

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

**Commission on Public Schools**



**Committee on Public Secondary Schools**

**Report of the Visiting Team for  
Hopkins Academy**

Hadley, MA

October 22, 2017 - October 25, 2017

Paul Mangelinkx, Chair  
Ruth Gilbert-Whitner, Assistant Chair  
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# STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

# **STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION**

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

## **Teaching and Learning Standards**

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

#### **Curriculum**

#### **Instruction**

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

## **Support Standards**

### **School Culture and Leadership**

### **School Resources for Learning**

### **Community Resources for Learning**

# CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

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

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

# CURRICULUM

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

*The written and taught curriculum is designed to result in all students achieving the school's 21st century expectations for student learning. The written curriculum is the framework within which a school aligns and personalizes the school's 21st century learning expectations. The curriculum includes a purposefully designed set of course offerings, co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities. The curriculum reflects the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The curriculum is collaboratively developed, implemented, reviewed, and revised based on analysis of student performance and current research.*

1. The curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.
2. The curriculum is written in a common format that includes:
  - units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills
  - the school's 21st century learning expectations
  - instructional strategies
  - assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics.
3. The curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through:
  - inquiry and problem-solving
  - higher order thinking
  - cross-disciplinary learning
  - authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school
  - informed and ethical use of technology.
4. There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum.
5. Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district.
6. Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.
7. The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research.

# INSTRUCTION

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

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

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

# ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

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## Teaching and Learning Standard

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

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

core values and beliefs about learning.

# SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

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## Support Standard

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

1. The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.
2. The school is equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.
3. There is a formal, on-going program(s) or process(es) through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.
4. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff:
  - engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning
  - use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices
  - dedicate formal time to implement professional development
  - apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
5. School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning.
6. The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.
7. Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students.
8. The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.
9. Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.
10. Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.
11. The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

12. The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

# SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

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## Support Standard

*Student learning and well-being are dependent upon adequate and appropriate support. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of coordinated programs and services. These resources enhance and improve student learning and well-being and support the school's core values and beliefs. Student support services enable each student to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.*

1. The school has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.
2. The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.
3. Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.
4. School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
  - deliver a written, developmental program
  - meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling
  - engage in individual and group meetings with all students
  - deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers
  - use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.
5. The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
  - provide preventative health services and direct intervention services
  - use an appropriate referral process
  - conduct ongoing student health assessments
  - use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.
6. Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
  - are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum
  - provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum
  - ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school
  - are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
  - conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.
7. Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
  - collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
  - provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students

- perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

# COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

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## Support Standard

*The achievement of the school's 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

Hopkins Academy serves the town of Hadley, Massachusetts as the public school for grades seven through twelve and is located in the western section of Massachusetts, in an area known as the Pioneer Valley. Hadley is bordered on the west by the Connecticut River for approximately 20 miles, on the east by the town of Amherst with its three colleges, and on the southeast by the Holyoke Mountain Range. Interstate 91 provides Hadley with easy access to the Massachusetts Turnpike.

Hadley was settled in 1659 as a farming community with some of the richest soil in the Pioneer Valley. With a population of 4,916, Hadley retains much of its farming heritage with extensive acreage dedicated to agricultural production, although it has gradually become a bedroom community for the five-college area which includes the University of Massachusetts, Amherst College, Hampshire College, Smith College, and Mount Holyoke College. Forty percent of Hadley's population has a bachelor's degree or higher. Housing units are 75 percent owner-occupied and 93 percent of Hadley's residents commute to work. Hadley has no manufacturing center but possesses a heavily traveled corridor, Route 9, which is a commercial strip with many stores, restaurants, shopping malls, and the recent addition and/or expansion of six major hotels. Several office buildings including National Evaluation Systems and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Regional Office are also located on Route 9 or have easy access to it. The median household income for Hadley is currently \$68,144 according to the 2015 city data with 6.8 percent living below the poverty level and an unemployment rate of 3.6 percent. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 89.4 percent of Hadley's population is white, 4 percent of residents are of Asian heritage, 3.1 percent are Hispanic, 1.8 percent are African American, 1.4 are of mixed heritage, and .2 percent are Native American. Five and nine-tenths of the population speaks a language other than English at home.

The building housing Hopkins Academy is located in the center of town at the intersection of Routes 9 and 47. It is a brick and glass structure built in 1954 with an addition completed in 1965. Thanks to an endowment from Edward Hopkins, a wealthy Connecticut merchant, the school was founded in 1664. The year 1816 marked the transition of Hopkins Academy from a private school to the town's public school. A separately incorporated board of trustees continues to manage the endowment fund and aids the school in the form of grants for special projects, educational enhancements, and generous scholarships awarded each year at graduation. In addition to Hopkins Academy, Hadley has one public elementary school, Hadley Elementary, which serves grades preschool through six with a population of 304 students. The Hartsbrook Waldorf School, serving grades K-12, is also located in Hadley. The Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School in Hadley serves grades K-12 and enrolls approximately 471 students. The Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School is located in neighboring South Hadley and has a current enrollment of 398 students. Hadley residents also have this charter school as an option.

The Hadley School District expended \$13,185 per pupil in FY 2016. The current enrollment of Hopkins Academy is 258 including 15.5 percent or 40 school choice students. The number of students leaving Hopkins Academy for other public schools via school choice is 34, an additional 36 students attend Smith Vocational and Agricultural School, and 24 Hadley residents of high school age attend local charter schools. In addition, the school-age population of children in Hadley has declined over the past five years. The school community is highly supportive of school budgets and has frequently voted to make educational improvements to the facilities and technology holdings, even after the initial school budget has been approved.

Hopkins Academy includes students in grades 7-12. Hadley only has one public elementary school so the majority of the students have been together since kindergarten. The heritage of students from Hopkins Academy is approximately 20 percent non-white. In terms of ethnic heritage, Hopkins Academy students are 80.6 percent white, 8.1 percent Hispanic, 3.9 percent African American, 3.5 percent mixed race, 2.3 percent Asian, 1.2 percent Native Hawaiian/ Pacific islander, and .4 percent Native American. The average dropout rate for the Class of 2016 was 0 percent, and the average daily student attendance for the same period was 95.2 percent.

There are 26.2 teachers at Hopkins Academy creating a ratio of 10.2:1. Individual teachers carry an average load

of 59 students. Students attend school for 180 days and teachers have five additional days for workshops and classroom preparation. One hundred percent of Hopkins Academy teachers are licensed in their educational assignments. The middle school, grades 7-8, is organized into a teaching team with common planning time. All core high school classes meet for the entire year, and students receive approximately 1,017 hours of direct instructional time each year.

Beginning in 2013-2014, Hopkins Academy graduates were required to complete four courses in both English and mathematics. In that same school year, teachers collaborated with the principal and began a two-year process of examining alternatives to the alternating block schedule. Many teachers made contributions to an initial model, which was presented to a focus group of students in grades 8-12. As a result of student feedback, the initial proposal was not continued for consideration. However, a model master schedule was crafted from the student focus group and faculty feedback. By February 2015, 79.4 percent of the faculty voted to affirm adoption of a new master schedule for Hopkins Academy. Hopkins Academy has adopted a ten-day rotating schedule that drops two courses each day and has two stable periods in the middle of the day. Rotating periods meet for 84-minute classes, for the entire year. Middle of the day classes meet for 50 minutes every day. Five credit courses and core content courses meet year long and elective courses are 2.5 credits and may be semester long or occur on alternating days. The schedule reduces student and teacher course load, allows for consideration for time-of-day and learning research, and added nearly 25 hours of instructional time to each high school year-long course.

Graduation requirements include 4 years each of English and math, 3 years of social studies and science, 2 years of world languages, 4 physical education courses, 2.5 credits in health education, 2.5 credits in personal finance, and the remaining credits in elective courses to total 120 credits. All students are provided the opportunity to receive instruction in art, music, family and consumer science, computer science, journalism, French, and Spanish as electives. Hopkins Academy currently offers 9 Advanced Placement (AP) courses, honors level courses in grades 9-12 math and grades 11-12 English and science, and Virtual High School classes to juniors and seniors, as well as the regular complement of college preparatory classes for grades 9-12. All Hopkins Academy students are enrolled in college preparatory classes, with the exception of students whose educational plans place them on a transitional path until age 22. There are no grade achievement minimum requirements as prerequisites for enrollment into honors and Advanced Placement courses. In the 2015-2016 school year, the faculty opened enrollment to honors and Advanced Placement courses to all students. In addition, AP United States History was opened to 10th grade students, and there is option for 10th graders to take biology and chemistry concurrently. Approximately 7.8 percent of Hopkins Academy students are provided support to address disabilities; 1.2 percent of Hopkins Students are English language learners; and 11.2 percent of students are considered to experience economic disadvantages.

Hopkins Academy offers a variety of co-curricular activities for its students including nine athletic programs for boys and girls. The school community added varsity cross-country as a sport in the 2015-2016 school year. The school offers an enormous variety of clubs and activities for students, including yearbook, The Hawk's Claw school newspaper, As Schools Match Wits, art workshop, math and mock trial teams, student government opportunities, diversity club, Gay-Straight Alliance, robotics, equestrian team, student council, knitting club, and a music program that includes chorus as well as jazz, concert, marching, and pep bands. A number of new initiatives to improve student learning and the school environment have been implemented at Hopkins Academy in the last few years. Learning opportunities have been increased with the addition of Advanced Placement classes and the open nature of enrollment in these courses, extended to all grades 9-12 students. Seventh graders have been attending Nature's Classroom since 2006 and the eighth grade added a culminating, team-building, educational trip to New York City. Extra-curricular opportunities to enhance and improve the school environment such as peer mentors, service learning international trips, Trained Active Bystanders, and the Gender Equity Task Force emerged and provide student leadership. Building renovations have been made to the library, which has been modified into a maker-space. The school has added broad technology holdings, including three additional Chromebook carts, laptops, and tablets for teachers and a 3-D printer, provided through grants from the Hopkins Academy Board of Trustees, Hadley Mothers' Club, the Hadley Parent Teacher Organization, and Helping Hearts for Hadley Schools.

The SAT is taken by 79 percent of Hopkins Academy students. The average SAT scores for the Class of 2017 were 579 in math and 589 in critical reading. From the Class of 2017, 71 percent of students are enrolled in four-year colleges, 13 percent are enrolled in two-year colleges, and a total of 95 percent are continuing their

education after high school, with 5 percent entering the work force. Many students take advantage of the nearby Massachusetts colleges, especially the University of Massachusetts, Westfield State, Mount Holyoke, and Western New England College. Recent graduates also attend Carnegie Melon, Hamilton, Rochester Institute of Technology, Amherst College, St. Anselms College, SUNY Cobleskill, the Universities of Connecticut, Vermont, and Rhode Island, Holyoke and Greenfield Community Colleges, and numerous other colleges.

Students are recognized for their accomplishments through a variety of means: teachers select a "student of the month" from each grade, and honor roll students are recognized each quarter at the honor roll breakfast. Additionally, awards assemblies are held each year on the final day of senior classes to recognize students in every subject area as well as extra-curricular achievements; a banquet is held to recognize athletes and equestrian competitors and to honor the pep band; and more than 75 awards and scholarships are presented at graduation and class night. Hopkins Academy students have been recognized for academic, athletic, artistic, and community service achievement by local news organizations, including a member of the Class of 2017, who earned the first regional Spirit of the Community Award for extensive commitment to provide service and leadership in the school and community.

School improvement planning occurs annually and is driven by the District's Three-Year Strategic Plan. The current strategic plan concludes at the end of the 2017-2018 school year. The school committee and superintendent regularly meet to monitor the current plan's execution and are beginning the process of development of a new three-year plan. The school council comprised of faculty, parents, students, and community members, meets monthly with the principal to develop and guide the implementation of a school improvement plan, beginning in October. Faculty members meet to review a variety of data in September and October in department meetings. This allows teachers to evaluate student success and make necessary modifications to curriculum and instruction, as well as consider recommendations for student supports. District-wide specialized committees including the Technology Committee and the Wellness Policy Committee also make contributions to school improvement planning and guide recommendations for purchasing educational materials, programs, changes in policy, or recommendations for professional development.

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

### **HOPKINS ACADEMY MISSION**

Hopkins Academy, in partnership with the community, provides a safe and supportive environment that fosters cooperation, critical thinking, creativity, and integrity. Our rigorous curriculum promotes the development of essential knowledge, the effective use of technology, and the skills needed to become lifelong learners who contribute positively to a global society.

#### **Hopkins Academy students will:**

##### **Academic expectations**

- Communicate effectively and fluently
- Apply problem solving and critical thinking skills
- Appropriately research, analyze, and evaluate information
- Engage in activities that promote diversity, which empower students to become knowledgeable, respectful and active global citizens.

Approved by faculty 05.07.12

##### **Civic and Social expectations**

- Demonstrate integrity, responsibility, and respectful behavior as established in classroom expectations and the school's code of conduct.
- Participate in activities that promote leadership, collaboration, and active citizenship.

Approved by faculty 05.08.17

**Related Files**

- [2017-10-07-09:15\\_hopkins-academy-mission-and-expectations-updated-5-8-17.pdf](#)

# Introduction

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## Introduction

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

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

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

### Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

### Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

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

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

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Hopkins Academy, a committee of four members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees included some students, parents, and community members through their participation on the school council. There was no direct participation of central office staff or school board representatives on any of the self-study subcommittees.

The self-study of Hopkins Academy extended over a period of 14 school months from the fall of 2015 to October

2017. The staff was required to take a six month hiatus in the winter/spring of 2017 to address a series of behavioral and cultural issues which had arisen and disrupted the school.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their alignment with the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Committee, Hopkins Academy also used questionnaires developed by The Research Center at Endicott College to reflect the concepts contained in the Standards for Accreditation. However, since the survey results were not compiled and made available until mid-June 2017, it is unclear to what extent these materials provided significant data and discussion items for a comprehensive assessment of the school by the professional staff during the self-study.

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

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

A visiting team of 12 members was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Hopkins Academy. The visiting team members spent four days in Hadley, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the members of the visiting team represented classroom teachers, guidance counselors, library/media specialists, school administrators, and central office administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Hopkins Academy.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 36 hours shadowing 24 students for a half day
- a total of 20 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility
- individual meetings with 22 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

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

This report of the findings of the visiting team will be forwarded to the Committee on Public Secondary Schools, which will make a decision on the accreditation of Hopkins Academy.

# Standard 1 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Hopkins Academy has yet to fully engage 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. The process to review and revise the school's academic, civic, and social expectations is currently ongoing. In advance of initiating the review and revision process of the school's 2012 Mission and Expectations for Student Learning, a number of students were trained in active bystander response and leadership by Quabbin Mediation. The students developed a forum and a series of prompts to initiate a dialogue with parents to solicit their input. Two parent events, although sparsely attended, provided valuable notes developed by the students, which will be used by the faculty as a source of parent and family input into the final review and revision process. The Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations Subcommittee conducted research based on the work done by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, which they plan to share with the faculty as they develop updated academic, social, and civic expectations. The subcommittee also examined model core values, beliefs, and learning expectations from other schools to provide a starting point for Hopkins Academy in developing an appropriate document to guide them going forward. In April 2016, the school council, consisting of the principal, teachers, parents, and students reviewed the parent input notes and the results of the research conducted by the Core Values Subcommittee and determined areas for further research, specifically models of rubrics and tools to measure academic, civic, and social expectations. There was agreement that the council would focus its research on several areas suggested by the work of the subcommittee such as reading, written communication, collaboration, problem solving and decision-making, information and technological literacy, critical thinking and visual literacy, inventive thinking/creativity, active learning, health and well-being literacy, and cultural, civic, and social literacy. With all of the work that has been completed over the past year, there is little significant faculty input into the process. The consensus of the faculty is that they will need to be provided with current research and time to revise the school's mission statement to reflect the current core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations of all stakeholders. While the process has begun and the school has identified a single civic and social expectation, a viable set of core value, beliefs, and academic learning expectations for Hopkins Academy does not yet exist. Once the school has and is committed to a set of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, which have been developed through an inclusive process involving all of the school's stakeholders, every aspect of the school will be driven by the core values and beliefs and support all students' achievement of the school's learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 1 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Hopkins Academy has measurable learning expectations for both civic and social competencies; however, the school has yet to develop challenging and measurable academic learning expectations. In addition, neither of the civic or social expectations is defined by measurable criteria for success, which define targeted high levels of achievement. Plans were initiated to develop learning expectations during the 2016-2017 school year through a process designed to involve the participation of all major stakeholders. The process was underway when several incidents involving hate speech and a marked increase in incidents of student disrespect to staff occurred, which shook the school community significantly. A decision was made to set aside any work on creating measurable academic expectations and focus on improving the school culture. Outside consultants from Collaborative Educational Services were contracted to provide professional development and to open up a dialogue among the faculty. Following that work, a decision was made to take what was learned to develop civic and social expectations and postpone the development of academic learning expectations until the following year. In May 2017 the faculty approved two expectations, which are "Demonstrate integrity, responsibility, and respectful behavior as established in classroom expectations and the school's code of conduct" and "Participate in activities that promote leadership, collaboration, and active citizenship." While measurable criteria for success and targeted high levels of achievement have not yet been developed, initial plans include soliciting student input to create a rubric to measure the social expectation and to award a "letter" similar to athletics, for student participation in any and all school activities. Without established and specific learning expectations, teachers are struggling to define what these expectations are and what they look like. Given this void, teachers have been creating their own expectations which unfortunately promotes a lack of continuity and confusion. Once the school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies defined by specific criteria for success and which define targeted high levels of achievement, students will clearly understand what is expected of them and know exactly what they need to accomplish to demonstrate success.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Hopkins Academy has yet to actively reflect its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations 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. Once the school community has established and is committed to a clear statement of its core values, and beliefs about learning, and 21 century learning expectations, those values, beliefs, and expectations will permeate the culture of the school and positively affect every aspect of teaching and learning in the school. As a result, when every component of the school is driven by the core values and beliefs and supports all students' achievement of the school's learning expectations, the community knows what is expected in order to ensure that students achieve success.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 1 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Hopkins Academy has an established five-year cycle to review and revise its mission and school-wide academic, social, and civic expectations; however, the school has yet to include research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities. The mission and expectations, which were created in 2006 for the school's 2008 decennial accreditation visit, were collaboratively reviewed and revised by the faculty in 2012 and a new mission statement and expectations were developed. The revision process also resulted in the development of a set of school-wide analytic rubrics to measure the new academic expectations specifically, "Communication (speaking, listening, reading, and writing), Problem Solving and Critical Thinking, Research, and Knowledge of and Respect for Diversity." The rubrics were never fully implemented to measure student achievement of the expectations. There were plans to adhere to the established cycle and to review and revise that document in 2016, but those plans were postponed due to the concerted focus on improving school culture. Therefore, the 2012 mission statement and learning expectations remain as the document, which purportedly guides all aspects of teaching and learning at Hopkins Academy. When the school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on current research, multiple data sources, and district and school community priorities, all aspects of the school are committed to and engaged in the best practices and decision making about teaching and learning to maximize student success.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Commendations

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## Commendation

The student-led parent forum to solicit input for the review and revision of the school's mission and expectations

## Commendation

The commitment to regularly review and revise the schools mission and expectations

# Standard 1 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Engage all members of the school community in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research to identify and commit to a set of core values and beliefs about learning

## Recommendation

Develop and implement challenging and measurable learning expectations, which address identified academic competencies

## Recommendation

Develop and implement specific and measurable criteria for success for all academic, social, and civic expectations, which define targeted high levels of achievement

## Recommendation

Ensure that, after they have been developed, the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and guide decision-making and resource allocation

## Recommendation

Re-establish an ongoing process, based on research, multiple data sources, and district and school community priorities to guide the regular review and revision of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

# Standard 2 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Hopkins Academy has yet to develop and implement 21st century learning expectations. Consequently, the curriculum has yet to be purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Although the faculty approved a revision of previously developed academic expectations on May 5, 2012, those academic expectations have not been further expanded to include 21st century learning expectations. Once 21st century learning expectations are developed and implemented, the curriculum can be purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation

# Standard 2 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The curriculum has yet to be written consistently 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 specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic or course specific rubrics. According to the Endicott survey, 42 percent of the faculty report that a common template is used in all subject areas. Various curriculum templates are used across subject areas. Some templates include essential questions, 21st century learning expectations, assessments accompanied by specific and measurable criteria, and instructional strategies, but they were consistently evident in most documents. Teachers and department chairs are currently working to develop a common template for curriculum documents with essential questions included in all units of study. When curriculum is written in a common format for all content areas that includes essential questions, the integration of the school's 21st century learning expectations, instructional strategies, and assessment practices including the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics or course-specific rubrics, teachers' instructional practices will be consistently aligned in all subject areas, enabling students to successfully meet 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The curriculum, to some extent, 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, and the informed and ethical use of technology. Some cross-disciplinary learning occurs in mathematics and sciences, but is not pervasive in the curriculum. Teachers indicated interest in having opportunities to include cross-curricular connections in the written and taught curriculum. Some courses, work study, and independent study opportunities foster authentic learning experiences in and outside of school. The curriculum in the biomedical elective class deliberately engages students in relevant research that aligns with their specific interests. Core classes, offered at the honors or Advanced Placement level, enable students to explore content in greater depth. Courses, available through the local colleges, universities, and online are pursued by some students. Overall, according to the Endicott survey, 67 percent of students at Hopkins Academy agree that the curriculum promotes critical thinking. Sixty-two percent of parents agree that their son or daughter is developing problem solving and higher order thinking skills, and nearly 88 percent of staff agree that the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge. At Hopkins Academy, 75 percent of staff, students, and parents affirm that the school promotes an understanding of the ethical use of technology. A class, taught in the seventh grade instructs students in the informed and ethical use of technology. However, informed and ethical use was not specifically written into the curriculum. The English language arts department addresses online plagiarism with a contract in which students and parents agree to expectations of the ethical use of technology. When the curriculum consistently 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, and informed and ethical use of technology, students will meet 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student work
- teachers
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

For the most part, there is alignment between the written and taught curriculum. The Endicott survey reveals that almost 67 percent of staff report that written and taught curricula are aligned. Although they do not evaluate their colleagues per the teachers' contract, department chairs observe teaching and learning in their content areas to assess and ensure alignment between the written and taught curriculum. Department chairs collaborate with teachers on curriculum pacing. School leadership collects syllabi and course outlines. Due to the school's low enrollment, many courses at specific grade levels are taught by a single teacher. As a result, teachers often write their own curriculum. In English language arts, where more than one teacher teaches some grade levels, the teachers share lesson plans and meet frequently. Departmental and interdepartmental meeting time is provided for teachers to problem solve and discuss issues relating to curriculum. Because there is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum, all students have access to consistent and appropriate delivery of the curriculum.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 2 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Curriculum coordination and vertical articulation occur to some extent between and among academic areas within the school as well as with the sending school. Ongoing and regular opportunities for curriculum coordination and vertical articulation between the elementary school and Hopkins Academy take place on a limited basis. Near the end of each school year when students transition from sixth grade at Hadley Elementary School to Hopkins Academy, staff from both schools meet to discuss specific students, the seventh grade program of studies, and modifications that may be necessary in the curriculum. Within the past two years, faculty from Hopkins Academy met with teachers from Hadley Elementary to discuss curriculum alignment however these meetings have not taken place on a regular basis. In the spring of 2016, teams of a team of teachers from Hadley Elementary and Hopkins Academy collaborated on the development of a K-12 science curriculum which led to the targeted purchase of textbooks and other curriculum materials. That level of collaborative curriculum articulation and development has not yet occurred among teachers in the other core academic areas. Weekly leadership team meetings, which include the superintendent, elementary principal, Hopkins Academy principal, and the student services coordinator include discussions regarding curriculum articulation and coordination. At Hopkins Academy, meetings are led by the department chairs for the purpose of curriculum coordination, which happen regularly within content areas and less frequently between content areas. When curriculum coordination and vertical articulation occur between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with the sending school, students and teachers will be provided with a comprehensive and cohesive system of teaching and learning, thus enabling students to achieve academic success.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources in the library/media center are sufficient to implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities. Staffing levels allow for small class sizes for the most part and low teacher-to-student ratios, providing teachers with opportunities to implement and differentiate the curriculum to meet individual students' learning needs. Even though class sizes at Hopkins Academy are at reasonable levels, curriculum implementation is hampered to some extent when teachers teach in more than one content area and at both the middle school and high school levels. Instructional materials supplement the curriculum which is implemented using a combination of textbooks, online websites, and print and Internet resources from the library/media center. Interactive white boards, Chromebooks, and stand-alone computers are available to staff to integrate technology for curriculum implementation. An initiative to increase the number of Chromebooks from a current level of 3:1 to 1:1 is supported by the administrators and school committee. Co-curricular programs and learning opportunities that supplement, extend, and expand the curriculum are available to students through academic support classes, virtual learning, and dual enrollment with local community colleges. For the most part, due to the updating of technology and infrastructure throughout the school, the school facility supports curriculum implementation. As a result of instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and library/media center resources being sufficient, teachers are able to implement the curriculum effectively ensuring that Hopkins Academy students achieve success.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- teacher interview
- teachers
- parents
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey

# Standard 2 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

The district provides the professional staff with adequate personnel, time, and financial support for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. Comprehensive support is readily available for curriculum development, evaluation, and revision. Over 83 percent of staff report in the Endicott survey that they are actively involved in revising and writing curriculum. Substitute coverage is available to enable teachers to engage in curriculum work during the school day. Teachers are compensated per contract for time spent writing and revising curriculum beyond the school day and in the summer. In-service days are also used to provide time for departmental collaboration for curriculum development, evaluation, and revision. Each academic department reviews current research, supplied by the department heads, and analyzes students' results from formative, summative, and state-wide assessments in order to make informed decisions about the curriculum. The overarching support of the administrators and school committee for curriculum development, evaluation, and revision, and the active participation of teachers in the process ensure that the professional staff have the resources to update and align the curriculum with state curriculum standards and 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- teacher interview
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey

# Standard 2 Commendations

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## Commendation

The ongoing commitment of the professional staff to the alignment of the written and taught curriculum

## Commendation

The availability of an array of resources to implement the curriculum

## Commendation

The commitment to the 1:1 Chromebook initiative to expand the integration of technology to enhance curriculum delivery

## Commendation

The comprehensive support for the ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research

# Standard 2 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Design the curriculum to ensure that all students practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations, when adopted

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a common curriculum template in all content areas, which includes essential questions, instructional strategies, 21st century learning expectations, and assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for student success

## Recommendation

Emphasize the depth of understanding and application of knowledge throughout the entire curriculum through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary, and authentic learning opportunities

## Recommendation

Provide regularly scheduled opportunities throughout the school year for professional staff to address vertical articulation between Hadley Elementary School and Hopkins Academy

# Standard 3 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Teachers are not yet able to fully examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. The school has yet to develop core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. However, some teachers and departments meet regularly to discuss best practices and current research. Some instruction is guided by the academic expectations already in place. These academic expectations, in some cases, can be translated into 21st century learning expectations as long as all community stakeholders have input. When the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are adopted and integrated into the curriculum and culture of the school, teachers will then be able to more effectively examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with those core values, beliefs, and expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 3 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Teachers consciously emphasize inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking, engage students as active and self-directed learners, and integrate available technology despite that the school's 21st century learning expectations have yet to be developed; however, cross-disciplinary learning, personalization of instruction, use of authentic tasks, and engaging students in self-assessment and reflection is limited to a few content areas and classrooms.

Some teachers demonstrate various aspects of best teaching practices. According to the Endicott survey, only 28 percent of students feel that their instruction is personalized; however, several teachers are working toward this end. Personalized instruction was demonstrated by a world languages teacher when discussing how to challenge the high achieving students. There is required vocabulary for each unit but also optional vocabulary for students who require an additional challenge. The optional vocabulary is not tested but serves to challenge the high achievers while also being available for all students. In classrooms, differentiation is not school-wide and for all ability levels. However, some differentiation and interdisciplinary instruction occurred with the home economics and Spanish teachers presenting a unit on the Day of the Dead. The eighth grade science and history teachers are developing an interdisciplinary lesson on the calendar, astronomers, Cleopatra, and climate change. Cross-disciplinary collaboration is limited due to scheduling conflicts and a lack of common planning time for teachers to collaborate.

In an Advanced Placement (AP) Chemistry lab, students were engaged as active and self-directed learners. The steps were explained, questions were answered, and then the students worked with a partner to complete the lab and write an analysis. As part of a seventh grade science class, students were designing buildings, which could sustain seismic waves. Students worked in groups to create their building. The teacher was a facilitator and students knew the goal and the intention of the final outcome. Student work and teacher lessons revealed inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking when using real-world data in the Introduction to Statistics class. Students assumed the role as agents of an auto insurance company and were required to analyze and synthesize numerical information from the Highway Loss Data Institute. Students created comparative plots and summary statistics, descriptions of injury ratings, and a comparison of injury ratings for three sizes of cars. Analysis included how these statistics impact the mock insurance company for which the students were employees. Students were seen applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks in an English classroom. Students listened to National Public Radio's (NPR) TED Radio Hour: "Failure is an Option" podcast. They summarized key points and reflected on how these ideas could resonate in their own lives. A similar real-world application was seen in the Modern Entrepreneur and Leadership classes. Students watched and discussed Steve Jobs's "10 Rules for Success". The lesson was designed to motivate students to study other entrepreneurs and then to create a personal rules for success list.

In a Spanish class, students were engaged in a full class review for an upcoming assessment. Every student was challenged to redefine or re-evaluate his/her response based on immediate teacher feedback. As the period drew to a close, the teacher specifically selected the four students who had not responded to fully immerse all students in the process. However, in other classes, there are more traditional instructional strategies and passive student learning. Many classes are 85-minute blocks, which lend themselves to innovative teaching strategies such as experiential learning, project-based learning, and other cooperative modes of instruction but these pedagogical strategies were not widely observed. The extended block necessitates a variety of instructional strategies and activities to maintain student engagement. Environmental science students were engaged in self-assessment and reflection during a class on water pollution. They responded to open-ended questions based on what they had seen and learned. However, when speaking with students, they noted that it was not customary practice for teachers to allow for self-assessment and reflection. In business classes, technology was utilized when students created a website to self-promote their mock business. One was a real estate business which included several tabs that the "customer" could use to access information on the steps necessary to purchase a home. The world languages classes regularly use online quiz games like Kahoot for formative assessment in their classes. While

the use of technology happens regularly, the platforms and hardware are not always user-friendly. Students described the technology as "clunky." While teachers do emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking, engage students as active and self-directed learners, and integrate available technology, when teachers can further engage students in cross-disciplinary learning and in self-assessment and reflection, implement personalization of instruction, and facilitate the application of knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations will be better supported.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- department leaders

# Standard 3 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Many teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the learning challenges of most students by using formative assessment, especially during instructional time; purposefully organizing group learning activities; and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom while fewer teachers adjust their instructional practices by strategically differentiating in a limited way.

Teachers used formative assessments during instructional time to evaluate and reteach elements of the lesson. In the Environmental Science class, there was an innovative approach to using formative assessments where students used a response system that allowed the teacher to identify, in real time, student mastery. When students demonstrated less than 50 percent mastery, the teacher clarified or retaught the concept.

Strategic differentiation was observed on a limited basis. For example, teachers incorporated student choice into major assignments. To address multiple intelligences, students selected topics that aligned with their learning styles and interests. Teachers retaught the same lesson to assist struggling students.

Some teachers purposefully organized group learning activities by deliberately organizing students into mixed groups. For example, in an Advanced Placement (AP) Chemistry class, the teacher drew tongue depressors labeled with student names at random to create groups to complete a lab experiment. In other classrooms, teachers used groups strategically to combine several different types of learners in each group.

Because of the small class sizes at Hopkins Academy, teachers can provide additional support and are able to interact more effectively with individuals and small groups of students especially during scheduled class time. Specific assistance to most students occurs as teachers circulate, answer questions, clarify misconceptions, and support students who have been absent. As a result, most teachers know their students well and are able to anticipate which students may struggle with a particular problem, concept, or lesson. Additional support is also available after school to address individual student needs.

Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment during instructional time, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom; however, when all teachers adjust instructional practices by strategically differentiating, student needs will be more fully met.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 3 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Many teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by informally using assessment data; analyzing student work; and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice; however, the majority of teachers have yet to rely on feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parent or examining current research on best practices to improve their instruction. Some teachers were observed using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments such as the use of quick writes, exit slips, and a variety of similar methods to ensure student learning. Collaborative examination of student work occurs within the English department; however, there is no formal process of analyzing student work for the purpose of school-wide instructional improvement. A small cohort of teachers have asked students to evaluate courses or units at their conclusion, but have not yet used feedback from parents. These teachers use the information to improve instructional practices in the future. Seventy-five percent of teachers, according to the Endicott survey, agree that they adjust their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments. The middle school teams examine current research regularly at their team meetings. They use "Teacher Channel" for best practices to critique and discuss which strategies are applicable and how they can best be implemented for their courses. Limited professional discourse focused on instructional practices occurs periodically in other department meetings, but there is no format in place to guide department meetings regarding goals, purpose, or the dissemination of information to guide instructional practices. When teachers, individually and collectively, improve their instructional practices by collaboratively analyzing student work; using student assessment and achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments; examining current research; and engaging in professional discourse focused on improving instructional practice, then students can be assured that they are receiving the most effective instruction to enable them to achieve success.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, sporadically maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. One hundred percent of the teaching staff at Hopkins Academy are licensed in their content area and a number of teachers maintain licensure in multiple content areas and grade levels. In a survey created by the instructional leadership team and disseminated to all staff in January 2017, 19 of the 24 faculty members responded that they felt “enthusiastic or optimistic,” a “five” on a one through five scale, about learning more pertaining to their content and/or instructional strategies. The survey also reported that 64.7 percent of the staff had taken a college course within a three-year period and many had also attended conferences and workshops to improve professional practice. Professional development is informally supported for teachers. The survey also asked teachers about other forms of learning such as professional development offered by colleagues, contracted professional development, library resources, collaboration, use of the technology specialist, and other teacher sought resources such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website. When asked, teachers struggled to give examples of recent professional development opportunities offered that fostered improved student learning. Five years ago they received training on formative assessments, while more recently staff members received Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) training, in which educators learn supporting and assessment strategies primarily designed for English language learners (ELL) and are valuable tools for teaching all students. Teachers have many possible avenues for professional development; however, the onus is on the teachers to find professional development which interests them. Survey results indicated that 47 percent of teachers feel that interacting with colleagues is helpful and 52 percent feel contracted professional development is productive. Eighty-four percent feel that collaboration with colleagues is the most helpful method of furthering their learning. The expectation is that the recent commitment to the creation of and support for the development of professional learning communities will capitalize on the faculty's belief in the efficacy of collaboration with their colleagues and help them become more reflective practitioners. When all teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional strategies, instructional practices and the full engagement of student learners in achieving academic success will improve.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 3 Commendations

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## Commendation

The wide variety of instructional strategies used in many classrooms throughout the school

## Commendation

The emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, higher order thinking, and the integration of technology during instruction, despite the lack of school-wide 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The informal collaboration among teachers that occurs throughout the school to help improve instructional practice

## Commendation

The efforts of teachers to provide highly personalized additional support to all students within and beyond designated classroom time

## Commendation

The regular use of data from a variety of formative assessments to improve instructional practice and student learning

# Standard 3 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Ensure teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined for consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

## Recommendation

Provide professional development specifically focused on expanding and improving instructional strategies in the long block to better engage students as self-directed learners, personalize instruction, and provide students with opportunities to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks

## Recommendation

Create formal opportunities for teachers to engage students in cross-disciplinary learning

## Recommendation

Ensure all teachers adjust their instructional practices to better meet the needs of each student by expanding the use of formative assessment and by strategically differentiating instruction in classrooms across the curriculum

## Recommendation

Ensure teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve instructional practices by examining student work and other assessment data; expand the use of feedback from a variety of sources including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents; regularly examine current research; and engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice

## Recommendation

Complete the development of professional learning communities to provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate and improve teaching and learning

# Standard 4 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Hopkins Academy is beginning to formalize a process for assessing whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations during the 2017-2018 school year. Currently, the school has yet to adopt 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as accompanying rubrics. Some teachers are using formative and summative assessments to measure students' progress toward the expectations written in 2012; however, there are currently no school-wide processes or rubrics to measure student achievement of those expectations. When the school continuously employs a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, students can be better informed regarding their learning progress and teachers regarding ways to adjust curriculum and instruction to respond effectively to the learning needs of students.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school's professional staff does not yet communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families or the school's progress to the community. Because Hopkins Academy has yet to develop 21st century learning expectations or accompanying rubrics, professional staff is not yet able formalized a process for assessing and reporting whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. However, there is an infrastructure in place to communicate student and school progress once these expectations have been established. Hopkins Academy uses the student information system, SchoolBrains, to communicate student achievement in specific courses to both students and parents and that program could eventually be used to incorporate student progress toward achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Some teachers also use the school's website to communicate course-specific expectations to students, families and the school community such as posting essential questions, content and skills knowledge, and review questions or self-check quizzes. When there is a system in place to communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations and whole-school progress to the school community, there will be an opportunity for staff, students, parents and the community to work together to optimize student achievement.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- parents

# Standard 4 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Many members of the professional staff, individually and collectively, consciously collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify inequities in student achievement. Fifty percent of staff agree with the previous statement, according to the Endicott survey. The staff collects data through department meetings where they look at Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results, common assessment tools and student work as it matches their objectives. Teachers use formative assessment tools such as strategic questioning, exit tickets, teacher circulation, conferencing, and student self-assessment to gauge understanding and to avoid inequalities in student achievement. This is done more frequently at an individual level more so than at the department level. Due to its small size, many teachers at Hopkins Academy are the only ones who teach their subject and collaboration to interpret data is not always feasible. Responses to inequities vary widely and some are tailored to meet the needs of individual students. Several content areas have made adjustments to curriculum recently as a result of data analysis. For example, the science, social studies, English, and mathematics departments have used MCAS results to adjust their curriculum to meet student needs. Based on the results of MCAS and Advanced Placement scores, the social studies and English departments have collaborated to develop and implement curriculum changes to address deficiencies in writing. Special education teachers gather progress reports from middle school teachers weekly or as needed in order to plan and adapt instruction or to plan an intervention to address inequities. Special education teachers and the English language learner (ELL) coordinator use several tools to identify areas of deficient student performance and to establish targets for improvement. With respect to the special education department, students participate in academic and intellectual assessments every three years to measure progress. Goals are reviewed and updated yearly. If a student requires interventions, systems are in place to ensure his or her needs are addressed. In addition to the daily personalized connections, middle school teachers meet on a weekly basis to discuss students at risk. Tier 1 academic interventions include revision of expectations, reteaching of content, differentiated instruction, group/pair work, IXL (an online self-guided mathematics program), modified assessments and assignments, spiraling material, scaffolding, student conferences, and access to educational support professionals, including paraprofessionals and emotional support staff. Tier 2 or 3 interventions include before and after school assistance, IXL, guided academic support, assignment to the learning center, and credit recovery. Although the supports and interventions are in place, at-risk students are not being provided with the structure and individualized support they require to succeed in their classes on a consistent basis. When professional staff regularly and formally collect, disaggregate, and analyze data, student inequities are identified and are able to be addressed in a timely manner ensuring a higher level of equity and student success.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

To some extent, prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate academic learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals. Although academic learning expectations which were developed in 2012 are in place, 21st century learning expectations have not yet been developed and are not currently implemented. Unit-specific goals, standards, and academic expectations are conveyed to students at the beginning of many units. Many teachers provide students with unit overviews, either on paper or digitally. Some teachers also have the unit objective posted daily in their classrooms. These objectives contain a variety of information, and may include an introduction to the main topics of the unit, the standards to be assessed, and the expected learning outcomes. While sixty-two percent of teachers in the Endicott Survey agree that students have learning expectations explained to them prior to each unit of study, less than half of students and parents agree. Once teachers develop and communicate 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed prior to each unit of study, students will have clarity about what is expected of them in regard to student achievement.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Prior to summative assessments, many teachers provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics and exemplars, which define targeted high levels of achievement. According to the Endicott survey, nearly 90 percent of students agree with the statement, "My teachers regularly use rubrics to assess my work." Sixty-eight percent of students agree that they understood in advance the work they had to accomplish to meet their teachers' criteria, using measures such as rubrics to assess their work. Some teachers provide the students with rubrics, checklists, or exemplars at the outset of a unit or project, or use student-created rubrics to assess research projects, or other methods of self-assessment. Some teachers are still engaged in the process of developing or revising curriculum, which will include a progression of assessments and specific rubrics which will be used to measure student learning. Whether they were used prior to the completion of summative assessments or not, specific criteria for assessment are used across the curriculum. Because students are provided rubrics and exemplars during the planning phase of a summative task, they are empowered and confident that they will succeed and the message is sent that high levels of achievement and critical thinking are not only possible, but expected of all students.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

In many units of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. There is a vast range of checking for understanding strategies including thumbs up/thumbs down, Poll Everywhere, response clickers, colored papers, calling out, choral response, projects, extended written response, performances, and class discussion. Some teachers were observed resolving misconceptions in the moment. Student work samples showed an array of assessments for many different projects and writing tasks. Some examples of varied assessment include art students creating online portfolios that show in-progress and completed works, math students creating their own linear programming problems, Advanced Placement (AP) Biology students creating spreadsheets to analyze genetic diseases, and in Humanities III students creating their own Utopian society and recruiting participants to join it. The small class sizes at Hopkins Academy lend themselves to a considerable amount of in-the-moment assessment of student understanding. Much of any apparent student confusion or need for clarification is revealed and addressed through teachers' conversations with the students while they are doing classwork. According to the Endicott survey, close to 92 percent of teachers state that they use a variety and range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments to determine the degree of student learning and nearly 74 percent of students concur with that assertion. Because teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, students have multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate their learning, and teachers are provided with many more opportunities to identify gaps in student learning and can address the gaps appropriately.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

All faculty collaborate regularly in informal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Although designated time is regularly provided for teachers to collaborate within their departments on formative and summative assessments, according to the Endicott survey only 50 percent of faculty agree that they meet formally to discuss and improve assessment strategies. Additionally, while there is some use of common assessments in some curricular areas, their use is limited because many of the courses at Hopkins Academy are singletons. Absent a formal process to guide the creation, analysis, and revision of assessments across the curriculum, formative and summative assessments are inconsistent from teacher to teacher. When teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and regular revision of formative and summative assessments, students experience continuity and relevance between courses and grade levels.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

Many teachers regularly provide specific and corrective feedback, and most teachers provide students with opportunities to revise or improve their work based on that feedback. However, timely feedback is provided inconsistently. As students complete drafts and practice assignments, teachers provide verbal and written feedback to encourage them to meet the course standards through successful completion of final projects. When the final project is assessed, teachers use rubrics to provide further feedback on progress toward meeting specific standards. Teachers often write comments directly on written assignments or submit digital comments on work submitted online. On many assignments students are encouraged, and sometimes required, to either make corrections to problems or submit updated versions of written assignments. In addition, teachers give verbal feedback to students during class, whole-class discussions, individual activities, and group work. Both parents and, more importantly students, do not feel that their work is graded or that grades are posted in a timely fashion. According to the Endicott survey, only 35.8 percent of students agree that teachers assess/correct their school work in a reasonable amount of time. Teachers provide specific, corrective feedback and provide students with multiple opportunities to revise and demonstrate success on their work; therefore, timely feedback will more fully motivate and engage students in the process of learning.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 9

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## Conclusions

Many teachers regularly use a wide variety and range of formative assessments to assess student learning as well as to inform and adapt teaching practices to improve student learning. The variety of formative assessment is pervasive; it is not always clear how the data collected through the assessments led to adaptation of instruction. The majority of interventions observed were the practice of spiraling back and reteaching concepts rather than engaging in alternative strategies to teach the same skills. Teachers regularly use formative assessments; therefore, when teachers use data from regular formative assessments to inform and truly adapt instruction, all students, and especially at-risk students demonstrate higher levels of confidence, engagement, and success.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- 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 including student work; common assessments; and standardized assessments. However, individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations; data from sending schools, and survey data from current students and alumni is not yet being examined. The district administrative team receives and analyzes a wide variety of data such as Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English language learners (ACCESS) scores, Title I data (growth by grade), post-secondary data, Advanced Placement scores, social-emotional data, survey data, and information on project-based learning. Using this data, the administrative team has implemented changes to programming such as creating a reading support course and are currently in the beginning stages of creating a similar course in science, implementing English language learner interventions, developing a monthly professional learning community for WIDA alignment and support for English language learners, and increasing the use of Naviance to guide students through the college preparatory process. The district has also increased the number of Advanced Placement courses and is in the process of exploring options for expanding AP offerings further. All learning areas are required to create and administer common assessments. A report detailing the findings and conclusions is shared with the principal and respective department head when that work is complete. It is an expectation that all Hopkins Academy teachers participate in department meetings where teachers address issues about curriculum and instruction, bring different perspectives to problem solving, examine student work, use protocols to discuss teaching and learning, and read professional articles. The purpose of this collaboration is to improve practice and student outcomes. These meetings also are used to analyze data from assessments to identify struggling students and to develop individual plans to help them succeed. The mathematics, English language arts, and science departments use standardized test data to inform instruction and curriculum. According to the Endicott survey, 74 percent of students and 63 percent of parents surveyed agree with the statement, "My teacher uses a variety of methods to assess my learning." Fifty percent of staff agree that "teachers and administrators examine a variety and range of student work, common course assessment, common grade-level assessment, and standardized assessments to revise and improve curriculum and instructional practices." Teachers at Hopkins Academy consistently seek out new and more effective ways to assess student performance with a wide range of assessment strategies including question and answer discussions, whiteboard use to answer teacher prompts, exit slips, thumb voting responses, catalyst questions, practice problems, short application practice, quizzes, short writing assignments, laboratory reports, lab technique activities, online assessment activities, such as No Red Ink, Quizlet, Edmodo, ASSISTments, reading guides, and active reading note checks. While teachers and administrators individually and collaboratively examine a range of evidence of student learning such as student work, common assessment results, and standardized assessment scores, when additional data from sources such as school-wide progress in achieving 21st century learning expectations, data from sending schools, and survey data from current students and alumni are also analyzed they will be fully informed and be better able to revise curriculum and improve instructional practice to ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve academic success.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Indicator 11

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## Conclusions

Grading and reporting practices are rarely reviewed and revised to meet the needs of faculty, students and community and to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. According to the Endicott survey, only 12.5 percent of staff members believe that school-wide grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised. At times, teachers, individually and in small groups, reflect on their own grading and reporting practices. For example, both the English and social studies teachers recently created standardized rubrics for writing throughout the grades in order to provide consistency and acquisition of common skills. In 2016-2017, the school district began utilizing SchoolBrains by Aptium, a data driven program which allows educators to manage and analyze student information and enables staff, students, and parents to access information about student progress in a timely and efficient manner. This program allows for real-time access so that counselors, teachers, and other staff members will be able to address issues both formally and informally with students and their parents. In addition, the hope is that this access will encourage students to take more responsibility for their performance by monitoring their grades frequently, will allow parents to be more engaged in their children's education, and will assist teachers as they identify and implement strategies to assist students with specific needs. Current grading practices are outlined the Hopkins Academy student handbook and specific grading guidelines are published in individual teacher's syllabus which is distributed to students at the beginning of the year. However, until the school develops its core values and beliefs, grading and reporting practices cannot be aligned with them. When grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core value and beliefs about learning, student grades will represent an accurate reflection of what teachers truly believe about student learning and will better assist students in achieving the school's stated learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 4 Commendations

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## Commendation

The use of SchoolBrains and the school's website to communicate student progress to students and their families

## Commendation

The use of data analysis to inform curriculum and instruction and to more effectively meet the needs of all students and the administrative team's analysis of a wide variety of assessment data to inform curricular and other program changes

## Commendation

The variety of effective responses used by teachers to address student achievement inequities

## Commendation

The involvement of students in creating their own rubrics prior to engaging in a research process

## Commendation

The wide range and variety of formative and summative assessments used to measure student learning

## Commendation

The assessment of student learning that incorporates student choice and self-assessment

## Commendation

The use of project-based assessment that emphasizes student collaboration, inquiry, critical thinking, and creativity

## Commendation

The informal collaboration among teachers involved with the development and revision of formative and summative assessments

## Commendation

The small, intimate class groupings that enable teachers to provide an abundance of timely and verbal corrective

feedback

## **Commendation**

The frequent practice of encouraging students to revise most assessments based on corrective feedback thus providing them with multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning

# Standard 4 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop and implement a formal, ongoing process using specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student achievement of the school's 21st century learning skills

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a process for communicating individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectation to students and their families and whole-school progress to the school community

## Recommendation

Ensure professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement

## Recommendation

Communicate 21st century learning expectations and unit-specific goals prior to beginning of each unit

## Recommendation

Provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as corresponding rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement prior to all summative assessments

## Recommendation

Ensure teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments

## Recommendation

Ensure that all student work is assessed and feedback is provided in a timely manner

## Recommendation

Ensure teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning

## **Recommendation**

Develop and implement a formal process to regularly review and revise grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment to the school's core values and beliefs about learning

# Standard 5 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The school community has not consciously and continuously built or maintained a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. According to the Endicott survey, 54 percent of the staff agree that the school's culture is safe, positive, and supportive and 57 percent of students agree that they feel safe at school. In the last year, 80 students staged a sit-in to protest the unfair treatment of women in the school, resulting in a change in the dress code. There are many clubs that have been established within the school over the past several years, including a Gay-Straight Alliance and a diversity club, reflecting student concerns about the nature of the school culture. There is a gender neutral bathroom, and signage at the other bathrooms indicating the location of the gender neutral bathroom within the building. The student handbook lays out a restorative justice protocol that the school uses as part of its discipline program. The principal, as the sole administrator in the school, is responsible for enforcing the code of conduct; however, students report inconsistencies with discipline in that the rules within the handbook are often not followed consistently, and that the handbook is not regularly referenced or addressed at the beginning of the year. Civic and social expectations were developed and approved in the past year and are posted throughout the school; however, the means to assess student achievement of these expectations has yet to be developed or implemented. Roughly half of the student body and the faculty support the belief that there is a lack of equitable and inclusive academic experiences for all students. The school has faced recent adversity in the form of racial discrimination and gender inequalities that manifested in student demonstrations and disruption of the school climate. Teachers and students felt that the principal was not doing enough to ensure the safety of everyone in the building. This perceived lack of action to address social and civic concerns caused a larger rift between students and administrators. Students have felt for some time that the principal does not value nor seek their input on school-wide decisions. Students feel undervalued and disconnected from their school, which is reflected in the Endicott survey where only 33 percent of the students agree that they are proud of their school. Furthermore, many students have the perception that there are certain students, such as athletes, who are privileged and are treated differently than others. Hopkins Academy is a more homogeneously grouped population and students representing the largely white majority acknowledge that they feel that students of color are not made to feel a part of the school's culture. Minority students admitted that they do not feel comfortable in the current school climate and they believe that more racially insensitive issues will arise again, as they did last year, because that particular situation was never properly addressed with the faculty, staff, or students in order to effectively move forward. Any activity or clubs that emerged to the forefront because of the issues did so because there were teachers willing to step forward to help students articulate their concerns. These teachers listened to the students' needs, and then helped to form a plan and put it into action. These efforts led to the creation of a gender equity club, an increase in enrollment of the diversity club, changes to the dress code in the student handbook, and the bringing in of a guest speaker to address the student body about the struggles people experience being a minority in the United States. When the school 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, student learning will be enhanced.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey
- school website

# Standard 5 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school is an equitable and inclusive learning environment that promotes 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 fostering heterogeneity; however, it is not yet supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations because they have not yet been created and implemented. All freshmen are required to take the same English class but have more choices as upperclassmen. Courses are offered in Advanced Placement (AP), honors, and college preparatory levels in most discipline areas. More importantly, the school has eliminated prerequisites and opened up Advanced Placement and honors classes to all students thus ensuring greater heterogeneity throughout the curriculum. Students have the opportunity to take Virtual High School courses beyond the traditional classroom setting if they are not offered at the high school. Hopkins Academy has also partnered with both Greenfield and Holyoke Community Colleges to provide dual enrollment opportunities for its students. In addition, Hopkins Academy has an endowment that supports low income students who want to take college classes but cannot afford them. Because the school is equitable and inclusive, ensuring that all students have access to challenging academic opportunities, students are encouraged to challenge themselves, take responsibility for their own learning, and achieve the school's academic expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 5 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

At this time, there is no formal, ongoing program or process 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. However, the nature of this small school with its low student-to-teacher ratio lends itself to a culture where everybody know each other fairly well and strong, productive relationships between teachers and students are the norm. Students report that most, if not all, have an adult in the building that they can go to if they are having difficulties. The teachers in the middle school meet weekly to address any students at risk, and involve the guidance counselor. The high school teachers also meet regularly to address the students at risk. When the school has a formal, ongoing program or process through which each student has an adult in the school who knows the student well, it assists the students in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 5 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

There is very little evidence that, in order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff have engaged 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. Professional development has been in a state of flux for the past few years as the time and resources have been utilized for state-mandated trainings such as special education and conflict-of-interest law, and restraint training. Also, within the last few years there has been a high turnover of personnel and a main focus on preparing for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation visit. In addition, during the past year, sensitive issues involving race and gender equity, along with significant behavioral concerns, caused the administration to focus on addressing those issues rather than the intended professional development plan. Nearly 63 percent of the faculty feel that the professional development does not support improved instruction and assessment. Recently, Hopkins Academy has begun taking a new approach toward professional development as teachers have more freedom to choose their own goal-oriented professional development opportunities subject to the approval of the superintendent. While professional development continues to exist at Hopkins Academy, the focus has been on other priorities besides teaching and learning. When, through professional development, the principal and professional staff engage professional discourse, which specifically targets reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning; and uses resources outside the school to maintain currency with best practices, and sustain the practice over time, teachers will acquire and apply the skills to improve student learning and curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. While teachers are evaluated and assessed according to state standards and contract language. The evaluation and supervision process is based on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) Educator Evaluation Protocol which includes goal setting and the collection/submission of artifacts related to the teachers goals. During the course of the evaluation cycle, several walkthrough observations are conducted and recorded using TeachPoint software to provide immediate feedback and one or two more formal observations followed by a conference with the evaluator. The evaluations of teachers are conducted by the principal and special education staff is evaluated by the special education administrator. While the department chairs are able to observe other teachers in their departments, contractually, they do not evaluate those teachers in order to improve instruction. The superintendent, director of student support services, the principal as well as all staff received professional development on the educator evaluation system prior to its implementation. According to the Endicott survey, 54 percent of the faculty agree that they receive valuable and constructive feedback to improve student learning. When school leaders use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning, it ensures that all teachers receive relevant and specific feedback to improve their practice, and as a result students are more successful in achieving the school's stated learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

The organization of time does not yet support research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. Students report that the 84-minute period is too long, and the 50-minute periods are too short. Classes are often interrupted for administrative tasks, such as students being called down to guidance. Many teachers, who are the only professionals who teach a specific subject collaborate outside of the school with teachers from other districts. The schedule does not provide much opportunity for teachers to collaborate or observe other colleagues teaching. There is an initiative for teachers to develop their own professional development which has been especially beneficial for teachers who teach Advanced Placement courses or if someone is the only teacher in their department teaching a specific course. Although teachers have a course load of five classes, some teachers are teaching five different courses, which can be difficult to prepare for each day, and many staff members have multiple responsibilities within the school. Teachers are required to be available after school for 40 minutes each day for common planning time, to provide extra help to students, and to meet with parents. When the organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students, the learning environment will be more conducive to enhanced student learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- department leaders

# Standard 5 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Student load and class size at Hopkins Academy enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. Class sizes can range from as few as 5 students up to 30 students in some classes with an average teacher load of 59 students. According to the Endicott survey, over 71 percent of students, 67 percent of staff, and 70.7 percent of parents agree that class sizes are sufficient to meet the needs of individual students. Class sizes are very manageable and that the student-teacher ratio is highly conducive to ensuring significant individual attention to meet all students' needs. This school has a private school feel that provides adequate staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, and equipment. As a result of extremely manageable student load and class size, teachers are able to provide personalized attention and assistance to students to better meet the learning needs of individual students.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

The principal is unable to provide instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations because the school has not yet developed and implemented these standards. According to the Endicott survey, only 32 percent of staff agree that instructional leadership is consistent with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. Hopkins Academy does not have a set of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations which has been developed by all of the school community's constituents and has been integrated in the overall climate and culture of the school. Therefore, because of underlying issues that have not been resolved and addressed in accordance with a set of fundamental core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, the climate still holds racial and gender discord, lack of trust and respect, and frustration, all of which currently affect teaching and learning. When the school has a clear set of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations implemented and effectively rooted into guiding instructional leadership, the climate and culture of the school will foster an environment of civic and social responsibility focused on learning expectations and student achievement.

## Sources of Evidence

- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 9

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## Conclusions

Teachers, students, and parents are not yet involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. According to the Endicott survey, only 33 percent of the staff believe that teachers, students, and parents are afforded meaningful roles in decision-making. There are many organizations such as the Board of Trustees, Hadley Mother's Club, Edward Hopkins Foundation, the parent-teacher organization, and athletic booster and band boosters clubs that support the school and student activities, but parents' involvement in decision-making at the school appears to be limited. According to the Endicott survey, 58 percent of parents agree that they have decision-making power within the school. There are many clubs within the school that began through teacher initiation, are student-run, and have lasted for many years; however, teachers and students believe that they are not provided with meaningful roles in decision-making at the school. The Endicott survey reveals that 25 percent of the student body agree they have any input in important decisions that are made in the school. Students are frustrated because they do not feel like they are being heard or respected by the administration. Many students, especially seniors, feel that he does not care about them and is dismissive when they bring issues or concerns to his attention. Teachers are also concerned that unilateral decisions are being made by the administration, with little notice given and no opportunity to provide input or feedback. Staff admit that the principal is approachable and willing to engage in professional discourse, but also state that they are constantly frustrated by a perceived lack of follow through or feedback from the principal. Trust between the principal, faculty, and staff has been negatively impacted by recent decisions to handle serious issues and sensitive topics which, to them, were largely unsuccessful and have left them disillusioned. Without core values and beliefs guiding decision-making, many organizations exist within the school and community that include teachers, students, and parents, but because those constituents do not have any meaningful role in decision-making, and as a result, they all share an acute sense of frustration. When the school provides teachers, students, and parents with meaningful and defined roles in decision-making, the resulting sense of ownership and responsibility increases motivation and strengthens the culture of the school.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- students
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 10

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## Conclusions

Teachers, to some extent, exercise initiative or leadership essential to the improvement of the school and increase students' engagement in learning. Many teachers develop their own professional development, often connecting with teachers in other districts to discuss teaching and learning and share successful instructional strategies. The principal initiated department chairs last year, who assist with leadership in the building. He also created two head teacher positions; at times, they assume some of the principal's responsibilities such as addressing discipline referrals and attendance issues. The school council includes teacher representatives, is involved with assisting in the governance of the school, and publishes agendas and minutes on the school's website. The minutes have not been updated since November 2016. Teachers take the initiative to develop their own courses, such as programming with LEGO Mindstorms, a biomedical class, and a personal finance class that will soon be required for graduation. Several teachers stated that, in the absence of leadership from the principal about certain issues, they have stepped up and assumed a leadership role. As an example, teachers responded to students' interests and concerns by forming and advising several clubs, especially in the wake of last spring's turmoil around racial and gender equity. When the school promotes a culture where teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school, student engagement in learning increases and they are more likely to be successful academically and achieve the school's stated learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 11

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## Conclusions

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive with most aspects involving the high school except about achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school board is very supportive of the superintendent and principal and applauds both the leaders for keeping them involved in major decisions that are being made in the school and district. They feel that they are a cohesive unit built on trust, transparency and collaboration. The school board also feels that its responsibility is to hear the needs of the principal and superintendent and then to find the resources and funds to address those needs. While there is trust and transparency among the school board, superintendent, and the principal, which is based on the students' best interests, there is no collaboration and reflection about the development of the school's 21st century learning expectations as that process has not yet begun. The school board supports and applauds the efforts of communication from the superintendent and principal; however, there is very little collaboration about the learning expectations due to their absence. When the school board, superintendent, and principal collaborate in a reflective and constructive manner to ensure that the school's 21 century learning expectations are being met, there is a unanimity of purpose to enables that all students graduate with the academic, social, and civic skills necessary for success.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teachers
- students
- school board
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 12

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## Conclusions

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. The principal initiated department chairs and head teacher positions in the past two years. The principal also added a system of restorative justice, but the handbook, which includes the protocols for restorative justice, is not consistently followed, and the delivery of disciplinary consequences for violations of the code of conduct is also inconsistent. According to the Endicott survey, eighty-four percent of parents agree that the principal has decision-making authority and only slightly more than half of the staff concur. The principal allows elective teachers the ability to design their own courses, which are approved by the superintendent and school board. One of these classes, Personal Finance, will be a graduation requirement in 2020. The principal has eliminated prerequisites for taking Advanced Placement and honors level courses thus creating more equitable access to those challenging courses for all students. The school board and superintendent provide principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school so that important decisions can be more fully accepted and embraced by all members of school community.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 5 Commendations

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## Commendation

The highly involved Gay-Straight Alliance and diversity clubs that are committed to improving the culture of the school

## Commendation

The elimination of prerequisites, which provides access to Advanced Placement and honors classes for all students

## Commendation

The relationship with area community colleges to provide dual enrollment opportunities for students to expand their learning beyond the walls of their school

## Commendation

The low student-to-teacher ratio that allows most students to have an adult in the school who knows them well

## Commendation

The manageable class sizes across the curriculum, which allow for more personal attention to be provided to all students

## Commendation

The high degree of involvement in a variety of clubs and organizations by teachers, students, and parents

## Commendation

The initiative and leadership exercised by teachers to improve the school and increase student engagement

## Commendation

The collaborative and supportive relationship that exists among the school board, superintendent, and principal

## Commendation

The provision of sufficient decision-making authority to the principal by the school board and superintendent

# Standard 5 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Ensure that all aspects of the school culture are safe, positive, respectful, and supportive, including an enforcement of the code of conduct which is fair and equitable

## Recommendation

Address and resolve the issues regarding race, gender, equity, and respect, which continue to adversely affect the culture of the school

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a formal program or process to ensure that every student in the school has an adult, other than the guidance counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's learning expectations

## Recommendation

Focus professional development to facilitate professional discourse among the principal and professional staff which specifically targets reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning; uses resources outside the school to maintain currency with best practices, and enables teachers to acquire and apply the skills to improve student learning and curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

## Recommendation

Ensure that the organization of time addresses the learning needs of all students and the collaborative professional development needs of the faculty

## Recommendation

Ensure instructional leadership is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations to repair the trust and confidence in leadership with all faculty and staff

## Recommendation

Provide formal opportunities for students, parents, and teachers to participate in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making to promote responsibility and ownership

## Recommendation

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

# Standard 6 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Hopkins Academy has made some progress toward formalizing a process to develop timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for some students, including identified and at-risk students, although is not yet able to support each student's achievement of the learning expectations. This is a work in progress as only 18 percent of students, 41.7 percent of teachers and 54.8 percent of parents agree that the school meets the needs of all students. The newly developed student at-risk (SAR) team meets on alternate Wednesdays to identify middle school students in need of strategic intervention to ensure academic, social, behavioral, and emotional success. In collaboration with regular education teachers, special education teachers, special education coordinator, school adjustment counselor, school counselor, and the school psychologist, the team implements appropriate interventions based on student data and anecdotal evidence. Examples of specific interventions are decreased work load, modified assignments, extended time, or the assignment to an academic skills class. For students in grades 9-12, the child study team process is initiated for any student identified as a struggling learner. Referral forms are submitted to the child study team after Tier 1 interventions have been implemented with fidelity and it is determined that the student is still not achieving an acceptable measure of success. The team convenes with all appropriate parties, including but not limited to, the parent(s), the referring teacher(s), and community agency providers if applicable. Tiers 2 and 3 interventions are identified, and the coordination of an action plan is developed and monitored over a six-week period to mitigate the area of concern. Follow-up meetings are held to analyze progress monitoring data to determine whether the intervention strategies need to continue or to be modified accordingly. The team then has the option to consider a special education referral if interventions are not improving student outcomes. Evidence of an action plan was provided for the team to verify recent implementation. The guidance counselor, school adjustment counselor and psychologist work collaboratively to provide group and individual counseling services to students with identified specific needs. There is a clear process established to delineate the level of services provided among the counselors. According to the Endicott survey, 71 percent of the staff agrees that counseling services are regularly provided to all students. Recent work has been completed to implement a re-entry process for students returning from hospitalization to assist in the gradual return to school. Following a series of issues involving race and bullying last year which many feel were not fully resolved, there is still a perceived need to address concerns about mental health issues and diversity. At this time, it is not able to be determined the extent to which support services and intervention strategies support students' achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations because they have not yet been developed. As the the school fully develops timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, and can support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations, the support team will be able to develop targeted processes to meet the needs of all student in academic, social, and civic domains.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- students
- central office personnel
- school support staff

# Standard 6 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school provides adequate information to families, especially those in need, about available support services; however, the practices are not consistent. Each year, Hopkins Academy hosts a Back-to-School Night for all parents within the first month of school. Parent conferences are held at the end of the first quarter, with families encouraged to make appointments with their children's teachers. The school encourages parents to be active participants in their children's education, as parents are considered to be integral to the learning process. The Hopkins Academy Student Handbook articulates information about student support services such as school guidance and counseling, health, special education, and English language learners. The use of email and direct phone contact is the most common form of communication between home and school, with both the health office and superintendent's office providing regular newsletter communication to the school community. Resource racks outside the health office provide information on health screenings, as well as available community resources, targeted at improving the access to health and wellness services. Parents indicate that the health office is extremely responsive and communicates in a timely and efficient manner regarding student injury or medical concerns, while maintaining confidentiality. Additionally, the school-wide student information system, SchoolBrains, is used for reporting student progress and grades by providing direct access to both students and parents. Some members of the school-based team indicate that the School Brains portal is updated daily; however, parents indicate that there is inconsistent updating from teacher to teacher. Also, students directly reported that it is "not updated regularly and is clunky to use." The school guidance and counseling department relies on its website to provide information to families about department-specific initiatives. Although parents know the information is there, there is not a system in place to inform parents of where to look. Parents rely solely on the superintendent's newsletter to find out about upcoming events, awards, or updates. In addition, the guidance counselor is not able to email all parents as a group, or through the phone messaging system, ConnectEd, and there is a concern among guidance staff that information from the school guidance counselor which is distributed directly to the students may not always reach the parents. The special education staff communicates with the families of their students through weekly email updates, mailings, Google Classroom, and invites all parents to attend Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transition meetings. The high school special education teacher assists families in understanding and becoming familiar with the services for which they may be eligible under Chapter 688, as well as the availability of workshops they may find beneficial. Additionally, home visits are completed by the middle school special education teacher when deemed appropriate. When the school communicates information about support services to students and families, especially those most in need, student engagement and parent involvement will increase resulting in an improvement in student achievement.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- school support staff
- school website

# Standard 6 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Support services staff uses technology to deliver some services to students. SchoolBrains is currently the school-wide student information system which houses all student records, demographic information, attendance, conduct, and grades. However, some parents and students experience difficulty effectively using this important technology. The guidance counselor implements the use of Naviance for all students to enhance their college and career readiness skills. Students are introduced to Naviance in grade 7 to explore and identify their personal strengths. During the grades 7-12 experience, students annually access their accounts to help align their strengths and interests to individual post-secondary goals. The data assists the counselor in improving student outcomes and connecting their learning to individual goals. The counselor utilizes the program to assist students in developing personalized resumes, conduct advanced college searches, and access local and national scholarship applications. Naviance is also used as the main portal for surveying students to aid in course selection and inform the construction of the school's master schedule. The school counseling program also maintains a website which provides current information about upcoming events, college visits, links to Naviance, College Board, SAT, ACT, Hopkins Academy School Profile, MEFA, FASFA, Common Application, academic opportunities, job opportunities, and upcoming courses available to students. The Hopkins Academy website directly links to the guidance page where families have the ability to directly contact the school counselor through the site. However, the phone system does not consistently work properly and the guidance counselor does not have access to call classrooms from her office. Health services uses a nursing software program called SNAP Health Center which is a comprehensive medical documentation and tracking software, which enables the office to track daily office visits, medications, immunizations, physicals, acute and chronic medical conditions, treatments, and state-mandated screenings. Additionally, the software enables the school nurse to generate accident reports, referral letters for physicians and parents, and extensive annual Massachusetts DPH reports. SNAP also enables her to analyze health data for trends and use data to inform the health office's prevention and wellness initiatives and create reports for the Wellness Committee and the School Committee. Special education/transition teachers use Google Classroom to create copies of the paper templates, outlines, etc. produced by regular education teachers that students are being asked to use in their regular education classes giving students the ability to access them in an electronically if they choose. The high school special education teacher also frequently shares the electronic tools she has created with regular education teachers to allow the electronic tools to be used by the students who are not in the Academic Skills class. Additionally, a number of students are encouraged to take a picture of notes and/or the homework assignment using their cell phones and, with permission, students access tools like Dictionary.com from their cell phones in class. The school psychologist utilizes technology for comprehensive evaluations, including the Psych Tools app to conduct student observations and manage student evaluations. Additionally, the school psychologist utilizes Pearson's Q-Global for online scoring of assessment data for analysis and interpretation. Computer-based scoring programs are also utilized for other assessment tools not available through Pearson. Special education teachers regularly consult with the assistive technology teacher to consider the needs for students on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), such as the use of iPads. In both the middle school and the high school, all students are allowed the use of a computer or Chromebook for written tasks. In addition, the high school special education/transitional teacher allows, with permission, students to access tools like Dictionary.com from their cell phones. Because support staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student, all students are better able to achieve success in meeting the schools learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

- parents
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website

# Standard 6 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

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; however, have yet to 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. There is one licensed guidance counselor, who implements a written comprehensive school counseling program that delivers all developmental guidance curriculum in grades 7-12, a .5 part-time school adjustment counselor, who holds an additional license in clinical social work and is trained in delivering eye movement desensitizing and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, and a .8 part-time nationally certified school psychologist. The counselor regularly meets with students to provide counseling in the following domains: personal, academic, college and career. The guidance staff effectively engages students in individual and group meetings. In addition to individual meetings with all students throughout the year, English and social studies teachers support the guidance counselor by providing access to their classroom so she can consistently deliver a developmental 7-12 guidance curriculum, which includes a variety of classroom lessons, such as Roadtrip Nation, Ivory Towers, and extensive College Board and Common Application work. To assist students in grades 7 and 8 in the transition from middle to high school, the guidance counselor employs a personal exploratory exercise and the use of critical documentaries such as Inocente which provide personal and social/emotional curriculum and initial training in the use of Naviance. Furthermore, she regularly schedules individual and group meetings with students to assist with college applications, scholarship applications, the completion of FAFSA forms, as well as assistance with essay and resume writing. Students also consistently reported that all students are able to easily access their counselor. The student support team, consisting of the guidance counselor, adjustment counselor, nurse, and school psychologist work collaboratively and demonstrate a strong partnership to address school culture issues surrounding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex (LGBTQI) awareness, stress management, depression and anxiety, substance abuse, and healthy relationships and dating violence. The team utilizes community agencies and social service providers when applicable. Also, they have developed a strong professional relationship with neighboring colleges and universities to utilize school counseling interns to enhance the service delivery in the department. Additionally, the school nurse is actively implementing Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) as the primary screening tool for substance abuse and will be committing to Signs of Suicide (S.O.S.) implementation next year. In extreme cases, local Clinical Support Options (CSO) is accessed for mobile crisis assistance and support. The counseling department focuses on a number of relevant data points to drive their decisions that focus on improving student achievement. They utilize the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Edwin Analytics, as well as MARC Jr., and School Climate Survey; however, the department does not yet solicit and use feedback from the school community to improve services to students. Additionally, the guidance department is not yet able to measure the success of their effort to ensure that students are achieving 21st century expectations. Because the school provides adequate professional 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; and, with the exception of feedback from the school community, use ongoing, relevant data to improve achievement, it is able to successfully meet the academic, social and emotional needs of all students by utilizing a wide variety of strategies and resources so students are better able to achieve success.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation

- teacher interview
- students
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

# 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 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; however, is not yet able to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The health services department works under the direction of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health School Health Unit mandates, in addition to following Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requirements. The health office is staffed with a full-time, nationally and state certified registered nurse to provide direct and preventative care. The school also employs a half-time district registered nurse, who is certified both in school and in public health nursing. The nurse leader makes every effort to maintain an adequate number of substitute per diem nurses who can provide services in the event of illness, professional development days, or at any other time the full-time nurse is not in the building. In the event a substitute registered nurse cannot be obtained, there is a district contract with a nursing agency to provide temporary staff, subject to availability. In addition, the district contracts with a pediatric physician who is available for consultation. Parents report that the health services provided at Hopkins Academy is an area of strength and a majority of students state that they feel comfortable going to the health office. The health services department is currently in the third year of a grant that focuses on mental health. Funded projects included opportunities for nurses to visit local mental health care providers, as well as agencies and institutions who serve their community. This project helped the school develop practices which identify students in need of a referral to outside mental health providers. In addition, the health services department funded an additional initiative that was previously identified by the school's athletic director to educate all staff regarding gender identity awareness and the need to alter the physical space of the building to support all students. Mindfulness practices have been introduced with the implementation of a drop-in yoga program offered to all middle and high school students. The athletic director also received training in yoga practices and dedicated time to incorporate yoga into the curriculum for all students. Protocols and procedures for suicide prevention and postvention were also developed with funding from the grant which led to staff education on suicide prevention delivered by a guest speaker. This year, funding will support community education regarding suicide prevention and the incorporation of Signs of Suicide (S.O.S.), a suicide prevention curriculum and screening program, into ninth grade health classes. The district is also participating in a grant-funded program, Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT), that will support the implementation of an evidence-based substance abuse prevention curriculum for middle school students. The school's health services staff use relevant assessment data to improve services and enhance school achievement. SNAP student health records management software is used to capture detailed information on every student's health-related encounter. Reports from the program allow the health office to analyze data, make decisions and evaluate outcomes. Data includes tracking of illnesses, injuries, screenings, and referrals. The health office regularly implements multiple health screenings each year including vision, hearing, body mass index (BMI), and SBIRT. The health office staff also participate in the annual mandated Massachusetts Department of Public Health Diabetes and Asthma Survey, as well as immunization surveys. In addition, the SPIFFY Prevention Needs Assessment Survey is issued every other year to students in grades 8, 10, and 12 to assess their involvement in a specific set of problem behaviors, as well as their exposure to a set of scientifically validated risk and protective factors. Historically, the risk and protective factors have been shown to influence the likelihood of academic success, school dropout, substance abuse, violence, and delinquency among youth. The district also participates in a variety of community collaboratives, including Hampshire Hope and the Regional School Health Task Force to stay informed of current best practices. SPIFFY survey results are made available to the community every two years by a local agency and can be accessed online. Educational materials and information on health services is made available to the community via the school website, the student handbook, brochures, and various mailings. The district nurse leader provides extensive data analysis and annually updates the community at school committee meetings, which are open to the public. Despite having an abundance of data to help improve services to students, the health office is not yet able to measure the success of their effort to ensure that students are achieving 21st century expectations. Because the school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who, provide direct

intervention and preventative health services to all students; are able to make necessary referrals to outside agencies to expand those services; communicate health information effectively to students and parents, and effectively utilize data from a variety of sources to improve their practice, the health and well-being of all students can be assured.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- parents
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

Library media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have adequate, licensed personnel, who is actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum; provides a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum; ensures that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school; is responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning; and conducts ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services; however, is not yet able to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. According to the Endicott survey, over 90 percent of the staff and 65 percent of parents agree that the school has sufficient certified/licensed library/media services personnel with one certified/licensed teacher librarian who functions as the director of the library and as a teacher. The librarian is increasingly involved in the implementation of the school's curriculum and in collaborating with teachers to integrate research and digital literacy skills into their lessons. Seventy-five percent of students use the library on a regular basis for research and assignments. The librarian works with the seventh grade to introduce the new students to the library web page and its resources. She also works with the middle school history teachers on research project support and source gathering. She presents various databases, NoodleTools, and web evaluation to the middle school science students as they begin their work on their science projects. The librarian has collaborated with the English department on a year-long "Reading Challenges" initiative and has worked with grades 7 and 8 to provide an overview of the available databases and citation creator websites as well as a Makerspace using two 3D printers in conjunction with the technology teacher.

The library provides a wide variety of resources in various formats for research and curriculum support and for the independent learning needs of both students and staff. The online Alexandria catalog provides a searchable database of the almost 7,500-item collection. There are links to the state funded Gale online databases, Britannica Encyclopedia, and online newspapers. The website also provides links to the Commonwealth eBook Collection of over 100,000 ebooks in three unique databases available on almost any digital device. The library houses over 200 DVDs for teacher use in the classroom and the library also subscribes to Britannica Image Quest, a database for copyright-free images. The library also has a small collection of popular magazines. The library houses 8 desktop computers, approximately 80 Chromebooks, and 20 Nook Readers, which are circulated to classes and teachers on an as-needed basis. A few years ago a burst pipe and resulting water damage in the library led to a forced weeding of the print collection. Because the Mass Library Association provides a wide variety of resources to support the curriculum, book replacement has been focused on fiction to encourage recreational reading. According to the Endicott survey, nearly half of the students indicate that they use the library often for class, and nearly 61 percent indicate library provides the resources they need. Sixty percent of students agree that the library provides a wide range of materials and technology and the library staff is willing to help them find information. The library is very accessible as it is open and staffed from 7:20 a.m. until 3 p.m. each day.

The librarian supports independent learning, especially through the library website, which is available as a resource for students and staff. The librarian leads both middle and high school book discussion groups as well as a staff discussion group focusing on social/emotional issues. She has fostered independent reading through collaboration with the English department in the annual Reading Challenges. She is developing a Makerspace with 3D printers as well as both high and low tech items to foster exploration and creativity among the students and staff. The librarian is also the site coordinator for the Virtual High School students enabling them to take classes beyond the curriculum offered at Hopkins Academy.

The librarian has used various assessment tools to determine the availability of adequate services in the library. Surveys have been sent to students, staff, and parents to help determine the need and desire for a Makerspace and she periodically requests input from teachers on video and magazine purchases. The librarian continually adjusts presentations and activities to respond to student needs and to increase understanding. Small groups of students regularly provide input for the placement of the flexible furniture in the library. The library is also utilized

as the showcase for many student projects. However, because the school has not yet developed its school-wide learning expectations, library media services cannot yet fully support students.

While library media services are integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices, is adequately staffed by a professional who is actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum; provides a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum; ensures that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school; is responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning; and conducts ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services; however, when the school's learning expectations are developed, each student can be better supported in meeting their goals.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- students
- parents
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities (ADA), and English language learners (ELL), have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel, who collaborate 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; however, is not yet able to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. There are two special education teachers, one for the middle school and one for the high school, with two paraprofessionals for the middle school and two and a half-time paraprofessionals for the high school. In addition, the high school special education teacher implements post-graduate vocational training. A special education coordinator schedules and chairs annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) and three-year re-evaluation meetings. The district also employs an occupational therapist (OT), physical therapist (PT), speech and language pathologist, and certified ELL teacher. Additionally, a board certified behavioral specialist and a part-time school psychologist (.8) are shared between Hadley Elementary and Hopkins Academy. Services can be provided, either formally or informally and on an as-needed basis, either in person or through email. Receiving direct services for students at Hopkins has been reported as challenging, due to the rotating schedule and the need to share some of the support staff with Hadley Elementary School.

In the middle school, most special education students are fully integrated into regular education classes. There are small group special education classes in both English and math, as well as small group classes in Academic Skills. The middle school special education teacher works with the English and math teachers to provide the curriculum, although at a slower pace. The middle school program has scheduled, daily common planning time to collaborate, which has improved their ability to discuss and implement interventions for at-risk students. This time is used in a variety of ways which include middle school meetings, grade 7 and grade 8 meetings, student at-risk team (SAR) meetings, meetings with support staff such as the guidance counselor, adjustment counselor, OT, PT, speech and language, and/or time to communicate with parents.

In the high school, the majority of students are fully included. There are unique circumstances where students have 1:1 paraprofessionals with them in some classes, with the stated goal of reducing support over time to increase student independence. Currently, there is one student in the high school in a substantially separate program to receive English, math, pre-vocational training and Activities for Daily Life (ADL) training in a self-contained model, but is included in gym, art, chorus and band without the support of a paraprofessional. Time for staff to collaborate is planned around other scheduling demands, and often happens after school.

Collaboration between teachers and support staff includes discussing particular skills that teachers want all students to develop, sharing of ideas, and working with students at risk. Other forms of collaboration include planning or designing instruction and assessments that meet the needs of all students. The amount of collaboration that is currently present in the middle school is due to the time which is built into their schedule, while collaboration at the high school is problematic because the current schedule does not provide or allow for common planning time. At all grade levels, annual reviews and three-year re-evaluation and transition assessments are done as required by law, but this type of assessment can be done more frequently if requested by the team. In the high school grades, all students in the Academic Skills class complete transition assessments and activities.

The school psychologist provides psychological services to 22 students at Hopkins Academy in the form of counseling and/or consultation services. Survey questionnaires and rating scales are administered to students and/or teachers to solicit feedback about services rendered and to determine the effectiveness of services provided. Informal feedback is also collected to determine areas of need. In addition, the Hopkins Academy school psychologist conducts 20-25 psychological evaluations annually, which includes the collection of data to help identify effective interventions to ensure student success. Because the school has yet to develop its learning expectations, the collaboration among staff and feedback from the school community cannot yet help ensure

students meet the 21st century learning expectations.

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities (ADA), and English language learners (ELL), have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel, who collaborate 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; however, when the school can ensure collaboration of staff and feedback from the school community based on the 21st century learning expectations, the opportunity for students to meet with academic success will be greatly enhanced.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 6 Commendations

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## Commendation

The creation of the student support teams at both the middle school and high school that actively identify and address the needs of struggling learners

## Commendation

The use of data and a collaborative approach to problem solving by the student support team to make informed decisions to increase student achievement

## Commendation

The effort by the student support team to provide communication to parents about available services

## Commendation

The use of SchoolBrains and Naviance to provide access to parents and students regarding grades, student progress, and college and career planning

## Commendation

The use of a variety of technology modules to deliver the school's grades 7-12 developmental services

## Commendation

The collaborative and cohesive teamwork of the school counseling services to provide a range of coordinated services to ensure the academic, social, and emotional well-being of all students; the delivery of a written, comprehensive grades 7-12 school counseling program that is aligned with the Mass Model, outlined by the Massachusetts School Counseling Association; and the use of interns from local colleges and universities to enhance the delivery of services to students

## Commendation

The preventative health and direct intervention services, which effectively reach all students; the ongoing student health office initiatives which are data driven and research-based; and the active provision of information to families and the community through a variety of resources by the health office

## Commendation

The availability of a variety of technology in the library and its ease of access demonstrated by the self-check in/out system for Chromebooks

## **Commendation**

The provision of comprehensive and effective support services through an inclusionary model to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students

# Standard 6 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations that will inform student support services as they work to provide an effective range of coordinated services to enhance student learning and well-being

## Recommendation

Communicate the student at-risk/child study team process to all faculty

## Recommendation

Address the increasing mental health concerns and global issues surrounding diversity

## Recommendation

Ensure the school provides information to families, especially those most in need, about available student support services

## Recommendation

Ensure students and families can use SchoolBrains to improve student learning and well-being

## Recommendation

Ensure collaboration and information sharing between support services and all teachers

## Recommendation

Ensure that all counselors have access to appropriate communication technology to effectively communicate with teachers and parents

# Standard 7 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for numerous school programs, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, and sufficient equipment and instructional materials and supplies; however, funding for sufficient staffing, a full-range of technology support, and expanded programs is limited. Programs, staffing, and services for students and staff at Hopkins Academy are currently funded by the district's operating budget, proposed by the school committee and approved annually by taxpayers. According to the Endicott survey, over 50 percent of staff, students, and parents maintain that acceptable funding for the schools is provided by the community and district's governing body. For the past several years, the operating budget has increased annually by just over 2 percent, providing the financial resources for a level services budget. The operating budget is enhanced by other funding sources such as state and federal grants, the Hopkins Academy Trustees, Helping Hearts 4 Hadley Schools, the Hadley Mothers' Club, the Hopkins Athletic Booster Club, and a variety of fundraisers provide additional financial resources. As a result, current programs, instructional materials, technology support, professional development and staffing are funded dependably; however, additional staffing and new programs are not included in the approved budget. According to the Endicott survey, only 30 percent of the faculty and students agree that there is adequate funding for professional and support staff. There are requests for additional staffing including paraprofessionals to assist students with special needs, a part-time mathematics teacher, and personnel for technology support. Funding for technology support has provided for the installation of wireless access, electronic white boards in most classrooms, desktop computers, and an increasing number of Chromebooks available to students in alignment with the district's technology plan. In spite of these improvements, students report that the technology available at Hopkins Academy does not adequately meet their learning needs because the network is often unreliable and at times cannot support the demand. The community and the district's governing body consistently provide dependable funding for Hopkins Academy to support current school programs, professional development and curriculum revision, equipment, and instructional materials and supplies; however, funding to support additional staffing requests, technology support, and expanded programs, will enhance opportunities for student learning and academic success.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teachers
- school board
- department leaders
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Hopkins Academy funds the maintenance and repair of the building and the cleaning of the school on a daily basis; however, it has not developed nor planned programs for the maintenance, cataloging, or replacement of equipment. The maintenance and cleaning of the building is completed on a daily schedule by a full-time day custodian and an evening staff of 1.5 custodians. Parents and staff agree that the building is clean and well-maintained. The day custodian handles most minor maintenance/repair issues and 70 percent of the staff agree that repairs are made in a timely manner. He is also responsible for coverage at the elementary school and is supplied with a cell phone for contact in order for him to respond to daily issues which occur in the school. Most larger maintenance issues like the replacement of furniture, roof repairs, and items that would disrupt the school environment are handled in the summer. In addition, routine whole-school cleaning also occurs during the summer when there is access to additional staff who work to prepare the building for opening in September. In fiscal year (FY) 15 the maintenance budget was \$536,339, which increased to \$564,686 in FY 16. These funds were used to purchase basic custodial and maintenance supplies and to provide heat and electric power to the building. Planned maintenance projects, which are spelled out in the capital plan, demonstrate a vision for funding and accomplishing significant long-term projects to improve the school. Air quality and the delivery of heat in the school is good and all classrooms are equipped with original Univents and most classrooms have supplemental heating and cooling provided by heat pump units, which can be individually controlled by the classroom teacher. There is no centralized system for the cataloging of equipment, which is a task left to individual teachers or department heads. Similarly, there is no program or plan to maintain or replace equipment as that occurs on as-needed basis. Teachers expressed concerns about the two existing rented copiers which are repaired by a contracted service company, stating that they are often unreliable resulting in frequent breakdowns leading to long lines for teachers needing to copy instructional materials. The school funds the maintenance and repair of the building and keeping the school clean on a daily basis; however, when the school takes appropriate steps to plan and fund programs and projects to ensure proper maintenance of the building and to catalog and repair or replace equipment, then the community can be assured that the facility will continue to provide a safe and healthy environment which supports student learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- Endicott survey

# Standard 7 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

To some extent 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. A long-range plan that includes programs, services, enrollment and staffing needs has not been developed recently. The district's five-year capital plan identifies and prioritizes eight projects that address facility, technology, and capital needs. For Hopkins Academy, these projects include the replacement of obsolete computers and insufficient and obsolete network components, addressing the condition of the athletic fields, remodeling the girls' locker room, adding new serving lines in the cafeteria, replacing external grease traps, and purchasing a new school bus. Each year as part of the budget process, the capital plan is reviewed and updated. In the fall, the school's business manager reviews the current capital plan and then it is submitted to the superintendent. Once the superintendent has proposed the capital plan, it is placed on a school committee meeting agenda for their review and approval. After school committee approval, the plan is forwarded to the town administrator and the town capital planning committee for their consideration and incorporation into the town's capital plan. The school committee, superintendent, and high school principal report that the community consistently supports the school system's requests for capital projects and improvements. When a comprehensive long-range plan is developed and implemented that includes facility, technology, and capital needs as well as programs, services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, the community will be able to plan and provide dependable and adequate funding to support the delivery of curriculum, instruction, programs, and services.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. The process, which begins each fall, involves department heads who coordinate the teachers' requests and then present them to the principal. Teachers without a department head submit their budget requests directly to the principal. Following a review by the principal, the budget then is sent to the central office, usually by December. After a review by the business manager and the superintendent who make appropriate reductions, the budget which is traditionally level funded, is presented to the school committee for a vote in February/March. At that point, the budget is the responsibility of the town and is reviewed by the finance committee which, in April, makes a recommendation to town meeting which has a fairly long history of approving the school budget. Often due to unexpected costs such as special education expenses, including out-of-district placements or transportation and tuition costs, the budget has been frozen at the mid-year point. Because the school engages in a budget process that engages all stakeholders, teachers can be assured that they will get what they need to provide meaningful instruction for their students.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teachers
- students
- school board
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Despite several challenges presented by an aged facility, the school site and plant support the delivery of high quality programs and services. Hopkins Academy was constructed in 1954 and expanded to include a cafetorium, music room, and gymnasium in 1965. Over the last decade there have been several significant upgrades to the facility which improve the comfort and safety of students and staff. A new gym floor was installed in 2010 and is meticulously maintained each year. Following a burst pipe and subsequent water damage in the library, the furniture and carpeting was replaced. The roof was replaced in 2012 and two new boilers were installed in 2010. To provide additional heating and cooling, almost every room has an individual heat pump unit which can be controlled by teachers using the room. A relatively new elevator/lift provides access to the second floor and, when there is an outage during a storm, a new generator provides emergency power which is delivered to an updated electrical panel. Technology infrastructure has been upgraded with wireless access available throughout the building although there are times when that service is troublesome or unreliable. The food service program is self-sustaining charging \$3.00 for a full student lunch which includes full access to a fresh salad bar daily. The department budget is augmented by a reliance on available United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) food commodities. A local cooperative provides locally grown produce to the school in a farm-to-table initiative, although this option is limited due to higher food costs. The school lunch program experiences approximately 40-43 percent daily student participation rate with approximately 23 percent of students receiving the benefits of a free or reduced lunch. There is a new After the Bell breakfast program where students can go to the cafetorium after first period to take "grab and go" from an array of freshly prepared breakfast items. The kitchen is well-maintained with updated grease traps recently installed and a point-of-sale system for collecting lunch revenue. Most of the kitchen staff has been ServSafe trained. Despite many improvements to the facility over the past few years, some issues which affect programs and services still remain. The locker rooms are in need of major renovation and, in fact, the project to upgrade the girls' locker room is included in next year's capital plan with the boys' locker room to follow. Plans have also been developed and funds allocated to renovate and expand the athletic fields on a newly acquired eight-acre parcel of land adjacent to the school. The most widespread facility issues involve the lack of available storage throughout the building. As an example, physical education supplies are stored in a variety of locations in and around the locker rooms, including in an exit corridor, which presents an obstacle and potential safety issue. Although the building is over a half-century old and shows the wear and tear of constant use, it is clean and well-maintained; major issues have been addressed in a timely manner; and the building supports the delivery of high quality programs and services. According to the Endicott survey, nearly two-thirds of parents, staff, and students agree with that assessment. Because the school site and plant support the delivery of high quality programs and services, with the exception of storage issues which present potential safety issues, students can be assured of an educational environment where they are safe and well-supported in achieving the school's stated learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teachers
- students
- school board
- department leaders
- school leadership
- 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 meet all applicable laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations. Routine inspections of the school are conducted by the Hadley Fire Department and the food services area is inspected regularly by the town health department and by officials from the state Office of Food and Nutrition. Current documentation and records of inspection are displayed in the appropriate areas of the school and demonstrate compliance with all applicable regulations. Fire extinguishers and alarms, the elevator/lift, the cafetorium stage curtains, and boilers are inspected and serviced routinely. Documentation of inspections, maintenance, the Integrated Pest Management plan, and all of the material safety data sheets (MSDS) are kept up to date and secured by the custodian. The school also conducts routine fire drills in accordance with state regulations. The school maintains compliance with all laws and local regulations, assuring students that they will be able to learn in a safe, healthy environment.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teachers
- students
- school board
- community members
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Most of the staff at Hopkins Academy actively engage parents and caregivers as partners in each student's education and reach out to families who have been less connected with the school. Ninety-two percent of the staff report that they actively engage caregivers as partners while 80 percent of parents state that they are solicited as partners in their children's education. The school maintains an informative website which provides access to a number of important documents as well as contact information for all staff members. The site also contains links to the guidance, library, and athletic pages where information related to those departments can be found. The superintendent sends out a weekly email to all families based on information provided by the building principals, which includes announcements pertaining to both Hopkins Academy and Hadley Elementary School. Emergency messages and other important information is conveyed to families via Connect Ed, an automated phone messaging system. A sign on the lawn in front of the school announces upcoming events. Through the school's student information system, SchoolBrains, students and parents have access to grades, attendance and other information electronically. Paper versions of all correspondence are sent to families who lack access or would prefer that form of communication. Teachers reach out to parents via phone calls, emails, and meetings and state that they use various forms of communication to report student progress to parents or to deliver a positive comment regarding a student's effort or performance. Many teachers maintain their own webpage or use Google Docs to share classroom information, assignments, notes, or important links with their students. Guidance counselors communicate extensively and in a timely manner with parents of students, especially those identified with academic, social, or emotional issues. Both guidance and the administration hold a variety of evening informational meetings during the school year such as an open house, college admissions and financial aid nights, and informational meetings for incoming seventh and ninth grade students. Despite the effort to inform parents of these events, they are, unfortunately, often frequently poorly attended. Because the school engages parents as partners and reaches out using a variety of means to all parents, especially those who might be less connected with the school, all students and their parents can be assured that they are valued members of the school community.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school board
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

The school has developed and benefits greatly from a wide range of productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. Within the school, there are several organizations in which parents participate, all of which directly impact student learning. The band and athletics booster groups provide support beyond the budget to support students in both co-curricular endeavors. Parents also play an integral role in the parent-teacher organization (PTO) which, among other initiatives, funds teacher grants. Parents also participate in the school district's special education parent advisory committee (SEPA) providing support and resources to parents of students who receive special education services. The Hopkins Academy School Council has parents as elected members and, in concert with the principal, teachers, students, and community members, are directly involved in the governance of the school. Hopkins Academy has also developed several partnerships with local colleges and universities which benefit students by providing opportunities to extend their learning at a higher level beyond the walls of the school. Specifically, the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment (ICE) agreement with both Holyoke and Greenfield Community Colleges enables students to enroll in classes at these institutions for credit while they are students at Hopkins Academy. The school also partners with the University of Massachusetts and Smith College which both provide student teachers and guidance interns to complete their practicum requirements at Hopkins Academy. The local business community, over the years, has been active in supporting the school and its students by making generous donations to various school fundraising efforts, by serving as supervised sites for the school's work-study initiative, and by participating in a number of mentoring opportunities. This partnership has helped provide students with a vehicle to gain valuable career experience and the opportunity to practice the skills learned in the classroom in a real world work environment. Lastly, Hopkins Academy is fortunate to be able to benefit from the significant efforts of several local philanthropic organizations which provide funding for a wide variety of school-based initiatives, which are unable to be supported by the budget. Foremost among the groups is the Hopkins Academy Board of Trustees, which has provided regular funding for the publication of the *Hawk's Claw*, the school newspaper, as well as funding for assembly speakers, field trips, and scholarships. The Hadley Mothers' Club and Helping Hearts 4 Hadley Schools, while focused on supporting the whole district, have been instrumental in providing financial support to Hopkins Academy. The former recently joined with the boosters club to purchase and install a new scoreboard in the gym, and the latter group donated funds to purchase computers and a new stove for the home economics room. As a result of the productive parent, community, business, and higher education relationships, which have been developed and sustained by the school, students have the opportunity to benefit from a wide range of programs and to extend their learning both within and beyond the walls of their school.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school board
- community members
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Commendations

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## Commendation

The commitment of the school committee, taxpayers, and community organizations to the dependable funding of the school system

## Commendation

The special town meeting vote approving the use of Community Preservation Act funds of \$400,000 to support the expansion of the athletic fields

## Commendation

The well-maintained and updated facility, which supports student learning despite the limitations imposed by its age

## Commendation

The efforts to ensure a clean, well-maintained building

## Commendation

The vision to identify future improvement projects to be included in the town's capital plan

## Commendation

The community support for capital projects

## Commendation

The budget process which involves all major stakeholders to secure the funding necessary to provide for their students

## Commendation

The concerted effort to fund and complete the necessary maintenance projects to ensure that the facility continues to support student learning

## Commendation

The proactive use of the capital improvement plan process to ensure that the building remains conducive to learning

## **Commendation**

The school's compliance with all applicable laws and local fire, health and safety regulations

The school's effort to communicate with parents and to actively engage them as partners in their children's education

The extensive partnerships within the community that support student learning

The dedication and generosity of the various philanthropic groups that provide ample funding to augment the budget and support student learning

# Standard 7 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Provide funding that fully supports staffing and technology needs to help ensure students' achievement of 21st century learning expectations

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a system to catalog equipment and a plan to ensure that it is properly maintained and replaced when necessary

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a comprehensive long-range plan

## Recommendation

Address the inadequacy of storage especially in the gymnasium area to eliminate obstacles and potential safety hazards

# **FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES**

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This comprehensive evaluation report reflects the findings of the school's self-study and those of the visiting team. It provides a blueprint for the faculty, administration, and other officials to use to improve the quality of programs and services for the students in this school. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting team recommendations.

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

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

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

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

The visiting team would like to express thanks to the community for the hospitality and welcome.

# **SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY**

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

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

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

# Roster of Team Members

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## Chair(s)

**Chair: Paul Mangelinkx** - New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.

**Assistant Chair: Ruth Gilbert-Whitner** - Whitman-Hanson Regional School District

## Team Members

**Nancy Antonellis** - Brockton High School

**Douglas Daponde** - Belchertown High School

**Patricia De Mars** - Maynard High School

**Jenni Durost** - Grafton High School

**Stephanie Goddard** - Enfield High School

**Steven Madancy** - Southington Public Schools

**Kelly Markland** - Wahconah Regional High School

**Davia Moore** - Beverly High School

**Patrick Neville** - Millis High School

**Jen Police** - Monomoy Regional High School