



NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, INC.  
COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

for

**Coventry High School**

Coventry, CT

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# STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

# 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 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, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
2. The school's professional staff communicates:
  - individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families
  - the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community.
3. Professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.
4. Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed.
5. Prior to summative assessments, teachers provide students with the corresponding rubrics.
6. In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments.
7. Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments.
8. Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work.
9. Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.
10. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following:
  - student work
  - common course and common grade-level assessments
  - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
  - standardized assessments
  - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
  - survey data from current students and alumni.
11. Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

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

1. The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for:
  - a wide range of school programs and services
  - sufficient professional and support staff
  - ongoing professional development and curriculum revision
  - a full range of technology support
  - sufficient equipment
  - sufficient instructional materials and supplies.
2. The school develops, plans, and funds programs:
  - to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant
  - to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment
  - to keep the school clean on a daily basis.
3. The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses:
  - programs and services
  - enrollment changes and staffing needs
  - facility needs
  - technology
  - capital improvements.
4. Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.
5. The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services.
6. The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.
7. All professional staff actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.
8. The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

# School and Community Summary

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## School and Community Summary

### Coventry School and Community Summary

Coventry High School (CHS) is located in the suburban town of Coventry, a community of 12,445 residents located in northeastern Connecticut in Tolland County. It is close to Interstate 84, which runs between Boston and New York State. Coventry is approximately 22 miles from Connecticut's state capitol, Hartford. The school is set on town-owned property on which is also located a middle school, the school district's facilities, maintenance department, town hall, and police department. The school is situated near the geographic center of town, making it a natural meeting place and recreational facility.

Other educational institutions within a twelve-mile radius of the school include the Captain Nathan Hale Middle School (CNH) with 385 students, Coventry Grammar School with 363 students, the George Hersey Robertson School with 368 students, two vocational technical high schools (Windham Regional Technical School and Cheney Regional Technical School), the Edwin O. Smith Vocational Agriculture Program, East Catholic High School and Windham High School. Annually, 84 percent of the Capt. Nathan Hale School's eighth-grade class enrolls at Coventry High school, while the remaining 16% attends one of the technical, private, magnet schools, or is home-schooled.

As the sole high school in the town of Coventry, Coventry High School serves students in grades 9-12 with a total enrollment of 479 students. The ethnic, racial and cultural composition of the school has remained constant in the past several years, with the percentage of students by race as follows: 88.2 percent Caucasian, 5.8 percent Hispanic, 4.4 percent two or more races, 1.0 percent African-American, and 0.6 percent Asian. 0.6 percent of students speak a language other than English at home. The graduation rate in 2014 was 97.7 percent and in 2015 was 98.1 percent. The two-year average dropout rate is 1.0 percent. The average attendance rate for students is 95.2 percent and 95.5 percent for daily teacher attendance rate. Approximately 15.2 percent of students receive special education services.

The CHS teaching staff currently numbers 57 certified teachers and 12 paraprofessionals. As of 2014-2015, the average class size at the high school was 17.12 students. Students attend school for 182 days and for a minimum of 6.4 hours. All students are required to take 4 credits of English, 4 credits of math (starting with the 2016 graduating class), 3 credits of science, 3 credits of social studies, 1 credit of physical education, 1 credit of fine arts/performing arts, 0.5 credit of health, with the remainder of students' programs filled with elective courses in all departments. Students are also encouraged to pursue an area of personal interest through Independent Study, in partnership with a teacher as mentor.

Coventry High School fosters effective partnerships with other schools in the community. The partnership with the University of Connecticut (UConn) has allowed for collaboration on the implementation of the iPad initiative at Coventry High School, in which all students receive an iPad for the remainder of their high school career. In the 2014-2015 school year, all sophomore and juniors received iPads. In the 2015-2016 school year, the program expanded to include all students and staff to receive iPads. The University has assisted the school in providing professional iPad trainings for teachers and supported our work with parents regarding the iPad initiative. Additionally, Coventry High School faculty members serve as mentors to college students as they fulfill intern or student teaching commitments to earn their University degrees. Many students from Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) serve as interns at CHS. Teachers at CHS support the pre-service teaching program by providing numerous internship opportunities for ECSU students.

Coventry High School students receive college credit through a variety of pathways, including partnership programs and articulated agreements with local colleges such as UConn and Manchester Community College

(MCC) as part of the Connecticut Early College Experience (ECE) Program. In 2014-2015, 69 students earned college credit from UConn and 113 students earned college credit from MCC. In 2014, 131 students took 229 Advanced Placement (AP) exams. In 2014-2015, there were 135 enrollments in AP courses, with 203 exams administered. In the school year 2015-16, there are 340 student enrollments across 14 AP course offerings.

Additionally in 2015-16, there are 171 student enrollments in MCC classes across 8 course offerings and 130 student enrollments in ECE classes across 8 ECE course offerings. Partnerships with ECSU, the University of Hartford, Goodwin College, and University of St. Joseph allow students to take college level courses outside of school. High school students, college students, and faculty members benefit from the reciprocal nature of these partnerships.

Community and business partnerships are also a critical component of education at Coventry High School. The school's facilities support many children and adults in the community through recreational sports, meetings and events held by the Coventry Youth Football Association and the Coventry Farmers Market in the winter. In addition to the formal partnerships that support students regularly, such as the CHS Music Booster Organization, Parent Advisory Council (PAC), Project Graduation Committee and the Athletic Booster Club, other organizations and residents traditionally show support as audience members, spectators, volunteers, and scholarship contributors. As part of the Coventry Scholarship Foundation Dollars for Scholars program, over \$40,000 is offered for graduating senior scholarships. The school building frequently serves as a center of activity for the town.

Additionally, a majority of students are involved in extracurricular activities offered at Coventry High School. The Coventry High School band involves 100 students with concerts and performances throughout the year. The Coventry High School Drama club performs a play and a musical annually, involving approximately 30 students for these performances. Sports programs are also popular, with 41 percent of students involved in interscholastic sports. All students also participate in the Enrichment Program which is scheduled approximately 12 times during the school year and provides an opportunity for students to explore their interests during the school day. Coventry High School is also involved in numerous co-curricular programs with neighboring towns.

In the class of 2015, 84.4 percent of graduating CHS students pursued post-secondary education, 10 percent entered the workforce, 4.6 percent entered the military, and 1 percent joined the Peace Corps. Comparatively in the class of 2014, 82 percent of graduating seniors went on to post-secondary education, 16% entered the workforce, 1 percent entered the military, and 1 percent pursued other endeavors. In the class of 2013, 83 percent of students attended post-secondary education, 9 percent entered the workforce, 6 percent entered the military, and 2 percent pursued other endeavors. Graduates take considerable advantage of educational opportunities nearby, such as attending the University of Connecticut, Eastern Connecticut State University, and Manchester Community College.

Although the Coventry school district and municipal offices are the major employers within the community, many residents commute to insurance, technical and industrial jobs in the Greater Hartford area. Construction, retail trade, health care and social assistance are the most common industries. In Coventry, major employers include East of the River Veterinary Emergency, the district schools, and Highland Park Market. The current unemployment rate is 7.1 percent. At present 3.5 percent of families in Coventry live on wages below the poverty level, and 20.6 percent of CHS students receive free or reduced price meals. The town is comprised primarily of single-family homes, but there are also several working farms. Coventry residents age 25 and older have achieved the following educational levels: 33 percent with a Bachelor's degree or more, 11 percent with an Associate's degree, 19 percent with some post-secondary education, and 29 percent with completion of high school as their highest level attained.

In 2012-2013 Coventry ranked as 108 out of 169 Connecticut towns in per-pupil expenditures. The high school spends \$13,821 per pupil as compared to the state average of \$14,500. Financial support for Coventry schools comes primarily from local taxes (57.8 percent) and state aid (34.5 percent) with the remaining coming from various federal programs.

The community's population is expected to show a 0.6 percent increase from 2012 to 2020. As of 2012, the median household income was \$92,308 with average homes in Coventry selling in the \$225,000 price range. However, the school population has been decreasing for the past several years with a -8.6 percent decrease in student population from 2007-2012. The student population is projected to decline further over the next several years.

Coventry High School believes that recognizing student achievement is important. To that end, there are two athletic and two academic assemblies each year at which students receive recognition awards. Students are also honored through achieving Honors and High Honors after each marking period, a list published in local newspapers. A year-end academic awards banquet is also held to recognize underclass students and senior awards assembly is held at which 25 organizations honor graduating seniors. A CAPT awards breakfast is held annually to recognize students earning Goal or Advanced on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) administered to all 10th grade students in Science. The Coventry Board of Education and superintendent frequently recognizes students and groups of students, such as the band for outstanding achievements, the volleyball team for athletic excellence, and students who have won awards such as the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) art award and other awards from the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS).

## **Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations**

### **Core Values and Beliefs Statement**

Our community believes in preparing students to become life-long learners by providing a challenging environment that supports the development and use of concepts, knowledge, skills, and ethics that meet the expectations of the global, interdependent society of the 21st century.

Coventry High School students will:

#### **Academic**

- Communicate effectively in multiple contexts and for varied purposes using a variety of tools/media.
- Use essential knowledge and skills to demonstrate critical, creative and adaptive thinking to solve problems with real-world applications.
- Engage productively in self-directed learning, independently, and/or collaboratively.
- Create or respond effectively to artistic works or technical products.

#### **Civic and Social**

- Demonstrate civic, social, and personal awareness and responsibility.
- Respect people as individuals within our school and global communities.
- Apply skills for a lifetime of health and well-being.

# 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 Commission on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), and the Commission 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 committees to assess the degree to which the evaluated schools meet the qualitative Standards for Accreditation of the Committee. Those Standards are:

### Teaching and Learning Standards

- Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

- Curriculum

- Instruction

- Assessment of and for Student Learning

### Support 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 committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study and the valid recommendations of the visiting committee and those identified by the Committee in the Follow-Up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school be reevaluated at least once every ten years and that it show continued progress addressing identified needs.

## Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Coventry High School, a committee of six members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people.

The self-study of Coventry High School extended over a period of 17 school months from November 2014 to march 2016.

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

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

### **The Process Used by the Visiting Committee**

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

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- thirty-seven hours shadowing thirteen students for a half day
- a total of twelve 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 twenty-six teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers
- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

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

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

# Standard 1 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The school community engaged in a collaborative and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning; however, the resulting statement is more closely related to a mission statement than clearly expressing the core values of the school and its beliefs about student learning. A core group of one administrator, five faculty members, and three students guided the process. In the fall of 2012 staff members worked in committees to generate ideas about what is valued in the Coventry High School (CHS) school community. At various faculty meetings, the process of developing core values, beliefs, and learning expectations was reviewed. Parents were involved in the process through the Parent Advisory Council (PAC), a collaborative group comprised of parents and administrators. Parents participated in numerous activities and group discussions in order to give feedback and input. Parents were also engaged through a joint meeting of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and Parent Advisory Council; other community involvement came from the Coventry Scholarship Foundation. Students were involved in the process through their advisory group and worked together to share their ideas about what should be included. A smaller group of student leaders compiled student feedback and created a document to be shared with that core group of teachers, administrators, and students. The core group incorporated the feedback from students, parents, and in collaborative sessions, incorporated the feedback from students, parents, as well as current research. Specific research included the *Six Critical Skills that Form the Foundation for 21st Century Success* by Jonathan Costa, the *Partnership for 21st Century Learning Skills*, the Education Connection's *21st Century Skills Crosswalk*, and Ron Brandt's *Powerful Learning*. In the winter of 2013, the CHS community engaged in a dynamic process to offer and compile feedback; the new CHS Core Values and Beliefs Statement and 21st Century Learning Expectations were adopted by the staff on February 27, 2013 and by the Coventry Board of Education on February 28, 2013. The approved Core Values and Belief Statement, "Our community believes in preparing students to become life-long learners by providing a challenging environment that supports the development and use of concepts, knowledge, skills, and ethics that meet the expectations of the global, interdependent society of the 21st century" provides a description of what the school hopes to accomplish, "life long learners", the environment they desire to create, "challenging", and what they hope to accomplish, "the development and use of concepts, knowledge, skills, and ethics that meet the expectations of the global, interdependent society of the 21st century"; however, the core values of the school community and their beliefs about how students' learn best are not specifically stated. Eighty-four percent of students report that they are familiar with the school's core values and beliefs about learning; 82.6 percent of parents are familiar with the core values and beliefs adopted by the school; 76 percent of parents are familiar with the 21st century learning expectations adopted by the school, and 70.3 percent of parents believe that the school's core values and beliefs represent what the community values about student learning. Because the school engaged in a collaborative and inclusive process informed by current research to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning and has defined learning expectations all stakeholders are invested and when the school community's specific core values and beliefs about student learning are identified they will function as explicit foundational commitments for student learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation

- teachers
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school has challenging and primarily measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-wide rubrics that are mostly analytical with identified targeted high levels of achievement. The faculty went through an extensive process to define the school's academic, civic, and social learning expectations which included receiving feedback from surveys, comprehensive analysis of responses and a number of faculty meetings at which some or most of the focus was devoted to refinement of the expectations. The final drafts were presented and approved by the faculty. The resulting learning expectations are fundamentally sound, but some contain multiple expectations within concepts that may need more than one rubric to assess the expectations. Existing Coventry High School rubrics, and rubrics from other schools were reviewed to prepare for the revision of the school-wide rubrics. The faculty was organized into groups based on one of the 21st century learning expectations: Communicate Effectively, Engage Productively, Create/Respond, Problem Solving, Civic, Social, Personal Awareness and Responsibility. These groups developed analytic rubrics for each of the 21st century academic learning expectations and each group presented its draft of rubrics to the entire faculty. Staff members discussed and provided feedback to the group who then revised the rubrics. The final drafts were presented again to the faculty, approved, and made available to the faculty both in hard copy and electronically. All rubrics consist of the same levels of achievement: Mastering, Proficient, Developing, and Emerging, with proficient being the targeted level of achievement. Some of the rubrics are clearly analytic such as the communication rubric; here, the learning expectation "Communicate effectively in multiple contexts and for varied purposes using a variety of tools/media" has defined the specific criteria of the expectation into six components each with respective descriptors for the four rating categories. The other rubrics for the learning expectations are fundamentally analytic, but sometimes lack a complete breakdown of all the specific criteria to be considered. However, the problem-solving rubric does not define the the specific criteria for problem solving, but uses the other five components of the learning expectation as the criteria effectively making the rubric a compilation of five holistic rubrics rather than one analytic rubric. When each learning expectation is defined by analytic rubrics, clearly defined by the desired criteria, then students will be more effectively supported in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- student work
- teachers

# Standard 1 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, are a major focus of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and often guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. Students are academically challenged and provided with numerous opportunities to earn college credits. Coventry High School offers open enrollment to 14 Advanced Placement (AP) classes, 10 University of Connecticut Early College Experience courses, and 11 College and Career Pathways courses as well as 80 Virtual High School online courses so that students can study areas of personal interest. As a graduation requirement, CHS students must complete an electronic portfolio project which is a culminating capstone project of their achievements during their high school career. This capstone portfolio project demonstrates students' achievement of the 21st century skills and serves as an example of self-directed learning. Students must make a presentation, which is judged and assessed by specific criteria, and provide evidence to demonstrate they have met all seven academic, civic, and social expectations, including community service, while also incorporating their areas of personal interest. Students present their portfolio to teachers, administrators, Board of Education members, community members and family members at a Portfolio Showcase each March. The core values and beliefs are ingrained in the school culture through various groups and activities such as Student Council, National Honor Society, Albert Schweitzer Club, school spirit initiatives, and enrichment and advisory. Student Council and National Honor Society offer leadership opportunities for the student body. Advisory provides students with opportunities to set specific personal goals for a lifetime of health and well-being. Additional activities are provided to engage students in understanding their civic and social responsibilities to respect people as citizens within the school and within global communities such as a school assembly on an introduction to race relations provided as part of the contemporary issues course. Enrichment activities encourage student to explore interests in various fields that will help them grow as individuals. For instance, following a school-wide character-building assembly, Rachael's Legacy, students formed Rachael's Club; school programs are held to bring additional awareness and to educate the school population and community about the dangers of bullying. Meeting the expectation of preparing students for a global society, as indicated in the core values statement, can be seen in the annual opportunities school-wide for students to participate in culturally enriching trips outside of the state and country, including the music department, art, and school club trips; Science Adventure Club and an International Travelers Club also offer frequent international trips. The core values are embedded in instruction across the content areas. In science classes students examine the impact of global warming and acid rain on the environment. Students study and create prosthetics to examine how muscles work within the human body, relating core concepts and skills to the real world. In English, students analyze literature written from various cultures to examine the human condition. In Contemporary Issues students study current national and global trends and events. Cross-disciplinary connections are made as students analyze *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *The Kite Runner* in their senior English class while simultaneously engaging in the study of the war on terror. Instruction often reflects topics relating to what is valued as a school community. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) assignments are being embedded into the science curriculum in all courses to provide opportunities for authentic problem solving and hands-on opportunities. Also, teachers have collaborated to design common unit assessments that involve students in integrating multiple texts into assessments for authentic audiences and purposes. Teachers are currently formally meeting three times each year to review student work, to discuss and analyze student achievement of the school's learning expectations and to determine gaps in skills. The school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations have guided changes to or adaptations to school policies, procedures, and decisions. For instance, based on student needs, the Development Guidance Program was expanded to include a Junior Seminar. In addition, a needs assessment indicated uneven practice of technology skills leading to the development of a plan to implement student technological competencies skills at each grade level. An annual review of school climate is conducted to provide staff and the greater school community the opportunity to provide feedback. The most significant indication of the influence of the core values, beliefs, and

learning expectations is in technology. The school has implemented, ahead of schedule, a one-to-one iPad initiative. The school issues an individual iPad to each student in all grade levels for daily classwork and homework. Support has been provided for teachers in the form of training and professional development opportunities to learn how to integrate the iPads effectively into instruction. During professional development time, departments have met to work on integrating technology into teaching and learning, including iPad applications within specific courses. For instance, social studies teachers have explored project development utilizing the iPad and world language teachers have collaborated on the integration of iPad applications in the world languages classrooms. Teachers may continue their professional development using technology by attending a variety of workshops including an annual iPad conference sponsored by the University of Connecticut. According to the newly adopted district Technology Plan, the district is committed to allocating resources that drive the acquisition of technology into assessment, curriculum and instruction. Because the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, are a major focus of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and often guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, decision-making is focused on and aligned to these critical commitments.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership

# Standard 1 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

The school has engaged in informally reviewing and revising its rubrics and is in the process of determining a plan for the formal review of its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities. Coventry High School is in the first year of implementing the new 21st century learning expectations. The school has developed a timeline for the regular review and revision of its Core Values, Beliefs Statement and the 21st century learning expectations which is scheduled for the fall of 2018. It is expected that the full faculty, parents, students, and the community will be involved in the review of the Core Values and Beliefs Statement and will provide feedback, but formal processes including data sources, research criteria and evolving school and district priorities have yet to be determined. This cycle is currently planned to repeat every four years. When the school consistently follows a process to review and revise its core values and beliefs, it will continue to function as the explicit foundational commitments to students and the community.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Commendations

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## **Commendation**

The dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process used to identify the school's core values and beliefs

## **Commendation**

The use of current researched-based best practices in aligning core values and beliefs

## **Commendation**

The development of challenging 21st century learning expectations for all students

## **Commendation**

The active reflection of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations in the culture of the school

## **Commendation**

The planned initiatives to ensure the 21st century learning expectations are influential in curriculum, instruction, and assessment decisions

## **Commendation**

The commitment to implementing resource allocations aligned to the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations in supporting the 1:1 iPad initiative

# Standard 1 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Ensure that each of the school's core values as well as beliefs about student learning are individually articulated and clearly identifiable within the Core Values and Beliefs Statement

## Recommendation

Ensure that each academic, social, and civic learning expectation is complemented by an analytic rubric or rubrics that can be used to assess student progress in achieving those learning expectations

## Recommendation

Develop and document the specific plan and criteria related to the constituent groups which will be involved, current research, multiple data sources and district and school community priorities to be used in the school's regularly scheduled review of its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

# Standard 2 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The curriculum is in the process of being designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Coventry High School is completing a transition of all existing content area curricula from "A Balanced Curriculum" to the "Atlas Rubicon" platform. English has transitioned; however social studies, science, health/physical education, art, music, and math are in various stages of completion and are slated to begin revision this summer. Each content area has been assigned responsibility for two specific learning expectations. Those learning expectations are posted in most classrooms. Data collection regarding these expectations is largely informal and does not inform decisions about the ongoing curriculum revision. It is clear in the curriculum where students specifically practice the 21st century learning expectations. For example, each unit in Atlas Rubicon has learning expectations attached to drive the learning. However, the course content and the learning expectations are loosely connected. As part of the Atlas Rubicon template, teachers include the learning expectations that their content area is accountable for; however, little connection beyond this listing ensures its inclusion. Due to the purposeful overlapping of multiple courses in multiple content areas across multiple years, students have a plethora of learning experiences related to each of the school's learning expectations. Individual teachers are very clear as to which learning expectations they are responsible for teaching. When the transition to Atlas Rubicon is completed for all content areas and the school begins to collect and review individual and aggregated results regarding the school's learning expectations, Coventry High School will ensure that all students have the opportunity to consistently practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The curriculum is in the midst of being 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; and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. Currently, CHS is transitioning from A Balanced Curriculum to Rubicon Atlas, and as part of this transition, curricula are being revised to include units of study, learning expectations, instructional strategies, and assessment practices. English has transitioned; however, the other subject areas are in various stages of completion. CHS does have a template/common format for use in writing all curriculum documents. However, the template is sometimes incomplete even in transitioned curricula. The completed curriculum guides do include essential questions, concepts, content, and skills. For instance, the World History units on decolonization, the Cold War, and global terrorism all include unit essential questions, significant tasks, and content, including critical vocabulary. The curriculum guides include CHS's applicable 21st century learning expectations. The curriculum guides include instructional practices, and the curriculum guides also include assessment practices which use the school-wide analytic rubrics. For example, the math department uses the problem-solving rubric to assess the similar triangles and trigonometry performance task, and the science department uses the communication rubric to assess the "nuclear power" performance task. CHS has curriculum guides for their vocational/technical courses although these documents are not all complete. CHS enrolls students in Virtual High School (VHS), but CHS does not maintain curriculum guides for these courses. CHS also enrolls students in Grad Point for credit recovery, and CHS maintains curriculum guides, which are created by Grad Point, for these courses. When all of 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, and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic rubrics, then the school can ensure all students will have opportunities to achieve the 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Coventry High School's curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school with some focus on cross-disciplinary learning and informed and ethical use of technology. Curricular documents identify depth of knowledge levels to ensure students are using higher order thinking in both the college and Pre-AP/AP courses. Most classes include opportunities for inquiry and problem solving whether it is assessing which paper towels are the most absorbent in Honors Biology, creating a magazine to illustrate an understanding of text structures in Reading Lab, or investigating how much a career pays and calculating what a potential paycheck would look like in Life Skills Math, or English 12 and Contemporary Issues making a concerted effort to align. Currently, limited connections are made from one content area to another and minimal emphasis is placed on cross-disciplinary learning which was identified in the self-study. The ECE Latin America Studies course combines Spanish and social studies, AP Language and Composition and Advanced Photography collaborate to create public service announcements, and the English 12 and Contemporary Issues making a concerted effort to align topics. What other cross-curricular opportunities are serendipitous such as Algebra II and Chemistry collaborating on "exponential growth" after a random conversation. While many departments do not officially plan cross-disciplinary instruction, they do reinforce connections through curricular topics and instructional approaches.

Coventry High School students have opportunities for authentic learning especially in science. Students in AP Environmental Studies do a field study in forest ecology which involves an in-depth analysis of micro-climate using a local forest, while the Alternative Energies class requires students to design a solar passive house using REVIT software. While the use of technology is clearly present, the informed and ethical use of technology is somewhat seen in the written and in the taught curriculum. According to the Endicott survey, 80 percent of staff supports the statement that technology ethics are emphasized; however, not all departments specifically reference plagiarism instruction within current curriculum documents. The CHS Handbook does include a specific policy and students sign an iPad usage agreement that emphasizes ethical usage. Some teachers use turnitin.com as a plagiarism check to critically evaluate students' ethical use of technology. However, the Endicott survey reveals only 15 percent of staff surveyed require the use of the turnitin.com database leaving this inconsistent across courses. The library media specialist reported that discussions are happening K-12 about a sequenced technology curriculum for age-appropriate digital skills including digital citizenship which will include the informed and ethical usage. The current structure to ensure the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding through inquiry, problem solving and higher order thinking skills across all levels and courses includes the use of Atlas Rubicon, the administrative oversight of the director of teaching and learning, the K-12 math and literacy specialists, and the building administrators. All curriculum writing is produced under the supervision of a facilitator with the director of teaching and learning. This structure ensures the new curriculum's emphasis on inquiry and problem solving. When all curricula are completed and transitioned to Atlas Rubicon, the cross-curricular learning and an emphasis on informed and ethical use of technology are firmly established, then the depth of understanding and application of knowledge will occur.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Clear alignment exists between the written and taught curriculum in most courses. As indicated, the curriculum at CHS is currently being transitioned to Atlas Rubicon, and for courses with transitioned curricula, alignment exists. According to the Endicott survey, 78.2 percent of the staff indicates that the alignment exists between the written and taught curriculum, and several conditions are in place to ensure the written curriculum is taught. Core academic courses including math, science, social studies, and English have common midterm and final exams, which are based on the written curriculum and ensure that all students are receiving instruction that is aligned with the assessments. School administrators discuss pacing in the teacher evaluation program to ensure that teachers are teaching the curriculum. Administrators also evaluate pacing through classroom walk-throughs and instructional rounds; administrators also check PowerSchool to ensure that quarterly standards-based assessments are completed. Teachers have the opportunity to develop shared Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), and teachers in math and science have developed common SLOs. In Honors Geometry a performance task in which students studied similar triangles and trigonometry was observed, and this task is included in the 10th grade Honors Geometry curriculum. In addition, in an observed French 3 class, students were describing an image in the target language while a partner was sketching the description, and this significant task is included in the written curriculum for French 3. When the curriculum development process is complete, the school can ensure that the learning outcomes stated in the written curriculum are demonstrated in the taught curriculum.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation opportunities exist to varying degrees between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district. The Curriculum Cabinet has a clearly defined five-year curriculum review cycle, which includes designated years for departments to develop curricula. During year one, teachers develop curriculum; in year two, teachers implement the curriculum; in years three and four, teachers revise the curriculum; in year five, teachers rewrite the curriculum. The district's Professional Development Plan demonstrates that some time is devoted to the development of curriculum. As noted, CHS is in the process of transitioning its curricula, so the review and evaluation protocols have not been fully implemented within the district. The English department will be the first to begin the revision cycle. Revision will start this summer and will include a curriculum writing refresher led by the director of teaching and learning. The faculty spends some time in collaboration activities within content areas and with sending schools for the purpose of articulation of the curriculum. Grades 6-12 teachers meet three times annually to discuss student work and the curriculum; grades 6-12 science teachers met to develop a common lab format; grades 6-12 art teachers met to address redundant content and activities. Therefore, some opportunities exist for teachers within disciplines to meet, but it is not a consistent practice. The math department has a consultant to support curriculum writing, and several departments, including English, social studies, and art have met to develop interdisciplinary projects. For example, AP English 12 and Advanced Photography developed an interdisciplinary project in which students developed and displayed public service announcements. However, no contractual time exists for department meetings, which hampers collaborative efforts. At this time, CHS does not have representative district K-12 curriculum guides to illustrate coordination and articulation due to the ongoing transition to Atlas Rubicon. At present, opportunities are limited for collaboration and coordination between and among staff of the schools in the district. When the school has consistent curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with the sending schools in the district, all students will be ensured access to a coordinated curriculum that includes the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

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. English classes average 15 students, math averages 16.7 students, science averages 16.3, and social studies averages 20.5; in the 2015-2016 school year, only three core classes had above 28 students, all of which are the senior Contemporary Issues course, which is team taught. Observed class sizes were between 15 and 23 students. Therefore, the observed and reported class sizes and teacher loads indicate adequate staffing. The reports that define expenditures over the most recent three-year period, relate that instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, and library-media resources are adequately funded. School administration stated that the building is adequately funded and described the prompt replacement of a \$5,000 refrigerator without question. For each of the last three years, the high school has ended the year with a surplus, which has been spent on hardware for the building. Students and teachers stated that they have sufficient instructional materials to fully implement the curriculum. Also, according to the Endicott survey, 82.7 percent of parents believe their children have been provided with materials needed for each class. Students also recognize the school provides the necessary instructional materials with 80.2 percent of students agreeing that the school adequately supports its programs and services. In addition to the 1:1 iPad initiative, CHS has three computer labs and extra computers in the library/media center. Therefore, students and teachers have sufficient and appropriate technology to implement the curriculum. Several teachers described the library media specialist asking, what if any, resources could benefit their classes, and the library/media center has an unfrozen budget. Therefore, the library/media center has sufficient print and non-print resources to fully implement the curriculum. Students have a number of extra- and co-curricular activities, clubs, and teams to select from. These include Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), community music events, the Tri-M Music Honors Society, International Travelers Club, the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), the Math Team, the Bio Olympics, Robotics Club, and the National Honor Society (NHS); also included are a variety of varsity and junior varsity team sports. Increases in the school budget combined with student interest have allowed for the addition of freshman boys' basketball, varsity wrestling, and freshman girls' volleyball over the past two years. Because the staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities and the resources of the library/media center are adequate, students are fully provided the learning opportunities to access the curriculum, including co-curricular programs.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teachers
- students
- school leadership
- 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 district and school-level curriculum coordination and articulation is overseen by the director of teaching and learning who conducts the first session of all content area curriculum writing as well as by the K-12 specialist in math and literacy. All sessions have a facilitator present to ensure for productive sessions. While the math department does have a monthly all-day session with a curriculum specialist from the regional education resource center (CREC), other content areas identified time challenges associated with curriculum work. Some teachers do have common planning time to accomplish this, while others do not. Some content areas have time and stipends to do work in the summer. Teachers stated that there are no department meetings at which this work can be done, although some teachers and departments will volunteer to stay after school to accomplish these goals. All teachers have been actively involved in the curriculum process both development and review. The English department, the first to go through the transition to Atlas Rubicon, will spend the week after the school year ends this June to work on review of their units. There is a Google Classroom that has been set up by the director of teaching and learning to which all teachers have access. They have documented changes to units as the year has progressed which will be the basis for the summer work. The English department is the first to reach the revision year of the five-year cycle. As other content areas come on line, the revision cycle will happen. Coventry has significant investments over the last three years for curriculum development, evaluation, and revision. The district has added a director of teaching and learning position as well as a K-12 math specialist and a K-12 literacy position. In addition they have moved to the Atlas Rubicon curriculum platform. There has been release time for teachers to work during the school day and substitutes are hired to cover those classes. The district has contracted with regional education resources centers (CREC and EastConn) for content specialists to come in to facilitate curriculum writing sessions. Stipends have been paid for summer curriculum sessions up to and including this summer where \$10,000 is budgeted. All teachers have received a copy of Larry Ainsworth's book, *Rigorous Curriculum Design*, and the district has referenced Marzano's effective teaching strategies as well as John Hattie's book, *Visible Thinking*, to ground curriculum work. When a process is available to more consistently provide time for curriculum work and a system is in place to use results to drive curriculum revision, all students will be able to achieve 21st century learning expectation mastery.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Commendations

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## Commendation

The thoughtful and purposeful transitioning of curriculum

## Commendation

The funding of necessary infrastructure for the transitioning of curriculum from A Balanced Curriculum to Atlas Rubicon

## Commendation

The curriculum format which is grounded in research and based on best practice

## Commendation

The strong and consistent alignment between written and taught curriculum

## Commendation

The commitment to add key personnel to facilitate and support the curriculum process

## Commendation

The sufficient levels of staffing, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and resources of the library/media center to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs

# Standard 2 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Ensure financial resources and time to complete all curricula

## Recommendation

Ensure the curricula emphasizes cross-disciplinary learning and consistently supports the informed and ethical use of technology

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to ensure effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas as well as with sending schools in the district

# Standard 3 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices are examined formally and informally on a routine basis to evaluate and ensure that lessons are consistently aligned with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. At Coventry High School, teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values and belief statement, which are also aligned with state standards, to prepare students to become lifelong learners by providing a challenging environment that supports the development and use of concepts, knowledge, skills, and ethics that meet the expectations of the global, interdependent society of the 21st century. There are several means by which instructional practices are examined on a routine basis such as instructional rounds, the student work protocol, the math department's partnership with Capitol Regional Education Center (CREC), and intra-department meetings. The instructional rounds initiative established focus questions for the past four years. During year one, teachers practiced questioning and learning activities to foster strategic thinking; year two, teachers developed questioning and discussion techniques to deepen student understanding; year three, teachers worked on student motivation and involvement; and year four, teachers designed feedback to foster student learning and achievement. In September 2015, the staff began implementing a new student work protocol to examine student work and to determine next steps for instruction. The student work protocol will be utilized at least three times during the 2015-2016 school year with departments collaboratively analyzing student work samples and data, and then planning future instruction accordingly. Teachers work in teams of three or more to analyze student work samples and provide suggestions for instruction, curriculum, intervention, and potential enrichment activities. Sixty-five percent of teachers report on the Endicott survey that they continuously examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Additionally, math department staff is working in close partnership with the CREC, modifying instructional design to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations as well as state standards. Math teachers report the district is field testing one major authentic, real world task each marking period. Instructional design elements include intensive chunking and scaffolding to develop the sophisticated problem-solving skills and intensive writing component associated with the multi-component 21st century learning tasks. Teachers meet once a month with a CREC consultant to review student work, revise assessments and review curriculum as well as identify and develop exemplars to aid student learning. Another example of a re-examination of instructional practices are the departmental meeting minutes detailing the changes made to the redesigned SAT in math and English which show detailed action plan steps complete with resources needed, timelines, persons responsible, evidence of success and outcomes. Specifically instructional shifts detail changes in vocabulary instruction, word choice for rhetorical effect, demonstrating command of evidence (quality and depth) and analysis and interpretation of data versus just citing numbers. Because the school's core values and 21st century learning skills are embedded into instruction, achievement of the 21st century learning expectations is supported.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

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

Many teachers routinely personalize their instruction in the area of choice to meet the needs of a diverse group of students. While 83 percent of staff report personalizing instruction to support the achievement of the school's learning expectations, only 36 percent of students agree with the statement, "my teachers personalize my instruction" (Endicott survey). Almost 66 percent of students agree with the statement, "my teachers give me opportunities to choose topics for some assignments" (Endicott survey). Students report on having choice in presentation of their mastery of content knowledge and skill ability for identified standards. One student reported being given the opportunity to demonstrate his knowledge about the Vietnam War through a song composition. This practice of personalized instruction was further verified in interviews with Board of Education members and central office staff. With a relatively small student population, teachers report that it is easier to know individual members of their student population. In interviews, parents report that students at Coventry High School are known, observing that students "can't hide in a small school." In interviews, teachers report that assessments done in September in the areas of math, reading, and language arts, specifically Measures of Academic Progress testing, provide valuable data on students, while smaller class sizes in core subjects enable teachers to know students' abilities and "adapt to the learning styles of students" relatively quickly. In AP Language and Composition, students and a teacher report that students have at least two writing conferences each quarter where personalized writing instruction is provided to students. In English, students report receiving a completion grade for first drafts and a more significantly weighted score on final drafts. Students report that they also have the opportunity to rewrite failing papers for a higher grade and that teachers use rubrics that detail areas of strength and weakness. English teachers and students report that student feedback is regularly elicited through discussions and surveys to better personalize instruction, gaining insight into students' preferences with regard to texts, assignment preferences and pacing. This feedback recently led to the substitution of *Lord of the Flies* for *Catcher in the Rye* in the sophomore curriculum in the current school year as well as the introduction of *Into the Wild*, a text with both popular and literary appeal in the senior curriculum. This spirit of flexibility and innovation is apparent in the school's open AP enrollment policy and the English department's genuine interest in stemming the national tide of young adult readers who fall out of the reading habit. Other examples of personalized learning can be found in school protocols for reaching out to students in danger of failure. Teachers frequently report contacting guidance counselors who in turn routinely place students in a designated study hall/tutoring center which is staffed by a full-time monitor who keeps abreast of students' progress on assignments. English and math teachers also are assigned duty periods in the center. This study hall is also staffed on a rotating basis with college interns. Teachers offer additional help sessions as evidenced during student shadowing when a student had to leave to take an AP exam for another course and before leaving, the teacher said, "If you need to sign up for a help session to review for our AP exam, sign up times are posted on the door." Additionally, struggling students in math have additional class time built into their schedules.

Cross-disciplinary learning opportunities are by and large not standardized, although cross-disciplinary learning is built into several courses. Classroom observations, analysis of student work and interviews suggest that cross-disciplinary learning is more commonly found between the humanities and visual and performing arts classes with a heavy focus on literacy. While evidence of graphs, tables, charts, and diagrams are included within student presentations in English language arts, social studies and science, there are no clear examples of numeracy (data, tables, graphs, charts, diagrams). During an interview with the grade 10 Honors Biology teacher, an

explicit description was provided of how problem solving was assessed through the completion of a lab report on analyzing the absorbency of ten different paper towels. This task represented real world application and even provided a plethora of opportunities to reinforce numeracy. However, the teacher reported that students exhibited difficulty in communicating a conclusion because they failed to provide an analysis and interpretation of the data. The AP Language and Composition teacher collaborated with the art teacher in creating public service announcements. These teachers assumed the responsibility for the creativity, communication, and collaboration rubrics. The students in art history learned about rhetorical elements with regard to argument, tone, and mood. During art history there was an emphasis on domain-specific vocabulary and visual representation of vocabulary that connoted meaning. Art units are theme based and an overview of art history was taught in chronological order. In an interview, the teacher reported that 50 percent of the art curriculum involves writing. In carpentry, students built tables for the Macbooks used in the art classes. Contemporary Issues aligned the instruction on human trafficking and world hunger with English AP Language and Composition's study of the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and also aligned its study of conflict in the Middle East with English 12's study of *The Kite Runner*.

A student reported that the content learned in Chemistry on nuclear science provided valuable contextual information needed in AP US History.

Active and self-directed learners were observed in AP US History as students and their teacher informally assessed the number of times students demonstrate examples of synthesis and contextualization. Two charts are posted on a bulletin board, one for synthesis and one for contextualization. Each student's name is under each higher order thinking skill and students make a tally next to their name each time they demonstrate one of these skills. An Algebra 2 Honors teacher had students up and moving, progressing through stations reviewing skills needed for an upcoming test. The teacher adjusted the time required to complete these tasks based on real-time student performance. The teacher asked specific students explain their work process using bullet points, then asked fellow students who were still struggling to master the task through their process. Also, teachers report that the use of iPads allow students to respond to questions at their own pace and instructional levels. This allows students to express opinions anonymously. While on a tour of the tutoring center, students were observed working on specific assignments that were chosen from several options. For example, a student chose to research two songs that pertained to the topic of human rights. In Spanish, students reported receiving a large packet of take-home assignments and are given the opportunity to choose from these to accumulate a required point total.

Endicott survey results indicated that 81.7 percent of students strongly agree that inquiry and problem solving are embedded within the curriculum and their course work. Essential questions are prominently displayed in English, science, Contemporary Issues, art classrooms, which promote inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking. CREC's collaboration with the math department emphasizes the creation and use of authentic, multi-layered, complex tasks. During an observation in an Anatomy and Physiology class, a lab report was reviewed for opportunities to focus on numeracy. The assignment required students to investigate pulse rates across several activities (e.g., resting, standing, holding breath). They had to compare their pulse rates to that of average females and males. Analysis and interpretation questions required that they compare their rate with their sex and discuss any difference between their pulse rate and the average. These questions represent an analysis of literal numbers and students' abilities to calculate using a formula.

Attesting to how deeply students are engaged as active and self-directed learners, one parent noted that his daughter spoke at the invitation of the Board of Education to defend a program in danger of being eliminated. Another parent spoke about his son's desire to continue his study of physics and his son's current collaboration with a school physics teacher to create a Physics 2 course. In interviews, several parents noted how impressed they were by how all seniors are applying knowledge and skills to the authentic tasks of résumé and cover letter writing as well as mock interviews which paired students with professionals in the community based on students' career interests (i.e., college, work, and military). In the third quarter, students in Sophomore AP applied knowledge and skills to authentic tasks which anticipate the timed writing demands of the AP Literature exams they will begin preparing for their junior year. Students were provided scaffolding activities which offered instruction in essay planning strategies, including text evidence identification skills, before taking three timed writing responses to complete their study of *Lord of the Flies*. Life Skills math students research their career

aspirations to draw conclusions about the quality of lifestyle this income would sustain.

The Endicott survey reveals that 72 percent of students agree they are asked to self-assess. Students in English classes confirmed this finding as one student interviewed noted that her teacher routinely rewards students for accurate self-assessments. The shop/robotics teacher includes a self-assessment after project completion, requiring students to observe what worked and what did not work. A physical education/health teacher reported closing discreet units with a student reflective essay on how the activity could improve their overall health. An American Literature teacher gives students a midterm student survey asking students to rate themselves on measures of effort, achievement on assignments, meaningful class participation, preparedness, and engagement. These surveys also ask students to rate teachers on pacing, the quality of feedback on their assignments, classroom management, clarity of expectations, and personal investment which is assessed on a 1 to 5 point rating scale and provides room for comments.

Almost 73 percent of students report on the Endicott survey that "my teachers ask me to use technology in my assignments." All students are now provided iPads as part of an initiative to further embed and integrate technology into the classroom. iPads provide access to online homework, digital libraries, and families are given emails to communicate with teachers. Using the Nearpods application on iPads, teachers are able to gather real-time feedback, offering a quick, anonymous check of initial understanding of a new concept or poll of student opinion. The Board of Education reported that parents have communicated satisfaction with the iPad initiative. The assistant board chair stated that plans are underway to run metrics on the various apps used in classroom to determine the effects on student learning. In the Able Room, five special needs (Asperger's syndrome, Downs syndrome, students with anxiety, and low functioning) children received one-to-one attention and students were observed working on the IXL math software program. This program provided functional real-world math problems. Interviews with classroom teacher and the self-study reveal that Macbook Pros are used in art for video editing, creating songs and silent films. Many teachers use SMARTBoard technology to facilitate classroom lectures and students taking notes.

Because teachers are routinely engaging their students in opportunities to personalize instruction, cross-disciplinary learning, active and self-directed learning, inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking, applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, engaging students in self-assessment and reflection and the use of technology to support learning, students are effectively supported in their achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Teachers generally adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment, strategically differentiating, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and by providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Teachers often improve their instructional practices, individually and collaboratively, by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, examining student work, and engaging in professional discourse.

Students revealed that the terms formative and summative assessment are not often used, but they do report that they routinely perform many "low stakes" learning tasks which offer them myriad opportunities to demonstrate their developing mastery of 21st century skills. The self-study indicates that 36 teachers in the high school report using distinct examples of formative assessments for instructional practices. Classroom visits confirmed the self-study data. An Honors Algebra 2 teacher utilized work station tasks which required groups comprised of three or four students to successfully complete more than a dozen practice problems in preparation for an upcoming exam. Students needed to demonstrate mastery of each discreet problem type in order to successfully advance through all of the problems. By gauging groups' progress through the task, the teacher was able to check for understanding. Using a prominently displayed visual and auditory timer, the teacher adjusted the time allotted for problem solving when students demonstrated an ability to work through tasks more rapidly than initially anticipated. In an interview, a Spanish teacher discussed using a learning check which asked students to rate their understanding of instruction on a four point scale by placing post-it notes in the box best describing their level of mastery as the teacher momentarily exited the room to preserve student anonymity. An English teacher and her students reported in two separate interviews that the teacher offers detailed feedback on first/rough drafts which receive completion credit, while final essays bear a more significant weight. The self-study reports the use of common formative assessments in social studies to monitor understanding and student growth and progress and, according to the self study report, the results of these are shared with students so that they are able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses in order to establish goals. Measures of Academic Progress testing done in September in the areas of math, reading, and language arts, also provide a formative benchmark teachers utilize in instruction design.

Many teachers strategically differentiate instruction in order to meet the needs of each student. In the self-study report, 68.6 percent of students respond, "my teachers use a variety of teaching strategies in my courses" and 74.5 percent of teachers report that "teachers use differentiated instructional practices to meet the learning needs of all students." In the self-study, CHS reports that all tests cover the same content, but in different versions best suited to the individual student's need. Also, the self-study reports that common unit tests and quizzes are aligned with the Common Core and differentiated based upon course level and special education needs. A parent explained that her daughter, who suffers from anxiety, is often permitted to take tests in the guidance office, a less stressful setting, and, on a few occasions, has been permitted to complete her tests orally. In interviews, students noted that they are often able to choose the type of project which best displays their mastery of content. In a classroom observation, an English teacher, working with a single text, offered two very distinct assignments for students to display their understanding of the text's themes. One assignment encouraged role playing and asked students to create monologues to gain deeper insights into a character's motivations, feelings and thought process. In the same class and using the same text, students were given the opportunity to identify a key piece of textual evidence, then offer a reflection on their choice, discussing the quotations thematic significance as well as the author's use of powerful diction. The teacher gave students an opportunity to brainstorm with one another and circulated throughout the classroom to check in on students who appeared to be struggling. The teacher varied her questions to check for understanding based on her knowledge of her students. Students who had trouble getting started were asked open-ended questions about which characters they found most interesting or which episodes in the novel they thought were most important. Students with more

independent learning styles were asked to offer examples of key moments that offered insights into their chosen character. Observing an Honors Algebra 2 class, a teacher was seen scaffolding a problem for some students, offering a first and sometimes second step in the problem-solving process to struggling students, while other students were asked to show their work, using bullet points to articulate the steps they took in coming up with the correct answer. A highly skilled student was asked to articulate his rationalization for the elimination of incorrect responses to aid classmates in multiple choice test taking strategies.

Teachers often purposefully organize group activities. The self-study indicates that 82.9 percent of students agree with the statement, "Teachers use group activities in my class," while 85.5 percent of teachers report "adjusting their instructional practices by organizing group learning activities." A math teacher began class with a diagram projected on the front board indicating student groups of three. Lower performing students seemed to be grouped together on this occasion to prevent struggling students from hiding in plain sight. In a Spanish class, students worked with partners, and all but a few students seemed engaged and invested in the progress of the team on a learning task that required students to use vocabulary flashcard sets to create meaningful sentences.

Additional support and alternative strategies are often offered in the regular classroom. A teacher interview revealed how in math, struggling students are identified and their schedules adjusted to bring them into the regular classroom more frequently where students receive more personalized, intensive support. In a teacher interview, a math teacher reported much of her collaboration with fellow teachers and the CREC consultant is devoted to the development of scaffolding and chunking strategies to aid students struggling to identify and employ the wide variety of specific problem-solving skills required to complete the complex, multi-layered real world tasks of the new assessments. What's more, technology in the classroom has offered additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Students all have iPads as of the 2015-2016 school year and in an interview, a Contemporary Issues teacher noted his frequent use of this technology to gain a quick read on student understanding and opinion. According to the self-study report, the district provides PD several times each year and topics addressed in the past three years include Digital Learning in the 21st Century, iPads, SAMR (Substitution Augmentation Modification Redefinition, a model designed to help educators infuse technology into teaching and learning), Google Classroom, and departmental iPad applications. Many teachers have attended an annual event at the University of Connecticut focusing on the functionality of iPads and apps for education. In alignment with the district's Technology Plan, all students and teachers have been issued gmail accounts as of fall 2015, facilitating personalized communication between teachers and their students and parents.

While 74.5 percent of teachers report that they "use differentiated instructional practices to meet the learning needs of all students," when all teachers adjust instruction and use alternative strategies within the regular classroom, they will ensure that they are meeting the needs of each student.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Most teachers use student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments to improve their instructional practices, and there is some collaborative examination of student work and opportunities for discourse on instructional practices; however, there are few opportunities for formal feedback to teachers from students and parents on their instructional practices and availability and use of current research is not prevalent.

The practice of using student achievement data from a variety of sources to improve instruction was reported to occur by teachers 78.2 percent of the time according to the Endicott survey. Summative assessments used include the MAPS Assessment, Redesigned PSAT/SAT, 14 content-based Advanced Placement (AP) courses, CAPT Science Test and Performance Tasks. A comprehensive analysis of the MAPS data was conducted in the fall of 2015. While this is a multiple choice test, teachers were able to provide instructional recommendations to support argumentative writing and embedding of informational text within the English 9-12 curriculum. A recommendation was also made for opportunities for vertical teaming and the annotation of fictional vs. informational text. This collegiate sharing also offered the strategy of using Nearpod as a quick formative assessment to read informational text and identify the author's claim or evaluate evidence which best supports the author's assertion. In the winter of 2016, another department/curriculum meeting was held to analyze the Redesigned PSAT data. Out of this meeting came a comprehensive plan to make instructional shifts within ELA and math. An example of a formative assessment was observed in the AP United States History class while conducting student interviews. A data bulletin board displayed the number of occurrences that students demonstrated examples of synthesizing and contextualizing information. Each of the 32 students enrolled had a series of tallies by their name, under each skill. This provided the teacher with real-time data as to how her students were performing in each of these areas. A sampling of student work across several disciplines showed the use of the student work protocol initiated by the district. All teachers engaged in district-wide professional development use this protocol. Teachers choose a lesson and analyze student work samples and provide a description of the task, the standards addressed, purpose of the task and instructional sequence (i.e., introduction, middle, end). An explanation of what the students have learned is also included. Further information provided includes a listing of strengths and weaknesses with regards to skills and the students' level of mastery: above mastery, mastery, proficient or approaching and developing. This protocol also includes a list of target students, skills to reach, high impact strategies and differentiation, and methods for reassessment. However, central office personnel, school leaders, and teachers report that the analysis of student work using this protocol only happens three times per year. Coventry High School uses standardized rubrics to assess project-based learning and performance tasks. During the opening reception of the NEASC visit, several academic projects were displayed throughout the library. These projects reflected a synthesis of what students read and what was happening in the world. For example, in the AP Language and Composition class students read the novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and created a visual display of the atrocities of human trafficking. Several of the questions provided information about specific quotes and the students' interpretation of the content. This information was displayed with graphs, and charts of the documented instances of human trafficking within the world. Positioned next to these displays were CHS' 21st century rubrics for communication and collaboration. Another review of student work samples revealed that students are engaged in completing performance tasks aligned to the reading, writing, and math standards outlined in the Common Core State Standards. What was equally impressive was the differentiation of the ELA tasks for students who exhibited reading and writing difficulties. All students were held to the same standards of expectation for communication. They are required to read several texts, respond to constructed response text dependent questions and then synthesize all texts and write to a task. The teachers and school leadership team maintain agendas, notes and samples of meetings held to discuss student work and data. The school has engaged in examining student work as is evidenced by the newly initiated opportunities for grades 6-12; teachers meet three times annually to discuss student work and the curriculum. However, they lack the ongoing collaborative planning time and

structure of weekly or biweekly data teams to frequently engage in the process that results in incremental and subsequently, substantial student achievement for all students. Additionally, there are some singular examples of teachers seeking feedback from students and parents on instructional practices, but there is no formal or widespread practice in place to solicit and receive this information. Best practices from current research are shared by administration during faculty meetings and professional development days and there are some professional library resources. Administrators also encourage professional reading, as evidenced by the articles sent periodically from the Marshall Memo or other educational journals, but again there is no formal or widespread practice in place. Because there are many opportunities for teachers, individually and collaboratively, to improve instructional practices student learning is supported and when more opportunities for professional discourse, additional feedback from students and parents and examination of current research is implemented, then instructional practices will be better supported.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Teachers maintain expertise in their content area and content-specific practices and department leaders and school leadership frequently promote a culture where teachers' individual professional development is largely supported. Interviews with departmental leaders confirm that teachers in all instructional areas attended myriad seminars and trainings in their subject areas. The self-study report reveals that Advanced Placement teachers, including those in English, social studies, math, and science often attend workshops, during the school year and in the summer, enhancing teacher skills and strategies and an overall understanding of the AP examination, and provide them with new instructional materials needed to remain abreast of the changing College Board exams. In teacher interviews and the self-study, other examples of self-selected professional development emerged, including Early College Experience training, Manchester Community College "Round Table" Conferences, TeacherFest sponsored by LearnZillion, as well as work with consultants (including CREC). An interview with school leadership indicated that the school now is offering teachers the opportunity to select their preferred areas of technology instruction (e.g, Google Classroom, Kahoot, Socrative, iPad applications like Nearpod) tailored to individual levels of expertise. The self-study indicates and teacher interviews confirm that teachers occasionally attend professional conferences to maintain expertise in their content. In the 2013-2014 school year, four science teachers had 16 professional development days, six of which were spent at a national conference. In art, two teachers had nine professional development days and in family and consumer sciences (FACS), two teachers had 14 professional development days. Other teachers have attended professional development on human rights workshops, TEAM Training, and iPad workshops. Additionally, in the 2014-2015 school year, a member of the social studies department attended the 2015 AP US History Scoring in Kentucky for six days as a reader. Other teachers have attended their professional organization's regional annual conferences, including the NCTE conference in Boston in 2013, the Connecticut Reading Association conference, and the Associated Teachers of Mathematics in Connecticut (ATOMIC) conference. The focus on professional learning at Coventry High School helps to create a culture in which teachers maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 3 Commendations

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## Commendation

The continuously examined teachers' instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values and belief statement

## Commendation

The teacher emphasis on providing opportunities to personalize instruction and the active and self-directed learning that demonstrates a commitment to develop student engagement

## Commendation

The student work protocol utilized at least three times during the school year with departments collaboratively analyzing student work samples and data to plan future instruction

## Commendation

The math department's collaboration with CREC which emphasizes the creation and use of authentic, multi-layered, complex tasks

## Commendation

The two personalized writing conferences per quarter in AP Language and Composition

## Commendation

The many teachers that strategically differentiate instruction in order to meet the needs of each student

## Commendation

The implementation of the iPad initiative and professional development offered to teachers to further embed and integrate technology into classroom instruction

## Commendation

The application of communication skills to real world tasks of resume writing, mock college and work interviews, and completing applications

## **Commendation**

The instructional rounds which provide teachers a unique opportunity to learn from peers and inform and adapt their instruction

# Standard 3 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop and implement a process to ensure that data from summative assessments is used by all teachers to improve instructional practices

## Recommendation

Increase opportunities for departments to engage in regular and formal interdisciplinary meetings for the purpose of analyzing student work to increase cross-disciplinary learning and improve instructional practices

## Recommendation

Provide increased opportunities for professional discourse, feedback from students and parents, and examination of current research to inform and improve instructional practices

# Standard 4 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Coventry High School has a formal process based on school-wide analytic rubrics to assess individual student and whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school has seven school-wide analytic rubrics that it uses to assess these learning expectations. Each department has taken responsibility for assessing using two of these rubrics. Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, teachers are required to give at least one assessment each quarter using each of their department's two rubrics. Scores are input into PowerSchool. In order to graduate, students must meet the standard for each learning expectation at least once during high school. A student's highest score in each area is considered. Once each marking period, the building principal runs a report on both individual student and whole-school progress on the learning expectations. At that time, the building principal identifies any students who are at risk for not meeting the standard. School-wide progress is reported to the superintendent. In order to graduate, all seniors complete an electronic portfolio showcasing work from their high school career that best represents their achievement in each learning expectation. According to the Endicott survey, eighty-five percent of teachers understand the school's formal process for assessing individual and whole-school progress toward the learning expectations. Because the school has a formal process to address data from use of the school-wide rubrics, the school is able to identify individual student and whole-school progress toward the learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school's professional staff effectively reports individual student progress in achieving the learning expectations. Teachers assess students on the learning expectations using the school's seven school-wide rubrics. Students are rated on a one-to-four scale (a one indicates Emerging and a four indicates Mastery), with three being the target score. At least once each quarter, teachers are required to assess each of their students on the two rubrics for which their department is responsible. The scores for these assessments are then posted on PowerSchool on the standards tab. Once posted on PowerSchool, the scores are immediately accessible to students and parents. Parents, students, and administrators can also view a student's historical performance on each learning expectation, thereby giving a broader picture of a student's progress toward meeting the standard. In addition, teachers can easily print out a report of how students in their classes are progressing toward the standards. All seniors complete a required portfolio showcasing their achievement of each learning expectation and present it to teachers and parents. According to the Endicott survey, fifty-four percent of parents agree that the school explains their children's progress toward the learning expectations. However, since the survey was given, the school has done more parent education and outreach through mail and the Parent Advisory Council about how to use the PowerSchool portal to view learning expectations. CHS has a plan to present whole-school progress toward the school's learning expectations to the community. The building principal generates a report after every semester that gives data on the school's progress. The building principal shares this information with the superintendent and the information is presented to the Board of Education, and thus the community at large, since Board of Education meetings are televised on public access television. Because CHS effectively reports individual student results to students and families, students and families understand student progress toward learning expectations and inform the community about whole-school achievement, the community remains informed about the school's progress toward achieving the learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes some data to identify and respond to student inequities in achievement. Teachers use formative and summative assessments such as exit slips, self-assessments, projects, tests, essays, and midterms as well as standardized assessment data such as the Measures of Academic Progress Assessment, PSAT, and CAPT Science. Data is disaggregated by teachers, administrators, and a data consultant to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement individually. In Spanish, the teacher uses a data wall with a race track to not only show student progress, but to track it herself. She uses this data to identify struggling students and offers differentiated assignments or reteaches material as needed. An English teacher receives a stipend to disaggregate and analyze data with the reading specialist, English department head, and math department head. She works to analyze data as needed. She reports the analysis to the principal and the K-12 literacy specialist. She also makes individual teacher folders with disaggregated data from standardized assessments for teachers to adjust their instruction based on that data. While data is being collected, there is minimal evidence as to how this data is being used to improve student learning. Sometimes data is disaggregated and analyzed during student work protocols, common planning time carved out as a duty, and content area team meetings. Teachers report that they do not feel qualified to analyze the data and said that they lack time to effectively change instruction based on the data. When all teachers have enough training and time to appropriately analyze data, they will be better able to address inequities in student achievement.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview

# Standard 4 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Prior to each unit of study, applicable 21st century learning expectations are available to students via highly visible magnetic posters and bright yellow flyers in each classroom and online. These expectations were communicated to students by most teachers through school-wide rubrics when used to assess student projects. Most teachers communicate unit-specific learning goals to students through various vehicles. Unit-specific learning goals are presented to students via syllabi varying in format from teacher to teacher: essential questions delivered orally, on the whiteboard, and on performance tasks. According to the Endicott survey, 64.9 percent of students either agree or strongly agree that teachers explain learning expectations before the unit of study. When all students know what the 21st century learning expectations and unit learning goals are, they understand what skills will be necessary to demonstrate mastery to achieve those expectations and goals.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview

# Standard 4 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Prior to summative assessments, teachers consistently provide students with the corresponding rubrics for school-wide learning expectations and/or assignment-specific rubrics. Rubrics are being used across content areas to assess student work. For example, school-wide rubrics were seen for a physical education persuasive essay, an art drawing, and a biology paper. Both assignment-specific and school-wide rubrics were used for a genetics research paper and an oral presentation on Hispanic artists. Students were able to provide examples of these rubrics for multiple assessments that they were working on, and in the Endicott survey 86 percent of students agree that their teachers commonly use rubrics to assess their work. When multiple rubrics were given for an assignment (e.g., project-specific rubrics and learning expectation rubrics) it was sometimes unclear to students how scores on these rubrics would translate into a grade. In interviews, parents also expressed awareness of rubrics associated with their children's assessments. Because teachers provide students with rubrics before assessments, students understand the expectations for assignments.

## Sources of Evidence

- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- Endicott survey

# Standard 4 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

The vast majority of teachers at CHS employ a varied range of formative and summative assessment strategies. Most teachers use regular formal and informal formative assessment strategies in their classes. Informal formative assessments in most classes include monitoring student conversations, exit activities, and questioning techniques. Formal formative assessments include activities such as creating a visual representation of operant conditioning in psychology, submitting initial lab reports in biology for review, and journals in English and French classes. Summative assessments through unit assessments, presentations, performance tasks, debates, midterm and end-of-year exams. Within the core departments, common benchmark assessments are used. Additionally, science, English, and world languages departments rely on common unit, midterm and final exam assessments. Summative assessments include activities such as designing a board game for World Understanding, a test on verb forms in Spanish, and a debate on colonial perspectives in English. Additionally, all seniors complete a portfolio in which they collect the work from their four years that they feel best represents their achievement of the seven school-wide learning expectations and present it to a panel of teachers and administrators as well as to members of the community. Because teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments, students are provided with multiple ways to express their understanding of subject matter.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview

# Standard 4 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Many teachers at CHS formally collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of assessments. Nearly 50 percent of teachers have a common planning time built into the duty schedule once a week to meet with a departmental colleague. The Endicott survey corroborates that information as 52.7 percent of teachers agree that they meet formally to discuss and improve both formative and summative assessments. For the last three years, math teachers have had one release day each month in order to revise curriculum during which time they create, analyze, and revise formative and summative assessments. Some teachers have expressed that they collaborate informally before or after school during their personal time. Teachers engage in student work protocols several times a year. During these, one teacher presents a piece of student work and the department critiques that work and gives suggestions for revision. Teachers have found these opportunities helpful and the school is devoting more time to this activity in the next school year. Despite these opportunities, formal opportunities to create, analyze and revise formative and summative assessments collaboratively are limited. Having the opportunity to create, analyze, and revise formative assessments creates uniformity about school-wide expectations and allows teachers to adapt instruction and assessment based on student needs.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 4 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

Teachers at CHS frequently provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure that students revise and improve their work. Feedback is given both verbally and in writing. Feedback includes specific comments written on rubrics. Examples include suggestions on a Photography project rubric and comments on an AP US History essay. There were also suggestions for revision written directly on papers for World Understanding and English. Teachers provide timely feedback, such as immediate, in-class, verbal comments in response to student work in AP Biology and Band. Students also solicit immediate feedback from teachers during their study halls. For example, one student in World Understanding went to ask for feedback on his political cartoon project. The teacher made suggestions and the student was able to implement them right away. The Endicott survey indicates that 70 percent of students feel that their teachers' suggestions help them improve their school work. The school has guidelines for teacher timeliness in entering grades into its PowerSchool portal. Teachers are asked to submit grades for homework within two to three days, one week for formal assessments, and two weeks for longer projects. According to the Endicott survey, 53 percent of students and 57 percent of parents believe that teachers are providing timely and corrective feedback. There are many opportunities for students to revise their work. For example, the science department allows for homework and lab revisions provided the student has a conference with the teacher first. History and English classes have writing conferences throughout the year during which students can receive feedback and revise their writing. Because students receive specific, timely, and corrective feedback, they are able to revise and improve their work.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- student work
- teachers
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 4 Indicator 9

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## Conclusions

Many teachers at CHS regularly use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instructional practices for the purpose of improving student learning. For example, in world languages, teachers use classroom exit activities and journals to find out if students have mastered concepts and to plan further instruction based on the results. In Biology, teachers analyzed student performance data from a mock-CAPT activity and then developed labs in response to student learning needs. After a common science formative assessment, teachers concluded that students needed a better understanding of energy transfer. Science teachers then integrated more focus on energy transfer into the next semester. In addition, several times a year, teachers engage in student work protocols, a formalized process to analyze student work expressly for the purpose of revising instruction. There are some formal opportunities for teacher collaboration on using formative assessments to adapt instruction, such as several department meetings throughout the year, scheduled release time for curriculum revisions, and some impromptu teacher release from duties. However, the majority of these activities are conducted informally by teachers during personal time. When all CHS teachers have more consistent, dedicated time to use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instruction, they will be able to provide appropriate instruction to all students to improve student learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 10

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## Conclusions

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. Individually teachers compile data from student work and use that data to help inform changes in the curriculum. One example of this practice is student work from an English class that prompted the curriculum to be changed from *Catcher and the Rye* to *The Lord of the Flies*. Midterm and final exam data serve as common course assessments that also inform changes in the curriculum. Data collection from mock CAPT tests led to applesauce and cabbage labs which changed curriculum and instruction to strengthen student growth where needed. Teachers use a wide range of formative and summative assessments to measure student learning and use the data to improve instructional practices. The math department uses summer work to evaluate student strengths and needs that is evaluated through traditional pen/paper or Google forms to get results quicker that they use to drive beginning of the year instruction as well as to inform what scaffolding is needed on various topics throughout the year. In Spanish 1, the teacher uses exit “stickies” that students use to self-assess their understanding of the material that they place on a board numbered 1-4 (1 being not a lot of understanding and 4 meaning completely understood). A few teachers meet with professors from Manchester Community College to ensure that instruction aligns with course at the college based on midterm revisions found in student work. The principal runs a report from PowerSchool on 21st century learning expectations based on rubric scores and aggregates data each quarter to deliver to teachers to be used for instructional purposes. A few teachers use student surveys to improve instruction. An annual survey is administered to alumni to solicit feedback on the extent to which the CHS academic program supports them in being career and college ready at graduation. Data from this survey is used to inform program refinement and improvement. Collaboratively, teachers and administrators use various evidence to guide curriculum revision and instructional practice. Teachers and administrators participate in student work protocol to critique student work to improve instruction and revise curriculum. There is evidence of notes during student work protocol that refer to curriculum revision. Sending school data comes mostly from the Captain Nathan Hale Middle School. For example the math department hands out a summer work packet to all incoming 9th graders as they leave for the summer. When they come back, the math teachers collect these packets and analyze them to determine the course of instruction at the beginning of the 9th grade math courses. When a student arrives from a school other than those in Coventry, their grades from transcripts are entered in applicable existing courses. Post-secondary school data is used to drive curriculum development in AP and University of Connecticut ECE courses. AP curricula need to be approved by the College Board and the ECE classes use the curriculum developed by the receiving college. Departments also analyze data from standardized assessments such as CAPT to inform both instruction and curriculum. The Accuplacer data and the number of students placed in remedial college classes prior to college matriculation were used to inform programmatic changes to English 12 and to make the decision to add two courses to grade 12 math. By having and examining a range of evidence of student learning both individually and collaboratively, teachers can identify student need more accurately and develop strategies to meet those needs.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation

- teacher interview

# Standard 4 Indicator 11

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## Conclusions

CHS has some opportunities to review and revise grading and reporting to align with the school's core values and beliefs. In 2015, teachers and administrators reviewed and revised school-wide learning expectations. Some of these revisions included changing social studies' departmental responsibility from Problem Solving to Collaboration in order to align more closely with the core values and beliefs the department addresses most. The school's Leadership Team has plans to revisit the school-wide rubrics again in 2017-2018. Teachers report that each specific course calculates its grade in the same way whether it be category percentages or points. However, there is no standard requirement for the school or departments to calculate quarter grades or weight quarters consistently. CHS uses PowerSchool to report grades to students and parents. There is a guideline in place that asks teachers to post grades in a timely fashion in order to communicate effectively with students and parents. CHS also engaged in an Assessment Reduction Initiative in order to identify and remove testing that does not promote student learning. According to the Endicott survey, 47 percent of the staff agree that grading and reporting practices are regularly revised. The survey also reports that 70 percent of parents believe that teacher grading practices are aligned with the school's belief about learning. Regular opportunities to review and revise grading and reporting practices ensures alignment with the school's core values and beliefs.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Commendations

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## Commendation

The widespread use of the common school-wide rubrics to assess school learning expectations

## Commendation

The consistent and easily accessible feedback given to students and parents about individual student progress toward the learning expectations

## Commendation

The provision of a designated staff person to collect, disaggregate, and support teacher analysis of student learning data

## Commendation

The consistent distribution of project-specific rubrics before summative assessments

## Commendation

The varied range of formative and summative assessments employed by teachers

## Commendation

The senior portfolio that all seniors compile as a culminating assessment of their achievement of the learning expectations

## Commendation

The teachers' commitment to informal collaboration with colleagues

## Commendation

The many opportunities that faculty provide for students to revise and improve student work

## Commendation

The use of the student work protocol to adapt and inform instruction

## **Commendation**

The use of data from post-secondary schools and alumni surveys to revise curriculum and inform instructional practices

# Standard 4 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Implement regular, formal opportunities for staff to collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of summative assessments

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a process to ensure teachers clarify for students how assessments using school-wide analytic rubrics applicable to 21st century learning expectations and rubrics related to unit-specific learning goals affect grades on individual assessments

## Recommendation

Review grading practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning as well as review how quarter/semester/year grades are weighted across disciplines to ensure consistency and equity of grading practices

# Standard 5 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The entire Coventry High School community has worked diligently to build a safe, positive, respectful and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results. The handbook outlines expectations for academic conduct, discipline and attendance policies resulting in a steady decline in disciplinary incidents. At CHS, disciplinary practices support the development of the whole student, including their social and emotional development. Protocols regarding student management and behavior are also specified, including such information as when to call home, when to provide consequences for misbehavior, and when to refer the issue to administration. In the past five years, the total number of administrative referrals have decreased, from 1,384 in 2010-2011 to 262 total referrals in 2014-2015. Similarly, the total number of in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions have also decreased. In 2010-2011, there were 118 students with at least one day of in-school suspension. In 2014-2015, there were only 19 students who served at least one day of in-school suspension. Much of this has been attributed to the changing culture of the school, as teachers develop relationships with their students and have taken a more positive and proactive approach to classroom management. Student interviews confirmed that this positive approach has enabled them to feel success at the high school which they may not have felt previously. Coventry High School offers a variety of programs created to maintain a strong sense of ownership and pride in the school. These enrichment programs include but are not limited to, the tutoring center, fashion club, knitting club and UNO card club. These programs have been created to run during the school day to allow students who are unable to stay after school to be involved in activities. There are also a variety of athletic clubs, various artistic exhibits around the building and 25 percent of the student body is involved in the band. Coventry students are also offered many opportunities to immerse themselves in their education through travel to various locations in Europe. Members of the band have also been provided the opportunity to travel to Nashville and Washington, DC. Coventry has high expectations for students as all students have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement classes regardless of background. Each student at Coventry High School has a Student Success Plan (SSP), an individualized student-driven plan that is developed to address every student's needs and interests to help every student stay connected in school and to achieve post-secondary educational and career goals. This plan addresses academic development, career development and social/emotional/physical development. These core components are addressed across disciplines. Students are encouraged to be responsible and to take ownership of their own learning, including reaching out to teachers when they need support or assistance. According to the Endicott survey, 90.9 percent of staff feel that teachers support students in assuming responsibility for their learning. It was observed that teachers actively encourage students to contact them when class time is missed and are routinely available before school, during school prep blocks and after school. Teachers keep logs and calendars of appointments with students. It is a school-wide goal to make frequent and consistent contact with parents to involve them as extensively as possible in their children's education. The CHS faculty and staff have participated in several professional development opportunities regarding school security and safety. All staff members are provided with a foldable chart for their classrooms, entitled "Coventry Public Schools Emergency Operations Plan." This chart outlines all security and safety protocols for the CHS community. Students and staff also regularly participate in practice fire and lock-down drills to better prepare themselves and students for a possible emergency situation. Recently, CHS was a recipient of state grant monies that have been used to install new locks on classroom doors, digital school identification badges for staff, and a new secure door system. In September 2015, all staff were involved in a presentation on school safety, presented by the Coventry Police Department. Seventy-six percent of students report they feel safe at school. The health and wellness of students is supported in a variety of ways. In addition to health alerts within the PowerSchool student management system, each teacher is provided with a purple "Health Alert" folder with reference to every student in the building who may have a life-threatening allergy or condition. Additionally, each staff member is required to view a video regarding safety with blood borne pathogens and receive EpiPen administration training. The school nurse also issues a mini first aid kit to each teacher which contains gloves and bandages. All of these measures are in place

to keep the students and staff of CHS healthy and safe. School climate is assessed and communicated to administration by parents, faculty and students in a variety of ways including PTO, athletic advisory board, parent advisory, student council, surveys and leadership committee. Parents spoke positively and exhibited pride in the school community. They noted that faculty always exhibit a presence at after-school events and are very approachable. Parents also said that administrators have open door policies, teachers are always available both before and after school and that their children feel comfortable going to teachers with problems. Parents can also access the progress of their children through Powerschool and there is also constant communication with guidance counselors. Students feel safe and have good relationships with teachers. Due to this safe, positive, respectful and supportive school culture at Coventry High School, student responsibility for learning is fostered and there is a shared sense of ownership, pride, and high expectation for all.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 5 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Coventry High 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, and are fostering heterogeneity as well as supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Efforts have been made in Life Skills Math (math department), Contemporary Issues (social studies department), world languages, chemistry, U.S. History, English 11 and 12, and elective courses to group students heterogeneously. All students are required to enroll in either Civics or Contemporary Issues (CI) as a graduation requirement. The CI course is not leveled ensuring a heterogeneous experience. Many elective classes are heterogeneously grouped, with 85.2 percent of parents reporting that students have the opportunity to enroll in courses with students of varying abilities. All students are encouraged to strive to reach their academic potential regardless of educational background. Therefore, all students are able to enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) and Early College Experience (ECE) classes to obtain college credit. In 2014-2015, students earned 454 credits from MCC, and 334 credits from UCONN. On AP exams, 91 scores of 3 or above were earned in the 2014-2015 school year. Coventry High School has also increased the graduation credit requirement from 22 to 25 and beginning with the class of 2016, is requiring four years of mathematics to ensure student preparedness upon graduation. Support is available for students with disabilities through the tutoring center, Skills Advancement and Transition Exploration (SATE), which reinforces skills that can be applied to multiple content areas, math lab and reading lab. Math lab is offered to grades 9-11 and reading lab is offered to grades 9 and 10; grade 11 will be added next year. Recently, Coventry changed its policy regarding participation in extracurricular activities. Students deemed ineligible to play sports are still allowed to practice with their team but not allowed to compete. This enables students to maintain a strong connection with their coach. Research supports that students' participation in extracurricular activities enhances their engagement in learning practiced in extracurricular sports, clubs and organizations regardless of a student's academic standing. Online options are available at Coventry High School through virtual classroom. Continuing to offer students opportunities to enroll and to be engaged in heterogeneously grouped courses and increasing inclusive and diverse learning experiences in core subject classes will allow for students of Coventry High School to achieve the school's 21st century learning objectives.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teachers
- students
- parents
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

There is a formal, on-going program at Coventry High School 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. CHS has an advisory and enrichment program which meets twelve times per year and enables students to make connections with adults in the building. In addition, the students have access to a tutoring center which provides another adult in the school who can assist students in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Advisories are split alphabetically by grade. Each teacher is given approximately ten to fifteen students and remains with those same students for four years. While there is no formal curriculum, there are planned grade-appropriate activities such as goal-setting, bullying, school improvement, and planning for the future. This advisory time gives each student an opportunity to develop a relationship with a teacher he or she may not have otherwise. However, because advisory only meets twelve times per year and is grouped alphabetically, some teachers and students expressed that this is an artificial grouping and an inadequate amount of time to form meaningful relationships. Enrichment periods are run by teachers with students able to choose their enrichment period given their area of interest. Last year, an Enrichment Fair was implemented where tables were set up for each enrichment and was staffed by teachers and students. The activities offered change each semester, providing students with the opportunity to try something new. Activities include 3D modeling and printing, creative writers workshop, Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), weight training, soul-mining and path-finding, among others. Teachers regularly create new enrichment offerings, based on student interest. In 2015-2016, new enrichment offerings include an A Capella group, comic art, and fashion club. These are heterogeneous groups across grade level allowing students to develop relationships with peers in different grades, as well as with a faculty member they may not otherwise encounter. The tutoring center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This center is open to all students, but some are identified by the SAT (Student Assistance Team) and assigned to the tutoring center. This center can be used for academic extra help, organizational strategies, and credit recovery. This center is staffed by para-professionals, college interns through partnerships with area colleges, as well as with math and English teachers as part of their duties. This intervention gives students another opportunity to develop a relationship with an adult in the school. Students indicated that they also have connections with other adults in the building be it a teacher, paraprofessional, janitor or other staff member, with whom they feel comfortable approaching with issues that may arise. They also feel that the approach used in response to disciplinary issues is very effective as counseling and discussion is used to get to the root of behaviors as opposed to disciplinary action. The consensus among students, who are all of various educational backgrounds, is that the sense of community is pervasive at Coventry High School. Through the implementation of a formal ongoing program and other processes, each student has an adult in the school who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving both their individual potential as well as the schools's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- students

# Standard 5 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff at Coventry High School regularly 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. Collaboration occurs within departments, across departments, within data teams, using common planning/collaborative time, and peer-coaching sessions. Some teachers are provided common planning time to collaborate within the department. There are also vertical team meetings for departments held three times per year (grades 6-12) in all subject areas giving teachers an opportunity to align curriculum and to plan for continuity of instruction. The PD committee for the 2013-2014 school year consisted of 14 members, six of whom were teachers. These teachers exercised initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school. There are five full days and three half days set aside for professional development during the school year. In addition, there are opportunities for time on Saturdays and during the summer to develop curriculum. Last year the district spent \$10,000 to allow for curriculum writing over the summer. In addition, teachers have opportunities to attend external professional development. For example, in the 2013-2014 school year, four science teachers had 16 professional development days, six of which were spent at a national conference. In art, two teachers had nine professional development days, and in family and consumer sciences (FCS), two teachers had 14 professional development days. In the 2014-2015 school year, two art teachers had eight professional development days, the science department had 18 days of professional development among four teachers, and two FCS teachers had 13.5 days. Other teachers have attended professional development on human rights workshops, state reading and regional English conferences, CT Core Standards, Connecticut Council of Language Teachers (COLT) and Teacher Education and Mentor (TEAM) training (20 teachers as of fall 2015). Teachers of AP courses frequently attend College Board course-specific update trainings to remain current with course expectations and alignment. Additionally, in the 2014-2015 school year, a member of the social studies department attended the 2015 AP US History Scoring in Kentucky for eight days as a reader. The district also has contracted for consultants to provide on-site professional development in the area of mathematics, science, iPads integration, and teacher goal-setting support. Another opportunity for professional development and reflection are the instructional rounds. Teachers observe their peers around an identified instructional practice (i.e., engagement, depth of knowledge, feedback). These rounds highlight the current state of practice in focus areas and suggest areas in need of improvement and future professional development. In 2014-2015, instructional rounds focused on "Engaging Students in Rigorous Learning." Ninety-five teachers district-wide participated from across grade level and subject areas. Through an exit survey, 96 percent of staff found the experience was valuable professional development, 94 percent of staff felt they learned more about the focus area of "Engaging Students in Rigorous Learning," 100 percent of staff found that instructional rounds caused them to reflect on current engagement practices, 92 percent of staff felt CHS should continue to provide instructional rounds as professional development to certified staff, and 88 percent believed that their own instructional practices would be changed this year. Teachers routinely engage in conversations about learning expectations, consistent grading standards, quality of student work, instructional practices and curriculum revision. CHS analyzes data from multiple sources (i.e., MAP testing, SAT scores, SBAC, course work, grades) to inform instructional practices and to revise curriculum if necessary. Teachers examine student work to inform instructional practices. CHS has developed a student work protocol (SWP) through which a sharing teacher distributes two work samples to the group. The SWP focuses discussion around identifying strengths of the assignment/student work/achievement, identifying patterns of need, and determining next steps and effective instructional practices. CHS provides multiple professional development opportunities for the professional staff. The shared emphasis by the principal and professional staff on improving student learning through professional development at Coventry High School has created a culture and climate of learning and improvement that supports each student in practicing and achieving the school's 21st century learning

expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 5 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Coventry High School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. Coventry has implemented a modified version of the state of Connecticut's evaluation model SEED in which evaluation is based 40 percent on observation of teacher performance and practice, 45 percent on student outcomes and achievement, 10 percent on parent feedback, and 5 percent on whole-school student learning. As a part of this process teachers set student learning objectives (SLOs) that are assessed at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. Student growth is monitored to ensure that students are showing growth. Teachers are also evaluated several times throughout the school year. This evaluation process enables teachers to reflect upon their practice and to modify lessons based on feedback from evaluators and student progress. It allows for professional dialogue to take place between teacher and evaluator regarding student learning aligned to the professional growth and development of teachers. The supervision and evaluation process is implemented school-wide and holds all teachers to the same level of expectations. Administrators at Coventry High School have attended a variety of workshops and seminars to remain current with best practice. Administrators have also been integral with a CT State Department of Education (CSDE) grant proposal with UConn for curriculum writing with the new Social Studies Frameworks to include a human rights focus. The use of research-based evaluation and supervision processes at Coventry High School enables teachers to focus on improved instruction and continuous learning for all teachers.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

The organization of time at Coventry High School generally supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. Teachers attend five full day and three half days of professional development which are built into the school calendar to allow for collaboration. The schedule is a five-day rotating schedule. All classes meet on Monday for 43 minutes, which has proven to be effective for organizing instruction and learning for the week. Tuesday through Friday, six classes meet per day for 58 minutes each, with two of the eight classes dropping each day. Therefore, each class meets four times per week. Schedule rotation enables teachers to meet students at different times of the day allowing students who may struggle to be engaged at different times of the day. The schedule is flexible to include twelve meeting times per year of an advisory and an enrichment program. Lab science classes run back to back with the lecture to ensure adequate time. While there is some common planning time scheduled during the school day, it is not equitable across content areas and not all teachers are able to meet with their colleagues. However, some of the core content teachers have at least one period to collaborate each week. For example, teachers in the math department teaching the three core classes (Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry) have at least one common planning period where they reflect on student work and participate in a curriculum writing workshop along with a consultant from Capitol Region Education Center (CREC) as they work to rewrite the math curriculum. Due to the design of the current schedule, opportunities exist for some professional collaboration among teachers, supporting the needs of the students at Coventry High School. When common planning time is equitable across all content areas, the needs of CHS students will be better supported.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the individual needs of students. PowerSchool assists in the creation of a well-balanced and flexible schedule. In the current school year, 93 percent of student course requests were fulfilled. Class size varies depending upon course. Class size is on average between 15 and 20 students in the core classes and no class exceeds 28 students. Teachers are responsible for approximately 90 students in a given school year. Due to a smaller class size, teachers are able to better service student needs. Depending upon modifications within a class, a paraprofessional or special education teacher may also be present in the classroom to assist students. According to the Endicott survey, 81 percent of students feel that their class sizes are reasonable. Regardless of low enrollment, Coventry still runs several courses based on student requests such as Literature and Film with six students; Broadcast Journalism with ten students; ECE Spanish with nine; ECE/AP Statistics with nine; AP European History with seven; Creative Writing with eight; International Foods with nine students; ECE Drawing with six students and ECE French with nine students. Independent studies are also options allowing students to work one on one with a teacher in a specific area of study. Reasonable student loads, class sizes, and fluidity between levels enable teachers to create a more individualized program of study, thus consistently meeting the needs of students.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

The principal, working with other building leaders, regularly provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The principal works closely with the Leadership Committee during bi-monthly meetings. This committee is comprised of department heads and serves to complement the principal's leadership by facilitating discussions around school values, beliefs, and learning expectations as well as by serving as a liaison to faculty. The principal, in collaboration with the CHS Leadership Team and the District Administrative Leadership Team, then created yearly goals that support the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations. The principal and assistant principal have an actively utilized open door policy. Faculty and students find the administrators approachable and responsive to their needs and concerns. One example is that recently the principal was approached by the Gay/Straight Alliance regarding providing gender neutral bathrooms. This inquiry led to a discussion and the identification of a single stall bathroom that was designated gender neutral. Teachers are encouraged to share their expertise and instructional practice. This can be seen through the opportunities provided to staff through professional development and instructional rounds. Professional development at CHS is guided by the Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation Committee that consists of teachers and administrators and is based on the district's Professional Development Plan. The principal not only provides instructional leadership, but also empowers professionals to share their expertise. For example, a teacher was recently asked to provide professional development on Google Classroom for faculty in October 2015. Additionally, all teachers are given an opportunity to participate in instructional rounds which provides teachers and administrators the opportunity to observe their colleagues in the classroom and later to engage in reflective conversation about best practices. Finally, the principal and assistant principal are a visible presence in the school, greeting students at the entrance in the morning, walking the hallways during passing time and being in the cafeteria during lunches. According to the Endicott survey, 80 percent of staff report that the principal and other school-based administrators provide instructional leadership that is consistent with the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations. A professional development survey provides staff the opportunity for feedback on past professional development and input on future needs and has been used to guide professional development planning. Because the leadership team provides and models instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, students at Coventry High School experience strong support in achieving 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership

# Standard 5 Indicator 9

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## Conclusions

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. There are a wide variety of groups and committees in which Coventry High School's teachers, students and parents may participate in meaningful and defined roles regarding decision making. Many teachers are club advisers or coaches. They are actively involved in the hiring process of new teachers and are also invited to join district-wide committees such as the Curriculum Cabinet, Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation Committee, District Leadership Team, the Literacy Council and District Technology. Participation on these committees allow teachers input into issues that impact their school and entire district. According to the Endicott survey, 65.5 percent of staff feel that teachers, students, and parents are meaningfully involved in decision-making to promote an atmosphere of responsibility and change. Parents voiced that there is open communication with administration as the principal and superintendent have open door policies. There are also many other avenues that parents have to get involved in the decision-making process including a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) that meets twice a month and monthly PTO meetings. The CHS Music Boosters fund programs which directly impact the growth and activity of the music program. Parents also feel that the guidance department is easily accessible and is quick to respond to parents. Students also have a number of meaningful roles in the decision-making process, particularly those who partake in Student Council, class office, the student aide program, Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Albert Schweitzer Club, Best Buddies and by gathering for advisory meetings with the superintendent. In addition, feedback from student and parent surveys assist in guiding Coventry High School in their decision-making process. Since all major stakeholders have a voice in the decision-making process at the high school, this responsibility and ownership in change results from buy-in from the community.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- students
- parents
- school leadership

# Standard 5 Indicator 10

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## Conclusions

At Coventry High School, teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. The school-wide Leadership Team is a teacher-led initiative which allows teachers to exercise initiative and lead school improvements as the team meets bi-monthly and is in place to increase communication between administration and departments. This medium allows the feedback and recommendations of teachers to be brought to the attention of administration so that it may be discussed and modified as deemed fit. Teachers demonstrate leadership through committees such as Faculty Council or class advisors. Teachers also create meaningful displays on bulletin boards and display student art throughout the building. Coventry High School's enrichment period is teacher-led and focuses on increasing student engagement. Enrichment occurs bi-monthly throughout the school year and classes are selected by students based on interest. There were 35 teacher-led enrichment offerings in the spring of 2015 including 3D modeling and printing, creative writers' workshop, science adventure club, AP Biology test prep, paleontology, and acoustic guitar, to name a few. All enrichment offerings aim to prepare every student for life, learning, and work in the 21st century. The Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation Committee is in charge of identifying areas of development need and constructing, organizing and planning these developments. This committee included teachers that have taken the initiative to increase student engagement in class and increase student achievement. One example of how this is being implemented is through the iPad initiative. As each student has access to iPads, they are able to access notes, videos, and assignments through Google Classroom, complete virtual tasks, and absent students are able to Skype into class from home so as to not miss crucial content. Teachers have also had extensive training with the new use of technology and teachers within the building are also available to provide training allowing teachers to feel comfortable in implementing this initiative. As a result, the vast majority of teachers being involved in committees, activities, and clubs show leadership in school improvement and promote increase in student engagement in learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- students
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 11

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## Conclusions

At Coventry High School, the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Working with the Board of Education and administration, the superintendent lays out a vision and goals for the district. During the administrative summer retreat, the structures and processes related to achieving those goals are designed. The CHS principal, in collaboration with the Leadership Team, creates a school improvement plan aligned with this shared vision. The principal's goals are directly aligned with the district goals of the superintendent which include identify, define, and measure the critical skills and attributes that are required for success and align systems to continuously improve student performance and achievement; maintain and promote a positive and respectful learning community; and recruit, retain and develop high quality staff at every level. Under each of these three goals, building-specific goals and action steps are listed. These goals are related to increases in academic achievement as indicated by MAPS math, reading and language usage, CAPT science data, and graduation rates. Some goals are created by the principal; for the school year of 2015-2016 a goal to increase parent communication school-wide was created and progress towards this goal was reflected in Domain 4 of teachers' evaluation. The superintendent and principal collaborate and reflect on achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The superintendent meets with a heterogeneously grouped student advisory council. The students use this time to both celebrate successes and address issues at CHS. After the meetings, the superintendent and principal meet to reflect on this information. The board noted that they have a transparent relationship with the superintendent and principal and feel that important decisions are made as a team. The board relies on the superintendent and principal to collect data and present proposals to the board in order to support the board's vision for the district. This includes both piloting programs (i.e., 1:1 iPad technology) and eliminating programs which may not be working to assist the district in maximizing resources. Another example of collaborative work between the board and the principal is the addition of a wrestling team. A data-based proposal was presented to the board regarding the addition of a wrestling team to the high school. After careful consideration, this team was approved and funds were allocated. The NEASC committee had the opportunity to meet with a sophomore who dropped out last year, but is back this year actively engaged in his studies and participating on the wrestling team. The school board members serve as liaisons to various committees at CHS, such as the technology, athletics and curriculum development teams. The role of the board member is to observe, review, advise, and support the work of these committees. Continued collaboration, reflection, and planning will result in a culture of continuous improvement in achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. CHS's principal contributes to reports on school fundraising and community service, school budget, curriculum decisions, and assessment data. Throughout the year the superintendent and high school principal collaborate at bi-weekly administrative team meetings (Adminicon) attended by leaders from each school in the district, including principals, assistant principals, special education directors, the superintendent and director of teaching and learning. In addition to the Adminicon meetings the superintendent and principal have site-based meetings focused on student learning expectations. The principal, superintendent, and members of the school board all express satisfaction with the lines of communication and productive collaboration that occurs in the district, resulting in the school supporting the 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- school board
- central office personnel

- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 12

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## Conclusions

At Coventry High School, the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. While the superintendent has final approval on all hires, the building administrators recommend their top selection. The principal's job description outlines the specific responsibilities of the CHS principal, including instructional leadership, curriculum and classroom management, school climate, pupil support, employee relations, professional growth of staff, administration of teaching staff and certified personnel, relationships with other administrators, general systems organization, director of physical plant and facilities, and community relations. The superintendent assures that the principal has the autonomy to lead the school while still aligning school-wide goals to those of the district. The school board and superintendent have granted the principal authority to set school-wide goals, manage the school's governance process, approve new courses, assist with course development, provide instructional leadership, oversee the writing and revision of the Student Handbook and Disciplinary Code, conduct teacher evaluation, and manage the evaluation, hiring and dismissal process. As part of their role, the principal and assistant principal, along with the school counseling department, are responsible for the scheduling of classes, teacher duties, and student schedules. This local decision-making power gives the administrators the ability to make scheduling decisions best suited to the needs of the building. An example of this is the change to the schedule for finals this year. The original schedule had finals ending on a Friday, with a make-up day the following Monday. The schedule has been changed so that the make-up day is on Friday. The teachers interviewed stated that this could make the difference of whether or not some students could walk at graduation with their class. Additionally, the board commented that they have trust and confidence in the superintendent's and principal's abilities to lead CHS. The Endicott survey revealed that 80 percent of the CHS faculty and staff are in total agreement with the statement, "The principal and other school-based administrators provide instructional leadership that is consistent with the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations." As a result of the support of the school board and superintendent, the principal is able to work collaboratively within the school to create a strong, positive school culture focused on the 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- teacher interview
- school board
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Commendations

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## Commendation

The dedication of the Coventry High School leadership team and community to consciously and continuously build a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning through 21st century learning expectations and research-based instructional practices which results in shared pride and high expectations

## Commendation

The equitable and inclusive practices to ensure challenging academic experiences for all students

## Commendation

The pervasive level of school pride that is evident in classrooms, athletics, music/drama, clubs, and other extracurricular activities

## Commendation

The student load and class sizes that enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students

## Commendation

The high degree of teacher involvement in the school community both in and outside of the school

## Commendation

The teachers who are involved in meaningful ways in the decision-making process in the school

## Commendation

The administrative presence and visibility within the school, at after-school events, and within the community

## Commendation

The regular use of research-based evaluation and supervision processes to focus on and improve instructional practice and student learning

## Commendation

The implementation of instructional rounds to facilitate peer review and reflection

## **Commendation**

The collaborative and constructive relationships among the Board of Education, superintendent, and principal

# Standard 5 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Provide equitable opportunities for all teachers to be engaged in professional discourse for reflection and analysis of teaching and student learning

# Standard 6 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The school has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including all identified and at-risk students, that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Academic interventions start with a Student Assistance Team (SAT) which meets bi-weekly every Friday at 12:30 p.m. The SAT consists of all school counselors, the principal, the assistant principal, the school psychologist, the reading specialist, and the school nurse. Intervention strategies are implemented such as providing additional support in reading through a reading lab intervention class, additional support in math through a math intervention class, and interventions through the student tutoring center. Should a student require additional support, students may be referred to 504, a referral to special education or placed in Coventry Academy (CA). Placement in the Coventry Academy will occur only after the freshman year. In addition, Coventry High School offers a summer school program each year for credit recovery using the GradPoint program which is the same program that is utilized during the school year for credit recovery. This program is a standards-based, mastery program whereby students who have attained the required skills for a specific unit can "test out" and move to the next section which is in line with the school's 21st century learning expectations. Students identified through the special education process who have severe special needs may be placed in the ABLE Program (Ability-Based Learning Experience Program). There are currently five students in the Able Program. This program focuses on math, life math, and English with each student having a one-on-one paraprofessional. The students learn at their own pace supporting their achievement and then are pulled into regular education science classes and regular social studies classes, and the students attempt to keep up with the rigor of the classes. Upon completing the course requirements for graduation from Coventry High School, these students have the opportunity to enroll in a community-based vocational program involving two vocational trainers and two paraprofessionals. The program allows students to enter into the community to gain necessary work experience until the age of 21.

The alternate learning environment at Coventry Academy consists of regular education and special education students. Students work at their individual paces. There are two sessions of classes: one runs during the school day hours, and one runs until 6:00 p.m. The staff includes one regular education teacher with 45 years of experience, one special education teacher, and a paraprofessional. The regular education teacher teaches English and social studies, and the special education teacher teaches history and math. The Academy has a smaller environment for students who are not making progress due to behavioral problems, academic problems, or home problems. Some Coventry Academy students take classes at the high school including Contemporary Issues, Art, Baking Class, Tech Ed Class, and a Chorus Class. The CA teachers try to follow the high school's curriculum and try to mirror the regular school courses, although some courses have different titles. Many adjustments need to be made for these students to be successful such as going home early and increased flexibility with breaks. The social worker works Wednesday and Friday of each week. One of the Academy's students lives in a group home. The director works closely with the Department of Children and Family Services, the state surrogate parent, and the group home therapist in order to make sure that this student is successful in the program. One of the Academy's students who had not attended school for four years came back to school choosing to be at the Academy and will now be graduating. Upon graduation, these students participate in the community-based vocational program offered at the high school.

At the high school, interventions exist for credit recovery using the software program, GradPoint as well as a tutoring center open until 4:00 p.m. every school day for all students. Transition planning may also include related services such as speech and language, and occupational and physical therapy. Outside resources may also include the Joshua Center at Natchaug Hospital as well as the Humphrey Center at the Human Development Center housed at the University of Connecticut. Because the school has timely, coordinated, and directive interventions for all students the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations student learning is supported.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school consistently provides information to families especially to those most in need about available student support services. According to the Endicott survey, 70.9 percent of parents agree that the school provides information about available student support services. Parents state that the student support services help their children find their interests and get a taste of all subjects. Student services help challenge the students themselves and according to parents, "the staff is absolutely amazing." Text support messaging from parents is shared with the teachers and parents feel that their child is "the only student there." Coventry High School utilizes PowerSchool to provide student data such as grading and attendance information and information regarding post-secondary education options is provided through Naviance. Families can also sign up for Remind 101 to receive timely information via text messages. The school provides a monthly newsletter which includes entries by student support services personnel. Letters and emails are sent to all parents, plus the school's website provides a great deal of information. In the beginning of the school year, teachers will ask for all contact information including email and phones numbers from their students to supplement the information in the school database to keep parents aware of available information from the school. School events include a Financial Aid Program Night, a College Planning Night and an anti-bullying program called Rachel's Legacy. By providing a variety of means to communicate with parents, Coventry High School provides all families, including those most in need, with information about available student support services.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Support services staff pervasively use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Student support staff uses a wide variety of technology including the school's website, PowerSchool, Naviance, Remind 101, Google Classroom, Atlas Rubicon, GradPoint & IEP Direct to support students. Appointments for school support personnel are communicated and maintained through the Outlook Calendar. As each student is given an individual iPad, school counselors are able to have students complete a Freshman Entrance Survey, Strengths Explorer, Career Interest Profiler and a graduation survey through Naviance. Naviance can also be utilized to send email blasts to parents and students for pertinent information. The development counseling program lessons are stored on Atlas Rubicon for easy curriculum access. Counselors also utilize Google Classroom for assignments through the Junior Seminar Program and a counselor is responsible for updating the school counseling portion on the school's website. Grading is completed through the PowerSchool program which can be accessed by students and parents. Counselors also utilize Remind101 for upcoming events and deadlines for those who have registered for it. GradPoint is utilized for credit recovery through the tutoring center. All IEPs are on IEP Direct which is linked to PowerSchool to further facilitate easy access to accommodations and disability information for classroom teachers, whereas 504 plans are saved in Word Documents. In addition, special education teachers utilize a plethora of apps via the iPad to further individualize student instruction and to provide reinforcement for student learning. The school nurse utilizes the SNAP program for electronic health records and immunizations and has been issued a laptop to aid in data collection. The library media center utilizes and provides a variety of digital resources to teachers and students such as TurnItIn, iCONN, EasyBib, ABC/CLIO, and Opposing Viewpoints, along with applications for the iPad such as ebooks, audiobooks, destiny quest and BryteWave, and has been recently connected to the town library so that students without home Internet access can have access to the school resources via the computer at the town library on weekends. It is evident that technology is utilized extensively to support each student in attaining proficiency in the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 6 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

School counseling services have an adequate number of certified personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental guidance program, often 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. The department consists of three full-time school counselors who split their caseloads evenly by alphabet to meet the needs of approximately 500 students (167 students per counselor). In addition, there is a full-time school psychologist and a full-time school social worker. Each counselor meets individually with students twice a year, but students see counselors much more frequently in small groups for lessons on topics such as completing interest inventories, exploring strengths, reviewing PSAT scores, course registration, mock interviews, and planning for post-secondary education. In addition, each student completes a junior seminar series of six lessons during third quarter on creating a common application account, financial aid and the college search process led by school counselors. This was demonstrated both through interviewing school counselors and students and is within the written materials provided. The delivery of the developmental guidance program is systematically planned via a written curriculum that is maintained on the Atlas Program and is implemented throughout the school year via individual, small group, and large group meetings with students. Students indicated that their school counselor is readily accessible when needed. It was noted that there is limited access to the school counseling department during AP testing as all counselors are responsible for the administration of the AP Exams which are numerous due to the focus on AP at the school. In collaboration with the school social worker, school psychologist and school nurse, referrals are made when needed to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. A list of outside providers is updated and maintained by the department and provided to parents when necessary. The school social worker provides small group counseling in areas such as self-concept and administers behavioral screening tools such as the BASC and Functional Behavior Assessments as needed. Frequent surveys are conducted via Naviance for students such as the Freshman Entrance Survey, the Sophomore Goals and Interest Survey and the Graduation Survey for seniors, as well as feedback surveys for parents at events such as Financial Aid Night. In addition, graduates return to attend an alumni panel for current students to share their post-high school experiences. Additional feedback is provided to the school counseling department in this venue to help to assess the effectiveness of their program. The school counseling program provides pervasive evidence that school counseling services have an adequate number of certified personnel and support staff who 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 help to support the school's learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview

- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who often provide preventative health services and direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, conduct ongoing student health assessments, use informal 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. Coventry High School has one full-time nurse available in the building throughout the school day. The school nurse provides preventative health services including vision testing, hearing testing, and scoliosis screening and maintains all health records including visits to the nurse by students in the SNAP program. Direct intervention is provided as needed including emergency response, injury assessment, assessment of students regarding signs of drug and alcohol abuse, and assisting in mental health screenings and referrals. Referrals are made by teachers, support staff, administrators, along with self-referrals. Information is provided for students regarding mental health issues through the school counseling office. Wellness issues are addressed in the mandatory health classes and are also embedded in other courses as evidenced by presentations in Contemporary Issues and English classes; additional information is also available via publications in the nurse's office. Assessment protocols for issues such as sleeping in class and substance abuse screening, including a checklist for the school nurse, are maintained and referral guidelines are distributed to staff. Faculty training in blood borne pathogens and EpiPen use is conducted annually. School administrators have also been trained in medication administration and there is a substitute pool for school nurses in the event that the school nurse is unable to be in school; this pool is also utilized for extracurricular activities when needed as well. Faculty are informed of student health issues through a printed health alert list, health alerts in PowerSchool, along with individual health care plans when applicable that include student pictures and phone contacts so that the information is readily accessible for substitutes. For mental health concerns, the school nurse works closely with the school counselors, school psychologist, and school social worker in order to refer to additional outside agencies when needed. School health concerns are communicated to the community through letters home and via information in the monthly newsletter. The Endicott survey indicates that a majority of parents feel that they are provided appropriate resources and intervention services and most students feel comfortable accessing these services. The nurse is a part of the Student Assistance Team and provides input on students with health-related concerns. The health services program does not currently have a formal means of collecting data and feedback from the school community in order to evaluate a need for any changes in services, but school personnel and students appear to be very knowledgeable regarding current health-related issues affecting teenagers. Once a more formal means of collecting data from the school community is put in place, the overall services offered by Coventry High School's health services as well as the topics embedded throughout the curriculum across the school, provide for the overall health and well-being of the school community to ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- teachers

- students
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

# Standard 6 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

Library/media services are often 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 that 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 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. Examples of the integration of library/ media services can be seen through a challenged and banned book lesson in which small groups researched cases that challenged the book, *Speak*. A research project after the reading of the book, *Of Mice and Men* took place in the library. The library was also used to demonstrate how to use in-text citations in MLA format with a short assessment. The Summer Reading Plan for 2016 is now based on student and teacher feedback and the shared ownership of summer reading is now realized as many teachers have volunteered to lead a book discussion based on one of their favorite books. Students can pick what book they want to read for summer reading based on what book club that they want to join and then participate in the book club at the beginning of the school year. The library/media specialist (LMS) attends professional development opportunities to support the integration of best practices, including state and national conferences. As a result, the LMS has created resource lists for departments and courses, and presented new materials to staff informally and during faculty meetings. In support of the school's curriculum, several seminars about Easy Bib technology and "Intellectual Property is a Balancing Act," along with professional development on Destiny, Easy Bib, and Turnitin were given to teachers. Seventy percent of teachers agree that library information services personnel are actively engaged in the development and implementation of the curriculum. a.m. The library is open from 6:45 am to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, providing access for students and teachers before, during, and after school. Several changes have occurred within the library/media services program. A full-time library media specialist (LMS) has been hired for Coventry High School as well as the Captain Nathan Hale Middle School which has resulted in the library being rarely closed to students. After-school programs are designed to be responsive to students' interests and needs to support independent learning. A group of students consisting of representatives from the freshman, sophomore, junior and senior classes agree that technology is available when needed including the library/media center and are thrilled that another computer lab has been added to the library media center. The LMS has collected and responded to feedback regarding library media services from the entire Coventry High School community. There has been an addition of a new AP exam study guide section with accompanying digital resources. Outreach from the library concerning digital citizenship and information literacy has resulted in an increase in the number of teachers using Turnitin. There are also more opportunities to implement more advanced co-teaching models. There is now a four-week unit which is co-taught by the LMS and a college English teacher. This unit was planned to incorporate in-depth information literacy and research skills over the course of a research project spanning 16 classes. Library/media services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff and are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices; through more frequent utilization of the library media specialist's expertise, students will benefit from overall improved learning and will enhance students opportunities to achieve their school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- student work
- students
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

The support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate often with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff. The support personnel provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students, and 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. In addition to a district-wide pupil personnel services director and two and a half administrative assistants, there are six special education teachers, two full-time vocational trainers, two full-time vocational paraprofessionals, one full-time and one part-time social worker, a full-time school psychologist, three full-time school counselors, a part-time behavior analyst, a part-time occupational therapist, a half-time physical therapist, a half-time speech and language pathologist, nine full-time paraprofessionals, and three part-time paraprofessional educators. The behavior analyst works mainly with the ABLE room. Four of the special education teachers are each responsible for one grade level within the high school and have approximately 14-15 students on their caseload. These special education teachers are involved in co-teaching with regular education teachers in a number of content areas and this assistance is supplemented with special education para-educator support based on the needs expressed in a student's IEP. Due to scheduling constraints, planning time for special education teachers to collaborate with regular education teachers during the school day is limited. Currently, there are several students with severe special needs who are case managed by an additional special education teacher, are self-contained for language arts, mathematics and a Life Skills course, but are in inclusion settings for numerous classes including social studies, science, and electives. Currently, all learning disabled students are in the regular classroom for English as this course is an inclusion model for all students other than the most severe special needs students. Students also receive additional intervention through the reading lab, math lab, resource room and tutoring center. At this time, there are currently no English language learners enrolled at the high school. Each school counselor case manages all 504s on their caseload and there are approximately 15 students per counselor on 504 plans. The support personnel provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students, and perform ongoing assessment using relevant data such as current grade information in PowerSchool, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school counselors, principal, assistant principal, social worker, school psychologist, and school nurse meet twice a month for student assistance team to discuss struggling students. This platform reviews the Tier I interventions that have been utilized by teachers and implements Tier II interventions such as reading intervention, math intervention, credit recovery through the use of GradPoint, or placement in the tutoring center prior to moving toward a special education referral if these interventions are unsuccessful. An alternative program through Coventry Academy is available for special education and non-special education students who are unsuccessful in the traditional high school environment. This program provides personalized instruction and vocational training to support at-risk students. These students have access to a social worker, vocational trainer, a regular education teacher, a special education teacher, and paraprofessional support to achieve 21st century learning expectations. Coventry High School also provides a vocational program for special education students who need support transitioning to post-secondary settings. This vocational program occurs concurrent with the academic program after sophomore year and after the student has met his or her required academic program until the age of 21 in situations dictated by a student's IEP. Student assessment data, including standardized assessments given to all students such as Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) or the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) are utilized to improve services. Accommodations are provided during the administration of these assessments when appropriate. Additional assessments are administered as needed through the special education department and school psychologist plus funding is provided for ongoing updates so that the most recent protocol are being utilized. Because Coventry High School support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and

support staff who collaborate often with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff, provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students, and perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community to improve services, the high school ensures student achievement toward the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 6 Commendations

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## Commendation

The extensive use of a multitude of resources to provide information to parents

## Commendation

The technology that is utilized extensively to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student

## Commendation

The school counseling program that provides pervasive services to deliver a well-developed sequential school counseling curriculum

## Commendation

The school's health services program that provides preventative health services and is embedded in the health services contemporary issues and other cross-curricular activities

## Commendation

The integration of library/media center resources into curriculum and instructional practices

## Commendation

The support services staff that provides a pervasively inclusive learning environment for students

# Standard 6 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Ensure sufficient common planning time for regular education and special education teachers to collaborate on the appropriate instructional and assessment strategies for students to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations

## Recommendation

Implement a more formal means of collecting data from the school community on school health services and student support services for identified students to ensure that each student has opportunities to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations

# Standard 7 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body at Coventry High School provide adequate funding for a wide range of school programs and services; sufficient professional and support staff; ongoing professional development; a full range of technology support; sufficient equipment; and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. Recent budgets have provided for an increase in funding five percent, four percent, nine percent, and 1.99 percent, respectively, over the past four years according to the self-study, raising the school budget from \$791,780 in the 2011-2012 school year to \$960,950 in the 2015-2016 school year. Coventry High School has used these funds to provide students with a wide array of course offerings and programs. Coventry High School students have 131 course offerings from which to choose. These vary in level and rigor from highly supported courses like the Life Skills math course to more advanced courses like the fourteen Advanced Placement (AP) classes, ten University of Connecticut Early College Experience courses (ECE), and eleven College and Career Pathways courses. Students are also able to pursue personal interests within the independent study program offered at Coventry High School, or through over 80 Virtual High School online courses. Students also have a wealth of extra- and co-curricular activities, clubs, and teams. These include Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), community music events, the Tri-M Music Honors Society, International Travelers Club, the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), math team, the Bio Olympics, robotics club, and the National Honor Society (NHS). Also included are a variety of varsity and junior varsity team sports. Increases in the school budget combined with student interest have allowed for the addition of freshman boys' basketball, varsity wrestling, and freshman girls' volleyball over the past two years. Students, parents, and staff generally indicate they are satisfied with current levels of staffing. Parents specifically noted during interviews that staff is always accessible and have more than sufficient communication with them. Parents made specific note of the positive experiences with the counseling/guidance department. Coventry High School's administration and the district's governing body address staffing concerns promptly. A need had been identified within the special education department for additional staffing. The district responded by funding a 0.6 FTE special education position for the 2015-2016 school year. Other examples of new staffing positions recently added based on need and vision are a reading consultant, educational technology coach, and technology support staff. The staff at Coventry High School actively participates in ongoing professional development opportunities; for example, in the 2014-2015 school year, two art teachers have had eight professional development days, the science department has 18 days of professional development among four teachers, and two FACS teachers have had 13.5 days. Other teachers have attended professional development on human rights workshops, AP training, state reading and regional English conferences, CT Core Standards, and TEAM training. Other indicators of the Coventry District's dedication to professional development are the recently introduced three half-day PD days, summer hours for curriculum development, and paid Saturday mornings for staff to collaborate on curriculum writing. All new teachers are provided with a three-day orientation and professional development in order to quickly align them with the Coventry High School model. The district has recently added a director of teaching and learning position who has introduced a five-year curriculum writing cycle. The district also adopted Atlas Rubicon software and a new curriculum process and template based on Larry Ainsworth's *Rigorous Curriculum Design*. Coventry High School students and staff have a full range of technology support. A new position has recently been added, director of educational technology, which is supported by a network of staff including a network administrator and systems analyst, technology technicians, a project manager, and an educational technology coach/school enrichment teacher. Coventry High School has also implemented a student technology support team which supports students and staff technology needs. The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for sufficient equipment. Coventry High School's student iPad initiative has grown from only supporting 10th and 11th graders to a full 1:1 school-wide initiative. This effort has been supported by upgrades to the WiFi infrastructure and PD for staff. The school's curriculum is supported by new equipment like 3D printers in the CAD classroom and new Mac computers to run Adobe Photoshop and iMovie in the visual arts courses. The school receives dependable funding for instructional materials and supplies. Textbooks are

reviewed and updated on a regular basis with a vision toward upgrading to digital versions. Students have what they need to practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations because of the community and district's governing body's willingness to provide consistent, dependable funding to support a range of school programs and services; sufficient professional and support staff; ongoing professional development; a full range of technology support; sufficient equipment; and sufficient instructional materials and supplies.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Coventry High School develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant; to properly maintain, catalog, and replace equipment; and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. The director of physical plant and facilities is responsible for tracking supplies, scheduling maintenance for equipment and overseeing other custodial personnel. The director is also responsible for creating a schedule which ensures buildings and grounds are maintained and cleaned on a daily basis. The school provides the equipment necessary to meet instructional and facility needs and the annual operating budget is adequate to fund the routine maintenance and upkeep of the school building. Communication between educational staff and maintenance staff is done through phone calls, face-to-face interactions, and emails. These communications are logged through the School Dude online ticketing system. All inspections of major facilities are completed in accordance with guidelines provided by the CT School and Building Association; these tasks are also scheduled and logged in the School Dude system. The school maintains a catalog of all equipment and has regular maintenance schedule; this schedule specifies daily, weekly, monthly, and annual tasks. Replacement cycles and maintenance costs of equipment are all tracked via the School Dude system. The facility is kept clean on a daily basis; this includes common areas, restrooms, classrooms and hallways. The plant's cleanliness is maintained by four full-time and one part-time custodians. Detailed daily, monthly, and annual cleaning schedules are in place for custodial staff along with monthly facilities maintenance schedules. As reported in the Endicott survey, 68.8 percent of the students, 90.9 percent of the staff and 83.5 percent of the parents believe that the school is cleaned and well-maintained. The conscious planning and funding for maintenance and repair of the building and school plant; modern tracking and cataloging through the use of School Dude; and fully developed cleaning schedules provide an extremely clean and functional environment which supports the school's 21 century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teachers
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The community funds and Coventry High School implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. The director of the physical plant and facilities, in concert with the Board of Education, maintains 10- and 20-year capital improvement plans. Future improvements include a boiler upgrade or retrofit to natural gas, and a restructure of the building entrance to allow line of sight from main office to front door. The five-year School Improvement Plan is designed to acknowledge the district's declining enrollment, with the intention of shifting positions versus eliminating positions. One long-range plan associated with the declining enrollment is the development of a dedicated health classroom. Some programs are funded, in part, by grants. Some athletic field improvements and purchases are supported with booster club funds and through fundraising. These improvements will also bring the athletic fields into compliance with ADA specifications. One need area, which is currently in the planning stages, is to address ADA compliance in the science labs. While desk and lab space are within regulations, there is a need to update access to electric outlets and gas nozzles. The district has a five-year cycle for revising and improving curriculum, and resources are supplied by the board to ensure the curriculum writing time. The board approved and funded the creation of AP Capstone. Almost 60 percent of students feel that the school had a sufficient number of computers for student use; students now have 1:1 iPads. The district has also implemented a three-year Technology Plan to address the disposal of aging iPads and all other technology. Every three years, the district develops a technology plan to submit to the Connecticut State Department. The high school maintains a 12-year classroom improvement cycle wherein each year, three classrooms are refurbished and painted. The board also supports the high school's alternative program, Coventry Academy, as an alternative to out-of-district placement of students. The town maintains the athletic fields as the space is shared town space, and fields are used by entities other than the school. The community's funding and Coventry High School's implementation of a long-term plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, technology, and capital improvements provide students what they need to learn 21st century skills.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Building administrators and faculty are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. Almost 53 percent of staff report they feel they have input into the development of the school budget. Teachers meet within their departments to discuss and determine budgetary needs. Department chairs then work with administration to determine a departmental budget request. For teachers without department chairs, the principal meets individually to gather requests and data. Administrators meet with the superintendent to review and revise the budget to be presented to the Board of Education. Should cuts to the proposed budget be necessary the school has a process through which the principal can review the proposed budget requests with department chairs to solicit input on reductions. This has not been necessary for the past several budget cycles. The budget is voted on by the community in a May referendum. Teachers often attend board meetings. Special education budget requests are given to the district's director of pupil and personnel services (PSSS) and athletic budget information is compiled by the athletic director. Once the budget is passed, staff members can order their supplies for the upcoming school year. Departments are regularly updated on remaining funds in their department. Board of Education members reported that the board follows up in requesting feedback and data on new initiatives. Because the budgetary process is inclusive, the learning needs of students is supported.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- school board

# Standard 7 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Overall, the school site and plant supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services. The Endicott survey reports that 75.7 percent of students, 69.1 percent of staff, and 78.2 percent of parents feel the physical plant supports the delivery of high quality programs. Coventry High School updated the WiFi infrastructure and hardware last year. All students have access to technology through a 1:1 iPad initiative for students and teachers. Most classrooms have appropriate teaching technology (Promethean boards, SMARTBoards or overhead projectors). The science facilities are appropriate to support 21st century learning, and once a work station in each laboratory is retrofitted to be ADA compliant, the laboratories will support high quality programs for all students. The building houses a broadcasting studio, an art studio, a culinary space, two gymnasiums, an expansive library media center, a darkroom, a band room, an auditorium, a wood-shop, and a lecture hall. While the cafeteria serves 150 lunches and 60 breakfasts daily, there are two non-working ovens, and a semi-functional oven in the cafeteria kitchen. There are several natural grass fields, both practice and game fields, as well as a track and an outdoor stadium. Coventry Academy is housed in a separate building on the property. Locker rooms, hallways, and bathrooms are adequate to support programs and services. It was noted that food was being stored in the science chemical preparation and storage areas. Areas of concern posited by the Standards sub-committee members include a lack of storage space for broken furniture, gym equipment, etc. The weight room is subject to water seepage from its location below grade and lacks adequate ventilation, apparatus cleaning and disease prevention equipment and protocols. Parents are concerned that the weight room is not welcoming to all members of the student body. While welcoming and well-staffed, the school nurse/health office lacks sufficient space to allow for privacy during student visits, conversations, and treatment. The addition of a dedicated library media specialist and a redesign of the library space have ameliorated many usage constraints of the LMC. According to the director of the physical plant and facilities, storage issues are being addressed with general housekeeping and a new Google Docs inventory of currently unused items (the list provides opportunities for re-purposing items). A long-range plan includes the dedication of space to health instruction and upgrades to the weight room. Coventry High School's technological updates and planned retrofits for ADA compliance positively impact the delivery of high quality school programs and once space, privacy, and health and safety concerns are addressed, the delivery of high quality programs will be enhanced.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

The school maintains up-to-date documentation that the physical plant and facilities mostly meets applicable federal and state laws and comply with local fire, health, and safety regulations. Documentation for the storage of chemicals and the list of all chemicals stored in the facility are in the Material Safety Data Sheets stored in the chemical storage closet and stored online (msdsmanagement.msdsonline.com). The district conducts annual fire inspections and monthly safety drills. Documentation for local and state inspections is stored in the office of the director of physical plant and facilities within Coventry High School. Examples of the scheduled safety inspections include monthly water testing, annual fire extinguisher inspections, quarterly sprinkler inspections, weekly, fire pump checks, and annual AED inspections. The administrative team participates in emergency preparedness training with local law enforcement and emergency responders and has completed the National Incident Management Systems training. The district has submitted an All Hazards Safety and Security Plan to the state. Under the direction of the superintendent of schools, the district employs a compliance officer. This position is responsible for managing safety within the school district by monitoring, testing, maintaining records and reporting on a variety of safety equipment, processes and procedures to ensure that compliance issues are satisfied. The compliance officer reports directly to the director of physical plant and facilities. The officer manages the Hazard Communications Safety Data Sheets plan to ensure that departments have safety for chemicals within their school. Ventilation, temperature control and air quality are checked on a daily basis and monitored by alarms using the Alerton building maintenance system. When out of compliance with any state and federal regulations, Coventry High School and the district's governing body are responsive as evidenced by bringing the athletic fields, science lab sinks and some light switches up to code with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations. The athletic director reported that the bleachers have been upgraded to meet ADA regulations, and a committee is currently working on creating paths to the bleachers so they are ADA accessible. Plans are also being developed to address the compliance issues in the science lab space. When the plant or facilities is not in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, the school makes plans for the necessary repairs in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) targets. Faculty and staff comments or complaints relating to issues of health and safety are tracked using the online School Dude electronic tracking program. As to cleanliness, 68.8 percent of students say the school is clean and well-maintained, and 90.9 percent of staff agrees. Completion of the upgrades necessary to comply with ADA regulations and continued adherence to local fire, health, and safety laws and regulations will ensure a safe environment for learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teachers
- students
- parents
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

All Coventry High School 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. All parents and families have access to program, activity, and policy information via the school's website and access to student grade and attendance information through PowerSchool. One school-wide goal that the principal identified for CHS in 2014-2015 was "Using baseline data from 2013-14 teacher/parent communication logs, CHS will increase parent communication by 10 percent for the 2014-15 school year." Results from the Endicott survey show that 78.2 percent of staff believes all staff is actively engaging parents and families. Teachers use mass email through PowerSchool, email, and make phone calls home to connect and engage with parents and families. Administrators have conducted home visits to some less connected families. The director of pupil services has visited all of the town group homes to establish connections with group home staff to support students who live in group homes. Staff offer extra help after school. Students in less connected families are referred to the Student Assistance Team. Staff also collaborate with other resources within the school such as school counselors, the school psychologist, the school social worker, administration, or other staff (including special education teachers) when needing to contact families. Events such as Open House or conferences are publicized on the school's outdoor message board, on the school's website, and letters are sent home. According to the Endicott survey, 60.9 percent of parents and families feel that professional staff actively engages parents and families. The school provides a newsletter that is released quarterly with news, updates, and other information from each department in the school. Parents are invited to a Program of Studies Night in January and an Open House in September. The school holds an Eighth Grade Preview Night for rising eighth graders and their families. The school counseling department provides a College Planning Night in October and holds a Financial Aid Night in December, open to all families and students. The school holds a portfolio night for graduating seniors. The school counseling department also uses Naviance. Parent Advisory Council meetings meet three times a year. The superintendent of school's Open Door Meetings meet five times a year and families are invited to provide feedback directly to the superintendent. Parents and community members work together on Project Graduation. There is an active Band Boosters Committee that works together to provide resources to the Coventry High School music program. Board of Education meetings are televised. As all Coventry High School 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, many families are engaged with the school in a variety of ways.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 7 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

The school has developed highly productive parent and higher education partnerships that support student learning, while maintaining limited partnerships with the community and businesses. Parents are involved in the PTO, various booster clubs, open-door meetings with the superintendent, and parent advisory. Coventry High School involves parents often in various outreach activities including a Program of Studies Night, College Planning Night, and Financial Aid Night. This partnership with parents is supported by strong communication conduits like a monthly newsletter, a consistently updated website, PowerSchool student information system, and a strong informal communication network including social media. All seniors perform a minimum of ten hours of community service through the Contemporary Issues class or on their own. Seniors in the Contemporary Issues class are also required to attend at least one town meeting to demonstrate informed involvement in their community. While there are some relationships with the limited number of local businesses that provide financial support in the nature of donations, there is a need for Coventry High School students and staff to engage in building stronger partnerships with the community and businesses to aid students in achieving their civic and social 21st century learning expectations. Coventry High School develops strong partnerships with higher education institutions. The school offers UCONN Early College Experience credits in ten course offerings. Students also have opportunities to earn college credit through the Manchester Community College and Quinnebaug Valley Community College and Career Pathways partnership. Multiple off-site programs are offered after school for college credit through the Saint Joseph College Challenge Program, the Goodwin College Partnership Program, and the University of Hartford Partnership Program. Students also have the opportunity to develop career and college ready skills in math reading and writing and passing placement exams while earning community college credit in the ALEKS Math Program. While Coventry High School maintains rich partnerships with parents and with several local institutions of higher learning, the addition of community and local business partnerships will allow students opportunities to practice civic and social 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents

# Standard 7 Commendations

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## Commendation

The community and district's governing body that provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services

## Commendation

The custodial staff that keeps the school exceptionally clean on a daily basis

## Commendation

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

## Commendation

The school site and plant that support a variety of high quality programs

## Commendation

The new initiative to digitize maintenance schedules

## Commendation

The professional staff that actively engage parents and families in a variety of ways

## Commendation

The higher education partnerships that are strong and omnipresent

## Commendation

The school counseling department that builds strong relationships with parents and students

# Standard 7 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop additional productive business and community partnerships that support student learning

## Recommendation

Ensure adequate funding to update the physical space of the weight room to make the weight room more inviting to all students, and to implement best practices for weight room safety and sanitizing protocols

## Recommendation

Fulfill plans to bring building and grounds into compliance with ADA regulations

## Recommendation

Ensure appropriate privacy and confidentiality for student treatment and conversations in the health office

# **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 committee. It provides a blueprint for the faculty, administration, and other officials to use to improve the quality of programs and services for the students in this school. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting committee recommendations.

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

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

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

**Edward J. Gallagher III** - New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.

## Assistant Chair

**Cathy Sosnowski** - Avon High School

## Visiting Committee Members

**Suzanne Alfiero** - Griswold High School

**Beryl Bailey** - Bloomfield High School

**Gina Cunha** - East Providence High School

**Randy Dehnel** - Francis T. Maloney High School

**Joy Griffin** - Parish Hill Middle/Senior High School

**Heather Jeffers** - Connecticut River Academy

**Stacey Landowne** - Fairfield Warde High School

**Stephany Pascetta** - Glastonbury High School

**Lisa Sleboda** - Bellingham High School

**Noah Ventola** - Nathan Hale-Ray High School

**Michael Yagid** - Ridgefield High School