



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

VISITING TEAM REPORT

## Danvers High School

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**03/12/2017 - 03/15/2017**

# 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

### *Danvers High School School and Community Profile*

Danvers High School is located in the town of Danvers, Essex County, Massachusetts, in what is referred to as the North Shore region of the state. The topography of Danvers provides a variety of landscapes to enjoy, from saltwater riverfront to woodlands. Danvers enjoys a rich history dating back to Colonial days. Notably, the town played a large role in the 1692 Salem witch trials and in the Revolutionary War. Danvers residents' hometown pride is evident at well-attended annual celebrations, such as Danvers Family Festival events and the Memorial Day Parade. Additionally, the Danvers community is proud of the academic and co-curricular accomplishments of the students at Danvers High School. Over the past five years the number of students taking AP coursework has doubled, our a cappella groups and marching band have performed nationally, and our theater group competes at the highest level of state competition, as do many of our sports teams. In the spring of 2016, over 30 DECA students traveled to Nashville to compete at the international level. Six students won international awards, three placed first.

The population of Danvers is 27,460 (US Census Bureau, 2014). Our community is primarily residential, with a solid commercial and industrial tax base. Its proximity to three major highways I-95, Route 128, and Route 1 has made it a desirable place to live and do business. Businesses include office/industrial parks, hotel/motels, shopping centers, automobile dealerships and the following self-standing national chain stores: two Home Depots, Lowes Home Improvement, Wal-Mart, Costco, and B.J.'s Wholesale. In FY '16, Danvers tax levy was comprised of 66% from residential property, and 34% from business.

Danvers is economically middle to upper-middle class. Median family income as of 2014 was \$77,404. The percent of persons age 25 years with a high school diploma or higher is 94.2% and 41.5% have a bachelor's degree or higher. (2010-2014 census data).

As of October 1, 2015, 17.1% of the 3,603 student population qualifies as low income. There is a district homeless liaison who coordinates services for children sheltered in Danvers hotels. These services include school registration, transportation, preschool and after-school care, as well as registration for town summer recreational programs. Our district has identified 1.2% of the student population as English language learners. The Danvers Public Schools employ three English language learner (ELL) teachers to work with students at our elementary, middle and high schools.

Average expenditure per pupil in the state of Massachusetts is \$14,518. Danvers' expenditure per pupil is lower at \$13,625. This is due in part to the structure of its custodial services; they are provided by the town's Department of Public Works and are not embedded in the school budget. In FY 2015, the percent of local resources spent on public education was 52.6% of the budget, for FY 2016 it is 51.9%.

Danvers has five public elementary schools, one public middle school, and one public high school. There are three private schools: St. Mary of the Annunciation School and Plumfield Academy serving grades K-8 and St. John's Preparatory School, serving boys in grades 6-12. Additionally, the Essex Technical High School is a regional public school located in Danvers that serves 17 local communities.

In the 2015-2016 school year, 1,020 students enrolled at Danvers High School, which serves grades 9-12. Most students enter the high school from the Holten-Richmond Middle School (the Danvers public middle school) and from St. Mary of the Annunciation School. A small percentage of new students move into the district. The town of

Danvers does not accept school choice students.

During the school year 2014-15, the average daily student attendance rate was 93.4%. In 2015, the dropout rate was 1.8% (9 students).

Danvers High School employs 85.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers. The average class size is 19.1 (state average is 18.1) and the ratio of teachers to students is 1:13. Our district offers a new teacher induction program known as Off to a Great Start (OTAGS). Participation in the program satisfies the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requirement for an initial induction program. The program, which includes a mentoring partnership, is specifically designed to acclimate new teachers to the challenges, successes and nuances of teaching in the Danvers Public Schools. The district also provides a *Studying Skillful Teaching* course to new teachers as the second tier of the mentoring and induction program.

Our school operates on a seven-day rotating six-block schedule. Classes meet six times during the seven-day rotation. The dropped class meets during the first block the following day. Class blocks 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are on average 53 minutes long; the 5th block is 100 minutes long, of which 75 minutes are classroom instruction time and 25 minutes are allotted for lunch. There is an extended 40-minute block once every cycle for all AP classes. In addition, there is an abbreviated block schedule one day a month for the inclusion of a 37-minute advisory period. The advisory program was implemented in fall of 2011 for all students. Advisory groups are created in ninth grade, and groups cycle through all four grades together with the same advisor. In the monthly advisory meeting, groups of 12-20 students participate in team-building and anti-bullying activities and are given time to work on class-related business. Report cards and student high grade commendations are also made at this time.

Danvers High School offers the following levels of instruction: college preparatory and honors, accelerated and Advanced Placement coursework. Our student services personnel indicate that 15%, or 151 of our students, are on Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Our Life Skills program serves students with a variety of significant disabilities. In two self-contained classrooms, students learn academic, social, vocational and independent living skills so they may become contributing members of the community once they reach adulthood. There is also an alternative on-campus program known as DRIVE (Diversity, Respect, Integrity, Vision and Excellence), and a designated credit recovery classroom that is staffed throughout the school day. Our students are also able to take online coursework through Virtual High School (VHS). Approximately 42% of students enroll in honors and 48% enroll in college preparatory level courses. Advanced Placement courses are offered in the arts, English language arts, history, social science, math, science, and world languages.

Ninth grade students are grouped into instructional teams that have three blocks of common planning time per seven-day cycle. Special education teachers who co-teach ninth grade classes are part of these teams with the same amount of common planning time. This planning time may be spent on special education planning as well as meetings with parents and other school personnel (guidance counselors, social workers, administrators) regarding individual students.

Standardized tests utilized by our school district include the PSAT, SAT, SAT II, ACT, AP, and the MCAS. Students generally score above or close to the mean on national tests. The average SAT scores for the class of 2015 were as follows: Math: 530, Reading: 519; and Writing: 508; In 2015, MCAS testing results for Danvers were as follows: in the English language arts, 96% (state 91%) of tenth graders scored proficient or higher; in mathematics, 84% (state 79%) were proficient or higher; and in science, 80% (state 72%) scored proficient or higher.

Between 2011-2014, Danvers High School participated in the Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative (MMSI). This three-year grant, run by Mass Insight and funded by corporate sponsors, has expanding our Advanced Placement program through active recruitment, extra student supports (e.g., Saturday sessions), and teacher professional development. The grant specifically focused on math, science, and English. Over the three years of the grant, we increased the number of students taking one or more AP exams from 190 in 2011 to 243 in 2014

for a 28% increase, and we increased the number of students receiving qualifying scores from 146 in 2011 to 179 in 2014 for a 23% increase.

In addition to the 125 credits needed to graduate, all seniors are required to complete 40 hours of community service. In the Class of 2015, 78% of graduates attended four-year colleges, 12% attended two-year community/junior colleges, 5% entered the workforce, and 2% entered the military.

During high school, our students also have the option of enrolling in the Dual Enrollment program which provides an opportunity for high school students to take credit courses at any state college or university. Students who enroll are able to complete part or all of their remaining high school requirements while simultaneously earning college credit.

Danvers High School offers recognition for student accomplishments through a variety of means, including, but not limited to, the following: honor roll, academic and athletic awards and banquets, National Honor Society induction (Art, English, Tri-M Music, World Languages), writing and the visual arts, and performances in the fine arts.

Danvers is unique in its many school and business partnerships, including the North Shore Workforce Investment Board (WIB), Community Collaborative Initiative, the Danvers Educational Enrichment Partnership (DEEP), and DanversCARES. Other opportunities include Reality Check, Student Assistantships, internships and Village Automotive Group's *Keys to Success*, an incentive-based rewards program.

The North Shore Workforce Investment Board (WIB), has partnered with Danvers High School to provide an internship experience in engineering at Medtronic, a medical device manufacturer located in Danvers. The program aims to introduce female high school students to careers in engineering through a combination of classroom and hands-on work opportunities at Medtronic. Currently, six local high school students have been selected for the program. Three are from Danvers High School. As well, two Danvers High School science teachers took advantage of an externship opportunity with Medtronic last year through the North Shore WIB.

In an effort to enhance school and public safety, Danvers High School has been participating in the Community Collaborative Initiative (CCI) for over ten years. CCI meetings are designed to bring together schools, law enforcement, and state agencies on a regular basis to address youth violence. Additionally, DHS has one full time on-site community resource officer.

An important source of grant funding for teachers, the Danvers Educational Enrichment Partnership (DEEP) is a non-profit corporation that has supported the work of the Danvers Public Schools since 1990. The DEEP-associated area businesses and civic organizations provide teacher grants that fund innovative academic initiatives. This past May (2016) DEEP awarded \$14,000 to teachers across the district.

DanversCARES, whose office is located at Danvers High School, is a partnership for a healthy community. Its mission is to assist youth and families in making healthy decisions, to reduce youth substance abuse, and to ensure the future of a safe and healthy community. DanversCARES has offered a number of behavioral health education and professional development opportunities to Danvers High School staff, students and families. The organization runs two youth leadership groups, one at the middle school level and one at the high school level, providing students the opportunity to address social issues of concern among their peers and community.

People's United Bank (formerly Danversbank) has partnered with the high school for the past 9 years to bring the financial literacy program, *Reality Check*, to the senior class. *Reality Check* is designed to prepare high school seniors for life beyond the classroom.

Other school initiatives include the refinement of the senior capstone writing and internship project and a major technology shift. In the fourth quarter of 2014, a small cohort of the senior class – 27 students – were placed in (mostly local) workplace establishments of their choosing where they worked for 25 hours a week until the week preceding graduation. In this current school year (2015-2016), over 80% of the senior class participated in the

internship program.

Looking forward, in FY 2017, every faculty member and student will be provided with a Chromebook. The wireless network and Internet bandwidth at Danvers High School will be bolstered to meet the increased usage. Professional development opportunities on integrating the Chromebooks into the curriculum are being provided by the technology integration specialist as well as teachers currently using Chromebook applications. A student-staffed Chromebook Help Desk is currently being planned to assist students with integration issues. Curricular initiatives include continued technology integration, Common Core alignment, and upholding high standards for all students.

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

### **CORE VALUES**

Danvers High School is a community of independent learners dedicated to respect, responsibility, creativity, and the pursuit of academic excellence.

### **21st CENTURY LEARNING EXPECTATIONS**

1. Students will communicate effectively through writing, speaking, and other mediums.
2. Students will use appropriate strategies in order to achieve effective reading comprehension.
3. Students will be critical thinkers who locate, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.
4. Students will demonstrate creativity.
5. Students will understand how to use technology effectively and appropriately.
6. Students will demonstrate knowledge of behaviors that affect the health and safety of themselves and others.
7. Students will become knowledgeable of the needs of others through community service.
8. Students will work independently and collaboratively to accomplish goals.
9. Students, as members of a global community, will demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures.

# 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 Danvers High School, a committee of 17 members, 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.

The self-study of Danvers High School extended over a period of approximately 13 school months from Fall 2015

to January 2017. The visiting team was pleased to note that the entire professional staff participated fully and enthusiastically in the self-study deliberations.

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

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

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

A visiting team of sixteen members was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Danvers High School. The visiting team members spent four days in Danvers, 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 Danvers High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 40 hours shadowing 16 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 32 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 Danvers High School.

# Standard 1 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School (DHS) as a community has fully engaged in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. As evidenced by the self-study, there is a clear record that describes the process used by the stakeholders to identify and commit to core values and beliefs about learning, including dates of more than one meeting and names of participants with a designation of their role in the school. First, the school formed an eleven-member Mission and Expectations study committee comprised of representatives from various school departments and the high school curriculum director. The committee chair and curriculum director attended a two-day workshop and began work in October 2009. The group used research-based best practices, specifically "What is the Mission of Schooling" from Wiggins and McTighe's *Schooling by Design* to inform their discussions. The group also engaged in a "picture the graduate" activity to identify the qualities and skills they would like Danvers graduates to possess. Furthermore, the committee ensured community-wide input by holding focus group discussions with current high school students, secondary and elementary school parents and teachers, alumni, taxpayers without children in the schools, administrators, and local business people. These group discussions focused on the stakeholders' expectations for the school district and recommendations for ensuring success. The data collected from these focus groups, in addition to the research-based best practices incorporating *Schooling by Design*, were used to determine that the DHS Mission Statement aligned with the new data. Because the core values accurately reflected the mission of the school, the core values remained unchanged. From there, the group established and defined 21st century learning expectations. To see if the previously adopted expectations were well-aligned with 21st century learning expectations, they consulted the *21st Century Skills Crosswalk* document from the Teaching and Learning Solutions workshop. Again, the group used research-based best practices and information from the stakeholders, including the district's Five Year Strategic Plan, to make their determinations. The group presented the core values and 21st century learning expectations for student learning to faculty members, parents, and students and received feedback. After incorporating feedback, the final revisions were presented on May 5, 2010 and they were approved on May 7, 2010. According to the Endicott survey, 93.6 percent of students and 94.1 percent of parents are familiar with the school's core values and beliefs. Furthermore, based on student and teacher interviews, it is clear that students and teachers believe all members of the administration and faculty truly embody the core values and beliefs. As a result of the dynamic and collaborative process led by school leadership and stakeholders, virtually all students and teachers at DHS identify with and are committed to core values and beliefs about learning that include clear criteria for success for all DHS students and that prepare them for life after graduation.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 1 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which fully address academic, social, and civic competencies and are defined by specific and measurable school-wide rubrics, which illustrate targeted high levels of achievement. According to the Endicott survey, 69.8 percent of students and 91.7 percent of the staff either agree or strongly agree that the 21st century learning expectations are challenging and measurable. A little over 90 percent of parents state that they are aware of the level of learning their child must demonstrate to meet the school's learning expectations. Each 21st century learning expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, specifically nine school-wide analytic rubrics, which illustrate targeted high levels of achievement and use common language and scoring such as "Meets Standards (3-4)," "Meets Standards with Distinction (5-6)," and "Does Not Meet Standard (1-2)." The language of the rubrics is action-oriented and illustrates to students how to not only meet, but also to exceed expectations. According to the Endicott survey, 80.2 percent of students are familiar with school-wide rubrics, and 85.7 percent of staff report that the school has adopted these school-wide rubrics. These rubrics are the product of a committee which met during the 2011-2012 school year to align 21st century learning expectations to school-wide rubrics. The committee used literature on writing rubrics and analyzed rubrics from other districts to create its own school-wide analytic rubrics. The nine rubrics outline specific academic, social, and civic competencies that align with the school's 21st century learning expectations. Each member of the committee then piloted one rubric and, based on feedback from that pilot program, the committee revised the rubrics. In the fall of 2012, the final rubrics were presented to the departments, which then assumed responsibility for one or more specific expectation. For example, the English, health, science, social studies, and world languages departments are responsible for the learning expectation 1: "Students will communicate effectively through writing, speaking, and other mediums," and the art, health, math, science, and social studies departments are responsible for learning expectation 3: "Students will be critical thinkers who locate, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information." Many teachers and students feel that all of the 21st century learning expectations are present in their classrooms and assessments, but specific departments take responsibility for explicitly teaching and measuring specific standards and collecting that data on student achievement. As a result of the formal rubric creation, piloting program, revision, and consistent action-oriented language, Danvers High School students know and understand the criteria for success and can work toward high levels of achievement both in and out of the classroom.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are widely embedded 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. All academic departments at DHS assumed responsibility for teaching and assessing specific 21st century learning expectations after the 2012 implementation of the rubrics. It is apparent that 21st century learning expectations drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in classrooms. Many teachers shared that they and their colleagues use common planning time to analyze common assessments and, as a result, revise instruction or curriculum based on core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Most departments have common assessments that are driven by the 21st century learning expectations. For example, the English department specifically teaches and assesses close reading skills, one of the 21st century learning expectations. The world languages department has used the 21st century learning expectation 9: "Students, as members of a global community, will demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures," to drive curriculum decisions and school policies, specifically the development of courses and travel opportunities. The science department specifically developed a department-wide lab rubric that is tailored to learning expectation 3: "Students will be critical thinkers who locate, analyze, evaluate and synthesize information." In addition, the core values, beliefs and 21st century learning expectations are posted in all classrooms and read during the morning announcements each day. Similarly, the student handbook was revised by a committee of students, administrators, and faculty members to include a revision of the school's honesty policy to reflect the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. The advisory curriculum is clearly driven by the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, specifically learning expectation 6: "Students will demonstrate knowledge of behaviors that affect the health and safety of themselves and others." This curriculum was created after teachers on the advisory committee attended conferences where they learned best practices for advising students. In a similar vein, the curriculum and assessment of graduation requirements are guided by the 21st century learning expectations. These requirements, which include a capstone project that incorporates research, writing, and presentation skills and an internship, are aligned with the 21st century learning expectations, specifically learning expectation 1: "Students will communicate effectively through writing, speaking, and other mediums," as well as learning expectation 3: "Students will be critical thinkers who locate, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information." All DHS students must also complete a minimum of 40 hours of community service to graduate. This requirement is clearly guided by 21st century learning expectation 7: "Students will become knowledgeable of the needs of others through community service." These graduation requirements for the senior class are clear examples of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations guiding school policy and decision making. The core values, beliefs, and learning expectations also guide decisions regarding school resources. DHS has a one-to-one Chromebook Initiative, which clearly supports the importance of the 21st century learning expectations, specifically learning expectation 5: "Students will be able to understand how to use technology effectively and appropriately." The school committee clearly stated how much support the Chromebook Initiative has in town and how much all stakeholders believe in the core values and 21st century learning expectations. Furthermore, through the recent renovation project, the building itself was designed to promote the 21st century learning expectations. For example, the allocation of resources to the arts (i.e. music rooms, art rooms, video/editing spaces) promote learning expectation 4: "Students will demonstrate creativity." When a school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations guide school policies and decisions and drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment, students are immersed in a learning environment that provides ample opportunities for them to meet and exceed 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- school board

# Standard 1 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Although Danvers High School has reviewed its core values and beliefs and has reviewed and revised 21st century learning expectations, there is no formal and specific process for regular analysis and revision of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. As part of the preparation for its decennial visit, the school formed a committee to analyze and potentially revise the core values in 2010 as previously noted. This committee used research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school communities' priorities to determine that their original core values and beliefs would remain unchanged. From there, the committee set out to develop school-wide rubrics for measuring progress with regard to 21st century learning expectations, which they completed in 2012. Since then, however, there has not been a formal review or revision of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and community priorities. While there is no formal process in place for review or revision of these important documents, teachers state that they plan on reviewing the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations within their two- and five-year district-wide plans. When the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are formally reviewed and revised on a regular basis, based on current research, new data, and community priorities, students will graduate from DHS with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful academically, socially, and civically.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 1 Commendations

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## Commendation

The dynamic process used to identify and develop core values and beliefs and revise the school's 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The inclusion of a large number of community members in the development of and commitment to core values and 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The use of current, research-based best practices to inform the development of core values and beliefs

## Commendation

The significant majority of the DHS community who can identify and have internalized the school's core values and 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The use of research-based best practices to develop and revise clearly defined rubrics that include specific and measurable criteria for success for all nine 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The distribution of responsibility for the use of the school-wide rubrics among all departments to ensure broad assessment of the school's 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The purposeful and comprehensive inclusion of core values and of 21st century learning expectations in all content areas

## Commendation

The senior graduation requirements' alignment with civic and social learning expectations

## **Commendation**

The school committee's support of the 21st century learning expectations, specifically with regard to the Chromebook Initiative in alignment with the learning expectation related to using technology

# Standard 1 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop and implement a formal process by which core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are regularly reviewed and revised based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities

# Standard 2 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

At Danvers High School (DHS), extensive opportunities to regularly practice and achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations are provided through purposefully designed curricula for a vast majority of the courses. With each department formally adopting a specific standard to assess throughout the year, DHS students have numerous opportunities in each grade level and almost all of their courses to demonstrate mastery of the learning expectations established by the school. The school's 21st century learning expectations are recorded on the *Understanding By Design (UbD)* curriculum templates along with state and federal standards, reflecting teachers' use of curriculum that expects students to practice and achieve the school's 21st-century skills. Eighty-six percent of teachers and 96 percent of parents agree that the school's formal curriculum design ensures that all students practice and achieve all of the school's learning expectations. For example, the expectation which states, "Students will use appropriate strategies in order to achieve effective reading comprehension," has been adopted by the English and social studies departments, providing each student with at least two opportunities per grade level to practice and achieve this learning expectation. Opportunities for students to work independently and collaboratively to accomplish goals were present in nearly every course. Students are challenged to be critical thinkers who locate, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information not only in math, social studies, and science, but also in English and various other electives as well. Even though no department formally adopted the school's learning expectation related to the community, "Students will become knowledgeable of the needs of others through community service," its emphasis was apparent in the stated graduation requirement requiring all students to perform a minimum of 40 hours of community service to earn a diploma from DHS. The purposeful design of curricula provides teachers with clarity to expand the curriculum opportunities for each student to practice and achieve the school's learning expectations, thus ensuring the school can meet its commitment to the community.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Most of the curricula are written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's 21st century learning expectations; instructional strategies; and assessment practices that include the use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic or course-specific rubrics. At Danvers High School (DHS), teachers use three formats for curriculum maps: an *Understanding by Design (UBD)* template, a general scope and sequence template, and a syllabus/curricula used for Advanced Placement courses. The curriculum documents are provided to all teachers through an online portal, accessible to the entire school faculty. The consistent and purposefully designed curriculum provides all DHS teachers with guidelines and benchmarks for pacing, instructional strategies, content, and skills, supporting opportunities for students to practice and achieve the school's learning expectations. When all courses have fully completed curriculum maps in the *UBD* format, teachers will be able to ensure that students can relate specific skills and content to overarching concepts, thus contributing to student achievement of the school-wide learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The curriculum at DHS articulates depth of understanding and application of knowledge by consciously emphasizing inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and by integrating available technology. However, cross-disciplinary learning is limited to some content areas and, for the most part, is not intentionally designed. Each course map, whether created with the *Understanding by Design (UBD)* template, a general scope and sequence template, or a syllabus/curricula, is guided by an essential question that purposefully leads to inquiry and problem solving. Eighty-seven percent of students report that Danvers High School courses “challenge me to think critically and solve problems.” Collectively, the DHS curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and knowledge. Each course unit of study builds toward a performance task that is designed to have students display their depth of understanding and application of knowledge through a variety of project-based learning activities or writing assignments, which are purposefully designed to promote inquiry, problem solving and higher order thinking skills. Danvers High School excels in providing authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school. This is evident in not only the programs highlighted in the self-study like, DECA, TV Production, the “Teaching Spanish to Elementary Students” course, science field trips, and the senior career research essay culminating in the Falcon Internship Program, but are also apparent through the variety of performance tasks and projects taking place in each course. Students create furniture and chessboards in Fab Lab, develop marketing campaigns in their marketing class, design house plans in CAD, and build roller coasters in physics. It is apparent Danvers High School, as a whole, is emphasizing the informed and ethical use of technology. As a result of the 1:1 Chromebook initiative, the use of academic technology is a major focus of the school; to those ends, the school has implemented policies through its handbook's academic honesty policy and trains all students on the contents of this policy through advisory sessions. Eighty-eight percent of the student body indicates that they are knowledgeable about the ethical use of technology. In each course, students showed themselves to be respectful and conscientious with respect to the integration of technology and its proper use throughout the class period. However, there is only sporadic, informal, and mostly unintentional cross-disciplinary work being conducted at DHS. Fifty-eight percent of students report that “My teachers include topics from other subject areas in my classes,” and 58 percent of teachers report that “the curriculum emphasizes cross disciplinary learning.” While teachers acknowledge the constant, informal cross-curricular conversations that occur, additional, more formal opportunities are desired. As a result of the formal curriculum in place, there are consistent and widespread opportunities for DHS students to demonstrate their depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school and the informed and ethical use of technology, which will assist them in the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations; when cross-disciplinary learning is formalized, the school's curriculum will be strengthened, and students will be able to display a deeper understanding and application of knowledge across all courses.

## Sources of Evidence

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

- department leaders
- Endicott survey

# Standard 2 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

For the vast majority of courses at Danvers High School, there is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum. In collaboration with teacher leaders, the high school curriculum director, and the district curriculum director, the faculty created curriculum maps, which are documented in three general formats: the *Understanding by Design (UBD)* template, a general scope and sequence, and the approved Advanced Placement syllabus. More than half of those courses use the *UBD* format, in which teachers delineate focus standards, understandings, essential questions, content objectives, and essential skills. The remainder of the course syllabi/curricula follow a scope and sequence model that omits specific skills and essential questions and provides general guidelines in terms of assignments. Most teachers have time provided within the scheduled day to collaborate with colleagues in the analysis of assessment data and the revision of curriculum. Conversations with teacher leaders, individual teachers, curriculum directors, school administration, and students, as well as classroom observation, indicate that the written and taught curricula are deliberately aligned through an ongoing process of revision and evaluation. When schools demonstrate a consistent synergy between the written and taught curricula, students are provided with multiple opportunities to learn the skills and content that prepare them for post-secondary success.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among all academic areas within the school, as well as with sending schools in the district. The district curriculum leadership model provides ample oversight of curriculum coordination, as there is a K-12 curriculum director and a curriculum director for Danvers High School, as well as designated middle and elementary school curriculum directors. The DHS curriculum director works collaboratively with the sending schools' curriculum directors to provide oversight with respect to content and skills. Meetings are planned with representatives from the elementary, middle, and high schools, including teacher leaders, to improve vertical alignment with respect to both content and skills, however these opportunities have been limited over the past three academic years. Because of the curriculum oversight model in place, and district-wide teams that have convened, there is longitudinal articulation and consistency in terms of some curricula throughout the district. Common planning time, scheduled within the school day, allows most teachers to work in academic departments to address curricular needs. Within departments, there is clear connection between courses in sequence, and educators extensively understand the connections in the vertical sequence of courses. In some cases, opportunities are in place for cross-curricular alignment, but these are limited and occur informally. Allocation of additional time, financial resources, and opportunities for vertical integration, leads schools to establish extensive understanding of content and skills, continued efforts to align vertically with the sending schools, and allows cross-disciplinary teams to develop curricula that further enhances the ability of students to receive a purposeful, well-designed, 21st century curriculum.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

At Danvers High School, staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies and facilities, resources of the library, co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum. Class sizes vary at Danvers High School, with an average of about 22 students per class and a student-to-teacher ratio of 13:1, making overall quantity of staff acceptable. Some departments, such as English and mathematics, lack elective course offerings, but students have a variety of courses in other content areas from which to choose. A 1:1 Chromebook Initiative allows every student a device for use at school and at home; 88 percent of the students report that instructional materials are sufficient. Two desktop computers are deployed in each teacher's classroom, with one dedicated to an interactive SMART Board. The library has an exhaustive book collection of thousands of books and access to surrounding libraries, databases, and electronic checkout of texts. Science laboratories, studio, and technology lab spaces are provided extensive equipment. The facility itself enhances the delivery of curriculum through its purposeful design, pervasive integration of technology, and provision of furniture and space conducive to enhancing teaching and learning. While there is a fee imposed on certain activities and the interscholastic athletic program, co-curricular programs are well-funded and connect to the learning expectations of the school and its curricula. The dialogue between the Danvers High School staff and administration with central district administration and, consequently, the town and its constituents has the delivery of a robust curriculum and program of studies at its epicenter; thus, the curriculum is well supported. When a school has a strategically designed facility, new technology, appropriate staffing levels, and adequate resources, it is able to fully implement its established curriculum and provides students with multiple opportunities to master the school's learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school board
- community members
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 2 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

The district consciously and deliberately 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. A district curriculum director initiates and coordinates the curriculum evaluation and redesign process, in consultation and collaboration with curriculum directors at each sending level, including a 9-12 curriculum director and teacher leaders, who earn a stipend for the role while teaching a full slate of courses. Common planning time, professional development days, department meetings, and district task forces all support the curriculum revision process, which is driven by assessment results and guided by best practice research. All teachers have been instructed on the *Understanding by Design* model, with time provided for curriculum documents to be updated using the *UBD* template. The school participated in the Massachusetts Mathematics and Science Initiative, enabling the school to expand curricular offerings aligned with College Board and Advanced Placement standards and increase access to rigorous curricula for more students. Consequently, 18 Advanced Placement courses are offered on campus, with teachers having been trained and supported in the delivery of these curricula. Because of the recent focus on Advanced Placement offerings, teachers recognize the need to expand consistent supports, resources, and rigor across other curriculum levels. The district plans on expanding the Writers' Workshop model beyond elementary and middle school in the coming academic year. In terms of data, a variety of assessment and data points are analyzed to support all learners, including students with a variety of needs. When schools allocate additional time for collaboration, professional development, and analysis of the connection between curriculum design and student achievement, teacher pedagogy is enhanced and all students are ensured that they are receiving a purposeful, well-designed 21st century curriculum.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 2 Commendations

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## Commendation

The purposeful design of curriculum which provides all students with extensive opportunities to practice and achieve the school's learning expectations

## Commendation

The dedicated leadership of staff, curriculum coordinators, and administration to integrate the school's learning expectations across all content areas

## Commendation

The purposefully designed curriculum that provides all teachers with guidelines and benchmarks for appropriate pacing

## Commendation

The curricula written in the *UBD* format that emphasize content-specific benchmarks, as well as specific essential questions, skills, and enduring understandings

## Commendation

The commitment of the staff, curriculum director, and administration to promote depth of understanding and application of knowledge with curriculum that develops and fosters inquiry, problem solving and higher order thinking

## Commendation

The emphasis on the informed and ethical use of technology by all stakeholders of Danvers High School

## Commendation

The provision of authentic learning opportunities for most students both inside the classroom and across the community in order to promote the application of knowledge and civic awareness

## Commendation

The alignment between the written and taught curriculum, providing students multiple opportunities to learn skills and content

## **Commendation**

The opportunities for teachers to collaborate on curriculum goals, leading to curriculum documents that, at a minimum, provide all educators with a defined scope and sequence for all courses

## **Commendation**

The clear vertical alignment between courses and levels of curricula within the departments

The shared oversight of curriculum among administrators, curriculum directors, teacher leaders, and individual teachers

The sufficient staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies and facilities, resources of the library, co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities, allowing for full curriculum implementation

The Danvers High School facility, which supports not only the delivery of the curriculum, but also the ability for students to practice and master the school-wide learning expectations

The coordination and articulation of curricular goals through the curriculum director model, with a K-12, 9-12, and teacher leader model

The active involvement of professional staff in the process of curriculum development and review

The provision of release time, stipends, and specific curriculum resources for courses driven by teacher interest and student need

# Standard 2 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Document all courses using the consistent *UBD* format

## Recommendation

Ensure that all curriculum maps incorporate the school-wide learning expectations which are emphasized in the course

## Recommendation

Provide dedicated time for teachers to collaborate and purposefully build cross-disciplinary learning opportunities to enhance student understanding and greater application of knowledge across all content areas

## Recommendation

Increase opportunities for teachers to collaborate on curriculum alignment with sending schools' teachers and to coordinate and develop curricula between academic areas

## Recommendation

Provide additional opportunities for curriculum development and redesign, emphasizing student achievement data and the closure of achievement gaps

# Standard 3 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

At Danvers High School (DHS), teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. At DHS, they have structures in place and have carved out collaboration time to examine instruction, to share best practices, and to make connections to the school's 21st century learning expectations. The district has a K-12 curriculum director, the school has a 9-12 curriculum director, and each subject level has a teacher leader. The administrators, who have all been trained in Research for Better Teaching's *Skillful Leader I-III*, work in conjunction with the school principal and assistant principals to ensure that instructional practices are evaluated and refined using the state-designed evaluation program which focuses on teacher self-assessment, goal setting, and reflection resulting in formative and summative assessments of teachers' performance. In addition, teachers have collaboration time built into their schedule. One day out of the seven day cycle, teachers have time to work with department colleagues to create lessons, to share best practices, to create shared assessments and to reflect on their instructional techniques and lessons and on how they are impacting student learning. Furthermore, freshman team teachers meet three out of the seven day cycle and use this time to discuss instructional techniques that are working best for specific students or sets of students. The K-12 and 9-12 curriculum directors meet once per seven day cycle to discuss curriculum and instruction and to reflect on the direction and achievement of each department. Department teacher leaders meet with the 9-12 curriculum director once per seven day cycle and each department meets at least once per month and uses this time to share best practices. Co-teachers also have built in collaboration time and use it to refine instruction to meet students' individual needs and change strategies when a specific method of instruction has not worked for a particular student or students. Teachers at DHS utilize this time to create curriculum and instruction which connects to the school's 21st century learning expectations. In addition to the ample collaboration time that teachers are provided, it is evident that teaching practices in all classes consistently and overtly support the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The school has identified that respect, responsibility, creativity, and academic excellence are of the utmost importance and these ideas are the lifeblood of the teachers' daily instruction and classroom activities. Further, in an effort to quantify the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, teachers have worked to calibrate the school-wide rubrics to their own course content in an effort to ensure that instruction matches these values and that students are aware of their level of achievement in these areas. Each department has adopted one or more of the school-wide rubrics to specifically emphasize in their instruction and, while there is a need for more refinement and widespread use of these specific school-wide rubrics, teacher instruction consistently reinforces and uses the language of the rubrics relating to the core values and learning expectations. When teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, the daily instruction allows for clearer expectations for student success for both content area mastery and mastery of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 3 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Many teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students as active and self-directed learners, emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking, asking students to apply their knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, engaging students in self-assessment and reflection, and integrating technology in their daily instruction. Almost 92 percent of staff indicate that they personalize instruction in the classroom. Personalized instruction can be seen in individualized assignments and assessments through Google Classroom across classrooms in many disciplines as well as in elective courses, such as in the communications technology department, where students are assigned a broad task but allowed to explore individual interests to accomplish their goal. Special education teachers also indicate that they regularly work with teachers to modify assignments to meet specific goals outlined in students Individualized Education and 504 Plans as well as work with students in academic support classes to push their problem-solving and higher order thinking skills to higher levels. In addition, teachers have designed a rigorous, inquiry-based curriculum that asks students to solve problems and use higher order thinking skills. Eighty-nine percent of parents and 92 percent of teachers agree that students are challenged in this way on a regular basis. Courses such as physics, robotics, biology and fabrication were seen to have students designing solutions to self-identified problems, performing hands-on tasks that helped students to develop a deeper understanding of the content, and creating hypotheses and procedures to arrive at reasonable conclusions to scientific phenomenon. Further, programs such as DECA, Reality Check, and Project Adventure are prime examples of teachers asking students to apply their knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. DECA participants, in particular, have shown success in this area through their projects and proposals winning both local, regional, and national competitions. Another area of success at DHS is in asking students to self-assess their work and to reflect on their learning. Approximately 78 percent of students indicate that their teachers ask them to self-assess their work and/or reflect on their learning. Classroom rubrics are widely used by teachers, and students are asked to grade their work based on the rubrics on assignments such as open-response questions in courses like AP Calculus and AP Statistics and document based questions across all levels of history courses. Additionally, many courses ask students to set goals at the beginning of the quarter and to reflect on whether or not those goals have been met, or their work has improved, by the end of the quarter. Tasks such as these were seen in the English department where students compared their work on first and final drafts of their essays as well as in business courses where students are asked to answer questions related to their personal goals that are set at the beginning of each quarter. Finally, the implementation of the 1:1 Chromebook initiative has allowed most teachers throughout the building to enhance their instruction and to provide students with more opportunities to show they are meeting the 21st century learning expectations. Chromebook apps such as Kahoot!, Peardeck, and Lanschool have allowed for teachers to engage students in interactive learning and for teachers to more closely monitor, and respond to, student learning in real time, modifying instructional practices to meet student needs on a minute-to-minute basis. When all teachers employ a range of instructional practices, it ensures that every student has ample opportunity to show that they are meeting and exceeding, the school's 21st century learning expectations.

On the other hand, very few teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations through cross-disciplinary learning and some teachers have yet to integrate technology for the purpose of student learning through inquiry, application skills and reflection. While cross-disciplinary discussions do occur informally, there is no formal process for cross-discipline planning and instruction. For example, while 10th grade students read the novel *The Things They Carried*, the content of the Vietnam War is not taught until junior year in American History II. Similarly, there is no precedent or process for creating, implementing, and promoting cross-disciplinary content courses. For instance, while many students take psychology and discuss psychological research, the opportunity for teachers to collaborate so that these students can also accurately discuss statistical experimental models in an authentic setting, has not been

afforded to teachers in these areas. Further, there is no evidence of thematic learning in any grade and, while there is ample common planning time provided to teachers within the same discipline, few teachers have the opportunity to meet with their colleagues of differing disciplines. Teachers of freshmen have the opportunity to meet with grade level teams, however this time is used to discuss student issues and not for common planning purposes. In addition, despite being provided with an abundance of instructional technology, there are some teachers who have yet to integrate technology in purposeful ways that support student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The extent to which technology has been implemented in the classroom varies greatly from teacher to teacher. While there is evidence of exceptional use of technology in a variety of subject areas, there is a need for more support for teachers who have not had the opportunity to develop proficiency with the new technology and incorporate it into their instructional practices. When schools provide interdisciplinary common planning time and professional development and support related to the integration of technology it allows teachers to improve instructional practices and helps students to make connections between the content areas and apply their knowledge and skills to authentic tasks to show mastery of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 3 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Teachers at Danvers High School do, for the most part, adjust their instructional practices by frequently using formative assessment during instructional time, by strategically differentiating instruction in almost all classes, by purposefully organizing group learning activities to meet the ever changing needs of each student, and by providing support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.

Ninety percent of parents feel that the staff identify needs of and provide additional supports to students when needed. According to the self-study, "a number of teachers employ both warm-ups and exit tickets as barometers for student comprehension." Teachers use this instant feedback to inform on-the-spot instruction. Teachers utilize written activators and dry erase board activities to review and assess prior learning. As explained in the self-study, "Since moving to a 1:1 Chromebook initiative, teachers have an increased ability to gauge student understanding. Web applications such as Google Classroom, Kahoot!, Actively Learn, and Peardeck are utilized across most departments at Danvers High School." Student participation can be anonymous, and can provide the teacher and students with instant feedback. Teachers utilize these techniques with students to assess readings, to identify and define difficult vocabulary and phrases, and to critically analyze primary sources. Based on student input, the teachers provided additional support and collaborative strategies for approaching each question.

According to the Endicott survey, 98 percent of staff agree that they use differentiated instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. Student survey results show 74 percent agree that their teachers use a variety of teaching strategies in their courses. This statement was also reflected in meetings with students. Administrators also stated that they trust teachers to have some creative independence to differentiate instruction for students using a variety of instructional strategies and assignments. Danvers offers a variety of programs, such as DRIVE, foundations courses, and co-taught classes, to ensure that all students can meet the school's learning exceptions. Teachers offer choice and variation in assignments to individualize projects and assessments to allow all types of learners to be able to access the curriculum and to demonstrate what they have learned. Science teachers develop assignments utilizing drawings, short answers, essays, graphic organizers and math calculations in order to reach all learning styles. English and history classes offer the opportunity for students who enjoy speaking and acting to demonstrate their learning through this method. Special education teachers are very willing to collaborate and share with regular education teachers strategies such as graphic organizers, modified assessments, and scaffolding ideas in order to differentiate instruction.

Ninety-two percent of the students agree that teachers create opportunities for collaboration and group work in their classes. Spanish teachers pair students and utilize a modified "think, pair, share" model. Students work together to ask questions and to write answers, then they practice developing their own questions and responding to one another in Spanish. Lastly, they swap partners, leaving their notes behind, and create a new conversation, or they share what they have learned with the class. The teachers make the learning meaningful to the students by circulating around the room, asking them to practice speaking while asking them questions about what they are doing. History teachers utilize the jigsaw method in their classes. They assign students different readings for homework. When students come to class, they are grouped with students who have the same reading, and they discuss their findings and come up with a way to teach the other students about the essence of the particular reading. Then they jigsaw, and teach their classmates the material. In the English department, the group poetry project allows students to work cooperatively to analyze and present their analysis of a poem. Freshman English students have a 'Book Buddies' activity during which students work in groups of three and share their independent reading with each other, finding similarities and differences between the independent reading with each other, and mapping those in Venn Diagrams. Teachers stated that although there are many group activities, the groups are not always purposefully organized, however, for the most part, they do

take into account students' learning styles as well as social emotional needs when developing seating plans, and forming pairings and groups.

Ninety percent of parents and 75 percent of students agree that teachers at Danvers High School intentionally adjust their practice in order to provide additional supports and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. The math department makes use of supplemental instructional videos to assist students in understanding difficult concepts. Similarly, many science classes are using the flipped classroom model, using videos for basic instruction which are assigned as homework and are then enhanced and expanded upon in class activities based on that learning. Teachers utilize technological tools like Pear Deck and Quizlet to reinforce important vocabulary and concepts and to provide students with opportunities for interactive practice. Additional supports are frequently provided through templates and organizers to aid in the writing process based on student need. Co-taught classes are offered to students who need more support in classes, and students on IEPs are provided with reinforcement of concepts and ideas, study skills, and executive function support during a section of academic support. Danvers also offers fundamentals courses for students who would benefit from more scaffolding and smaller classes to access the curriculum. The DRIVE program is an option for students who are at risk for dropping out due to poor attendance and significant social and/or emotional needs. This program utilizes individualized instruction and close relationships with guidance and the school social workers to help these students to access the curriculum. When teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student through differentiation and individualized learning, create opportunities for students to learn from each other, and provide students with the support and alternative learning strategies necessary to be successful, all students will be able to connect to the curriculum and will have the opportunity to achieve high academic standards.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 3 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

Teachers at Danvers High School, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by using a variety of formative and summative assessments, by analyzing student work, and by examining current research, however, the use of feedback from a variety of sources to inform instruction and the regular engagement by teachers in professional discourse on instructional practice is relatively limited.

Teachers often use a variety of formative and summative assessment data to influence further teaching practices in all content areas. Eighty-seven percent of teachers agree that they improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments. Most teachers have an established common planning period or periods (one to three days out of the seven day cycle). In most instances, teachers utilize their common planning time to create common assessments, to analyze the results, and to adjust instruction based on the results, although a few teachers report that this time is not utilized in this way by all teachers. Teachers have developed common midterm and final exams which inform their instruction and are used to ensure all students in common courses are working toward development of a common knowledge and skill set. Departments meet after each exam to analyze the results and to adjust their practice. For select courses, teachers analyze their students' assessment results for courses in which students take standardized tests (MCAS and Advanced Placement) and make instructional changes based on their students' performance. After reviewing MCAS results, English and history teachers decided that they needed to develop a shared language to use with all students around writing. The district supported this initiative by providing school-wide training in the Lucy Calkins' Method. All teachers now share a common language around the writing and revision process. Based on the results of the AP English Language and Composition exams, teachers decided that rhetorical concepts needed to be introduced in the earlier grades. As a result, the 9th grade team integrated rhetorical analysis into their unit on *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and continue to track student understanding of the concept through common written assessments. In addition to summative assessments, teachers utilize technology such as Kahoot!, Pear Deck, and Google Questions to formatively assess students, and to make timely adjustments to their practice. They discuss these assessments and adjustments during their collaborative meeting blocks.

DHS teachers individually and collaboratively improve their instructional practices by analyzing student work. Many teachers use common planning time to create shared assignments and assessments and to analyze and share student work together. Departmental common planning groups have indicated that they maintain shared folders on Google Docs for the purpose of sharing assignments and assessments that were successful with their students and/or assignments or assessments that could use modification for more success in the future. English teachers review student writing and determine which skills need to be retaught, and they share best instructional practices. Most history teachers utilize Pear Deck to provide real time feedback, which they use to adjust instruction. For example, in AP European History, the teacher used Pear Deck with students to determine which concepts needed to be retaught to improve student understanding.

DHS teachers often improve their instructional practices by examining current research. All teachers receive training in RBT's *Skillful Teacher* within their first two years at DHS. Teachers implement methods learned in this course in their classroom and the administrators utilize the the RBT evaluation model set forth in this training. All teachers have been trained in the Lucy Calkins' method of teaching writing, as well as in the use of *Understanding by Design* to develop units and lessons, and teachers are implementing what they learned in their planning and instruction. In addition, many teachers have also received Advanced Placement training at the district's expense. DHS also partners with Primary Source and many history teachers take advantage of their professional development offerings. Staff has been completing the Sheltered English Immersion course or exam, as required by the Commonwealth, to improve the overall effectiveness of instruction for all students including

English language learners. Many teachers report they would like more training specific to instruction in content areas to provide them with current research and best practices in their specific fields of study. When teachers individually and collaboratively discuss instructional feedback, formative and summative assessment results and data, and student work, teachers are able to adjust instructional practices to better target student needs, to improve student learning, and to foster their achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

At DHS, the use of feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents is limited. While teachers use Powerschool, Google Classroom and email to communicate with parents and students, these methods are not used to garner feedback regarding instruction. Only 27 percent of parents report teachers asking them for input to improve student performance. Although teachers ask students to assess themselves, they do not often ask for feedback on instructional methods and units of study. Some teachers are starting to incorporate student feedback through Pear Deck, although this feedback is not specific enough to guide instruction. Many DHS teachers improve their instructional practices by engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.

Common planning time allows for many core subject teachers to engage in professional discourse about content and instructional practices, however, not all core teachers, most notably upper-grade teachers in the math department, have formal common planning time. This is also an issue for non-core teachers. Despite the inconsistent planning time, informal collaboration happens frequently with discussion, email, and shared Google Drive folders. When feedback from students and parents is used to inform instructional practice and all teachers have the opportunity to formally collaborate with their colleagues during the scheduled day regarding this feedback and other pertinent information to improve their instruction, students are more likely to receive instruction that will help them achieve the school's stated learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 3 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

The vast majority of teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Ninety-four percent of Danvers High School teachers responded positively to the statement, "Teachers maintain expertise in their content area and in specific content-specific instructional practices." In addition, 92.4 percent of students and 83.4 percent of parents believe that the teachers at DHS are experts in the subject they are teaching. This is supported by the fact that during the 2016-2017 academic year, 100 percent of DHS teachers are certified in the area in which they teach. Further, through partnerships with Salem Collaborative Project and Primary Source, teachers are offered a wide variety of professional development courses paid for by the district. Teachers and administrators have also indicated that all staff members are trained in Research for Better Teaching (RBT) in their second year with the district, are completing the required Sheltered English Immersion course or exam required by the state, and that AP teachers are encouraged to attend week-long AP Institutes designed to improve instructional practices in AP courses for students at all levels. Teachers have also indicated that common planning time, involving both department and grade-level teams, is used to reflect on best practices and specific lessons or units and to modify pedagogy as needed to meet the needs of individual students. When teachers model lifelong learning practices by engaging in continuing education courses, professional development and reflective practices, students benefit by receiving instruction with pedagogy based in research, practice, and refinement and this results in deeper understanding and enhanced performance by all students.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 3 Commendations

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## Commendation

The effective use of common planning time which allows teachers to share best practices, create common assessments, analyze data, and reflect on instructional strategies

## Commendation

The DHS administration for making teachers' instructional needs a priority

## Commendation

The creation of purposefully designed, individualized, student-driven instruction as evidenced in the communications technology department

## Commendation

The encouragement of students to identify problems, design proposals, and present solutions to real-world, self-selected issues resulting in students applying their knowledge and skills to authentic tasks as evidenced in the DECA program

## Commendation

The consistent use of differentiated strategies in order to help all students meet the school's 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The use of technology to differentiate instruction and to provide scaffolding and/or rigor for all students

## Commendation

The development of programs such as DRIVE, co-taught courses, fundamental courses, and honors/AP opportunities, that support all students in meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The ongoing commitment of the district to professional development opportunities that target improvement of instructional practices

## **Commendation**

The maintenance of expertise in teachers' specific fields of study and the use of research-based instructional practices in their courses

# Standard 3 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Refine and implement school-wide rubrics that allow for teachers to relate their instructional practices and resulting student work directly to the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations of the school

## Recommendation

Provide formal opportunities and support for teachers of different disciplines to engage in planning and delivering common units of study and to creating cross-disciplinary content courses

## Recommendation

Establish an ongoing process through which all teachers are afforded the opportunity to increase their ability to use technology for student learning, inquiry, application, and reflection

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a system for parents and students to provide feedback to improve teachers' instructional practices

## Recommendation

Provide common planning time for all teachers in all content areas

# Standard 4 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School (DHS) does not have a formal process in place to assess whole-school and individual progress toward achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Following the creation of the school's 21st century learning expectations, between 2011 and 2013 a committee developed nine rubrics to measure achievement of the learning expectations and the faculty approved and piloted the use of the rubrics across all disciplines. However, the overall implementation and usage of the school-wide rubrics were scattered and sporadic. The school has not used them consistently to collect data and to monitor whole-school and individual progress regarding achievement of the school's stated learning expectations. Many teachers state school-wide rubrics are too general, require too much extra work to implement, and are not very helpful in measuring student progress which explains why teachers are reluctant to use them. There seems to be a disconnection between the use of school-wide rubrics which measure specific skills related to the learning expectations and teacher-created classroom rubrics which are mostly used to measure content knowledge. As a result, most teachers have adjusted or modified the school-wide rubrics to meet their content-specific needs to assess student work. The academic expectations for communication, reading comprehension, critical thinking and effective use of technology are certainly being taught and assessed in the content areas, just not through the use of the school-wide rubrics. The 21st century learning expectations are displayed and demonstrated by the students in the daily functions of the school day and year, and the social and civic expectations for community service, independent and collaborative work, and global community are evidenced by the community service graduation requirement, the various international and national trips, and the low incidences of disciplinary infractions. When a school has a formal process to assesses whole-school and individual progress, students, parents, and the school community are well informed of their progress toward achieving the school's expectations, and teachers are able to develop and revise curriculum as needed to effectively support all students.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

DHS does not yet have a process to communicate individual student and whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and parents. Although DHS has established 21st century learning expectations which are posted in every classroom, incorporated in daily announcements, and integrated in instruction throughout the curriculum, the school is not currently assessing the students' or school's performance regarding these expectations in a consistent or formal manner. While it is clear that the school's learning expectations are often incorporated in lessons in most content areas and, to a certain degree, are being assessed using modified rubrics to determine levels of achievement, this information is not being disseminated to students and parents. While acknowledging that there is no formal process to communicate achievement of learning expectations, the school administration team states there are several opportunities for anecdotal communication through the use of PowerSchool, student-teacher conferences, parent-teacher conferences, daily school announcements, weekly newsletter, and the use of social media. When schools have a formal process to communicate whole-school and individual progress toward the achievement of the school's stated 21st learning expectations, students, parents, and the community have a clear understanding of how those expectations are being met allowing all stakeholders to make informed decisions about the school and its programs.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership

# Standard 4 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The professional staff at DHS collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement in mathematics, English, science, history, and world languages. At least twice per year, after content area midterm and final exams, the professional staff uses common planning time to discuss the results of common assessments, to develop interventions and strategies to support student learning, and to revise the curriculum to address the needs of students who are not meeting the learning standards. Several representatives from the English department serve on the district writing team which reviews data to address inequities in English language arts. English, science, and math department teachers use common planning time to analyze MCAS data, and Advanced Placement teachers similarly review exam results to adjust curriculum and instruction. An additional source of data for determining student performance is the College Board Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) which is administered to all sophomores each October. Through the use of the co-taught model, special educators and general educators use assessment data to inform lesson development and to implement appropriate instructional strategies. While this collaborative effort of data analysis is evident within the inclusion model, there is limited collaboration for students within the alternative on-campus Diversity, Respect, Integrity, Vision, and Excellence (DRIVE) program and the substantially separate classrooms of the Life Skills and Transitions program. The data leadership team, which includes teacher leaders, analyzes and discusses standardized testing data with the goal of minimizing the learning gaps in performance between low and high needs students. Information is brought back to the school where the teacher leaders work with the teacher teams during common planning time to create logic models within each discipline. The logic models allow the team to monitor student progress over the course of the school year. At DHS, the collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data by professional staff address inequities in student achievement in general education and inclusion settings. When a school's professional staff regularly collects, disaggregates, and analyzes student assessment data, inequities in student achievement are identified and addressed to help ensure that all students are successful in meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school leadership

# Standard 4 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

At DHS, the majority of teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations throughout the school year. However, the communication of the specific, relevant 21st century learning expectations to the students by their teachers prior to the start of each unit of study is inconsistent. Nevertheless, teachers frequently communicate related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed prior to the start of the unit of study or lesson. Since the DHS curriculum has been created using the *Understanding by Design (UbD)* template, essential questions and objectives are clearly communicated to students in all content areas. This *UbD* template affords teachers the opportunity to relate specific units of study to targeted learning outcomes. Close to 74 percent of students state that they understand the learning goals in their classes and data from TeachPoint, a teacher observation software application, suggest that 76 percent of teachers clearly articulate their expectations to their students. Throughout the school and visible in all classrooms, the 21st century learning expectations are clearly posted and influence instruction in most classrooms. Several teachers post the learning expectations, adopted by their department, on the board along with content area objectives and daily agendas. Students also have a syllabus that outlines the 21st century learning expectations as well as the teacher and course expectations to be successful in the course. When teachers deliberately communicate the relevant learning expectations prior to unit of study, students understand and are able to meet 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students

# Standard 4 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Prior to summative assessments, some DHS teachers provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success which define targeted high levels of achievement. While 80 percent of the teachers at DHS consistently use content-specific rubric to assess student work, only 60 percent of teachers, based on the Endicott survey, show the rubrics to students prior to the unit of study. However, in many classrooms, the learning expectations are posted in daily agendas on the board and various assignments and projects specific have rubrics attached to them. Classroom observations reveal teachers are providing students with the specific learning expectations needed to be successful on summative assessments. For example, in preparation for an AP Psychology exam, students were asked to respond to a prompt using Pear Deck. The teacher was able to monitor the students' anonymous responses and to provide feedback to address misconceptions. In history and English classes, teachers provide students with specific and measurable criteria for the successful completion of assignments and assessments. While some teachers are not providing specific and measurable criteria for success prior to the summative assessment, they are allowing students to use the rubric and criteria to improve their grades on summative assessments once they have been taken. When students are provided with specific and measurable criteria prior to summative assessments, they are able to achieve at higher levels, address misconceptions, and clarify learning expectations to improve their learning outcomes.

## Sources of Evidence

- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey

# Standard 4 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

DHS teachers employ a wide range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. The professional staff are unanimous in their agreement that they use a variety and range of both formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning. Eighty-seven percent of the student body agrees that teachers use a wide variety of methods to assess their learning. Course curriculum maps and units of study within the *Understanding by Design* curriculum document show clear evidence of a variety of assessments. Documents shared via Google Docs and student work samples show the consistent use of the following assessment strategies: exit tickets, Pear Deck, Kahoot!, Ed Plan, Do Now, group projects, presentations, labs, essays, tests, spirals, Actively Learn, Socratic seminars, and quizzes. At the end of most units of study, students complete a summative assessment such as a performance task, research paper, or essay. Twice during the year, English, mathematics, history, science, and world languages teachers develop and administer content area common midterm and final exams. Teachers at DHS often use multiple assessments to assess student learning such as reading, writing, listening and speaking in world languages, and multiple revisions of student writing in English while some teachers offer individual student conferences as a means of assessing student progress. The use of the 1:1 Chromebook initiative has allowed teachers to provide immediate feedback to students following an assessment and appropriate support to improve student learning. When a variety of assessment strategies are used to measure student learning, students are provided with multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency and achievement of the school's learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Almost all teachers at Danvers High School (DHS) collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments such as the midterm and final exams. The DHS schedule provides teachers with formal common planning time to collaborate. Most content area teachers and all those who teach a common subject are able to meet formally once per seven day cycle and to use the time provided to plan units of study and to identify the skills to be assessed. In most content area courses, teachers assess students using a common midterm and final exam, but many subjects have developed common assignments and assessments in other areas as well. For example, in the mathematics department some teachers have created several assessments, called spirals, in which students are asked to repeatedly revisit content to increase comprehension and mastery of concepts. Common planning time is also used effectively to review assessment data, to analyze the results, and to make revisions in both formative and summative assessments. Teachers also plan instruction and assessment to address student learning issues regarding mastery of specific standards. In courses which are co-taught, regular and special education teachers use common planning time to collaborate on lesson development and on the creation of appropriate assessment strategies to ensure that all students are engaged in learning. While the current DHS schedule does not provide for interdisciplinary collaboration time to develop cross-curricular units or lessons, the English and social studies departments have collaborated to develop and implement common writing assignments, such as document-based questions, research assignments, and six summative pieces per year reflecting the three writing forms (arguments, expository, and narratives) and the use of common language when assessing these assignments. When teachers collaborate to create, analyze, and revise formative and summative assessments, students are assessed using methods and strategies which are consistent across the curriculum providing them with greater opportunities to demonstrate proficiency and achieve academic success.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

Many DHS teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. As a result of the recent 1:1 Chromebook initiative, most students and teachers are in communication in real time. Assignments, submitted through Google Classroom, receive feedback through written comments. Pear Deck and other digital tools allow for immediate feedback from the teacher to the class using anonymous student samples, which encourages student self-assessment and reflection. Further self-assessment and reflection opportunities are evident through the writing process in the English department. Close to 75 percent of students report that teachers offer suggestions to help them improve their work and parents concur that most teachers provide timely and corrective feedback to assist students in improving their school work. Students state that their regular use of PowerSchool enables them to stay current with assignments and to monitor their grades. When teachers consistently provide their students with specific, timely, and corrective feedback and the opportunity to reflect on and improve the quality of their work, students are able to use teachers' input and feedback to correct errors, clarify misconceptions, and achieve at higher levels.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 9

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## Conclusions

Most DHS teachers regularly use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Through the use of technology and applications such as Pear Deck, Ed Plan, Google Classroom, content area rubrics, and a variety of assessments, teachers are provided with the data to allow them, both individually and collaboratively, to reflect on students' progress in meeting the academic objective(s) of a lesson and to revise instruction accordingly. Both formally through common planning time, as well as informally, teachers discuss and revise the skills students need to demonstrate in order to meet the learning expectation(s) for a specific unit. When the data that is acquired through formative assessment indicates a revision, some teachers re-teach a skill or concept either to a whole class or individually. When teachers regularly use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning, the students benefit from having dynamic and responsive instruction that is adapted to meet their academic needs.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- Endicott survey

# Standard 4 Indicator 10

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## Conclusions

DHS teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. Close to 87 percent of the staff agrees that they 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. Individual departments indicate that they examine student work and common course or grade-level assessments during their scheduled common planning time, as well as on their own time. However, there is no formal process for monitoring the individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Although the data leadership team examines standardized assessments across the district such as MCAS results in English, math and science, this data is not readily accessible to classroom teachers to assist them in revising curriculum and improving instruction. Administrators and teachers receive and are able to analyze individual student data for incoming freshmen and transfer students such as report cards and special education needs. There is evidence that some teachers use the standardized data from Advanced Placement exams to help revise curriculum, instruction and assessments for AP courses. Current DHS students are surveyed annually by the school district and that data is used for the purpose of informing instruction. While there is no formal survey to gather feedback from alumni, through the Naviance subscription, DHS is able to track alumni data, but this limited data is not being used to revise curriculum or to improve instructional practice. While there are practices in place to examine a range of evidence of student learning, there is no formal structure or protocol in place for teachers to collaboratively examine student work for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. When teachers and administrators routinely examine the full range of available evidence of student learning in order to revise curriculum and to improve instructional practice, students are assured of receiving the support they need to successfully achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 4 Indicator 11

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## Conclusions

The grading and reporting practices of DHS teachers are not regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Exactly one half of the staff agrees that the school does not regularly review and discuss the school's grading practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. During the last school year, teachers revised the student handbook, but did not align the school's grading practice with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Since the school has yet to identify the manner in which the learning expectations and core values will be integrated in the grading policy, student performance in achieving the school's learning expectations is not yet reported. Individual teachers and departments have devised their own grading policy, but, to date, a school-wide grading policy does not exist. Most teachers provide students with a syllabus that outlines the grading policy for their particular course. Other than the midterm and final exam each accounting for 10 percent of the final grade, the weight of assessments and inclusion of a participation grade varies from teacher to teacher. The lack of a school-wide grading practice results in occasional confusion for students and somewhat inconsistent assessment and reporting of student achievement. When grading and reporting practices are formalized and regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core value and beliefs about learning, students clearly know and understand what is expected of them and are assured that all students are being graded fairly and consistently across the curriculum.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- student shadowing
- students

# Standard 4 Commendations

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## Commendation

The effective use of common planning time to analyze assessment data to address inequities in student achievement

## Commendation

The use of a variety of assessment strategies to measure student learning

## Commendation

The use of common planning time to collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of common assessments

## Commendation

The use of technology to increase and enhance teacher feedback to improve student learning

## Commendation

The comprehensive use of formative assessments to inform instructional practices to improve student learning

# Standard 4 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop and implement a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success

## Recommendation

Reassess the current school-wide rubrics to ensure that they are effective in measuring achievement of the school's learning expectations

## Recommendation

Communicate individual student and whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to the students, parents, and community

## Recommendation

Communicate relevant learning expectations to all students prior to the start of each unit of study

## Recommendation

Provide formal opportunities and an appropriate protocol for teachers to collaboratively analyze student work

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a formalized process to disseminate and analyze assessment data for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice

## Recommendation

Regularly review and revise school-wide grading practices to ensure that they are aligned with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

# Standard 5 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The Danvers High School (DHS) 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. Eighty-five percent of students feel safe at school and over 90 percent of staff and parents agree that the school culture is safe, positive, and respectful. Students also believe that their teachers and administrators value and respect them as individuals, care about their learning, and motivate them to do their very best. DHS core values are displayed in every classroom and students are reminded of these beliefs and learning expectations not only at the beginning of every year but every day in the morning announcements. In addition, the student handbook communicates clear expectations for student behavior. Students report that their teachers motivate and constantly encourage them to put forth their best effort. Art work hangs in the hallways and athletic, band and DECA (local, state, and international champions) competition awards and trophies are displayed in highly visible cases throughout the school. Spirit days for sports and participation in school's many clubs and after school activities (e.g. SADD, SUFA, Best Buddies, College Day, and Danvers Cares) as well as awards and scholarship nights emphasize students' spirit and pride for their school community. As examples of student support, DHS has implemented a vital advisory program focused on helping students make good decisions and establish supportive relationships between students and adults in the building. A student support team comprised of guidance counselors, social workers, school psychologist, school nurse and faculty members are available to assist students with any of their difficult academic, social or behavioral challenges. There is a clear focus on maintaining a safe learning environment and a positive culture by everyone involved at DHS. When students are valued and feel supported and safe within their school community, they have the confidence to take academic risks, share responsibility for their own learning and attain a sense of pride in and commitment to their school.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- students
- parents
- school leadership
- school support staff
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School is equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. All students from the beginning of freshman year are encouraged to challenge themselves and commit to high expectations. DHS provides its students with the opportunity, after discussions and feedback from their teachers, parents, and guidance counselors, to enroll in any academic level course, as documented in their curriculum guides, such as Advanced Placement, honors, and college prep. This process fosters heterogeneity and supports the diversity of the student body, including English language learners and students with disabilities, to ensure that all students have access to challenging academic experiences throughout the curriculum. For DHS students who need additional supports and/or an alternative learning environment, they have access to DRIVE, an alternative learning program with smaller classes and more individualized support and which is focused on Diversity, Respect, Integrity, Vision and Excellence. Students in this particular class also spend a minimum of one period each day in a mainstream classroom. For DHS students with more significant or cognitive disabilities, it offers Life Skills and Transitions, programs designed to teach them the skills necessary to be successful in the community. It is evident that the school's core values and school-wide 21st century learning expectations are strongly considered in the development and implementation of new courses, embedded in their present curriculum, and incorporated in teachers' lesson activities and instructional strategies at all levels. As a result of this equitable and inclusive process, students have access to a wide range of educational opportunities, are empowered to take responsibility for their own learning, and are more able to successfully achieve their school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- students
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School has an established formal, ongoing advisory program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. DHS established an advisory program for all students in 2012 which meets for 40 minutes once per month. Over 71 percent of DHS students agree that this program provides them with another adult in school with whom they meet regularly and who knows them well. The advisory program helps to address the social, emotional, and academic needs of the students while fostering community partnerships, strong teacher-student relationships, and a positive school climate. It provides an avenue for adult guidance and peer support for young adolescents as they cope with the challenges encountered during their formative high school years. As evident in this program's curriculum, students learn about building relationships, establishing goals, preparing for academic challenges, and connecting to their school. An ongoing relationship with one adult over time is a primary factor in fostering positive relationships within the school community. This program provides an opportunity for another adult to be a resource, sounding board, and mentor to a small group of students with whom they will develop a relationship over a four-year period of time. Despite the success of this program, some teachers have indicated a need for more opportunities to meet with students each month, especially underclassmen (e.g. freshmen) in an effort to strengthen the student-teacher relationship within the first year. When schools provide a formal, ongoing advisory program for all students, they benefit from the support and assistance as they work toward the successful achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff of Danvers High School engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning. DHS has scheduled the first Wednesday of each month as an early release day which allocates time for teachers to collaborate on curriculum mapping and the development of unit objectives. Additionally, time was committed to the development of student learning and professional practice goals and for meetings with middle school staff to align curriculum vertically. DHS has also dedicated common planning time for teachers and administrators to have discourse related to instruction, assessment, curriculum alignment, and the analysis of data collected from the administration of common mid-year and final assessments. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff of Danvers High School use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices. Over the past several years the teachers and staff at DHS have had the opportunity to participate in training both within the school community and beyond through participation in professional development offered by the following resources:

- Off To a Great Start - Mentoring program for new teachers
- SEI TRAINING - Sheltered English Immersion
- AP Workshops - Danvers Participated in the Mass. Math/Science Initiative 2011-2014
- Research for Better Teaching - The Skillful Teacher
- Courage to Teach
- Technology workshops- Google Classroom and various applications
- Collegial seminars (Fletcher School, Tufts University)
- Subject-specific seminars
- Annual Behavioral Health Conference
- Membership to Salem Collaborative
- Primary Source

This commitment by DHS to provide researched-based professional development to the professional staff ensures that the teachers are current in research-based best practices as they collaborate to develop and implement strategies to enhance their pedagogy to improve student learning and to provide support to their peers. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff of Danvers High School dedicate formal time to implement professional development.

Currently at Danvers High School, teachers are provided a total of 34 hours of relevant professional development during the academic school year which is offered through two full days (seven hours each) and ten early release days (two hours each on the first Wednesday of each month). Optional summer professional development, for which teachers may earn stipends, are offered each year including two full days in June, and three full days in September. Professional development topics cover a wide-range of areas, including those that are content-specific and those that incorporate the development of best instructional practices.

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff of Danvers High School apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. At DHS, skills, practices, and ideas gained by staff through professional development are directly applied to practice as exemplified by the current use of universal practices including such as *Understanding by Design (UBD)* curriculum templates, performance tasks, common assessments, and the gathering and analysis of data. Most members of the teaching staff are provided common planning time which meets at least one 55-minute block every seven school days. This time is devoted to creating lessons, common assessments, and performance tasks. Currently common planning time exists for teachers in the core academic subjects and for

courses where there is more than one teacher teaching a specific class. For example, all ninth grade students are required to take biology, which is taught by four different instructors who meet every seven school days to discuss curriculum and assessment. Other specific examples of utilizing professional development to improve student learning include the development, implementation, data collection, analysis and modification of student learning goals, as well as, the training for and implementation of the 1:1 Chromebook initiative and Google Classroom.

When teachers and administrators have opportunities to engage in reflection, professional discourse, collective inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning; have access to professional development within the school schedule; and use resources outside of school to stay current in research-based best practices, then students have the best educational opportunities which enable them to be successful.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school leadership

# Standard 5 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

At Danvers High School, school leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. All administrators are required to participate in training with a consultant from Research for Better Teaching and successfully complete their courses *The Skillful Leader* 1, 2, and 3, as well as participate in administrative council discussions about how to implement the supervision and evaluation model effectively. The district designed and implemented a PowerPoint presentation to guide all educators to develop their student learning and professional practice goals. District administrators then determined which standards and indicators would be prioritized to guide the goal development process and to create synergy between departments. Teachers worked collaboratively within their departments focusing on these priorities and standards, analyzed student assessment data to address their students' learning problems, and deliberately developed professional practice goals to support and address student learning goals, all in consultation with their administrators. The use of the TeachPoint Software program allows administrators to provide evaluative feedback following classroom observations, and provide a focal point when administrators meet with all of their assigned teachers to discuss lessons, instructional strategies, and assessment of student learning. This process of data analysis, collaboration, discourse, and reflection, facilitates collaboration between supervisors/evaluators and teachers. This process is clearly linked to the improvement of teacher instruction and student learning, as well as for meeting the needs of all students. Eighty percent of teachers believe that input from their evaluating supervisors plays an important role in improving their instructional practices. When school leaders use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that involve inquiry, data analysis, goal setting and collaboration, students are assured of receiving high quality instruction which provides them with the opportunity for academic success.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

The organization of time at Danvers High School supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. All teachers have one planning period per day and most also have time built into their schedules to collaborate once every seven days to discuss departmental curriculum, research-based instruction, and assessment of student performance. Freshman students are divided into three teams and have a group of core teachers who have additional scheduled common planning time to implement instructional strategies and to support individual learning needs. Content teacher leaders meet once a month with curriculum directors to collaborate, address curriculum and instruction, and analyze the learning needs of students. The school day is organized in a rotating schedule which consists of a six period, seven-day rotating drop schedule. This schedule has a 74-minute block in the middle of the day built around the lunch period and a 40-minute flex block from 2:00-2:40 p.m. when teachers are available for team meetings, parent conferences, and administrative meetings. This flex block is also used for students to access extra help and to make-up missed assignments. Additionally, in order to re-enforce their learning and to enhance their testing skills, Advanced Placement students are mandated to attend this extra block when their AP course rotates to the end of the day. This schedule also has the flexibility to support content common planning time for teacher collaboration to improve teaching and learning and to provide parents' access to faculty and support staff to discuss their children's education as well as a 37-minute advisory period each month which is designed to provide academic, social, and emotional support for all students. When a school's schedule allows for collaboration among teachers to focus on research-based instruction and the provision of time for students' support, the opportunity for students to successfully achieve the school's learning expectations is enhanced.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- school leadership

# Standard 5 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Student load and class size at Danvers High School enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students, to provide sufficient personalization, and to ensure student achievement of the school-wide expectations. At DHS teachers are required to teach five classes per semester and class sizes are determined contractually. The total number of students teachers may be assigned cannot exceed 125, with the exception of English teachers and any other faculty members who teach only four classes, in which case, the limit is 100 students. Class sizes at DHS were observed to be well within research-based standards so that sufficient personalization and individual attention can be provided to all students. Almost 85 percent of students feel that their “class sizes were reasonable” while 72.6 percent of teachers and 80.1 percent of parents feel that the number of students in DHS classes allows teachers to meet students' individual learning needs. When schools maintain class sizes which allow individualization and personalization of instruction, students have a better opportunity to learn in an atmosphere where they can actively participate and take risks as they master the 21st century skills stated in the school's learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- school leadership

# Standard 5 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

The Danvers High School principal, working with other building leaders, consistently provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The Endicott survey indicates near unanimity that the principal leads the school effectively. She works with the curriculum director to oversee the program of studies, and the development, implementation, and assessment of curriculum. She supervises assistant principals and works with them to coordinate academic standards, instructional programs, and curriculum. Teachers are given the freedom to make instructional decisions that work best in their classrooms; this distribution of leadership promotes teacher empowerment and autonomy. Instructional feedback is given primarily through the evaluation process by helping teachers set appropriate goals that align with the school improvement plans, develop action plans to improve their practice, and implement and assess the plans throughout the year. Within 48 hours after an observation, teachers are provided feedback through the use of the TeachPoint software application but the administrators have indicated that they prefer to have conversations with educators before officially posting their results electronically. This way, any suggested improvements can be discussed in a positive and productive manner. Further, teachers with instructional needs have indicated that they can go to any administrator and feel that those needs are heard and responded to in an efficient and timely fashion. When a principal provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations and which involves leading by example through reflective, constructive, and collaborative dialogue, students are ensured of learning in a positive and supportive environment.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- school board
- department leaders
- central office personnel
- school leadership

# Standard 5 Indicator 9

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Fifty-four percent of Danvers students, 74 percent of staff, and 63 percent of parents agree that they have input in important decisions made at the school, in part because the principal models accessibility and openness to feedback and welcomes discussions from students, teachers, parents, and community members. Parents, students, teachers, and community members have the opportunity to advise the administration on school issues through participation in the school council, the minutes of which reflect actual deliberations on school practices. As an example, this is the venue where the details of the 1:1 initiative were deliberated. These monthly meetings go beyond giving people the opportunity to "feel involved" all the way to giving people actual influence on planning. Parents also participate in the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC). The school has seven teacher leaders who represent all of the major departments in the building. These teacher leaders who receive a stipend while carrying a full teaching load, work cooperatively with administration, guidance, and other teachers to help shape and implement school initiatives. Student input in school decision-making is largely technological as the central office annually surveys students and parents, and the results are shared with administrators. The student council also meets occasionally with the principal, however since the school is essentially an "open society," students always have the opportunity to meet informally with the principal. Community members participate in the wellness committee along with school nurses, teachers, trainers, administration and Danvers Cares. In addition, parents and students are invited to participate in the interview and decision process for hiring new faculty. When schools provide all stakeholders with meaningful and defined roles in decision-making, the resulting ownership and responsibility leads to genuine pride in the school and enhanced learning for students.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 5 Indicator 10

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. Teachers at DHS are encouraged to pursue leadership roles within the school as chairs or facilitators of committees or as teacher leaders for the major academic departments. More specifically, in the past teachers worked as leaders to develop several new elective courses including Spanish 1a/1b, Physics of Sport, and various Advanced Placement courses. Classroom teachers played a role in the decision to move to a 1:1 Chromebook initiative to ensure their students had equitable access to technology that would engage them in their own learning. With the influx of available technology in the classrooms and in the absence of a technology integration specialist, teachers have taken leadership roles in the integration and support of Chromebooks, often sharing their expertise with colleagues. With regard to curriculum, teachers voluntarily rework curriculum maps on their own time to ensure universal alignment with *Understanding by Design* templates. Teachers also have assumed leadership roles in professional development activities, student travel opportunities, and in the advisory program. Teachers were involved with initiating many of the fifty clubs and co-curricular activities that the school offers, most of which are currently led by teachers. When teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school, students are more engaged in learning and are more likely to be successful in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 5 Indicator 11

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## Conclusions

The Danvers School Board, superintendent, and principal are highly collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The Danvers School Committee meets monthly and their meetings are frequented by members of the school and community. The agendas are published and available to the public in advance. Their meetings are in compliance with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and all meetings are televised locally. School committee members stated that specific members of the Danvers High School community present at every meeting. These presentations, whether by students, teachers, or other school community members, are evidence of the high degree of collaboration between the school committee and the school community. The Danvers School Committee is comprised of well-informed community members and has benefited from a continuity in membership and leadership. Furthermore, the superintendent and school committee have been very supportive of academic and co-curricular initiatives at DHS. The recent support for educational technology evidenced by the Chromebook initiative and enthusiastic approval for out-of-state and international travel opportunities for groups such as the band, art club, DECA and others is truly indicative of the committee's commitment to helping students achieve the school's learning expectations. Additionally, it is clear that the lines of communication between teachers and central office are open. For example, if a teacher feels he or she needs something to improve their instruction, there is a level of comfort with regard to approaching the business manager with this request. Many teachers stated that if something is necessary for their instruction, the business manager will do anything within his power to ensure the teachers receive the necessary materials. With a specific office for the business manager within Danvers High School, the DHS teachers stated they feel comfortable approaching the business manager whenever a need arises. When the school committee, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, the opportunities for students to achieve those learning expectations are enhanced.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- facility tour
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

# Standard 5 Indicator 12

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## Conclusions

The Danvers School Committee and superintendent consistently provide the principal of Danvers High School with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. It is abundantly clear that the school committee, superintendent, and principal have a shared vision for student achievement of 21st century learning expectations, which leads to a general trust and confidence in the principal's decision-making. The superintendent leaves the day-to-day management of DHS to the high school administrators. The Danvers School Committee and superintendent support the decisions the principal makes regarding building-specific needs. Moreover, the principal and the superintendent have an excellent and unique working relationship which has evolved over a period of years, dating from when they were both hired at the same time and worked together in the Danvers Public Schools, the principal as an elementary teacher/principal and the superintendent as a middle school teacher. The relationship was also strengthened when the principal served as the assistant superintendent for personnel prior to assuming leadership of DHS. Several years ago, the principal assumed both roles. Close to 90 percent of the DHS staff and parents agree that the school committee and superintendent provide the principal with the autonomy to lead the school. The school committee and superintendent have historically supported DHS at school committee meetings, with respect to both academic and co-curricular initiatives. When the principal is provided with the autonomy to lead the school, the school community can be assured that all decisions will be made in the best interest of students in order to help them achieve the school's learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 5 Commendations

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## Commendation

The development and nurturing of a safe, supportive, and respectful school culture

## Commendation

The celebration of student academic, artistic, co-curricular and athletic accomplishments and achievements

## Commendation

The mutual respect demonstrated by students, teachers, and administrators

## Commendation

The equitable access to challenging academic experiences for all students

## Commendation

The formal advisory program which helps meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students

## Commendation

The commitment to provide professional development opportunities for all faculty which allows them to stay current in their pedagogy and to improve instruction and learning for all students

## Commendation

The allocation of professional development time during the school day to provide teachers the opportunity to discuss curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve student learning and achievement

## Commendation

The use of a collaborative, research-based supervision and evaluation process to improve teaching and learning

## Commendation

The commitment to providing common planning time to improve instruction and assessment

## **Commendation**

The effort to maintain student loads and class sizes to meet the learning needs of individual students

The multiple opportunities for all stakeholders to participate in a meaningful way in decision-making at DHS

The teachers for exercising initiative and leadership to improve the school and to increase student engagement in learning

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

The decision-making authority entrusted to the principal by the superintendent and the school committee

# Standard 5 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Provide additional contact opportunities for freshman advisories in order to more successfully develop the student-teacher relationship within the first year

# Standard 6 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School has multiple timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that support each student's achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. A variety of programs and direct support services ensure the social, emotional, and educational needs of all students are met in a timely manner. The student study team (SST), comprised of guidance counselors, social workers, the school psychologist, the school attendance officer, the nurses, the assistant principals, and principal, meets twice per month to discuss students who have been referred for intervention. This group works collaboratively to develop interventions and strategies that help students access the curriculum and find success in school. Using a team approach, the SST is able to support each student using a case management model to establish measurable goals for the student, as well as provides a system for assessing success in a timely manner. While Danvers High School cited a need to strengthen its follow-up process at the time of the self-study, the SST has since improved follow-up by identifying one adult on the team who is responsible for monitoring each student's progress after the action plan is developed and implemented. Also in place is an onsite alternative program, DRIVE (Diversity, Respect, Integrity, Vision, and Excellence). This semi-contained dropout prevention program is staffed by one full-time teacher and further supported by a designated social worker and a special educator. This program provides Tier 3 interventions for students who are at-risk of not graduating due to a credit deficit, behavioral issues, and/or poor attendance, among other factors. While there are no specific criteria used to assign students to DRIVE, each placement is thoughtfully and purposely made by administration. Students in DRIVE are able to participate fully in building activities and attend at least one mainstream class. All students at Danvers High School are able to recover credits toward graduation during the school day using an online credit recovery program (APEX). Students may also recover credits through the summer school program. Three full-time and two part-time counselors, who job share one position, follow the same group of students all four years. In addition to annual individual student meetings to discuss progress toward graduation and course selection, counselors deliver a comprehensive developmental guidance curriculum to all students in grades 9-12. Guidance counselors present two classroom lessons per year on topics such as personality type, career exploration, and resume building using Naviance. Information is also communicated through class assemblies when access to students in a classroom setting is not possible. Guidance counselors indicated that a third classroom lesson would be beneficial for students. In conjunction with the assistant principals, guidance counselors meet quarterly with any student who has one or more failing grades. Twelve special educators and one school psychologist coordinate all referral, annual, and programming meetings to ensure compliance with federal regulations. Special education teachers support students in both inclusive and self-contained learning environments. There is one district-wide Section 504 coordinator for students who require an accommodation plan. Three social workers offer both group and individual counseling to address the social and emotional needs of every student at Danvers High School. Two full-time nurses write and implement individual health plans for students with significant medical needs. Danvers High School implemented an advisory program in 2012 in which students are assigned to the same faculty advisor for all four years. Advisory groups meet once per month to discuss specific topics or engage in activities tailored to each grade level. Topics have included anti-bullying awareness, social media safety, post-secondary goal setting, and academic reflection. While the advisory program provides a structure for delivering important information, relationships with students are difficult to establish with only one meeting per month. Teachers state that while relationships with students develop as a result of the program, they often take several years to build. In addition to the advisory program, 9th grade students are supported by academic teams that support them through the transition to high school. Two of the teams also include a special educator who ensures delivery of services for students with an IEP. These academic teams are allotted common planning time, which allows for the early identification of students experiencing academic, social, or emotional difficulties, which are frequently reported by parents, social workers, guidance counselors, and administrators. As a result of Danvers High School's multiple, timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies, all students, including identified and at-risk students, are able

to progress toward achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- school support staff
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School consistently provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. Results from the Endicott survey show that over 90 percent of parents agree the school provides information about available student support services using a variety of communication methods. Parents and students use PowerSchool to access information about attendance, grades, and schedules. The school's website also provides a multitude of information, including the program of studies, the student handbook, weekly newsletters, upcoming events, and school and community resources. Parent interviews revealed that support services staff, teachers, and administrators are very responsive to parent inquiry, stating that it is common for parents to receive a response to any concern within hours. The guidance website provides information about the post-secondary planning process and also contains resources for student athletes, students with disabilities, and other college and career-related resources. The quarterly guidance newsletter, which is sent to families via ConnectEd, is also available on the school's website. Guidance counselors use Naviance as a communication tool for providing students and families with important post-secondary planning information as well. The guidance staff participates in parent information nights throughout the year regarding information for incoming 9th grade students, college planning night for juniors, and financial aid night for seniors. The department also maintains a Twitter account, which provides information about such upcoming events. The health services department maintains its own web page on the DHS website, which communicates information about mandated health screenings, medication policies, and access to school health forms. Personalized screening results are mailed home to families. There is also a link to the district's student services homepage on the Danvers Public Schools' website. This webpage contains information regarding special education programs, contact information for school psychologists and the Section 504 accommodation plan coordinator, as well as other service providers. There are also links to state resources and the Danvers Special Education Parental Advisory Committee (SEPAC). Families are also able to access library resources, such as online databases, ebooks, audiobooks, an online catalog and newspaper subscriptions, lists of newly added resources and book club announcements. The principal communicates with families and the community weekly via email. Every Friday she sends information regarding upcoming events, as well as other important information about which students and parents need to be aware. Parent interviews revealed that families regard this weekly communication as the cornerstone to what they already view as an exceptionally strong relationship between the the school and the families it serves. Although the school utilizes a multitude of technologies to communicate information to families, support services personnel realize that there are times when information is best delivered in a more personalized way. Parent interviews revealed that support services personnel commonly reach out to parents via telephone to discuss concerns regarding a variety of student issues. Additionally, parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit the health services office, the student services office, the school Library, or the guidance department to gather information about school-based and community services. As a result of Danvers High School's strong commitment to providing information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services, students and families are able to access a wide network of support personnel who assist all students in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, as well as their own self-defined academic and career goals.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- school support staff
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

Support services staff at Danvers High School use a broad spectrum of technologies to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Starting with the 2016-2017 school year, all students and faculty were provided with Chromebooks for classroom and home use. Teacher interviews revealed that the provision of Chromebooks has allowed certain subgroups of students, such as low-income, access to technology and resources they did not previously have. As a result, all students are able to access information about grades, attendance, and schedules using PowerSchool and are also able to complete the course selection process online. The guidance department delivers its curriculum using Naviance, a web-based student success system which assists students in the post-secondary planning process. Guidance counselors cite Naviance as an essential component of its developmental guidance program. The tool is used to facilitate classroom lessons on a variety of topics, such as personality type, career exploration, and resume building. In their junior and senior years students utilize Naviance as a college search tool, as well as a college application management tool. Guidance counselors also use Naviance to manage student transcript requests and submit supporting college application documents, such as transcripts and letters of recommendation. In addition to Naviance, the guidance department maintains a web page and a Twitter account. The student services department uses ESped to develop and share IEPs and Section 504 accommodation plans with students, parents, and teachers. Parents are able to apply for bus transportation or free/reduced lunch through the district's website. All health forms utilized by the school nurses are also available online. Health Office Anywhere (HOA) software is used to create and maintain student health records. The library's website serves as a portal to its many online and digital resources. When schools use a broad range of technologies to communicate information to students and families, every student is able to access an effective range of coordinated services, which allows them to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who effectively deliver a written, developmental program; regularly meet with students to provide effective personal, academic, career and college counseling; regularly engage in individual and group meetings with all students; extensively deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and collectively use ongoing, relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve and ensure each student achieves the 21st century learning expectations.

Three full-time and two part-time counselors, who job share a position, serve approximately 980 students at Danvers High School. Each guidance counselor maintains a caseload of approximately 250 students in grades 9-12 and they remain with students during all four years of high school. Three social workers provide additional support to students with social and emotional challenges, averaging approximately 160 visits with students each week. One full-time secretary provides support for the guidance office. Guidance counselors and social workers employ a solution-focused counseling approach, which assists students in the development of effective and appropriate coping strategies. A majority of students state that they feel comfortable going to their guidance counselor, and faculty and parents believe the school has an adequate number of support staff to serve the population.

Of particular note, interviews with guidance counselors, social workers, school nurses, and the school psychologist revealed an exceptionally high level of collaboration between and among these staff members. Interviews with the School Resources Standard Subcommittee reinforced the observation that the informal case management model used by the group ensures that every student is well-supported in and beyond the classroom. Guidance counselors spend the majority of their time with students in individual counseling for both post-secondary and academic issues. Counselors also deliver two classroom lessons per year to each grade level. Topics covered include, but are not limited to, 9th grade orientation, introduction to Naviance and career exploration for freshmen, College Board PSAT testing and career exploration for sophomores, post-secondary planning and resume building for juniors, and navigating the college application process for seniors. Although students are able to complete the course selection process online, guidance counselors meet individually with all students to review course selections, to make recommendations based on each student's goals, and to assess progress toward graduation.

School social workers spend the majority of their time directly supporting students through individual and group counseling and meet with identified students as outlined in Section 504 Plans and IEPs. All students in the school are able to access a social worker upon request. Additionally, social workers facilitate a newcomers group to assist students who are transitioning to Danvers Public Schools. When necessary, students are referred to outside services, such as Lahey Behavioral Emergency Services, private therapists, mental health agencies, and community service providers.

School counselors use a variety of data to assess and improve their programs and services. Classroom lessons include pre- and post-assessments, which provide valuable data and feedback used to adjust and update lesson plans. Parents of juniors are asked to complete an evaluation after college planning night, which is used to improve the program. School social workers administer various surveys to students to evaluate the effectiveness of individual and group counseling services.

When school counseling services employ an adequate number of licensed professional staff who are able to deliver a comprehensive program which includes academic, career, and personal/social counseling, guided by the use of ongoing and relevant assessment data, all students are supported in their achievement of the school's

21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 6 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

Danvers High School health services are staffed with an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel who provide both preventative and direct intervention health services; consistently use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; and gather relevant data for use in improving services to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

The school health office is staffed by two registered nurses serving a population of 980 students, and 96 percent of staff and 88 percent of parents agree the staffing of the health office is adequate to serve the needs of the school. The nurses and the health office provide a comfortable, safe space to accommodate the 4,000 annual student visits, as well as afford privacy to students when required. Eighty percent of students report feeling comfortable going to the school nurse and students polled indicated that the health office personnel are approachable and helpful.

The nurses provide preventative health services in the form of hearing, vision and scoliosis screenings as well as Body Mass Index assessments. Additionally, the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) screening was implemented in the fall of 2016 to identify at-risk 10th graders who may need assistance in dealing with alcohol and/or drug use. Health personnel also provide ongoing preventative care by educating students and staff during treatment to eliminate a return trip for the same occurrence. Examples of this include education on sunburn care or the effects of low blood sugar. Direct interventions carried out by the nurses include first aid, emergency care, vital sign monitoring, illness and injury assessments, medication administration, blood glucose monitoring, diabetic care, health education and emotional support. Eighty-eight percent of staff and 82 percent of parents believe health services personnel provide preventative health and direct care services.

When appropriate, the nurses refer students and staff to various outside agencies and individuals such as primary care physicians, dentists, specialized physicians, in-house social workers, and therapeutic counselors. When the need is medical based, the referral is communicated via phone to the parent of the student in need. Nurses may be asked by the parent and given permission to speak directly to the recommended person. If the referral is psycho-socially based, it can be directly made via phone or in person to one of the school social workers, or it may be made via phone to the parent. Suggestions are offered if students or parents are in need of names of physicians, dentists, or counselors. Follow up is always made on all referrals by a phone call to a parent or via a personal check-in with the student. Student health assessments are ongoing. During a typical school year over 4,000 visits are logged to the school nurse's office. The health office utilizes Health Office Anywhere (HOA) software to log health visits, track immunizations, document screening information, upload health plans, and flag life-threatening health conditions for staff. The nurses write individual health care plans and ensure their implementation based on a physician's recommendations to ensure that students have accommodations appropriate to the medical condition. In addition, they attend IEP, 504 and team meetings on an as needed basis and serve on the student services team, crisis response team, and one nurse also serves on the wellness committee.

Lastly, they communicate with parents, staff and students through the principal's email, the website, and by phone or face-to-face conversations. School health personnel gather relevant data regarding student health via emergency forms each year and communicate medical conditions to staff. Presently there is no formal process to solicit feedback regarding health services from parents or students in order to improve the services provided however, additional programming has been instituted this year to educate staff and students to make healthier decisions regarding beverage choices and this program will be examined using survey data to determine effectiveness.

When schools manifest a strong commitment to providing adequate health services to all students, every student has the opportunity to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 6 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

The library/media services are extensively integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel who provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and information services; ensure accessibility to and staffing of the library; are responsive to student interests and needs to support independent learning; and utilize ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community to improve services to support 21st century learning expectations.

The Danvers High School Library is a welcoming, well-organized space that is staffed by one certified library teacher and one library assistant. In order to help students reach 21st century learning goals, the library is following the learning commons principle of a student-centered, multi-functional and adaptive space. The library is staffed and open to students and teachers from 7:00 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and from 7:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on Fridays. Eighty-nine percent of students agree that the library staff is available to help them find the information they need or want. Many students use the library before and after school to connect and collaborate with one another. Students use the library throughout the day to choose books for independent reading, conduct research for class assignments, and as a communal space. In order to further meet the needs of all students, the library hosts National Honor Society student-led tutoring after school Monday through Thursday. The librarian actively engages in the implementation of the school's curriculum by attending content area department meetings, collaborating with teachers across disciplines and designing project-oriented rubrics with faculty.

The library collection features a wide range of current, engaging materials in both print and electronic formats including books, audiobooks, and DVDs to support student learning expectations. Slightly over 97 percent of staff and 92 percent of parents agree that the library and personnel provide a wide range of print and non-print materials to support student learning. In addition, the library supports the students and curriculum by providing access to various technologies including 24/7 access to the online catalog, databases, Overdrive book subscription service, and the Noodletools research management program. The librarian also provides information services such as research and citation lessons, subject guides for projects, and visual and writing guides. The librarian demonstrates responsiveness to students' interests by giving book talks, facilitating the book club, and by partnering with the public library to provide inter-library loan services to guarantee independent learning needs are met. Currently she is in the process of creating a makerspace in the library that will provide enhanced opportunities for the students to create digital media as well as to engage in more traditional learning experiences such as crafts or sewing.

The library teacher frequently conducts an analysis of the collection using Follett's Titlewave as well as the school's circulation statistics. This data is used to inform the library purchases for collection development and the reverse selection of the collection resulting in resources that support students needs. In addition to collection analysis, the high school librarian, in cooperation with other librarians in the district, writes a five-year, long-range strategic plan that includes formally surveying students, teachers and parents about their library experiences and needs. The results from the last school community survey were incorporated into the design of the new media center. For example, students requested that the media center have a more relaxed atmosphere to gather and collaborate with others, so the library was designed with group study rooms, comfortable furniture and common spaces to allow students to meet with friends to play chess or to collaborate on projects.

When a school's library/media services are extensively integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel who provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and information services; ensure accessibility to and staffing of the library; are responsive to student interests and needs to support independent learning; and utilize ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback

from the school community to improve services, students are ensured that they will have the support they need to successfully achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

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

# Standard 6 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners (ELL), 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 an inclusive learning environment for all students; and perform ongoing assessment, using relevant data including feedback from the school community to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Twelve special education teachers, one ELL teacher, and one speech therapist provide services to identified students. The student services department employs one K-12 special education director, three administrative assistants, one school psychologist dedicated solely to Danvers High School, and one Section 504 coordinator. An out-of-district coordinator coordinates services for students placed out of district. Special education teachers ensure delivery of services through collaboration with teachers and student support staff, allowing all students the opportunity to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. Special education services are developed and delivered in accordance with state and federal laws. Academic support classes are available to eligible identified students, while other students receive support via co-taught classes. In co-taught classes the special education teacher provides personalized instruction to students with IEPs, in addition to collaborating with the subject area teacher to plan lessons, to present instruction, and to modify and design assignments and assessments that ensure each student access to the curriculum. Students in grades 9-12 are served by the co-taught model which is available in most content areas. However, teachers revealed a need for co-taught classes in world languages to assist identified students in meeting the school's two-year world languages requirement.

Students with more significant disabilities receive services in a substantially separate classroom setting through the Transitions program. The goal of this program is to teach students academic, social, and vocational skills that provide for independent living. Students in grades 9-11 receive services in the Transitions I classroom, where the focus is primarily on academics. As seniors, students are moved to the Transitions II classroom where the focus is on independent living skills. The needs of identified students are also addressed through the student study team (SST), which meets twice per month. This team, which also addresses the needs of some regular education students, monitors student progress through PowerSchool, periodic check-ins, annual reviews, and three-year re-evaluations. Danvers High School supports the principles of inclusion and mainstreaming, working to ensure that every identified student receives necessary supports in the least restrictive environment possible. The special education staff is fully integrated into most curriculum areas and also serves to support regular education students and teachers.

When identified students are supported by an adequate number of professional licensed personnel and support staff and are provided appropriate services in an inclusive learning environment, all students are able to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teachers
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 6 Commendations

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## Commendation

The timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, such as the DRIVE program, the student study team, and 9th grade academic teams to help students with the transition to high school

## Commendation

The thoughtfully designed, comprehensive, and developmental guidance curriculum that allows students to develop and implement a plan for achieving self-defined academic and career goals

## Commendation

The extensive use of technology to communicate important school information to students and families

## Commendation

The strong culture of communication that exists between student support services personnel and families to address inquiries and concerns in a timely manner

## Commendation

The broad spectrum of technologies utilized to deliver an effective range of coordinated services to all students

## Commendation

The provision of Chromebooks to all students and faculty, which allows students to be fully engaged in their education both in and out of the classroom

## Commendation

The use of Naviance to deliver a comprehensive developmental guidance curriculum

## Commendation

The high level of collaboration among student support services personnel to ensure the academic and social/emotional well-being of every student

## Commendation

The use of ongoing, relevant assessment data to adjust and improve the school counseling program and services

## **Commendation**

The robust communication with parents and staff regarding student health issues through multiple means

The vibrant, current library collection that supports student learning through the thoughtful purchase of varied print and digital resources

The commitment of library personnel to provide a flexible, welcoming environment to enhance independent student learning in a supportive environment

The range of academic supports for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners

# Standard 6 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Expand co-taught class offerings across all subject areas to ensure that students in all grades receive necessary academic supports

# Standard 7 Indicator 1

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## Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body provides dependable funding for the vast majority of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. Danvers High School (DHS) has over 170 offerings of required and elective courses at four distinct levels: Advanced Placement (AP), honors, college prep and foundations. Internships are required of seniors during their final semester. Special education programs and services include co-taught, self-contained and the Life Skills/Transitions programs. There is an extensive array of co-curricular activities, including athletic, performance-based, and artistic endeavors, in which students may participate. While these programs are funded by the district, there are student activity fees associated with participation in a number of interscholastic sports and fine arts activities. Seventy-five percent of the staff agrees that there is sufficient funding for professional and support staff. There are items in the school budget that fund district workshops, AP teacher training, and common planning time for teachers to engage in curriculum development and revision. DHS recently implemented a one-to-one initiative using Chromebooks and each teacher has use of three computers and a SMARTBoard to facilitate instruction and to enhance learning opportunities for students. In addition to the availability of classroom technology, teachers have access to a number of computer labs, rolling computer carts, technology associated with the communications technology department and a 3-D printer. While there has been extensive and creative use of the technology in many of the classrooms, a number of individuals have expressed a need for training and assistance in making the best instructional use of that technology. Eighty percent of the staff feels that there is sufficient and dependable funding for supplies and equipment. The district utilizes a novel 70/30 allocation of funds which allows 70 percent of a department's budget to be expended in the first part of the year and holds 30 percent for allocation later to ensure that contingencies can be managed and that necessary items can be procured later during the school year. When a dependable and sufficient source of funding for all aspects of the school's operation is provided, it ensures that students have access to a variety of opportunities and that the academic, physical, and emotional needs of students can be met.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- facility tour
- teachers
- school support staff
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 2

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## Conclusions

The school consciously and extensively develops, plans and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, to properly maintain, catalogue and replace equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. Danvers High School works in conjunction with the town's Department of Public Works (DPW) which has been provided with dedicated space within the school building to address plumbing, electrical, and other maintenance issues. In addition, the Maintenance Standards Manual and the Green Team Cleaning Procedures Manual were created to ensure consistent procedures for building cleaning and maintenance. The document establishes a specific cleaning procedure and routine maintenance schedule to which both the DPW and the maintenance crew at Danvers High School adhere. The school is exceptionally clean. A private company is contracted to clean classrooms, entryways, corridors, break rooms, kitchenettes, stairs, restrooms, lounges, study halls and conference rooms each evening. Students and staff stated that the school is well-maintained. In addition to the highly visible areas, the custodial staff meticulously and routinely cleans all storage closets, HVAC areas, electrical closets, and boiler rooms. Ninety-nine percent of students, parents, and staff agree that the school is cleaned and well-maintained on a daily basis. When repairs are needed in individual classrooms, teachers email the assistant principal who then forwards the request to the DPW through FacilityDude. Staff reported that most repairs are completed within 24-48 hours. Additionally, 93 percent of staff agrees or strongly agrees that needed repairs are conducted in a timely fashion. In addition to routine building repairs, the maintenance staff follows a formal preventative maintenance schedule. Each month an aspect of the campus is reviewed and equipment is repaired or replaced as needed. These areas include roofing, plumbing, lighting, emergency lights, boiler room, door hardware, and fire extinguishers. For example, the roof of the facility is inspected and repaired each fall and spring. The town of Danvers supports and funds this maintenance plan, and 76 percent of parents feel that the school does a very good job maintaining facilities and equipment. There is a full-time porter on staff during the day whose responsibilities include maintaining the atrium, cafeteria, and common areas. Students have a positive relationship with him and as a result of this relationship, students are very respectful of the space. When facilities are routinely maintained and cleaned, students develop a sense of pride about their school and take ownership in its care and upkeep.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 3

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## Conclusions

The community consistently funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology and capital improvements. The Town of Danvers and Danvers High School have developed a five-year plan entitled The Danvers Public Schools (DPS) Strategic Plan. This plan prioritizes support for 21st century skills. An important part of this plan is a commitment to the long-range funding of technology at DHS evidenced by Danvers' new 1:1 Chromebook initiative which issues each student a Chromebook for academic use both in school and at home. The only cost to families under this plan is a \$30 insurance fee. The evidence of long-range planning is very apparent in the way DPS chose to purchase the technology. Rather than making a one time \$400,000 purchase resulting in a budget item for one year only, DPS chose to lease the Chromebooks thereby creating a consistent \$100,000 line item. This would allow them to continue maintenance of the Chromebooks through the insurance policy, but also to ensure that in four years the technology can be upgraded with a new lease. Even though the Endicott survey was conducted prior to students receiving their personal Chromebooks, 88 percent of students felt that the school had sufficient computers, and 92 percent believed there were computers available to them at school which demonstrates the strength of the commitment to technology at DHS even prior to the 1:1 initiative. Each staff member has also received three computers: a personal desktop, a presentation desktop, and a Chromebook.

In addition to maintaining its technology, DHS is also committed to maintaining its staff which it supports through professional development initiatives. Once a month staff participate in half-day professional development opportunities as well as five full days of professional development over the course of the school year. Additionally, staff members are encouraged to participate in conferences or professional development opportunities of their own choosing throughout the year. The school has had a steady annual enrollment of approximately 1,000 students over the last decade and there are no anticipated increases in enrollment in the immediate future. Part of the five-year plan is a dedication to maintaining a well-qualified and effective staff. Should the need for additional staff arise, DPS operates their budget on a 70/30 split. This means that 30 percent of the budget is held in reserve until the spring to handle any unforeseen changes in equipment needs or staffing. If the funds are not redirected by the spring, they are released to the school to filter down to teachers' classroom budgets, program budgets, and administrative purchases for the school. The staff indicated that DPS has been very responsive in hiring additional staff when student needs dictate it, and the town has supported the school in its hiring. Per the contract with the Danvers Teachers Association, teachers may have no more than 30 students enrolled in a core subject class, and English language arts teachers may have no more than 100 students in total in their case load. Teachers indicate that DPS has hired staff as needed to ensure that those stipulations are met. The business manager indicates an anticipated 3.3 to 3.5 percent increase in the school budget for next year which he believes this will be sufficient to maintain existing staff as well as any unforeseen necessary staffing additions.

Seventy-seven percent of the staff believes the school has a long range plan to address, "facilities, future programs, services, staffing levels, and capital improvements." In addition to staff, the town has committed to funding a long-range plan to address facility needs. The cleaning and maintenance schedules, preventative maintenance efforts, and coordination between DHS and the Danvers DPW ensure that the facilities are properly maintained, and the need for large scale repairs are mitigated. One of the goal's of the Five-Year Strategic Plan is to support management and operations as needed. The newly renovated school building which opened in 2013, is a stunning state-of-the-art building. Additionally, a new sports stadium, which includes a new turf field, concession stand, bathroom facility, and sound booth, has just been completed, its construction greatly aided by a million dollar gift from an alumnus of the school. The same alumnus has committed to a future million dollar matched gift to continue investment in the complex. The business manager, facilities manager, and administration all agreed that the town is incredibly proud of the campus and is committed to maintaining it for

years to come. The atrium of the school has become a source of pride for the town with events, meetings, and banquets being held there on a regular basis. The athletic facilities are used by both students and the public, and the sports complex is used by local youth recreation programs in addition to DHS teams. In this way the school has become a community facility, and the community is committed to investing capital funds in maintaining it. When a school has a well-funded long range plan, students benefit from consistency in their academic education, the quality of their teachers, as well as the school resources available to them.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- parents
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 4

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## Conclusions

The faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the annual development and implementation of the budget. Each year staff receive an email from curriculum directors soliciting budget requests for the upcoming year. Teacher leaders then meet with faculty and administrators to resolve any content area budget issues. Using the teacher requests and the information from the budget meeting, the curriculum director then collaborates with school administrators to create a budget proposal. The proposal is presented to the superintendent and, after review, it is presented to the school committee and is ultimately submitted for approval by the town's citizens. Once it has received the support of the town, DHS is responsible for allocating the money for the support of teaching and learning. Staff indicated that they feel they have all of the necessary supplies for their classrooms. In addition to the supplies provided by their department's budget through this process, teachers are also granted a classroom budget that they can use to purchase supplies needed that are unique to their individual classroom needs. The amount allocated varies depending on department. Despite having a formal, planned budget allocation process in place, teachers believe that if they discovered a need after the budget process is completed, they feel comfortable to approach administration with the request and that a way to fund a need will be found. The business manager stated that this is possible because of the aforementioned 70/30 split. For example, one of the art teachers discovered that she needed new memory cards. Rather than waiting until next year's budget was approved to receive them, the business manager was able to free up some of the 30 percent early to allow her to purchase them for class use this semester. The business manager's location in the DHS building allows for him to visit classrooms and also provides him with the ability to speak with teachers directly, thus allowing him to better anticipate needs and follow up on requests. Furthermore, the staff feels comfortable expressing needs as they arise. Many staff feel very strongly that they have an active role in the budget process. Since teachers have a true understanding of what is needed in their classrooms, actively involving them in the process ensures that they are able to implement and develop creative lesson plans in the best interest of the students, knowing that the supplies needed for those lessons will be funded. When faculty and building administrators have an active role in the development and implementation of the budget, teachers are able to get the instructional supplies they need to provide quality educational experiences for their students.

## Sources of Evidence

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour
- teacher interview
- teachers
- parents
- community members
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 5

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## Conclusions

The school site and plant strongly support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. In 2013 Danvers opened a renovated state-of-the-art facility which addressed many of the concerns and needs identified in the last decennial self-study at DHS. The new facility includes an art lab, two business labs, two engineering and design labs, a credit recovery lab, a TV production studio, a world languages lab, and a music technology lab. Additionally, the library provides laptop carts, computer lab space and a Chromebook support desk for the new 1:1 initiative. In addition to labs, several new spaces were built at DHS including a brand new science wing, cafeteria, atrium, courtyards, and media center. Staff expressed how the new facilities and spaces have allowed them to offer high quality, new, and innovative programming. For example, the new TV production studio allows students to create, edit, and produce films in a simulated TV studio environment using state-of-the-art equipment. The engineering and design labs allow students to participate in authentic learning experiences. For example, students in the engineering class are designing chess pieces and using the new 3-D printer to manufacture those pieces. They are then, in conjunction with industrial arts, manufacturing chess tables to go with them. In this way, students are not only learning concepts and ideas, but the new facility allows them to put those ideas into action. Ninety-two percent of staff and 89 percent of students agree that the school facility provides the means to support high quality programs and services.

In addition to newly built spaces, previous spaces were renovated. The gymnasiums, field house, and fitness center were all renovated to meet current standards. The gymnasium area includes a state-of-the-art weight room that is open to students, staff, and the community. The main gym itself can be divided into three separate areas to allow multiple classes to run simultaneously, or it can be opened up to accommodate a basketball game or indoor track meet.

A 6.45 million dollar renovation of the outdoor facilities was recently completed as well which includes a new turf field, the resurfacing of the track, new bathrooms, a new concession stand, natural turf fields, and tennis courts. A ropes course has also been added which students use to participate in team and community building programs. Additionally, students and staff have plenty of personal storage. Each student is assigned a locker and staff members have a secure place within their classrooms to store belongings.

In addition to physical needs, the school site and plant support students' emotional needs. There are spaces for guidance offices and conference rooms to accommodate the entire counseling staff. Guidance offices are soundproofed for student privacy. The equivalent of four full-time guidance counselors are available to work with students individually or in group sessions. In addition to guidance counselors, three social workers counsel students individually and in group therapy sessions. Finally, there are two full-time nurses on staff who are housed in a wellness center that includes a separate office area ensuring student confidentiality and an area to accommodate several students at once if needed. There is plenty of parking for students, staff, and visitors.

Security at DHS is a priority so doors automatically lock to the outside after 7:30 a.m. and visitors must sign in through the front desk. This process requires them to scan their license to ensure that they are allowed on campus. This ensures that students and staff will remain safe. Faculty and staff are able to enter the building's locked doors with a secure key fob. In addition to the door security system, there are 105 security cameras located both inside and outside the building. Teachers and students report feeling very safe in the facility.

The school is climate well controlled and comfortable. DHS uses an innovative chilled beam HVAC system, which provides a quieter and cleaner way to control climate in the building. Additionally, teachers have temperature controls in their rooms. Students and staff said they feel comfortable throughout the building during the day. The cafeteria is a stunning facility, designed to emulate a college cafeteria. Students say that it is one of

their favorite places on campus. The cafeteria is open for breakfast and lunch at appropriate times, and snack purchases can be made in a separate cafe throughout the day. Seventy-five percent of students make purchases daily in either the cafeteria or the cafe. Food preparation and storage areas have been modernized and all meals are prepared fresh on site. Storage and prep facilities allow food services to provide fresh fruits and vegetables as well as a variety of nutritious meal options for students. Some of these include a taco bar, a salad bar, and a made to order sandwich station. Students utilize a PIN system to make purchases, allowing parents to track student spending. In addition to providing meals to DHS, the food services station serves as a morning bakery for DPS, providing fresh muffins to the elementary school's in Danvers to serve for breakfast each day. Due to its impressive nature, the cafeteria is also used for community events by local organizations such as the annual seniors' breakfast and activities offered by many of the town's civic clubs such as the Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast. The well-designed, modernized and state-of-the-art facility is a source of pride among both the DHS and Danvers community. Ninety-four percent of parents believe that the facility is conducive to the education of their children. When a school site and plant supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services, there are fewer obstacles to prevent a student from meeting the requirements of becoming a 21st century learner.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- facility tour
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 6

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## Conclusions

The school consistently 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. Certificates of current inspections and operation permits are posted throughout the physical plant and facilities. All aspects of the facility are in compliance with local fire, health and safety regulations. The facility management team institutes a preventative maintenance program to head off safety issues that might develop. When schools conduct regular inspections and maintain up-to-date documentation, students are assured that the school facility is safe which allows them to focus on meeting the school's stated learning expectations.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- facility tour
- school leadership

# Standard 7 Indicator 7

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## Conclusions

All professional staff actively and routinely 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. Parents indicated that they find the communication with staff at DHS to be exceedingly efficient. The school utilizes ConnectEd, an all-call service, that sends instant updates via phone, text, and email. Teachers are encouraged to routinely use email and reach out to parents which they do on a regular basis. Parents indicate that the average response time from a teacher via email is less than a day, sometimes as quickly as 30 minutes. The principal sends weekly updates each Friday via email, and updates are also posted on the school's web page and sent out through traditional mail and via Twitter. The school hosts a "Meet the Teacher" night at the start of the school year to engage families and to help them to get to know their students' teachers for the upcoming school year. There are also a number of parent conferences throughout the year where parents can come to the school to discuss their children's achievements and any concerns they might have. Recently, DPS invested in the creation of a mobile app for phones which streamlines the information from the school's website and provides the latest updates about school events. Google Classroom is utilized by most teachers to post assignments and to give students feedback. Additionally, many teachers use an application called Remind to keep students and parents aware of upcoming assignments and events. DHS stresses the importance of connecting with families and communication home in their New Teacher Induction Program. Ninety-one percent of staff affirm that they actively engage parents as partners in their children's education. The school also engages with families around topics of health and substance abuse. DHS has hosted the Community Collaborative Initiative and a presentation by Jonathan Mattleman entitled, "The Secret Life of Teens." Both programs were aimed at helping to educate parents about issues facing their sons and daughters. Parents are also encouraged to participate in the school council, the Danvers Education Enrichment Partnership (DEEP), and to help mentor seniors through internship programs.

The special education staff routinely reach out to parents about opportunities for their children at the high school. The Danvers Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC) meets regularly with administration, and IEP and 504 meetings are conveniently scheduled to accommodate families to ensure their participation. The English language learner (ELL) teacher consistently reaches out to parents and families to assist them, providing a translator for meetings when requested. However, at this time the school does not have a routine, formalized process for communicating with families whose native language is not English. Recognizing that reaching every family is difficult, Danvers continues to work on finding new and innovative ways to connect with parents beyond the traditional letter home and to expand on efforts to identify and reach out those families who are not consistently engaged in school activities. When staff actively engage parents and families as partners, specifically those families who have been less connected with the school, it encourages collaboration between families and staff that results in all students having a greater opportunity to meet the expectations of 21st century learning.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students

- parents
- school board
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- school website
- Standard sub-committee

# Standard 7 Indicator 8

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## Conclusions

The school extensively develops and maintains many productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. The school has partnerships with a number of businesses and organizations in the community that support the programs of the school and afford opportunities for students to explore interests outside of the school. Such partnerships include Danvers Educational Enrichment Partnership (DEEP) which provides funding for program initiatives, Danvers Cares to promote healthy practices by students, and Reality Check, an annual financial simulation program for seniors. The local Workforce Investment Board sponsors internships specifically in engineering. Currently three young women from DHS are completing an internship at Medtronics. A number of booster groups support athletic and fine arts programs. Ninety-five percent of the staff believes that these partnerships are effective in supporting the school. Senior student internships have been offered by more than 170 local businesses and organizations. Dual enrollment opportunities are supported in conjunction with North Shore Community College. There are a number of very generous donations and contributions by local citizens and businesses that support the goals of the school, especially in the areas of athletic facilities and technological opportunities. Community needs are met through its extensive use of the building and facilities for youth athletic events, voting, and fundraising efforts such as pancake breakfasts. When partnerships are fostered with parents, community organizations, and businesses, student and program needs can be enhanced and students are afforded the opportunity to further develop and demonstrate the necessary skills to be successful in the 21st century.

## Sources of Evidence

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

# Standard 7 Commendations

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## Commendation

The dependable funding provided by the community and governing body to fund programs, services, and resources which allow students to meet the the school's stated 21st century learning expectations

## Commendation

The proactive maintenance and repair regime and innovative funding strategies designed to meet the needs of the programs, students, and the staff at DHS

## Commendation

The maintenance of a remarkably clean, functional, well-maintained, and versatile campus and physical plant

## Commendation

The use of a cleaning and preventative maintenance schedule to ensure the consistent, long-term upkeep of the school facility

## Commendation

The innovative, collaborative, and proactive approach to facility management to keep the school safe and well-maintained

## Commendation

The commitment to fund, build, and maintain a state-of-the-art facility to benefit students and the community

## Commendation

The creation of an innovative, long-term plan for the future funding of initiatives and programs

## Commendation

The commitment to maintain a culture where teachers feel they can approach the business office with requests and entrust teachers to know what they need in their classrooms

## Commendation

The "bottom up" approach to budget planning and development, assuming that teachers and administrators know best what they need in their classrooms and schools

## **Commendation**

The funding of a beautiful state-of-the-art facility to support myriad programs to provide students with a top quality education

The food services for the provision of healthy and varied meal options for students

The routine inspection schedule and visible documentation of adherence to fire, health and safety regulations

The use of a variety of available means to regularly and effectively communicate with parents

The degree to which DHS develops, promotes, and cultivates partnerships with community organizations and businesses

# Standard 7 Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Develop a formalized approach to communicating with non-English speaking families

## Recommendation

Continue efforts toward identifying and reaching out to families who may have barriers to engagement in school activities

# **FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

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

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

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

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

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

# **SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY**

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

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

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

# Roster of Team Members

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## Chair(s)

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

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

## Team Members

**Nicholas Beauchamp** - Lawrence High School

**Aram Boornazian** - Concord-Carlisle Regional High School

**Paul Brisson** - Marshwood High School

**Jennifer Donahue** - Mansfield High School

**Jacqueline Fallon** - Everett High School

**Megan Hall** - Old Rochester Regional High School

**Suzanne Harde** - Westford Academy

**Tamara Lawrence** - The English High School

**Eduardo MacDonald** - Nauset Regional High School

**Elizabeth Miller** - Woburn Memorial High School

**Allison Pickens** - Plymouth North High School

**Peter Reaman** - Gray-New Gloucester High School

**Michael Rubin** - Uxbridge High School

**Leanne Soulard** - Dartmouth High School