff and students on an informal basis and also assesses the collection and databases on an ongoing basis to determine usage and to guide collection development.

While library/media services have a sufficient number of 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, when library/media services collect relevant data to improve services and are fully integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices, students will be more successful in achieving the 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- school website

- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

There are many support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners (ELL), that 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.

To service special education, 504 and English language learner (ELL) students at Kennebunk High School, RSU 21 employs a director of special services, an assistant director of special services, administrative assistant to the director /assistant director, a student data specialist, nine certified special education teachers two of whom specialize in direct reading instruction, three certified and licensed specialists (physical therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy), an assistive technology consultant, one licensed clinical social worker assigned to special education two certified school psychologists and one licensed psychologist, two part-time gifted and talented staff, and one certified ELL specialist. There are also twelve full-time and one part-time educational technicians who support the special education caseload in general education classes as well as in the special education setting. There are three educational technicians who support the general school population and 504 students through the learning center and Alternative Education program. Special education caseloads range from eight to twenty-four. Special education teams meet at least on a weekly basis, if not more often, to discuss student progress as it relates to data collected in the special and general education settings and timely interventions to help ensure student success. Special education faculty members meet every other week for an hour to discuss, but not limited to, the following: relevant issues concerning student progress, assessments and interventions, range of services and programming options. Many special education students receive services that may include speech language services, OT/PT, specialized direct reading instruction, social work services and academic support from their case managers. The special education social worker meets with students assigned to her caseload at least once weekly for between 30 and 45 minutes. In addition, the social worker is available for students who may be in crisis at any point during the school week and acts in the role of liaison between family and the school and outside agencies. The special education department heads attend monthly district special education administrative meetings and special education faculty attend four yearly district special education meetings in their area of specialty. Special education department heads consult with eighth grade case managers to help ensure a smooth transition to the high school. Kennebunk High School's ELL program is provided by a part-time certified ELL teacher who supports the entire RSU 21 District. The ELL teacher is present at Kennebunk High School when a student is identified and assessed as a student needing language services. An Individualized Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP) is then developed and services are provided to ensure the student's access to curriculum. The ILAP indicates the English proficiency levels and required support needed from the classroom teacher and the ELL teacher. The ELL district teacher collaborates with faculty regarding the needs of particular ELL students. Students who receive English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) services are evaluated on a yearly basis according to State of Maine requirements and their level of services is changed to reflect their progress

Kennebunk High School offers a wide array of classes from IB, AP, dual enrollment college classes, honors, college preparatory, vocational programming, Common Core, Transitional Learning classes and individualized classes. Students attend classes that are appropriate for their goals, interests and that are of the least restrictive environment given their needs. Special education students are encouraged to be with their non-disabled peers as often as possible throughout the school day as determined by their specialized needs and IEP team. There is educational technician support for identified students at all course levels when available. Learning centers are available for regular education students who need further academic support.

The school adheres to federal and state laws regarding identification, referral, evaluation and service provision for qualified students of special education services. 504 Plans are developed with input from a team including the district 504 coordinator, parent, guidance counselors and teachers. Guidance counselors and the nurse provide

case management services including meetings requested by a team member or annually, revision and update of plans and provision of updated information to the faculty. Guidance counselors currently have 504 caseloads of 25 students each and the school nurse has a 504 caseload of 12 to 15 students.

Although 90.4 percent of the staff believe the school has timely, coordinated and direct intervention strategies for all students, including special education, 504, and at-risk students, that support each student's achievement of the school's learning expectations, the 2016 Endicott survey states that 50.4 percent of students feel that their school meets the needs of all students, and 65.2 percent of the parents believe the school has timely and coordinated strategies to meet the needs of all students.

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

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Commendations

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## Commendation

The range of 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

## Commendation

The practice of student-centered, individualized post-secondary planning

## Commendation

The consistent and pertinent information provided to families about available student support services.

## Commendation

The supportive relationships built between the guidance department and students and their families

## Commendation

The extensive integration of technology into coordinating and delivering support services

## Commendation

The developmental guidance curriculum that supports an appropriate progression through the stages of development and exploration and implementation of a post-secondary plan

## Commendation

The extended times the library is open for staff and students

## Commendation

The extensive staff and resources to support identified students and provide inclusive learning opportunities

## Commendation

The individualized and personalized health services for students

## **Commendation**

The availability of virtual resources for staff and students during library construction

The provision of the library educational technician position

# Standard 6 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop and implement strategies for the library media specialist to collaborate with all teachers to fully integrate research and information literacy skills into the curriculum

## Recommendation

Conduct ongoing assessments with staff and students to assess all support services including guidance, library, nurse and special education

## Recommendation

Provide a school-level 504 coordinator to provide consistent delivery of services to students

## Recommendation

Provide a summary report on the completion of the learning commons (library) and verify that the facility meets the needs of students and staff

# Standard 7 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The RSU 21 School Board consistently provides a level of financial backing that supports 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, and sufficient instructional supplies.

Kennebunk High School (KHS) provides supports for all learners in achieving the identified educational goals. Onsite, KHS offers a wide variety of pathways to its 712 students. Programming includes International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), Cooperative Education Program (Co-op), and apprenticeships. The KHS Alternative Education program is an option available for students who wish to remain in school but need a non-traditional, hands-on program in order to earn their high school credentials. Through partnerships and articulation agreements with Southern Maine Community College (SMCC), York County Community College (YCCC), the University of New England (UNE), and the University of Southern Maine (USM), students have opportunities to take college classes and to earn both high school and college credit. Additionally, students may choose to venture outside of the district and attend Biddeford Regional Technical Center (BRTC) Sanford Regional Technical Center (SRTC) or Portland Arts and Technology High School (PATHS) to access more extensive career training in a field of choice.

KHS also provides extensive support for a wide array of co-curricular activities. The RSU School Board is open to listening to student ideas for new clubs and groups and offers support for many of the new programs once the student(s) provide documentation of the need and the ability to adhere to the traditional protocol. The athletic department offers a wide array of athletic programs as well. All of this is funded through the district budget.

Currently, 57 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers result in a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:14. Support services are extensive at KHS with three guidance counselors, a full-time librarian, a school nurse, a social worker for regular education students, and a social worker for special education students. There is a Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered Support System (RTI/MTSS) in place for all students. The Endicott survey shows that 81 percent of the staff agree that there is dependable funding for programs and services. Although the survey shows that there is dependable funding for professional and support staff, there is concern about adequate staffing for the maintenance and upkeep of the new facility.

The budget supports sustained, high quality opportunities for professional growth. Professional development provides ongoing opportunity for educators to improve their knowledge and skills so they can help students achieve. High quality professional development is available to meet the needs of the district as detailed through the goals of the newly developed 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, the needs of the schools as evidenced by both formal and informal assessment measures, and the needs of teachers as evidenced through survey and evaluation data. Weekly Late Start Wednesdays allow teachers to participate in training, discuss practices, share craft knowledge, and set specific goals for student achievement. Monthly early release Wednesdays for staff in grades K-5 focus on a variety of educational topics and allow teachers to learn new techniques and curriculum, and collaborate and reflect on practice. Teachers have access to conferences both at the local and national level. Time and resources are available for vertical articulation within and among buildings and has resulted in K-12 identification of standard practices districtwide.

The district supports 1:1 technology K-12 with technology integration specialists available to offer training as needed. The KHS staff and students feel that sufficient equipment supports instruction. Each classroom has networked interactive technology to enhance student engagement; all teachers and students have ChromeBooks. The network is sufficient and reliable with wireless printers available throughout the building. The Education Foundation of the Kennebunks & Arundel have supported innovative programs presented by faculty and staff. Equipment of other types is sufficient.

Teachers report that there is sufficient funding for materials, supplies and equipment. However, in the new building a few science teachers found that the safety showers are missing in the labs. The building administration

supports the funding of the majority of needs that can be justified by improving services for students and supporting the curriculum needs. However, there is concern that there is a limited range of electives for the Common Core students.

It is commonly believed that the driving force behind the board's support of and the district's approval of a \$42.8 million dollar renovation was to provide a state-of-the-art facility to support 21st century teaching and learning. RSU 21 also has access to the Education Foundation of the Kennebunks & Arundel and community businesses (i.e., Corning) which provide additional funding for innovative curriculum development and IB training. According to the Endicott survey, 81 percent of staff agree that the governing body provides dependable funding for the wide range of programs and services.

Dependable funding by the RSU 21 School Board consistently provides a level of financial backing that supports 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, and sufficient instructional supplies.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- parents
- school board
- community members
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- school website

# Standard 7 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Due to a \$42.8 million renovation, Kennebunk High School (KHS) has begun the process of developing, planning, and funding 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.

The new facilities director, along with the new maintenance and grounds supervisor are currently using KiSSFLOW and transitioning to the full implementation of SchoolDude for tracking and maintenance purposes. The maintenance department has certificates of inspection that ensure the safety of the building and mechanical operations within the new facility. Once the school comes online fully, the facilities director will be working toward building a maintenance and repair schedule for all of the mechanical systems within the building.

Due to the renovation and the increase in the physical plant size, the facilities director is currently doing a work load/staffing study to assess the day -to-day cleaning of the school. KHS has 2.3 custodial positions for the daily cleaning and four full-time and two part-time custodial staff positions for the evening cleaning. This is the same staffing numbers that the old building had. The facilities director is currently looking at other options due to the lack of hireable manpower that is available to help decrease the work load of the current staff. Once completed, his study and its potential impact will be presented to the RSU #21 School Board's facility committee. He feels confident that this will be supported as long as there is a need and it is feasible. There is an e-form system in place for notification of immediate needs/issues that staff members can access. A maintenance team exists for the district and operates during the school hours. All custodial crew members (day and evening) have a routine and will support the administration and staff as they are needed. Prior to the renovation, the age of of the original facility and the core systems stressed the resources of both maintenance and custodial operations. The increase in size of the "new building" will require additional personnel. Additional personnel are currently being budgeted for in order to meet this need. As the dust settles with the new construction, the facilities director and maintenance and grounds supervisor will be developing a plan for the existing infrastructure for ongoing maintenance and equipment replacement.

When there is a process in place to thoroughly address the maintenance needs of the facility, KHS will be able to concentrate on the student attainment of the 21st century skills.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- facility tour
- central office personnel
- school support staff

# Standard 7 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

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 recent publicly approved investment of \$42.8 million to renovate Kennebunk High School shows commitment to ensuring that the facility provides an environment that is conducive to the safety and comfort of all students as well as to student attainment of the 21st century learning. The 2017 Annual Report shares that the budget process begins with examining enrollments to determine that staffing and programming are appropriate. The master facility committee has provided data on enrollment projections through 2024-2025. Programs and services are reviewed annually during the budget process.

Currently, facility, technology and capital needs are being met with a 42.8 million dollar renovation project with a completion date of September 2018. Technology is available in each classroom with an interactive whiteboard and WiFi. Wireless printers are placed throughout the school. The district supports 1:1 technology K-12 with technology integration specialists available to offer training as needed. At KHS each classroom has networked interactive technology to enhance student engagement; all teachers and students have ChromeBooks. The network is sufficient and reliable with wireless printers available throughout the building. The Education Foundation of the Kennebunks & Arundel have supported innovative programs presented by faculty and staff. Three computer labs in the building support specialized instruction. Equipment of other types is sufficient as well. The new building is designed with expansion in mind with the opportunity to increase several areas for additional classroom space as needed. The 2016-2021 Strategic Plan Key addresses the importance of implementing protocols and resources for safety in each building. There are funds built into the budget for building repairs and maintenance.

A director of facilities was hired during the summer of 2017 to oversee the district's facilities as well as the long-term care of such facilities. His charge is to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment, as well as to oversee the cleanliness of buildings on a daily basis.

When long-range plans for programs and services, enrollment changes, staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements exist, the district will be prepared to meet the challenges of the future.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- school leadership

# Standard 7 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Kennebunk High School faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. Programs and services are reviewed annually during the budget process. The district utilizes a zero-based budgeting process. This means that budgeting starts from a zero base and every function within an organization is analyzed for its needs and costs. Although it may be seen as a more time-consuming method, the district feels that it results in a budget that clearly defines the needs of each cost center. Enrollments are examined to determine that staffing is appropriate. The budgeting process allows departments to request equipment that is needed each year. The building principal and department chairs base their budgets on needs identified within each department at KHS. The process is very supportive of funding needs that enhance the delivery of high quality programming for students. One of the key objectives of the district's Strategic Plan is to establish consistent structures to support academic growth. Any additional needs are identified by the leadership team at KHS. Once the building-based budget is put together, the principal presents it to the superintendent, assistant superintendent, business manager, and director of technology. Ultimately, the finance committee summarizes and prepares the budget for greater clarity and understanding and presents this to the school board for a first reading, followed by public input sessions, and a second reading. In mid-May a district budget meeting recommends the budget through a closed warrant for the public referendum in June. Active involvement by the KHS faculty and building administrators streamlines the development and implementation of the budget.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership

# Standard 7 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

The school site and plant, by design, will support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. The building design process was mindful of the location of many of the services and departments. The student support team (SST) has been located to facilitate collaboration as well as to improve accessibility for parents and outside providers. The core subject areas are located by department. This will maximize and facilitate communication as well as the potential for ongoing professional learning communities (PLCs) which work together on curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Adjacent to the beautiful new theater, the visual and performing arts classrooms are all conveniently located to support annual visual and performing arts presentations. The STEM labs are located to complement and support multiple programs. The new learning commons (formerly known as the library) are now the center of the school with easy access for all departments. Support services (learning centers and English language learners room) are located with the learning commons.

The continuum of special education services are centralized within KHS. Upon completion, the new facility will meet ADA guidelines allowing students the ability to move freely throughout the building and classrooms. Updated indoor athletic facilities allow for improved student use as well as security from the rest of the building during off hours. The outdoor athletic facilities were not updated and this may compromise the quality of fields. The 2016-2021 Strategic Plan provides the district framework for maintaining and advancing strong curriculum, student outcomes, and school environment for KHS and the other schools to meet. By design, the school site and plant support the delivery of high quality programs and services for students to be successful in attaining the 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- facility tour
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff

# Standard 7 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

The school extensively maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

The entire renovation project brought all systems and physical plant up to code meeting all fire, health and safety regulations. The subsequent opening of various sections of the building has been dependent on inspections by regulatory agencies. In addition, a director of facilities was hired in the summer of 2017 to oversee the operation of and long-range planning related to facilities.

The chemical hygiene officer at Kennebunk High School is responsible for the implementation of appropriate chemical hygiene policies and practices in the school. This includes the use and disposal of all chemicals. Regular audits and material safety data sheets are required. The chemical hygiene officer is up to date on current knowledge and legal regulations regarding all laboratory and chemical safety. The chemical storage area uses the Flinn system and all materials are located in their appropriate areas and containers. The school has done a good job of culling out outdated and dangerous chemicals over the years and is currently working on using what they have to move to a system that only uses what is needed in a given year.

By state law, schools that house grades 9-12 must hold six fire drills per year with the first two being held within the first two weeks of school. Kennebunk High School holds six drills per year and three lockdown drills per year. The fire and lockdown drills are documented with date, time, and type of drill.

The school nurse maintains documentation of compliance with OSHA required training on Bloodborne Pathogens. All school staff are required to watch a training video and complete an online post-test. The nurse promotes the importance of the training, monitors for completion of the post-test, and follows-up with delinquencies. The nurse also ensures staff has accessible first aid supplies to reduce risk of exposure. The nurse is often consulted for work-related injuries. When consulted, the nurse helps ensure that reporting documentation is initiated by the injured employee. With the exception of the device maintained by the athletic trainer, the school nurse maintains the automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) in the school. Expiration dates of supplies are monitored and the AED functioning is checked and documented at least monthly.

The school nutrition program at Kennebunk High School is visited once a year by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to make sure that they are adhering to the sanitation regulations and guidelines of DHHS. All heating and cooling devices are checked daily to make sure they are working at the proper temperature. All data is kept current and visibly available as many of the employees take on this task. Food services work closely with the maintenance department as well to make sure all the equipment is up to date, maintained, and working properly.

The facilities department will develop and implement a preventative maintenance program for each building in the RSU supported by the hiring of a director of facilities. Schooldude PM Direct sets up required maintenance checks and schedules these checks with a determined frequency. Schooldude generates an email with printable work orders for each task monthly, quarterly, biannually or annually, as the task requires. Tasks are set up for either in-house work or with outside vendors.

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 ensures successful delivery of student services for all students.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- facility tour
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

The vast majority of 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.

The professional staff at Kennebunk High School is committed to actively engaging parents and families as partners in each student's education. Formal methods include teacher websites, emails, the Daily Bulletin, and the Wednesday Message which is emailed to parents and students. An annual open house is held each September which affords parents and guardians an opportunity to follow students' schedules to put a name and face with each teacher and to hear about the plans for each class. Parent/teacher conferences are held in November and again in March, and teachers attend IEPs and 504s for students on a regular basis. Informally, faculty and staff interact with parents at athletic events, visual and performing arts events, and a variety of fundraisers.

Informal communication occurs regularly through emails and phone calls. Teachers and support staff are encouraged to send postcards, provided by the school, to the families of students to share positive and encouraging information. The school resource officer reaches out to students and families that are less connected to the school. Additionally, the Alternative Education program consistently supports those students for whom a traditional school day is not beneficial. The Co-op and apprenticeship programs are also highly successful in engaging students and families through their connections with local businesses.

While the professional staff as a whole is actively engaged in reaching out to the families and students, there are some students who remain less connected to the school. KHS has three full-time guidance counselors and two full-time social workers, one of whom is dedicated to providing services specifically to special education students. Guidance counselors communicate with all students and their parents through a variety of means including emails, phone calls, and individual and group meetings. Individual and group meetings are documented within counselors' individual calendars, and all group meetings are promoted through the KHS Daily Bulletin, via student email, and in the Wednesday Message. Counselors meet with all freshmen in small groups throughout the year, and they acquaint sophomores with Naviance through sophomore classes. Each year counselors send a letter home to request parents of juniors to join their student for an individual meeting to discuss post-secondary plans and proactively create a continuing education or career action plan. Seniors meet with their guidance counselors at the beginning of their senior year to follow-up on their action plan set forth in spring of their junior year.

Counselors regularly review each senior's progress toward graduation and send letters home to parents and the student who may be in jeopardy of not graduating to clarify what needs to be done. In addition, the principal meets with each senior for whom graduation is in jeopardy to complete a contract outlining what needs to be accomplished. This contract is signed by the principal, student, parent, guidance counselor, and, if applicable, the case manager. Weekly check-ins to monitor progress and offer support occur.

Counselors provide special support for students who are college ready but may not have the necessary support from home to navigate the college application process by encouraging them to participate in the Early College for ME program, a program offered for a select group of students statewide by the Maine Community College System. On-the-spot admissions for area two and four-year colleges take place during the second semester. Senior memos are sent to seniors to remind them of scholarship opportunities and visits by college representatives are posted online and outside the guidance office.

The regular education social worker communicates with students in several ways throughout the year. She communicates the availability of her services to parents and students via the student handbook, a message in the back-to-school newsletter, and a message at the annual open house. Parents may opt out of having their sons or daughters meet with her. The social worker meets with students who have been referred to her by teachers, administration, other students/friends, and/or parents for a variety of reasons/concerns regarding the

student's well being. She will also speak with parents to address concerns associated with each student that has been referred to her for any reason. The social worker, counselors, and administration meet weekly to address concerns about specific students and as needed with the student, teacher and/or parents in order to promote each student's well-being.

When all professional staff actively engage all parents and families as partners, the success of all students will be assured.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school website

# Standard 7 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

KHS extensively develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

KHS works to develop productive parent partnerships through electronic weekly newsletters, open house, and biannual parent-teacher conferences. There is also active and continual engagement through emails, phone calls, and text messages home to parents. There are several organizations that are driven by parent and community involvement. Parents and guardians have access to PowerSchool in an effort to keep them up to date with the progress of their student. The RSU 21 website shares items of interest and promotes upcoming events on a regular basis. It also provides access to a wealth of information to interested parties.

KHS staff actively seeks partnerships with community and higher education programs and local businesses. A business roundtable meets at central office throughout the year to connect the schools and community. Through programs such as Alternative Education, Co-op, and apprenticeships, students are connected to community businesses and non-profits. Biddeford Regional Technology Center, Sanford Regional technology Center and Portland Arts and Technology Center programs provide students with hands-on experiential learning opportunities as they work side-by-side with highly skilled and trained professionals. Known as "We Care Projects", advisory groups choose an area or organization in the community and create a small project to help those in need. In addition, some classes participate in the United Way Day of Caring which is one day of community service per year. Seniors have the opportunity to design and engage in a two-week long senior project in the community to explore a career choice. Lastly, students are encouraged to reach out to community non-profits to complete 30 hours of required community service.

Students are able to attend programs at BRCOT, SRTC, and PATHS. These programs provide students with hands-on experiential learning opportunities as they work side by side with highly skilled and trained professionals. Through partnerships and articulation agreements with SMCC, YCCC, and UNE, students have opportunities to take college classes and earn both high school and college credit.

The KHS facility is frequently used by community members during after school hours for a variety of programs and presentations. This will be enhanced once the new facility is completed. An example of this is the recently announced Kennebunk High School theater department's collaboration with the Public Theater in New York and the Kennebunk-based MaineStage Shakespeare troupe on the high school production of the new musical "As You Like It." This amazing opportunity will give high school performers the opportunity to work alongside professionals from New York who will mentor, rehearse, and perform with the students and community members.

The Education Foundation of the Kennebunks & Arundel, a community run non-profit, provides grants to teachers who are designing and implementing new initiatives that foster and support student learning in both the classroom and community. The visual and performing arts boosters and the athletic boosters provide support and the KHS senate serves as a forum for staff, students, and community members to discuss school practices relative to the school's mission and beliefs. Two KHS students serve two-year terms on the school board in an advisory capacity and report back to their school community.

Strong parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning lead to great student achievement and engagement and increase the opportunities for all students to achieve 21st century learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study

- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- teachers
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school website

# Standard 7 Commendations

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## Commendation

The consistent and dependable funding provided by the RSU School Board and the community

## Commendation

The community support of a \$42.3 million renovation for the building and mechanical systems

## Commendation

The extensive technology in the classroom that enhances student engagement and success

## Commendation

The collaborative budgeting process that is supportive of funding needs that enhance the delivery of high quality programming

## Commendation

The budget process that consistently supports the student-teacher ratio of 14:1

## Commendation

The centralized Learning Commons area that serves as a focal point for the new school

## Commendation

The new state of the art school facility that will support high quality and innovative programs to ensure all KHS students meet the 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The exciting addition of the new theater as a centerpiece to the community

## Commendation

The energy efficient building design within the structure and mechanical systems

## **Commendation**

The many partnerships with local businesses and the community that provide authentic learning opportunities for students

The community support and partnership as evidenced by the The Education Foundation of the Kennebunks & Arundel

The Strategic Plan that focuses on developing productive global citizens

# Standard 7 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Ensure there is a collaborative development of a construction "punch list" to guarantee compliance with the design plan and completion of all outstanding issues

## Recommendation

Provide safety showers in the science lab areas

## Recommendation

Develop, plan, and fund programs and staff to ensure the maintenance and cleanliness of the facility as an ongoing priority

## Recommendation

Assess the need for additional elective classes to better meet the needs of all learners

## Recommendation

Monitor the use of the fields and grounds to assess adequacy of the fields and address any identified deficiencies

## Recommendation

Prioritize communicating with all students' families, especially those who are less connected to the school

# **FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES**

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This comprehensive evaluation report reflects the findings of the school's self-study and those of the visiting team. 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 this school. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting team recommendations.

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

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

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

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

The visiting team would like to express thanks to the community for the hospitality and welcome. The school community completed an exemplary self-study that clearly identified the school's strengths and areas of need. The time and effort dedicated to the self-study and preparation for the visit ensured a successful accreditation visit.

# **SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY**

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## **NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES Commission on Public Secondary Schools**

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

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

# Roster of Team Members

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## Chair(s)

**Chair:** Michael Jette - Bedford School District, NH

**Assistant Chair:** Grace Leavitt - Greely High School

## Team Members

**Daniel Bowers** - Messalonskee High School

**William Buzza** - Edward Little High School

**Janet Clemons** - Gray-New Gloucester High School

**Donald Denico** - Bonny Eagle High School

**Jennifer Erickson** - Yarmouth High School

**Charlie Franklin** - Poland Regional High School

**Vanessa Michaud** - Windham High School

**Stewart Palmer** - Mount Ararat High School

**David Peary** - Cape Elizabeth High School

**Heather Perry** - Gorham School Department

**Gretchen Ross** - Lawrence High School

**Jennifer Stone** - Old Town High School