New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

**Report of the Visiting Committee for
Coginchaug Regional High School**

Durham, Connecticut

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

THE DISTRIBUTION, USE AND SCOPE OF THE
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

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

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

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public secondary school member institutions, CPSS requires visiting committees to assess the degree to which the evaluated schools meet the qualitative Standards for Accreditation of the Commission. 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 Commission's visiting committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study and the valid recommendations of the visiting committee and those identified by the Commission in the Follow-Up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school be reevaluated at least once every ten years and that it shows 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 Coginchaug Regional High School, a committee of 6 members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people. In addition to faculty members, the self-study committees also included parents.

The self-study of Coginchaug Regional High School extended over a period of 19 school months from May 2011 to November 2012. The visiting committee was pleased to note that parents joined the professional staff in the self-study deliberations.

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

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of 16 evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the Coginchaug Regional High School. The Committee members spent four days in Durham, Connecticut, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school meets the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools, and central office administrators diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Coginchaug Regional High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials

- 38 hours shadowing 16 students for a half day

- a total of 24 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

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

Each conclusion in the report was agreed to by visiting committee consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting committee appear in parenthesis in the Standards sections of the report. The seven Standards for Accreditation reports include commendations and recommendations

that in the visiting committee's judgment will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better meet Committee Standards.

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

Coginchaug Regional High School
School and Community Summary

Coginchaug Regional High School is located in the town of Durham CT, and is a part of Regional School District 13. The school district serves the towns of Durham and Middlefield. Located between New Haven and Hartford, Durham and Middlefield are close-knit rural communities with strong ties to their agricultural past as demonstrated by the Durham Fair, the largest volunteer-run agricultural fair in North America.

Regional School District 13 is a part of the Demographic Reference Group (DRG) C. The population of the towns of Durham and Middlefield are 7,416and 4,415, respectively. In 2012, the median household income in Durham was $108,975 and in Middlefield was $85,976. According to 2010 figures, approximately 1.6% of Durham's population and 2.2% of Middlefield's population lived below the poverty level. Out of the total district population there are 75 students who receive free or reduced lunch. The expenditures per pupil of Regional School District 13 are $15,125.72, compared to the state average of $13,386 and DRG average of $13,077. Of the local resources spent on education, Durham contributes 66% of the school budget, which is 79% of their total taxation. Middlefield contributes 34% of the school budget, 75% of their total taxation. Town contributions are based on their proportion of student enrollment.

Regional School District 13 is comprised of six public schools with a total population of 1,959: Coginchaug Regional High School (grades 9-12) has 577students, Frank Ward Strong Middle School (grades 7-8) has 334 students, Middlefield Memorial Middle School (grades 5-6) with 343 students, Francis E. Korn Elementary School (grades 3-4) has 174 students, John Lyman Elementary School (grades K-4) has 283 students, and Fredrick Brewster Elementary School (grades PK-2) has 241 students. Enrollment figures at the high school have remained stable. Although there has been a 0.2% enrollment increase at the high school over the past several years, there has been a 4.4% decrease of enrollment in the district. Durham and Middlefield are, for the most part, culturally and racially homogenous. The vast majority(94%) of students in Regional School District 13 are White, 2.4% are Hispanic, 2% are Asian American, 1% are Black, and 0.6% other. English is the primary language in 99% of student homes.

There are 46.3 general education teachers, 5.5 special education teachers, and 4.5 counseling faculty at Coginchaug, creating a student-to-teacher ratio of 11:1. The average class size in 2011-2012 in Algebra I was 20.14, Biology I was 16.1, English 10 was 16.75 and United States History was 19.

The graduation rate for the Class of 2012 was 99.3%. Upon graduation, 67.4% of graduates attended four-year colleges, 15.6% attended two-year colleges, 1.4% entered the military, and 8.5% entered the workforce. The average dropout rate for the past four years had been 0.4%. The average daily student attendance for school year 2011-2012 was 96.5% and the average daily attendance rate among teachers was 94.4%.

Students at Coginchaug Regional High School are active members of their local community. As a graduation requirement students are expected to participate in 14 hours of community service activities. Every December Coginchaug students and staff participate in the Community Round-up which collects thousands of food items for the local food banks. In addition, meaningful relationships with local business and institutions of higher education have been built. The school has established many local business partnerships through which students may participate in internships, job shadowing, and in some

cases, employment. Examples of partnerships include Powerhold, Inc., Panacea, Durham Coop Nursery, Visiting Angels, Dzialo, Pickett & Allen, Attorneys at Law, Lyman Orchards, Torrison Stone & Garden, Durham Volunteer Fire Company, Middlefield Volunteer Fire Company, Perk on Main, Durham Public Library, Levi Coe Library, Towns of Durham & Middlefield, Durham Veterinary Hospital, Citgo Gas Station, Grippo's Mobil Service Center, Durham Kitchen, Durham Pharmacy, Durham Dental, Durham Auto, Auto Sales and Services of Durham, Wesleyan Potters, Hans Pedersen Construction, Summer Hill Nurseries, CT Water Company, Meriden Tattoo Parlor, Wild Wisteria, Baldwin Furniture, CT DEP, Wesleyan Athletics, Charles Bogen, CPA, Pratt & Whitney, Middlefield Children's Center, Pegasus Inc., Destinta Theaters, Blackbird Tavern, Epic Horse Farm, Durham & Middlefield Youth and Family Services, Naples Farm, Starlight Gardens, and Brenda's Main St. Feed.

Through partnerships with local institutions of higher education, students at Coginchaug have the opportunity to extend their educational experience by enrolling in classes at Wesleyan University, Middlesex Community College, Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, and the Educational Center for the Arts in New Haven. Also, for several years Coginchaug has benefited from a number of intern teachers and counselors from the University of New Haven.

Coginchaug Regional High School sets high standards for its students. Coginchaug students consistently outperform the state and national average on all parts of the SAT and outperform the state average on all parts of the CAPT test. Students taking the Perkins Grant Concentrator Exams consistently place in the top ten statewide. The school and community recognize, celebrate, and publicize student achievements. Formal recognition programs include Honor Roll, National and World Language Honor Societies, National Honor Society Bookmark Ceremony, Positive Referral Program, Honor Flag Announcements, CRHS Scholar Athletes, Underclass and Senior Awards Night, University Book Awards, Senior Arts Showcase, World Language State Recognition, District Art Show, and CAS/CIAC Scholar Athlete and Arts Awards banquets. The school actively promotes coverage of school events and student achievements in The Town Times, The Middletown Press, The Hartford Courant, and patch.com.

Coginchaug Regional High School

Core Values, Beliefs, and Expectations

The mission of Coginchaug Regional High School is to ensure that each student graduates prepared to successfully meet the demands and challenges of a constantly changing world by committing to high academic standards and meaningful, innovative learning opportunities in a supportive safe environment that promotes collaboration, self-reliance, ethical behavior and civic engagement.

21st Century Academic Expectations for Lifelong Learning

All graduates of Coginchaug Regional High School will demonstrate high academic standards through the ability to:
1. read critically for a variety of purposes
2. communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences
3. compute and estimate mathematically
4. apply reasoning and scientific concepts to make responsible decisions
5. access and process information responsibly, legally, and ethically
6. produce quality work

Social and Civic Expectations

All graduates of Coginchaug Regional High School will demonstrate adherence to the Core Ethical Values through the ability to:
- collaborate and cooperate
- practice productive habits of mind
- achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle

Regional School District 13's Core Ethical Values:

Respect
Responsibility
Honesty
Kindness
Courage

The Coginchaug faculty believes that:

- All students are able to learn and should be challenged to meet high standards for academics and behavior
- Failure represents an opportunity for growth and learning
- All students have the right to an education appropriate to their learning style
- Academics, arts, sports, music, and clubs all play an integral role in developing an educated student.
- The classroom should be an engaging and safe environment
- Students should be invested in the life-long learning process

1 Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

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

1. The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.

2. The school has challenging and measurable 21stcentury learning expectations for all students, which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement.

3. The school's core values, beliefs, and 21stcentury 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 21stcentury learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.

Conclusions:

In 2011, under the leadership of the principal, the faculty reviewed and approved the existing mission statement and from it created the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations, however other major stakeholders, such as parents, students, and community members did not participate in this most recent collaborative review process. Faculty members stated that they are waiting for external reviews (NEASC) before implementing further revisions to learner expectations. The school has a clear set of written core values with which most stakeholders agree. Over several months in 2011, the faculty met to brainstorm their beliefs on learning, and from those sessions they articulated a set of beliefs about learning. Along with the district's core ethical values, these beliefs about learning underpin the strong and healthy rapport between students and faculty. In an effort to commit to all of the various values and beliefs about learning, district and school leaders report that the faculty stays current with research-based practices through professional development session's run by the district's director of curriculum and instruction.

The core values and beliefs are identifiable in the mission, yet the language differs between the school's statement of core values and the 21st century academic expectations for lifelong learning. Members of the school community sometimes expressed confusion when asked to identify the school's academic, social and civic expectations. The entire community can articulate the district's core ethical values, and many cite these core ethical values as the foundation for a positive learning community. Because the faculty has recently aligned five of nine school-wide rubrics with the language of the core values, the students, faculty, and parents can state the school's core values and beliefs in general terms. The school's core values and beliefs about learning hang in each classroom, in the hallways and offices, and appear on the school's website. While there was a dynamic and collaborative review of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations by the faculty, not all stakeholders were involved, thereby limiting the potential for shared language and community ownership regarding learning expectations. (self-study, students, teachers)

Taken together the nine learning expectations help prepare students for life and work in the 21st century. The six 21st century academic expectations for lifelong learning (read critically for a variety of purposes; communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences; compute and estimate mathematically; apply reasoning and scientific concepts to make responsible decisions; access and process information responsibly, legally, and ethically; produce quality work) challenge students across the disciplines. However, the social and civic expectations, specifically, "practice productive habits of mind," are difficult to measure, in part because the administration has not prioritized the use of the expectations, and because there is not a matching analytic rubric for each learning expectation. Many assessments embrace aspects of the three Habits of Mind expectations (creative, critical and self-regulated thinking), but there is no consistent protocol for rubric use in these three areas, primarily because the faculty believes that these rubrics are "not user-friendly." The faculty recognizes that further discussion on the role and use of these rubrics is warranted, as just over half agree that the 21st century academic expectations for lifelong learning are challenging and measurable for all students. Furthermore, no school-wide rubrics exist to target high levels of achievement in the following expectations: "compute and estimate mathematically," "apply reasoning and scientific concepts," and "achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle." Instead, to measure student skill growth in these areas the school relies on students' Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) data and performance on Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) in science and math, while using department-generated rubrics. Physical education and health teachers assess 10th grade students' ability to "achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle," using a department-generated rubric, and there are no plans to expand assessment mechanisms. The analytic rubrics state consistent benchmarks for achievement and students must achieve proficiency three times in three of the six competencies for graduation. These learning expectations are consistent with the core values and beliefs. For example, it is clear that teachers collaborate in instructional design and review of CFAs. The six school-wide learning expectations share common benchmark titles, but the Habits of Mind mirror only some of these terms. This wide variance in understanding and application of school-wide rubrics hinders the faculty's ability to implement a coherent and consistent assessment protocol. (student work, teachers, school leaders)

The social and civic expectations and core ethical values characterize the culture of the school and clearly drive instruction in every classroom, and are reflected in some school policies and procedures; however, the 21st century learning expectations do not drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom. For instance, students who exhibit high academic achievement can be exempt from study hall periods and spend that time in the cafeteria or library; students and teachers indicate that this is an extension of trust and an acknowledgement of responsibility. Students and teachers are also proud of the culture of kindness and inclusion that characterize most interactions.

On the other hand, the 21st century academic expectations do not consistently drive school policies, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The school has taken initial steps to adjust curricular documents to incorporate the 21st century academic expectations, but there is limited evidence that these changes are consistently translating into changes in instruction. The school has not fully addressed the challenges of aligning assessment practices with the academic expectations for learning.   Although they use school-wide rubrics, the faculty acknowledges variations in practice and philosophy about the role of these tools, and only 53.1 percent of teachers believes that Coginchaug Regional High School's 21st Century Academic Expectations for Lifelong Learning expectations are challenging and measurable for all students. Teachers state that a recent revision of rubric protocol gives them some freedom to customize school-wide rubrics, but they are at an impasse about the purpose and application of the school-wide Habits of Mind (HOM) rubrics. The school community has not prioritized or emphasized the use of these HOM rubrics.

Teachers also report a strong need for a reading intervention to help all students access the challenges of the curriculum. Currently a .2 FTE reading specialist position remains unfilled. As the school navigates many large-scale initiatives, some teachers report that their concerns are not heard by administration. Many faculty members believe that the wide range of new initiatives negatively impacts teaching and learning. Teachers also report the need for professional development in data teamwork, differentiated instruction, aligning practices with

the Common Core, with Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI), and with Naviance (a software package for guidance counselors). District supervisors and faculty have varying accounts of what is driving professional development priorities.

While there have been limited changes or adaptations of school policies based on examination of core values and beliefs, the school has recently added two Mac labs and a tablet initiative in history classes to address some of the 21st century academic learning expectations. Furthermore, the superintendent reports a clear vision for the role of technology to support dynamic teaching and learning in the 21st century.

The school culture supports academic learning, visible in clearly posted essential questions, learning objectives and core value statements in every classroom. Most stakeholders agree that the culture between students and staff is one of inclusion, support and mutual respect, as 89.1 percent of students and 98.4 percent of staff report that the school is safe, positive, and supportive. Staff and students indicate that teaching and learning happen in an atmosphere of inclusion, respect, and kindness. While the core ethical values are actively reflected in the culture of the school, and help to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, the school's 21stcentury academic learning expectations for lifelong learning are not guiding the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. When the school establishes a collaborative understanding of the use of all of the school-wide rubrics, the 21st century academic learning expectations will consistently drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom and will result in improved teaching and learning.(student work, self-study, teachers, Endicott Survey)

School leadership has a process and timeline for the regular review and revision of its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations within the Site Planning cycle. School leadership staggers its review with the district review plans, which have been completed every five years for the past 20 years with the last comprehensive review occurring in 2007. However, the school does not have a formal process for this review outside of the Site Planning cycle. In a series of meetings from October 2010 to February 2012, the principal,

faculty and district leaders refined and approved several components of the school's core values, beliefs and 21stcentury academic expectations for lifelong learning. For example, in May 2011 the faculty aligned the 21stcentury academic expectations for lifelong learning standards with the existing graduation competencies.

Team leaders reviewed best practice standards including the NEASC Standards for Accreditation, and the Framework for Connecticut's High Schools: A Working Guide for High School Redesign. However, these documents are from 2006 and 2005, respectively; as such, they do not represent the most current research in school-wide implementation of 21st century learning skills. It is not clear that the principal's efforts have widespread effect in improving practice and promoting discussion about teaching and learning.

The school elicits feedback from the local business community regarding expectations of 21st century skills in the workplace; these businesses include two large local manufacturers. The principal works with the Middlesex Consortium Coordinator to apply for and receive a Perkins grant from the federal government. This grant provides professional growth for teachers within the Concentrator panels of auto shop, CAD, business, childcare and food services. It also enables local business people to work with teachers in relevant subject areas to review curriculum and advise the teachers of 21st century skills necessary for employment in these areas.

The school examines data about student achievement of school-wide learning expectations, student performance on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test and Scholastic Aptitude Test. School leaders examine data over the summer and report cohort concerns to team leaders to then devise targeted curricular and instructional strategies. Two years ago, these data examinations fused Connecticut Mastery Test and CAPT data in an effort to more effectively target student deficiencies over time. Actions taken because of this data tracking have led to above average skill growth in special education populations. Four years ago, the school began using Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) for benchmark skill data within departments, and team leaders are required to report student progress to school leadership, but these

processes have not been formalized. Teachers report that examination of CFAs in data teams is very helpful in aligning their teaching with school-wide learning priorities. However, inconsistent protocols and expectations about the role of data teams reduce their potential to inform teaching and learning practices across the disciplines. The school has yet to develop a system for standardizing the process and synthesizing this data effectively.

The school does not use other standardized test data to track growth in achievement of 21st century learning expectations, particularly in math, science, reading and writing for all students. There is evidence of discussion of the learning expectations, based upon the review of data sources, including CMT, CAPT and CFAs. These discussions have led to some departments taking principle ownership of certain rubrics, though this practice has not led to exclusivity. For example, the social studies and English departments regularly use the written and oral communication rubrics, but the math department and physical education department assess student skills in this learning expectation. Review of data sources has also prompted frustration among staff as they wrestle with the language and application of some social and civic rubrics, such as the three Habits of Mind rubrics.

While data teams have regular and rich discussions about strategies to improve teaching and learning, they do not regularly discuss research on learning, including an assessment of the implications of such research on the school's beliefs about learning. The principal shares readings at faculty meetings, but there is no evidence that data teams extend and apply those ideas more formally within their departments.

The faculty discusses district and community priorities, but these discussions center more on the district common ethical values, which are engrained in the ethos of the community. Parents and students show more immediate familiarity with the district CEVs and graduation competencies (the previous iterations of the 21st century expectations for lifelong learning.) Only 60.7 percent of parent's report that they are familiar with the expectations, which may indicate that there may be a communication gap between school community and the wider community.

The school's learning expectations generally align with the district's learning goals. However, the school's learning expectations are numerous and diffuse, whereas the district's are more concise and focused. As Coginchaug Regional High School continues to collaborate and reaches consensus about the meaning of its 21st century learning expectations, the review and revision of these expectations and core values and beliefs will be more effective. (teachers, Endicott Survey, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The commitment to the district's core ethical values
2. The culture of kindness and inclusion
3. The introduction of tablet technology in the social studies department
4. The safe, positive and supportive school culture
5. The expanded opportunities for authentic learning experiences for students
6. The establishment of a formal process to review the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
7. The use of assessment results/data in the review of the school's learning expectations

Recommendations:

1. Include all stakeholders in the review of core values, beliefs, and 21st century academic expectations for learning and academic and social expectations
2. Ensure research, multiple data sources and district and community priorities are reflected in the review of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century academic expectations for learning and academic and social expectations
3. Create clear language linking the school's statement of core values to the 21st century academic expectations for lifelong learning and the social and civic expectations
4. Prioritize the various statements of values and expectations used to measure student achievement
5. Develop and implement school-wide analytic rubrics with targeted high levels of achievement for each academic, civic and social learning expectation

6. Create rubrics to measure individual and school-wide achievement in all of the core values and learning expectations
7. Resolve use of rubrics, including social and civic expectations and 21st century academic expectations for lifelong learning
8. Promote common language and vision regarding the core values and beliefs
9. Develop shared vocabulary for all stakeholders

2 Curriculum

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

1. The curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

2. The curriculum is written in a common format that includes:
   - units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills
   - the school's 21st century learning expectations
   - instructional strategies
   - assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics.

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

4. There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum.

5. Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district.

6. Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.

7. The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research.

Conclusions

Coginchaug Regional High School frequently designs its curriculum to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.   All teachers are expected to incorporate 21st century learning expectations as indicated in the curriculum documents. However there is not always a clear connection between 21st century learning expectations and specific strategies or assessments within a course. There is no document specifying which courses or departments are responsible for specific rubrics. Teachers are expected to use all existing academic rubrics and are allowed to adapt these rubrics to specific assignments. From the Endicott Survey it is evident that teachers and parents believe that all students achieve the 21st century learning expectations. The student work shows the usage of both school-wide and course-specific rubrics across multiple content areas and grade levels. The design of the curriculum allows teachers to offer multiple opportunities for students to practice and meet the 21st century learning expectations in most content areas and levels of courses. (teacher interviews, Endicott Survey, student work)

The curriculum has been rewritten in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's 21st century learning expectations; instructional strategies; and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. The curricula use a common template based on the Understanding By Design model. The curriculum exhibits a wide range of instructional and assessment strategies such as inquiry labs, teacher demonstrations, and cooperative learning, written essays, debates, research projects, and performance tasks. Student work demonstrates the use of both school-wide and course-specific rubrics that are tied to essential questions and learning expectations. Ninety-four percent of teachers surveyed indicate that the curriculum documents are a useful guide in developing lessons. The curriculum documents provide a framework to ensure that all teachers can deliver high quality content and skills to students within a specific course and across levels. (self-study, student work, teacher interviews)

The curriculum, to varying degrees, emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem-solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary

learning, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology. The results of the Endicott Survey show that 82 percent of students reports they are challenged to think critically and to solve problems; 92 percent of parents indicates that their child is developing problem-solving and higher order thinking skills, and 93.8 percent of teachers reports an emphasis on inquiry, problem-solving and higher order thinking in their curriculum. Examples of lessons incorporating problem-solving, higher order thinking skills, the use of technology, and inquiry were seen in some classes but were not consistently seen in all classes. Teachers shared multiple examples of how they incorporate application or content into real world problem-solving and authentic learning such as the Life Skills learning opportunities within the community, web quests, the Spanish II personal shopper project, the roller coaster project in physics, Global Studies salons and the math quadratics project. Emphasis on cross-disciplinary learning within the curriculum is limited with the exception of two English/social studies courses. Approximately half of the students report that teachers include topics from other subject areas in their classes. Any cross-disciplinary connections that occur within classrooms are informal. Teachers do not have common planning time to support this process. To promote the use of technology, each curriculum document includes a section for suggestions to integrate technology into the unit. The school-wide rubric for accessing/processing information includes a component on the ethical use of technology. Ninety percent of students report that they are knowledgeable about the ethical use of technology. Multiple opportunities to engage in higher order thinking, problem solving and authentic learning enable students to gain a deeper understanding of the content as well as to acquire 21st century learning skills. (Endicott Survey, student shadowing, teacher interviews)

There is alignment between the written and taught curriculum. In the Endicott Survey, 85.9 percent of teachers report that the taught and written curriculums are aligned. Common midterm and final exams, which are aligned to the curriculum documents, are administered in world language, mathematics and science courses. English and social studies departments do not have common exams. Common formative assessments are used within all core areas. However there is not a consistent process used across disciplines for administering and

analyzing CFA data. In addition, some departments do not feel confident in the development of CFAs and the data team's process. There is also no formal process in place to analyze the data from data team meetings and to use this data to inform instruction and ultimately to revise the curriculum. It is evident from discussions with students and teachers that the core ethical values are written into the curriculum documents and are engrained in the daily practices of the members of the school community. There is no formal plan to ensure alignment between written and taught curriculum in terms of the academic 21st century learning expectations, therefore students may not be consistently exposed to a challenging, rigorous, higher order thinking that allows them to practice and develop the 21st century learning skills. (school leadership, teacher interviews, Endicott Survey)

Curricular coordination exists within departments and vertical articulation exists with sending schools, however coordination between departments is limited. A five-year cycle for revision of the curriculum is required by district policy. Under the supervision of the Director of Curriculum was vertically aligned to Common Core State Standards ingrades K through 12. The majority of teachers have opportunities to meet with the teachers of sending schools once a year to discuss curriculum expectations, with math teachers meeting several additional times to discuss placement criteria for students. Within the past year the new director of curriculum has held several initial meetings with K through 12 math teachers to discuss alignment of the math curriculum to the Common Core. Within core departments, the faculty is provided with common planning time to develop CFAs and to discuss student work. Teachers reported that there is no time for alignment of curriculum across departments. Vertical alignment of curricular documents ensures students have the necessary prerequisite skills and concepts to be successful as they progress through grade level and course sequences. However, without sufficient time to coordinate across disciplines it will be difficult for students to achieve the schools 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, central office personnel)

The sufficiency of staffing, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center vary in the level to which it supports the

curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. The staffing levels are generally sufficient. However, the special education caseloads of 16 to18 students per teacher are an area of concern for special education students. Case Load numbers reported here are inaccurate. With such a large caseload special education teachers are not able to ensure all students attain the school's 21st century learning expectations. Another area of concern for teachers is the lack of a reading specialist to support students in accessing the curriculum across the disciplines. A .2 FTE reading specialist was added this year, but that position is no longer filled.

Teachers, parents, and students agree that there are sufficient instructional materials to support the delivery of the curriculum. Only 12 percent of teachers state that the technology at Coginchaug is completely sufficient for implementing the curriculum; 65 percent of teachers view the technology as mostly sufficient and 22 percent views it as not at all sufficient. Although there are seven computer labs, some are assigned to specific classes making it difficult to reserve lab time during certain blocks. The Board of Education's recent policy change of allowing students to bring their own technology devices may serve to offset this difficulty. Students indicate that the library/media center has a wide range of both print and electronic materials to help them meet their course requirements as well as to meet 21st century learning expectations and report using these library resources on a regular basis. Although the building is safe and clean, the space is not fully adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. The special education department has been physically separated with classrooms placed in the portables, which is in a courtyard outside of the main building. This places those students far from other special education classrooms, the nurse, guidance and main office. Four out of the five special education rooms are adjacent to the nurse, guidance, and main office. In addition there is a concern over the loss of department office space in the areas of special education and mathematics. There is limited funding available for field trips which support curricular, co-curricular and authentic learning. When caseloads of special education teachers are high and location of special education classes is separated from the general population, students may not be receiving quality exposure to the least restrictive environment and 21st century learning

expectations. The absence of a sufficient technology infrastructure interferes with students' ability to achieve 21st century learning skills. (self-study, Endicott Survey, student interviews)

The district provides the professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of curriculum using assessment results and current research. The district policy has a five-year cycle in place for revising curriculum documents, which is overseen by the director of curriculum, and 84 percent of the teachers' reports participating in revising or writing curriculum during the past five years. This takes place during release time, common planning time, or paid/unpaid days over the summer. There is limited funding for school professional development on curriculum-related topics such as CFAs and the development and use of rubrics to support the curriculum. The teachers indicate a need for more training in how use CFA data, differentiation, Pearson Inform, SRBI, Naviance, PowerSchool, and in how to use data in the curriculum revision process.When CRHS provides sufficient time, training, and financial resources, the faculty's ability to effectively deliver and revise curriculum will result in improved student achievement of the 21st century learning skills. (Endicott Survey, self-study, school leadership)

Commendations:
1. The emphasis on depth of understanding through inquiry, problem solving, authentic learning, and higher order thinking
2. The district's core ethical values are embedded in the culture
3. The math teachers' meeting to discuss placement criteria for students
4. The level of collaboration with sending schools in developing curriculum articulation
5. The use of both school-wide and course-specific rubrics in assessing student work aligned to the learning expectations
6. The establishment of a common curriculum template
7. The multiple opportunities students have to practice and achieve the school's learning expectations
8. The alignment between the written and taught curriculum

9. The vertical alignment of the K-12 curriculum with the Common Core

10. The financial support for staffing levels, instructional supplies and materials, and professional development programs

<u>Recommendations:</u>

1. Link the 21st century learning expectations to specific instructional strategies and assessments within the written and taught curriculum

2. Consistently incorporate inquiry, problem solving, authentic learning, and higher order thinking in all courses

3. Increase interdisciplinary opportunities for all students

4. Implement a process to ensure the alignment of written and taught curriculum in all content areas

5. Review current allocations of space for all programs

6. Provide training on data-driven curriculum revision and instruction

3 Instruction

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

1. Teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

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

3. Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by:
   - using formative assessment, especially during instructional time
   - strategically differentiating
   - purposefully organizing group learning activities
   - providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.

4. Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by:
   - using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments
   - examining student work
   - using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents
   - examining current research
   - engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.

5. Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices are not continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. In addition to the school's core values, social and civic expectations, and 21st century skills, there are also the district's core ethical values that the school is expected to implement. Based on supporting evidence from parent and teacher interviews, the district's core ethical values are taught from kindergarten on and as a result, students and parents are more familiar with those than with the core values, beliefs, and 21st century skills that students and teachers interact with daily. Although a majority (79.7 percent) of teachers report having a clear understanding of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Rubrics based on the 21st century skills are incomplete and are not used consistently across all content areas, which prevent teachers from properly aligning instructional practices to the school's 21st century skills. Likewise, the social and civic expectations present a challenge for the faculty due to the difficulty of implementing the Habits of Mind rubric. For example, a rubric for the "achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle" Habit of Mind rubric does not exist yet, although "the collaborate and cooperate" rubric is widely used across disciplines. Based on the student work samples, teachers did not use the rubrics consistently in grading or for student feedback. When teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, student learning will be concretely linked to these values, beliefs, and expectations (teacher interviews, Endicott Survey, self-study)

Teacher 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, and integrating technology. Despite an incomplete set of rubrics for the 21st century learning expectations as well as the multiple versions of existing rubrics and competencies, teachers have implemented instructional practices

consistent with the goals of 21st century skills. Students often engage in activities that allow personalization of their work by allowing them to choose the product they will work on based on their specific interests. The WISE and Quest programs, while not available school-wide, also offer students a highly customized approach to learning. Cross-disciplinary learning is limited although it occurs through the use of authentic learning activities. There are also two course offerings that integrate history and English into one curriculum. Many teachers engage their students as active and self-directed learners although this can be limited at times due to the use of teacher-directed instruction, such as lectures. Emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking is prevalent throughout the schoolas92.2 percent of teachers' reports that they employ this on a regular basis. The math and science departments continually work to improve instruction that focuses more on discovery-based learning. Most teachers have an emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking. This occurs mostly in the A and B levels, while the C level has predominantly a skills-based approach. Coginchaug Regional High School teachers have exhibited strength in applying knowledge and skills to real world tasks. Students experience authentic tasks throughout the disciplines. Students also have access to job shadowing and work experience opportunities, although these are limited to special education students. Teachers frequently engage students in self-assessment and reflection during their advisory periods. Students have further occasion to reflect with the use of Naviance. Some teachers are integrating technology into their instructional practices by using the seven computer labs available throughout the school as well as by using other electronic devices, such as SMARTBoards, Mimeo devices, and Elmo presenters. Scheduling of computer labs creates an inequity of access for all classes. Teachers report inconsistent Wi-Fi access and also they report difficulty in using technology to manage data in their data teams. Teacher instructional practices support achievement of the school's 21st century learning for most students, since the majority of teachers successfully implements higher order thinking and authentic learning opportunities in multiple ways despite the lack of a uniform set of 21st century skills and accompanying rubrics. (student work, Endicott Survey, teacher interviews)

Many teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the students' needs by inconsistently using formative assessment; by using some strategic differentiating; by limited purposeful, organized group learning activities; and by providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. A vast majority of teachers(96.9 percent) uses formative assessments, especially during instructional time, to assess student understanding including homework, flashbacks, dipsticks, quizzes, and entrance and exit slips used prior to summative assessments given at the end of a unit. Pre-assessments help determine student needs, interests, and prior knowledge about specific content. Teachers across a wide variety of disciplines are developing performance-based assessments. Data teams specific to some courses develop, implement, and analyze common formative assessments (CFA) given to all students over the course of the year. Content-specific data teams analyze the results of the CFAs and use the results to adjust instructional strategies to better meet the needs of student learning. Teachers report that more training is needed, specifically focused on the use of technology, to allow them to fully use the CFA data so that they can collect, organize, and analyze student learning and more effectively develop strategies for student success. The current rubrics do not include all of the 21st century expectations and teachers report that some rubrics are difficult to use as written.   The use of CFA information by data teams would more effectively assist teachers in meeting students' achievement of 21st century learning expectations if there were a clearer understanding of the new 21st century learning expectations as well as a closer alignment of those 21st century learning expectations to rubrics specifically targeted to each of the expectations; this would allow for a more successful implementation of a variety of assignments by classroom teachers.

Differentiation does occur for some students needing targeted intervention in a particular course. CFA administration and analysis may result in students being given extra help before or after school, but is generally limited to students in regular education classes. Co-taught classes with a regular education teacher and special education teacher allow specific targeted interventions during class for struggling students. Teachers show limited use of differentiation beyond modifications required by Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), 504s, and A, B, and C levels. SRBI and SAT also help support differentiation for struggling students. Teachers are

generous about providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Teachers provide extra help sessions for students who need additional support before school, after school, and during X block. Many respond to students through email. Students report that they feel free to ask teachers other than their own for extra help. One of the graduation requirements is that students demonstrate proficiency in collaboration and cooperation, and all students are graded using the school-wide rubric for collaboration and cooperation. A large majority of teachers (95.3 percent) report designing group activities for the students in their classes. Teachers will effectively adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student if there is clear understanding of the 21st century learning expectations and if there is close alignment of these 21st century learning expectations to rubrics specifically targeted with a level of accomplishment to each of the expectations, allowing more successful implementation by classroom teachers. (Endicott Survey, teacher interviews, student interviews)

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, work diligently to improve their instructional practices by examining student data from CFAs, summative assessments, and student work, but the process is not as effective or efficient as it could be. Current research is examined through both informal means and formal professional development, although the professional development is not regarded as targeted to the perceived needs of the teachers. Most teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, including CFAs, CAPT release items, labs, projects, and tests. Student data is examined by the data team, but that process would be more effective at helping students achieve 21st century learning skills if teachers could organize the data and align the assessments and the data to the core values and beliefs and 21stcentury expectations, social and civic expectations, and 21st century skills measured by rubrics specific to the expectations. Through examination of student work, teachers provide anecdotal evidence from CFAs to help guide instruction, but that effect is limited by the lack of alignment of learning expectations and tools. The school has purchased Inform, which will assist in the administration and communication of that data by interfacing with PowerSchool, however the faculty has not received training in how to use the system.

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, inform their instructional practices by using feedback from other teachers, mostly through their data teams. Teachers report that tenured teachers are not routinely evaluated with formal or informal classroom evaluations, although all have professional growth plans about which most receive some feedback from administration. Non-tenured teachers are evaluated regularly as required. Teachers report that they have some opportunities to examine current research through professional development and book talks; most examination of current educational research is done informally. A small number of teachers report that the professional development offered is ineffective and does not improve classroom instruction. This is especially apparent in the work of the data teams, in which evaluation of CFA data is insufficient because they do not have the training to manipulate the data. Many teachers have time for professional discourse through scheduled common planning time, during delayed openings for professional development, and when new teachers and mentors participate in the TEAM program. Interdisciplinary teachers and those teachers who co-teach do not have scheduled planning time and must meet before or after school or during lunch. Teachers who are trained to analyze and synthesize data will more effectively develop instructional practices informed by student work, formative and summative assessments, and CFAs, which will result in improved opportunities for students to achieve 21st century skills. (Endicott Survey, self-study, teacher interview)

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Based on teacher interviews and as reported in the self-study, teachers regularly read professional journals as well as literature based on their content area. Whenever possible, teachers attend content-specific professional development. In the Endicott Survey, 98.4 percent of teachers agree that they maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Teachers also asked for professional development (PD) to help them use SRBI, Inform, and the CFA data. The primary obstacle accounting for teachers' difficulty with these programs is a lack of PD. While there are a variety of opportunities from within the district for reflection and feedback, including

department and data team meetings, there is limited funding for teachers to attend conferences and workshops. The school currently has $2,000 to spend annually on professional development. There are multiple sources of funds to support PD, for example, pupil personnel and the district also provide funding to high school staff. The willingness of teachers to engage in professional development, along with the district's commitment to support that PD, will allow teachers to continue to be experts in their content areas and will increase the teachers' knowledge of content-specific instructional practices, consistently improving teaching and learning for all students. (leadership meeting, Endicott Survey, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The opportunities students have to be active, self-directed learners
2. The two interdisciplinary courses that combine English and social studies in cross-disciplinary learning
3. The emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking is prevalent throughout most of the school
4. The enhancement of student learning resulting from the teachers who encourage inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skill
5. The opportunities students have to apply their knowledge and skills to authentic tasks
6. The job shadowing and work experience opportunities for students
7. The teachers' development of performance-based assessments
8. The teachers who generously give their time providing additional support and alternative strategies to their students
9. The purposefully organized group-learning activities developed by teachers
10. The focused efforts of teachers to examine student work to improve instructional strategies and student learning
11. The teachers who model roles as adult learners and reflective practitioners

Recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a process to ensure teachers instructional practices are continuously examined to align with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

2. Develop and implement a process to ensure teachers instructional practices emphasize inquiry, higher order thinking, problem solving and integrating technology for all students in all levels
3. Ensure differentiation and formative assessments used to adjust instructional practices are consistently used in all instruction
4. Provide formal opportunities for teachers to collaboratively improve their instructional practices through engaging in professional discourse
5. Increase effectiveness and efficiency of the process of examining student data
6. Provide training for the Pearson Inform software

4 Assessment of and for Student Learning

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

1. The professional staff continuously employs a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

2. The school's professional staff communicates:
   - individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families
   - the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community.

3. Professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.

4. Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed.

5. Prior to summative assessments, teachers provide students with the corresponding rubrics.

6. In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments.

7. Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments.

8. Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work.

9. Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.

10. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following:
    - student work
    - common course and common grade-level assessments
    - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
    - standardized assessments
    - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
    - survey data from current students and alumni.

11. Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

Conclusions

Most teachers reference school-wide rubrics to drive whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations; however, since teachers sometimes change the rubrics to fit their own curriculum, since the school does not track progress within the rubric indicators, and since there is no functioning data system to track progressions in student learning, the tracking of learning progress in achieving the 21st century skills is insufficient. According to the self-study there are nine academic, civic and social expectations, four of which are tied to the CAPT, three to students gathering competency verifications from teachers and two that are presently used in some subjects. The nine qualities are used to define the core values, beliefs, and expectations and represent the graduation requirements. Student work shows that teachers often replace or supplement school-wide rubrics with discipline-specific rubrics. Teacher interviews reveal that they may also create tasks and then look to see if a school-wide rubric can be referenced.

English teachers report that a district reading specialist for analysis of 9th grade students' reading abilities has obtained Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) data. Teacher interviews reflect concerns over reading achievement and support. Students report that the teachers reference and use rubrics for most tasks. Students say the teachers mostly hand out graduation competencies in the freshman year and that the requirements are quickly and easily met. High School Secretaries indicate that they monitor the collection of student competency slips for "Quality Work," "Collaboration and Cooperation," and "Access and Process Information Responsibly, Legally, and Ethically." Rubric data is not designed and gathered for the analysis of growth of learning over time. As shown through student work, consensus regarding the levels of proficiency is lacking for the school-wide rubrics. Although the Inform software will help teachers and administrators begin to use the data gathered through the use of school-wide rubrics, it has not yet been implemented. When teachers change the rubrics, reference the rubrics, or create their own for their specific curriculum, there is not a consistent way to show progress in the learning expectations. The consistent implementation of a formal process to employ the specific school-wide rubrics will ensure that

every student, no matter the course, level, or teacher, will be regularly assessed and will be able to show growth using the same criteria. As a result, student learning cannot be compared across the entire school. When the school tracks progressions in student learning within the rubric indicators, students will benefit as they gain a better understanding of their growth.(teacher interviews, student work, central office administrators)

The school's professional staff is beginning to communicate individual student achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families. Parents are becoming aware of the categories of 21st century learning expectations and their students' progress towards meeting these competencies (communication and collaboration; quality work; and accessing and processing information responsibly, legally and ethically) through the guidance department. Guidance has started using Naviance to track these graduation competencies. The self-study cites numerous examples of communication of student achievement including parent-teacher conferences, a graduation competency status report, and feedback on writing portfolios. Parents and students receive the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) results and report cards. Parents and students also access PowerSchool for continually updated information on student grades. Beginning with the Class of 2014, students and parents will be able to monitor achievement of the graduation competencies (21st century learning expectations) through the Naviance program. Guidance staff is available to provide parents and students with individual indications of academic performance.

Some of the school's 21st century learning expectations is reported to the school community. The community receives information regarding CAPT scores, which represent four of the nine 21st century learning expectations. The Board of Education is aware of the CAPT scores and three of the remaining five competencies. When the school develops a formal process to assess individual student progress in achieving all of the school's 21st century learning expectations they will have a foundation to develop a process to report individual student progress to students and their families and whole school progress to the school community.(students, parents, Board of Education)

Professional staff does not consistently collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement; therefore, individual student learning and targeted supports are inconsistent. According to the self-study, all core academic teachers meet during common planning time once every two weeks to accomplish data-team work, and teachers report that formative assessments are formulated, evaluated and modified to meet individual student achievement needs. However, elective teachers do not have common planning times for common analysis of student achievement of learning expectations data from their subjects. Teachers have been advised of the data team process. Student Assistant Teams go through a specified data team process. Data team notes indicate work with creating and analyzing common formative assessments (CFAs), frustration with the implementation of Inform, and attempts to organize data in Excel, gcalc, etc. Data team minutes indicate data analysis consists of analysis of CAPT results, analysis of student learning by department through such means as CFAs, flashbacks and dipsticks, but implementation is inconsistent. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the knowledge about student learning and, therefore, gaps in learning are not always identified and acted upon. (self-study, assessment committee, teachers)

Students clearly know the learning expectations, including the school-wide learning expectations that are addressed in their activities and assignments; therefore, they also know the criteria by which the quality of their work will be assessed. However it is unclear if teachers communicate the applicable 21st century learning expectations to students. Teachers inform students of the learning expectations and the unit-specific learning goals. Student shadowing demonstrated that most teachers post the learning goals and/or essential questions on the board. For example, as observed through student shadowing, a learning goal and/or essential question was either posted and/or discussed in social studies, math, English, physical education, and French classrooms. According to the Endicott Survey, 71.5 percent of students says that their teachers explain what the learning expectations are before each unit of study and 71.9 percent says that teachers communicate to students the school's learning expectations and corresponding rubrics to be used prior to each unit of study. Student

interviews also reveal that teachers communicate the learning objectives for assignments and activities. Numerous examples of assignments provided in the self-study documentation show teachers communicating the expectations for learning. For example, assignments sheets are used in biology outlining expected performances; project rubrics are used in world languages, on the Ferris Wheel Project in advanced math, for specific outcomes in advanced writing. As a result, students clearly understand their learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals. However it is unclear if students understand the connection to the school's 21st century learning expectations. (student work, student shadowing, data from faculty survey)

Prior to summative assessments, most teachers have communicated learning targets to students; therefore, students understand the goals for their learning. Prior to summative assessments many students understand their learning targets receiving rubrics when appropriate. Student work samples show a wide range of rubrics attached to assignments. For example, physical education has numerous rubrics for topics such as body sculpting, managing, score keeping, officiating, core ethical values, performing as a team player, and coaching. Many assignments have rubrics associated with them. The Endicott Survey states that 78.5 percent of students report that they understand in advance what work they have to accomplish to meet their teacher's expectations, and 86 percent states that their teachers use rubrics to assess their work. A number of parents report that their children understand learning goals prior to summative assessments. As a result, students understand the vision for their performance on summative assessments. (student work, Endicott Survey, teacher interview)

In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments; therefore, students have many ways to accomplish and demonstrate their learning. The self-study and teacher observation show that assessment strategies range from formative to summative and are provided through a variety of means such as scene performances, capstone projects, summary papers, Prezis, speaking, online quizzes in U.S. History, peer editing in English, scavenger hunts in algebra, problem-solving

in pottery, and many others. Teacher observations showed that students have many ways to accomplish and demonstrate their learning, and assignments are adjusted to their needs. Student shadowing showed teachers employing a range of assessment strategies during the teaching process including "monitoring and adjusting" in English and tablet input in social studies. The Endicott Survey results show that 98.4 percent of teachers say they use a variety and range of assessment strategies including formative and summative assessments. As a result, students have a variety of ways to learn and to demonstrate their understanding. (self-study, teacher observation, Endicott Survey)

In most core areas, teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative assessments. However, in elective areas that is not the case. According to the Endicott Survey, 86 percent of teachers collaborate on the creation of both formative and summative assessment strategies. The self-study report contains minutes confirming that classroom teachers in English, social studies, and science departments engage in formal data team meetings which include creating, analyzing, and revising formative assessments. Common for the core academic departments allows for data team meetings and the creation, analysis, and revision of formative assessments. The elective areas do not have formal collaboration time for the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments. Department leaders and teacher interviews confirm that while some data teams meet more frequently than others, core teachers meet on a regular basis to advance their work. The district does provide all teachers with five two-hour meetings for data teamwork throughout the year; these meetings are outside of the common planning time afforded core subject area teachers. The self-study also confirms that interdisciplinary classes and team-taught classes are not provided with common planning time, compromising their ability to create, analyze, and revise summative assessments. While data teams are not universal, the teachers that are afforded common planning time are using that time to creation, analysis, and revision of formative assessments. This work while helpful does not include all teachers, subject areas, or classes. As a result, student learning and achievement is only impacted in select content areas. (Endicott Survey, self-study, team leader interviews)

Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. Multiple samples of student work such as writing drafts, math work, and lab reports demonstrate that teachers return work quickly with specific feedback. Student shadowing also revealed teachers providing immediate feedback through various means. For example, in chemistry the teacher circulated through the classroom answering questions as students worked in pairs on a project, and in social studies, all students responded to questions through their tablets on Socrativean iPad application, and online teacher application. Teacher interviews revealed that there is attention paid to specific, timely, and corrective feedback. Numerous teachers described their practice of providing feedback to students and either allowing or requiring students to resubmit work in order to improve performance.

In a broader sense, the implementation of PowerSchool grade book portal has also served a function in providing timely feedback to students regarding achievement. Students have twenty minutes each day, referred to as the X block, which provides time for students to visit teachers for corrective feedback. Many teachers also stay after school to provide additional support. By receiving specific, timely, and corrective feedback students understand quickly and clearly how they can improve their achievement level. (student work, student shadowing, teacher interviews)

Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. A variety of formal and informal formative assessments are used such as exit slips, class discussions, pre-assessments, and homework. Student work samples provide a wide variety of formative assessments from content areas including art, world language, social studies, and science. The formative assessments are often accompanied by specific feedback either verbally or in writing. Student shadowing and teacher interviews also revealed an assortment of formative assessments. For example, with the implementation of the tablets in social studies, students can provide immediate responses to teachers for immediate feedback on questions and issues as they arise in the class. Further implementation of such technology will allow teachers to know instantly the level of student understanding of a particular lesson objective and to engage students simultaneously. The

continued use and refinement of formative assessments will allow teachers to understand at each step of a unit where their students stand in progressing toward meeting the learning objectives. (self-study, student shadowing, teacher interviews)

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of improving instructional practice and curriculum. Evidence from data team meeting minutes, teacher interviews, and team leader interviews demonstrate examination of a range of evidence of student learning. Teachers in data team and department meetings examine and analyze CFAs and CAPT scores. For example, the English department analyzes CAPT data and use CFAs to focus instruction in preparation for the test. Current data team meeting minutes in the self-study documentation also confirm this, with courses in the English, social studies, math, world languages, mathematics, and science departments citing use of data from CFAs to improve instructional practice. Many teachers appear to examine a range of evidence of student learning, but there appears to be no clear role that the administration plays in evaluating evidence of student learning. In the English department concerns over reading skills in the freshman year prompted the department to request reading support and testing. The department was able to administer a DRP for freshmen in order to identify issues and to revise instruction to meet the needs of students. It appears that the 21st century expectations are embedded in the curriculum. Teachers use the associated academic and social and civic expectation rubrics in their classrooms with appropriate assessments. The students meet graduation competencies through three of these rubrics. However, the data from these rubrics does not appear to be used to improve curriculum and instructional practice. There appears to be a disconnection between the 21st century rubrics and their purpose in driving curriculum and instruction. At the end of the school year, the district provides two hours of professional development for Coginchaug Regional High School teachers to meet with middle school teachers to help guide instruction in the coming year. Aside from some additional time the math department spends with middle school math teachers, evidence from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary surveys does not appear to play a significant role for teachers or administrators in helping to shape curriculum and instruction. Finally, while the self-study reports that teachers are encouraged

to use end-of-course feedback and surveys from students, the documentation only shows survey results in the Animal Behavior course. Teachers use a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practices, and when administrators actively collaborate with teachers in evaluating a range of evidence of student learning, it will serve to move the school forward in meeting the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teacher interviews, team leader interviews)

Grading and reporting practices have been inconsistently reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. In the past eight years, Coginchaug Regional High School has employed a number of approaches to ensure alignment and to consider current best practice for grading approaches. Teacher leaders reported work going back to 2004-2005 that considered the work of Thomas Gusky regarding grading practices. A committee was formed which considered separating performance and growth in reporting. Although not implemented school-wide, some teachers adopted the approach to their own grading. Following this, the committee recommended, "tuning protocols" to help teachers align expectations both within and across disciplines. Popular with staff, the protocols appeared to help teachers collaborate and to come to consensus regarding student work and instruction. With a shift to rubric development, the implementation of CFAs, and the establishment of the school's 21st century learning expectations, the school continues to align grading practices. Self-study documentation confirms that some courses have common expectations and grading approaches. Recently, a reading group consisting of a group of teachers discussed Wormelli's book Fair Isn't Always Equal. While teachers in smaller groups appear to reflect and consider grading policies and practices, it is not a regular and consistent exercise as 56 percent of teacher's reports in the Endicott Survey. Teachers reported that when attempts have been made to implement school-wide grading approaches, difficulties arise with specific content areas and loss of teacher flexibility. As teachers at the course and department level continue work in their data teams, a consistent school-wide philosophy for grading sensitive to the needs of content areas must be developed along with a regular review of that approach. Finally, the implementation of PowerSchool has served to improve teachers' ability to report grading to parents and could serve to increase consistent practices in grading

within and among departments. Periodic attempts have been made to review and revise grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment, and when all faculty members adopt a consistent grading philosophy, students will have a clearer understanding of grading practice. (teacher leaders, self- study, teacher interviews, Endicott Survey)

Commendations:

1. The incorporation of course rubrics and school-wide rubrics into instruction by some staff and departments

2. The students have a clear understanding of learning expectations and unit-specific learning goals

3. The common planning time in the core academic content areas

4. The implementation of formal data team meetings

5. The teachers returning work to students quickly and with specific feedback

6. The practice of some teachers who allow students to resubmit work after corrective feedback

7. The analysis and examination of CFAs and CAPT scores to improve teaching and learning

8. The initial progress in reporting individual student achievement of the school's learning expectations

9. The range and variety of assessment practices employed by teachers

Recommendations:

1. Gather and analyze data for the growth of learning over time of the 21st century learning expectations

2. Develop and implement a formal process to assess individual student progress in achieving all 21st century learning expectations

3. Develop and implement a formal process to communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families

4. Implement a process to report the school's progress in achieving learning expectations to the community independent of standardized testing
5. Expand data team time to all content areas
6. Revise curriculum and improve instructional practice through the examination of student work
7. Create, regularly review, and revise grading and reporting practices within and among departments
8. Align assessment practices with academic learning expectations
9. Improve data team protocols with fidelity across all departments, including disaggregation of data and reporting systems

5 School Culture and Leadership

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

1.   The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.

2.   The school is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course (English/language arts, social studies, math, science, or world languages).

3.   There is a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

4.   In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff:
   ▪   engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning
   ▪   use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices
   ▪   dedicate formal time to implement professional development
   ▪   apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

5.   School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning.

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

7.   Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students.

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

9.   Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.

10.   Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.

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

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

Conclusions

The Coginchaug Regional High School community continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership and pride, and high expectations for all. The school creates a warm, positive environment in which students are welcomed. When surveyed, 85.8 percent of students report that bullying is not a problem at school. Survey results also indicate that 93.8 percent of parents reports that the school encourages students to take responsibility for learning. Data from the school's disciplinary referrals and actions shows a low number of incidents related to violence, destruction or illegal substance use (15 out of 754) reported. For the 2011-2012 school year, the administration reports a 96.5 percent student attendance rate. In addition, Coginchaug Regional High School offers a variety of service organizations that focus on building positive peer relationships as well as providing students the opportunity to improve their school community. These opportunities include National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, French Honor Society and service clubs like Best Buds, Helping Hands, and Environmental Coginchaug Organization (ECO). Also, 14 hours of community service are required for graduation for all seniors. School spirit is evidenced through high participation in the numerous clubs and athletic teams, the performing arts program, and other student events. The recently implemented advisory program fosters connections amongst staff and students affording them the opportunity to further develop support networks in the building. The honor flag, positive referral system, and bookmark ceremonies are further examples of teachers finding opportunities to recognize positive student efforts. Student work is displayed throughout the building. Students report that courses are challenging and that teachers are supportive. Extra help is readily available after school and during the X block, a 28-minute open period where students can meet with teachers and other students or can access other resources. As a result of these formal and informal initiatives, the Coginchaug Regional High School community continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership and pride, and high expectations for all. (Endicott Survey, self-study, student shadowing)

The Coginchaug Regional High School is equitable, inclusive and fosters heterogeneity. While there is a high probability that every student experiences a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course, it is not guaranteed. According to the Endicott Survey, 82.4 percent of students and 81.3 percent of staff report that students have the opportunity to enroll with students of varying ability levels. Coginchaug Regional High School provides a wide variety of elective offerings that fosters heterogeneity. These offerings include social studies electives such as Comparative Religions, Psychology, Choices and Consequences and Current Issues. The science department has heterogeneous electives including Oceanography, Astronomy and Meteorology, Zoology, Animal Behavior, Geology and Forensics. Senior English courses, outside of UConn/AP English and senior writing courses and all world language courses also support heterogeneity. Some teachers, students and guidance staff report that students are encouraged to seek opportunities to advance their level of study. All students have access to heterogeneous classes in foreign language, physical education, health education, and electives, all of which are required for graduation. Therefore the school does ensure that each student is enrolled in at least one heterogeneously grouped core course. (Endicott Survey, self-study, teachers)

Coginchaug Regional High School has instituted an ongoing, formal program with the intent of ensuring that 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. According to the Endicott Survey given in 2011, 59.2 percent of students and 60.9 percent of staff report there was a formal, ongoing program to support students personally and individually. However, through the advisory committee work of the past school year, a more defined approach has been established and the advisory program is no longer "under review." All students are assigned to a homeroom advisory program, which consists of small groups of approximately 12-15 students who meet for 28 minutes once per week. Students enter the advisory groups as freshmen and stay with the same group of students and advisor until they graduate. Using lesson plans developed by the guidance department, students and their advisors use this time to pursue academic reflections, goal setting, college and career planning, study skills and self-advocacy and self-awareness. The

advisory also acts as a structured opportunity for grade-centered communication and team building. Students are consistent in reporting that they feel strongly connected to the teachers who are supportive and approachable. Teachers also report being available to students for academic and social emotional support after school and during X block. Because the advisory program exists, each student has an adult in the school that assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.(teachers, students, Endicott Survey)

With the intention of improving teaching and learning through professional development, teachers and administrators at Coginchaug High School engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning, use some resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices, dedicate formal time to implement professional development, and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Four full professional development days are dedicated each year to providing professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis related to teaching and learning. Additionally, two-hour delayed openings five times per year have been dedicated to data teamwork in support of Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI). In addition, the data teams and core teachers are scheduled for common planning time. Monthly faculty meetings, semi-monthly team leader meetings, and department meetings provide opportunities for informal discussions connected to professional development. Teachers report that they find times to work together on best practices informally and that there is a culture of collegiality in the building that encourages discussion, reflection, inquiry, and analysis but that there is limited focus on targeted professional development at the building level. The principal and team-leaders report that the data teams serve as a primary vehicle for targeted professional development opportunities for all teachers. Topics for whole-school professional development in recent years have focused on curriculum and instruction, technology, and special education. As directed by the principal, in accordance with the site and strategic planning processes, team leaders and the professional development committee provide input related to professional development offerings. Funding and scheduling sometimes allow for outside professional development opportunities. There is evidence of initiatives to provide professional growth for teachers connected to improvement of teaching

and learning. However, there is inconclusive evidence of building-wide accountability for these activities. In addition there is evidence of a perceived disparity between the administrators and teachers around the definition of professional development related to improvement of teaching and learning. When relevant professional development from in-school and out-of-school sources is readily available and when the purpose and responsibilities connected to professional development activities are clearly defined for all teachers and administrators, the best practices established will be more likely to improve teaching and learning. (school leadership, teachers, self-study)

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. Non-tenured teachers are formally evaluated a minimum of three times per school year. Tenured teachers are required to design a professional growth plan (PGP) with the intent of compiling data to track levels of student achievement for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. In addition to the PGP, all tenured teachers are informally evaluated throughout the year. The evaluation tool differentiates between the two major evaluation groups: non-tenured and tenured teachers. The evaluation tools used to evaluate all teachers outline criteria for competencies in the major categories of planning for instruction, content knowledge, assessment techniques, and reflective practice. Non-tenured teachers are evaluated according to a series of checklists that are used for the observation process and for final evaluation process as established by the State of Connecticut. Tenured teachers are asked at the beginning of the school year to outline their professional growth plans for the current year. The form indicates that teachers set goals for January and goals for May of the current year. For the professional growth plan teachers are asked to specify what evidence they will provide by their benchmark dates. Teachers reported that they are familiar with evaluation tools and that these tools are consistently used during the evaluation process. Administrators who are responsible for teacher evaluation have trained with consultants from ACES (Area Cooperating Education Services). In addition to any outside training sources, the principal reported that all evaluating administrators meet to discuss the evaluation process and to target ways to improve the process. When teachers at all development levels are required to go through a thorough evaluation process that encourages reflective practices and

targeted instruction, teaching and learning will improve.(teacher evaluation document, teachers, administrators)

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. The established school schedule has not changed since it was adopted in the late 1990's. The schedule includes AB alternating block schedule with four 83-minute periods per day to encourage effective 21st century instructional practices. There is also a 28-minute "X block" built in to afford students the opportunity to work with teachers. The core subjects of science, English, social studies, math and world languages have a block set aside for common planning within their departments every other day for 83 minutes used for curriculum and common assessment development. Minutes are periodically submitted, but there is no evidence of a formal process to evaluate this work. All other curricular areas are not provided formal collaboration time, however many teachers indicated an informal collaboration process that takes place at lunches and during unstructured time. Monthly faculty meetings and team leaders' meetings, and five two-hour delayed openings support the work of this professional collaboration process. The overall master schedule and use of collaborative times supports the school's core values and beliefs about learning. (self-study, principal meeting, teachers)

Student load and class size enable teachers to effectively meet the learning needs of all students. According to the enrollment report from 2011, typical class sizes in core courses are between 16 and 20 with an overall average of 17.8 students, which is within district guidelines. Student load and class size at Coginchaug Regional High School enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. The principal and team leaders examine data from the student course selection process to determine the sections that will be offered per course based on staffing. Teachers recommend students for selected levels based on measurable data and identified mastery of specific curricular skills. This individualized approach supports the process of maintaining lower overall average class sizes. Students, too, support this process. As part of the Endicott Survey, 80.1 percent of the students reports class size is reasonable. Given the systematic individualized approach to scheduling, combined with the evidence

produced in enrollment reports, class sizes provide students with the opportunity to achieve the academic and social competencies outlined in the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, Endicott Survey, teachers)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. When the current principal took over the position, he asked for feedback about teaching and learning from building stakeholders. He used this feedback to consult with team leaders and the assistant principal with the intent of making changes where needed. The principal has played a visible role in mentoring teachers of all professional phases and has enlisted the help of team leaders in taking on a more visible role in the development of curriculum and common assessments aimed at improving teaching and learning. Endicott Survey results indicate that 89.1 percent of the staff and 69.5 percent of the students report that the principal, through working with other school leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values and 21stcentury expectations for lifelong learning. When hiring new teachers, the principal includes students on interview panels to gain student insight about each candidate's potential contribution to teaching and learning at the school. As a part of this process, the students are asked to sit in on a mock lesson and to rate the quality of instruction as it relates to their learning. While there is evidence to support the acknowledgement of core values for teaching and learning on the part of teachers, there exists less evidence that teachers and students have a clear understanding of the core values and 21st academic expectations for lifelong learning as they relate to instruction overall. There is also evidence to suggest that there is a communication gap around the core values between the principal and his constituents. When all stakeholders in the building internalize the adopted core values for teaching and learning, students and teachers will have a clearer pathway to achievement at all academic levels. (principal, self-study, Endicott Survey)

Teachers, parents, and students are adequately involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Overall, Endicott Survey results indicate that 54.7 percent of the teachers and 51.9 percent of the students believe teachers,

students, and parents are meaningfully involved in decision-making to promote an atmosphere of responsibility and ownership. The principal has attempted to increase communication with students by creating the Principal's Advisory which functions as a vehicle for fostering student involvement in the decision-making process. This committee consists of twelve students representing each class who meets monthly to discuss student-centered concerns. When interviewed, these students said that they felt strongly that they represented the student perspective in helping shape administrative decisions regarding school-wide culture. The principal also communicates to teachers through faculty meetings and team leader meetings addressing department and staff concerns; these meetings provide stakeholders with the opportunity to give input to administration. The Endicott Survey also stated that 55.5 percent of the parents believe that they have opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. The principal reports reaching out to parents through regular updates on school events, activities, and general information through the AlertNow voicemail service, newsletters, the school website and tweets. In addition, parent forum meetings are held periodically with inconsistent parent attendance. The principal also reports the use of PowerSchool as a resource for students and parents to access relevant information pertaining to student academic progress. The principal noted that PowerSchool records that students spend more time accessing the PowerSchool portal than their parents. There are opportunities for meaningful and defined roles for parents, teachers, and students in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership, andas a result of this opportunity, constituents are empowered to make decisions that lead to 21stcentury goal attainment. (self-study, students, Endicott Survey)

There is evidence that some teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school culture and to increase students' engagement in learning. The teachers have demonstrated a commitment to improving their students' academic opportunities and achievement by their willingness to work with students before school, during X-block and after school. Teachers have also shown initiative in creating a more positive school by taking part in Capture Kids Heart program, which has contributed to a reduction in discipline referrals and school consequences over the past three years. In addition,

teachers act as advisors to the 24 clubs offered at the school and coaching or supervising other extra-curricular activities including sports and the arts. Teachers also help organize and lead trips within the United States and abroad that extend students' experiences beyond the classroom. The team leader role provides guidance and communication from administration to the faculty supporting important 21st century initiatives including the work of data teams. In turn, teachers respond to these efforts by their work on these teams engaging in reflective and collaborative practices to inform instruction in support of student learning. In other areas, teachers serve on committees to support administrative initiatives. While teachers are actively engaged in leadership activities connected to building initiatives, there is little evidence that teachers are taking ownership of their opportunities to lead of their own accord. When teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement, learning opportunities will be increased. (school leadership, self-study teachers)

The Region 13 school board, superintendent, and the principal of Coginchaug Regional High School are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. On an as-needed basis, the principal communicates with the chairman of the Board of Education. Because the superintendent and the principal work in the same facility, they communicate on a regular basis. Formal communication includes Administrative Council (ADCO) meetings at least twice a month, e-mails, phone calls and face-to-face meetings. Evidence suggests that the school board, superintendent, and the principal participate in collaborative efforts to attain the goals of the high school related to 21st century learning expectations. For example, the principal recently sought board approval for a new BYOD policy that allows students access to their mobile devices to support learning in the classroom. More recently, the purchase and piloting of tablet as a text platform was proposed by the principal and approved by the school board. The school board and the principal continue to collaborate on curriculum implementation and scheduling related to professional development initiatives like the two-hour delayed opening. Additionally, the Board of Education incorporates feedback from the principal during the budget process and includes him on its policy committee. Because The Region 13 school board, superintendent, and the

principal of Coginchaug Regional High School are collaborative and reflective, they support students in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, principal, board of education)

The Region 13 school board and superintendent provide the principal of Coginchaug Regional High School with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. The school board and the superintendent share a philosophy that they hire highly qualified people and allow them to do their jobs. The principal at Coginchaug Regional High School has the autonomy to make decisions and does so with the consultation of the superintendent. The principal recognizes that it is the authority of the school board to shape and dictate policy and that his role is to implement those policies in the school. In addition to having the autonomy to manage day-to-day operations in the building, he also has had the opportunity to propose policy change in some instances. One recent example of this is the new technology policy wherein the principal proposed allowing students to use their own technological devices as a learning tool in the classroom. With regard to hiring, the principal is given the authority to organize hiring committees that screen and recommend final candidates to the superintendent for hire. When community members contact the superintendent directly about high school affairs, she reminds them of the chain of command and refers them back to the principal. When the authorities of the principal are clearly defined and consistently recognized, the principal is fully able to directly support his students and teachers. (school board, self-study, principal)

Commendations:
1. The visible ownership of the core ethical values

2. The advisory program that assists students in achieving the 21st century learning goals
3. The establishment of data teams to assist teachers in support of the 21st century learning goals
4. The building-wide student-to-teacher ratio that assists in support of the 21st century learning goals
5. The principal's modeling of electronic communication as a learning tool

6. The safe, positive, respectful, and supportive school culture that fosters student responsibility for learning, shared ownership and pride

7. The high level of student participation in the school's numerous co-curricular activities

8. The numerous ways in which students' accomplishment are honored

9. The number of professional development and in-service days

10. The focus of teacher supervision and evaluation on improved instruction

11. The instructional leadership provided by the building administrators

12. The leadership roles assumed by teachers

13. The collaboration among the superintendent, principal and board of education

Recommendations:

1. Utilize formal feedback to implement personalized advisory programming

2. Define the role of common planning time and data teams to improve teaching and learning

3. Ensure that common planning time is equitably scheduled and utilized

4. Incorporate best practices for data team protocols

5. Maximize the use of teachers as resources for building-wide professional development

6. Expand professional development opportunities for all teachers

6 School Resources for Learning

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

7. 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.

8. The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.

9. Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.

10. 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 21stcentury learning expectations.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13.   Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:

- collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
- provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students
- perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Conclusions

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. The school leadership team indicated there are plans for the school to improve formal professional development for Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) as required. In the past two years members of the Student Assistance Team (SAT) implemented a response to intervention program for all students. All members of the community including parents, teachers, counselors, psychologist, nurse, administrators, and students can make student referrals. Once a referral is made, identified students are reviewed in the SAT meeting within a week, or sooner for crisis situations. The SAT team meets weekly to discuss new referrals. The team determines the necessary interventions and data to collect. Teachers are asked to complete data collection forms for the purpose of measuring the intervention. Students are reviewed for a follow-up meeting six weeks after the initial meeting to monitor the progress of interventions. There is a formal process in place, which is utilized by all members of the school community. Many teachers indicated that additional training in SRBI is desired to improve the effective implementation of the interventions. Several parents gave positive examples of interventions that were provided for their child in response to concerns. The Endicott Survey indicates 55.1 percent of the students responded in the affirmative to the statement, "My school meets the needs of all students." In parent interviews several examples of interventions were mentioned. Parents gave positive feedback regarding the success of the interventions. In faculty and staff interviews few examples of formal SRBI were articulated. Many teachers provide additional learning strategies and interventions in their classrooms to help students. However, formal data is not maintained or documented in a systematic manner for all students. As a result of the newly implemented SAT referral process, students are provided with the resources and interventions necessary to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations, however all students could benefit from a more systematic intervention process.(teacher interview, parents, Endicott Survey)

The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. Evidence suggests multiple perceptions exist throughout the learning community regarding the availability of information for student support services. The Endicott Survey shows 30 percent of parents do not feel adequately informed of available services. However, information regarding student services is made available through a variety of sources including the student handbook, Naviance, e-mail blasts, course selection book, various bulletins, and the school website which has recently been revamped. The school does not examine data to ensure all students are informed about student services. While there are numerous attempts to communicate with families regarding student support services, there still is a significant gap between the number of families that feels adequately informed and parents interviewed who expressed total satisfaction with the level of communication from the school.While the school provides information to families, not all families perceive they are receiving information about available student support services, and, consequently, a communication gap exists within the community regarding information provided to families.

Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services, and all students are provided with the resources necessary to grow academically and personally. The counseling department uses several methods of technology to deliver services. Naviance is used as an electronic portfolio to assist students in exploring careers and planning for post-secondary options. This is used in the advisory program to track and explore student learning styles, interests, and possible career choices. Recently, students have begun to use Naviance as a way to track progress on the school-wide expectations. PowerSchool, the school's student data and grading software, is used to track academic progress. Counselors monitor students' performance and meet with students to review progress. The school website has been recently revised to provide families with relevant information regarding school resources, upcoming events, programs, services, athletics and general school information. The library/media center uses a variety of methods to deliver curriculum including computers, SMART Boards, LCD projections, digital cameras, flip video cameras, and headphones. The media center also utilizes adjacent computer labs for information literacy. The library/media center responds to the changing needs of students, recently purchasing flip cameras and

headphones in response to student interest. The school nurse uses PowerSchool for charting important medical information and for logging student visits. She also utilizes several digital measurement devices to assist in student assessment. Special educators use PowerSchool to monitor academic progress and use a variety of assistive technologies to coordinate services to students with needs. Some of the software available for students includes Kurzweil, Smart Pen, Epson Scanner, Adobe Reader, Adobe Acrobat, MAC computers, PC computers, Abbey Fine Reader, Speech Easy, FM Auditory System, Inspiration, Co-Writer and Microsoft Office. Teacher and student interviews indicate that technology is available for all students to access the curriculum. All support service staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student thus meeting the technology needs of students. (teacher interview, panel presentation, school support services)

The school counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written developmental program, and meet regularly with students to provide personal academic, career, and college counseling, engage in individual and group meetings with all students, deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers, and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century leaning expectations. School counselors deliver a developmental counseling program in a variety of ways. An advisory program has been in place for the past three years. Groups of approximately tento fifteen students are assigned to an advisory in which they meet with a member of the faculty every Wednesday for 28 minutes. Students complete a variety of elements of the comprehensive counseling program in advisory including academic, personal, social, and civic topics, which are specific to each academic year. The written curriculum used in the advisory program was developed by the counseling department to meet the requirement of the developmental program and to include elements of the Student Success Plan (SSP). Counselors, in collaboration with health/physical education, English, science, social studies and math departments, deliver elements of the curriculum in a classroom setting. The ratio of counselors to students is 1-to-195. Counselors use a multi-facetted approach to reaching students. Classroom lessons combined with

individual meetings and advisory are the main methods counselors use to reach all of the students. The counseling department collaborates with the middle school counselors to prepare the incoming students for the transition to high school. In addition, counselors offer New Student Registration before school begins. A new state mandate beginning July 1st, 2012 states all schools must implement a Student Success Plan built around the three core components: academic development, career development, and social/emotional and physical development. The counseling department worked this past summer in collaboration with the counselors from Strong Middle School to develop a program for all students in grades 6 through 12. Counselors spend about 15 minutes with each ninth grade student individually to assess transition to high school. They meet for one hour with each junior and their parents for college and career planning. Counselors meet with seniors on an ongoing basis to develop a plan for post- secondary planning. There are no individual meetings with sophomores. However, sophomore students do have group sessions in the classroom setting working on Naviance "Do What You Are" and they attend the regional career fair held at Wesleyan University. Students meet in groups for Naviance training and resume writing. There is no evidence that counselors meet individually with all students, however counselors meet with all students in grade level informal class meetings with the administration on an as-needed basis. In an effort to engage parents and provide information to families, counselors offer a wide range of evening meetings including Senior Parent College Night, Financial Aid Night, Junior College Admissions Forum, 8th Grade Curriculum Night, AP Info Night, National College Fair, Middlesex Chamber /Consortium Career Fair, Senior Awards Night, and Underclass Awards Ceremony. Evidence indicates that support services are very responsive to student needs. Counselors maintain the names of a variety of agencies in the community with whom they collaborate and to whom they refer students. There is an increase in students with at-risk behaviors including anxiety and a variety of personal/social needs. Due to a shortage of available local community-based service providers, requests from parents for counselor support have increased. School counselors administer a survey to seniors and alumni to evaluate counselor services. No formal changes have been made as a result of these surveys administered by the department. There have been informal changes made including moving the junior college night to an earlier date in the year and revising the advisory

curriculum as a result of teacher and student feedback. Student interviews provided evidence that not all students receive counseling services. Students report that if they need to see their counselor they are available but there is no systemic plan to provide all services to all students. The self-study states that sophomores and seniors do not have individual meetings. The counseling staff has a written developmental guidance program that incorporates an advisory program, which provides individual and group instruction to all grade levels. Although Student Success Plans are implemented with activities students with additional needs are serviced on an as-needed basis, and, therefore, the full range of services is not necessarily available to all students.(school support staff, parents, panel presentation)

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/ licensed personnel and support staff who provide preventative heath services and direct intervention services, use an appropriate referral process, conduct ongoing student health assessments, and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and to ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The school has one nurse, which is adequate to meet the needs of the student population.   The school nurse is able to take care of daily needs of the school as well as to complete yearly screenings for scoliosis and vision. The school nurse is also able to educate faculty and staff about preventative programs such as blood borne pathogens, the latest in diabetes research, the use of EpiPens, and how to treat asthma attacks. She is also able to handle all materials for the district, and is able to successfully care for daily requirements of special needs students. The school nurse also has a number of area nurses to cover absences should they arise. She is unable to attend important meetings such as 504 accommodations, Student Assistant Team meetings, and planning and placement team meetings due to lack of coverage. Students receive health services as needed and their health records are kept up-to-date to allow both access to the curriculum and participation in extra-curricular activities to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.(teacher meetings, self-study, support staff)

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' interest and needs in order to support independent learning, and, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. In the Endicott Survey, 80 percent of students report that they have adequate library/media center time and materials to help them complete their course work. Students are able to use the library/media center thought the school day. Students are also able to access the library/media center for short periods of time before and after school. Materials within the library/media center are chosen based on input from teachers. Teachers use the library/media center on a regular basis. Seventy-one percent of teachers listed frequent use of the library/media center in the Endicott Survey. The library/media specialist introduces students to information literacy through databases and advanced search techniques. Class projects utilize the library/media center and its staff, and the location of computer labs adjacent to the library/media center allows for students to access computers and text simultaneously. Students are able to access the library/media center and engage in activities involving 21st century skills to a degree, and benefit from having the undivided attention of their library/media specialist. (student interviews, teacher interviews, self-study)

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. Many examples exist pertaining to communication and collaboration with all teachers, counselors, targeted services and other support services personnel in helping identified students to achieve the school's

learning expectations. Teacher interviews indicated the special education teachers work very closely with the general education teachers in modifying and accommodating the needs of special education students. IEP students have at least one annual review a year and additional meetings are scheduled on an as-needed basis. Inclusive learning opportunities are available for all identified students. There are a number of self-contained classes, which students attend in identified academic areas. Many students who have self-contained classes are also enrolled in regular education classes. Co-taught classes are available in all disciplines except world languages. Teachers from all disciplines collaborate with special educators to ensure that students' IEP goals are achieved. When appropriate, the curriculum can be parallel or in some cases alternative curriculum is offered. All identified students have opportunities to participate in clubs, sports, community volunteering and curriculum related field trips. Identified students also have the opportunity to participate in school and community-based internships. There are numerous forms of assessment utilized to improve support services for identified students. Identified students who are eligible are registered to take the CAPT Modified Assessment System (MAS). For students suspected of having a specific learning disability a Multidisciplinary Evaluation Report is completed. Students with identified needs complete a Summary of Performance. Extensive minutes and documents are maintained for all identified students.   A Developmental Skills Reflection instrument is aligned to the 21st century learning expectations. Formal triennial evaluations are conducted and many educational decisions are made at the PPT's for identified students. The school psychologist is responsible for administering testing to determine eligibility. Some of the assessments administered include the Wechsler IV (adult or child) Vineland II ASSIST, BASC-2 and PRG ASSIST. In addition the team uses data from regular academic assessments, team-taught class assessments, progress toward to IEP goals, and informal collaborations among teachers and support service personnel. Examples of changes made in response to assessment data to improve support services and ensure that each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations include the development of an SRBI process, and the hiring of additional support staff as needed as determined by observational needs of students. In 2012 the Social Thinking class was developed and additional sections of Academic Skills and Life Skills classes were implemented. This year a part-time secretary was hired to work on scheduling

meetings for special education. The Endicott Survey reports 46.4 percent of parents believe staffing is adequate to provide needed services. All identified students including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners are provided a full range of services to which they are entitled to under law and which assist them as they strive to meet 21st century learning expectations.(student interviews, school support staff, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The individual teachers who engage in Scientific Researched Based Intervention (SRBI)
2. The support services staff who work in a highly collaborative manner for the benefit of all students
3. The special education staff who have supported a community of inclusion and acceptance based on core ethical values
4. The timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students
5. The use of technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services, and all students
6. The school counselors who deliver a developmental counseling program in collaboration with health/physical education, English, science, social studies and math departments
7. The integration of the library/media services into curriculum and instructional practices of the school

Recommendations:

1. Review the methods in which information is provided to families
2. Improve communication with all families especially those most in need
3. Seek professional development opportunities to expand use of Naviance and PowerSchool
4. Implement a system of sharing all SRBI interventions
5. Expand teacher involvement in Student Success Plans to ensure all students achieve 21st century skills
6. Revise and document the developmental guidance curriculum
7. Develop and implement a process to use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve guidance, health, library/media, and Special Education support services

8. Insure that all members of IEP and 504 teams can attend these important student meetings.

7 Community Resources for Learning

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

1. The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for:
    -   a wide range of school programs and services
    -   sufficient professional and support staff
    -   ongoing professional development and curriculum revision
    -   a full range of technology support
    -   sufficient equipment
    -   sufficient instructional materials and supplies.

2. The school develops, plans, and funds programs:
    -   to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant
    -   to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment
    -   to keep the school clean on a daily basis.

3. The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses:
    -   programs and services
    -   enrollment changes and staffing needs
    -   facility needs
    -   technology
    -   capital improvements.

4. Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.

5. The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services.

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

7. All professional staff actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.

8. The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

Conclusions

The community served by Coginchaug Regional High School and the district's governing body provide consistent and dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, curriculum revision, sufficient equipment, instructional materials and supplies; however, there is limited funding for technology support and professional development. Coginchaug Regional High School provides its students with a wide variety of school programs and services such as an award-winning musical program, new state-of-the-art athletic fields, comprehensive electives program, widely respected special education services, wide-ranging guidance department services and opportunities for staff development and curriculum revision. According to the Endicott Survey 83 percent of students report that the school has a wide range of programs and services and over 85 percent agrees that the school has a sufficient number of computers for use. Other technologies such as LCD projectors, SMARTBoards, Mimio's, and Elmo's are either installed in teachers' classrooms or are available to sign out from the library/media center. Parents indicate that they are pleased with the programs and services that are offered. The school also has sufficient instructional materials and supplies and the science labs are sufficiently equipped. The district has a budget for textbook replacement according to a schedule. Parents and community are supportive of school programs and work diligently to collect funds to support curricular and extra-curricular programs. In addition, teachers report that they are proud of the many programs available to the student body of Coginchaug. However, there is insufficient funding for technology support staff. Teachers report that while Coginchaug has sufficient technology equipment, the equipment is not installed in a timely manner and when there are technology performance issues, there is minimal support staff available to solve the problem. Staff members also indicated that warranties on new equipment have occasionally expired before the equipment could be installed, and that the wireless network is inadequate for school needs. Professional development opportunities are limited by budget constraints, with the budget for professional development being held to the same amount for several years with no increase. While the community served by Coginchaug Regional High School and the district governing

body provide consistent and dependable funding for a wide range of high quality school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, curriculum revision, sufficient equipment, instructional materials and supplies, the current budget does not provide adequate funding for technology support or for professional development; consequently, teachers are unable to consistently carry out technology-based lessons and do not have the professional development opportunities to improve from best practices which in turn affects student learning. (Endicott Survey, students, parents, panel presentation, self-study)

The high school effectively and purposefully develops, plans, and adequately funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, maintains, catalogues, and replaces equipment, and provides an exceptionally high daily level of building cleanliness to ensure the health and well-being of all building occupants. However, the weight room and locker rooms continue to have dampness issues with peeling paint, high humidity and occasional mildew. The school develops, plans, and funds programs to allow the district facilities manager and the district supervisor of buildings and grounds to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant. The maintenance and custodial staff maintain, catalog and replace equipment and keep the school clean on a daily basis. It was evident from a tour of the facility that the building and grounds are clean and well maintained and that the building automation systems, HVAC, fire suppression, fire and security systems, sprinkler systems, plumbing systems, elevators, drinking water supply and sewer ejection systems are all regularly maintained and working properly. According to the Endicott Survey, over 88 percent of students, and 100 percent of faculty and parents agree that the physical plant is clean and well maintained. The custodial staff reports that they prioritize all the work orders and that they give immediate attention to safety issues; non-critical maintenance issues might be addressed in the summer. While the issue of dampness in the weight room and locker rooms has not been resolved, it is being mitigated by the use of dehumidifiers and increased airflow through the new air system. According to the district facilities manager all peeling paint will be removed and the walls will be repainted during the summer. While the self-study indicated that the custodial department was understaffed, the district facilities manager explained that the number of custodians is adequate, according to the formula used by the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials to determine the necessary number

of custodians for a school. There is a five-year plan to address maintenance of the building, equipment repair and replacement. The consistent and ongoing maintenance of building and grounds provides a safe, clean and pleasant environment, which enhances teaching and learning. (Endicott Survey, parents, students, teachers, facility tour, self-study)

The community adequately funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, facility needs and technology needs as well as capital improvements, however, there is no plan to address enrollment changes and staffing needs. The district has purchased PowerSchool, the student software used to build and maintain the master schedule and to keep current records of biographical information, attendance, and grades. PowerSchool is also used to generate data reports, such as those to fulfill state requirements. The data is archived in the system and can be retrieved at any time. The school has also recently acquired Pearson Inform to store students' achievement data and to track and measure progress toward standards from multiple measures. At this point, PowerSchool has been integrated into school practice and the district plans to offer training to administrators and teachers on the use of Inform.

Coginchaug Regional High School Site Plan is aligned with the District Strategic Plan. Use of the current District Strategic Plan sets the direction for the school district. This is the fourth Strategic Plan developed by the district. The Capital Project Plan, which runs through 2016, lists projects for all the schools in the district along with costs for the improvements to be completed according to a specified time frame, and this Plan is dependent on the yearly budget vote. The district also has a technology plan to address the needs of the district. The plan includes steps to acquire technology equipment, integrate technology into the classroom and provide staff development in the use of technology. However, at this point, there is no evidence of a plan that addresses enrollment changes and staffing needs. Teachers, guidance counselors, school administrators and board of education members indicate a concern regarding the increasing special education population and the staffing levels required to provide this population with high quality services. While the community adequately funds and the school implements a long range plan that addresses programs and services, facility needs, technology needs and capital improvements, there is no evidence of a plan to address

enrollment changes and staffing needs. Without a plan to address the increased special education population the district will not be able to provide adequate services for these students, which will have a negative impact on student learning. (teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, board of education members, self-study)

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget process. Team leaders at Coginchaug Regional High School begin the budgetary process in October by soliciting input from faculty and staff and by analyzing student enrollment and curriculum. Team leaders then meet with the school principal to discuss the departmental budget requests and to provide further clarification. In December the school principal meets with the superintendent to discuss the preliminary numbers in the budget and to articulate the particular budget requests. Once the preliminary budget is put together, the school principal participates in a series of budget workshops to communicate and clarify the budget requests to the community. The principal and team leaders have regular access to the status of the budget and its allocations. According to school administrators, guidance counselors, teachers and staff, developing and implementing the budget is an active process in which faculty and administrators play an essential part. The active participation of faculty and administrators in the budgetary process ensures appropriate allocation of funding for programs and services, thus ensuring that teachers and staff have the necessary tools to optimize teaching and learning. (administrators, team leaders, board of education panel presentation)

Currently, the school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. The Coginchaug campus encompasses approximately seventy-two acres. The main building has 53 classrooms, seven state-of-the-art computer labs, six well-equipped science labs, prep rooms, a locked chemical storage area, a new administrative and guidance department complex and state-of-the-art health suite. A library/media center with a newly donated sunroom serves as the school hub and includes fifteen new computers, a color printer, SMARTBoards and assorted other audio and visual equipment available for student and staff use. The art room and pottery wing provide adequate space for student activities while the automotive shop, woodworking shop, photography lab, student kitchens, child care lab and

tropical aquatics lab support the varied educational opportunities offered at Coginchaug. However, a special education classroom has been moved to a portable classroom and according to faculty there is inadequate space for confidential meetings and phone conversations. A sports complex renovation included construction of a synthetic field lined for football and soccer with bleacher seating for over nine hundred spectators, an eight-lane track, and five lighted tennis courts. These new facilities complement the existing two varsity softball fields, three utility fields, a cross-country course, and lighted basketball courts. Approximately 3,700 participants use the athletic facilities each year. This includes students from Coginchaug, nearby schools, and members of the community. The gymnasium is well maintained and can seat approximately 750 spectators. There is adequate parking for faculty, staff, students and the general public for any major event. Building entrances and exits are well lit and sufficient in number to allow a safe and quick exit. The Environmental Coginchaug Organization (ECO) maintains five gardens on site. There is an 840-seat auditorium that is used for a variety of school and public events. The musical facilities are adequate, including space for storage and practice rooms. The food services program offers breakfast and snack options and four meal stations at lunchtime with a variety of meal options. The cafeteria staff requests that the school implement three lunch waves instead of two to reduce the wait time for students. Students indicated that they often run out of time to eat their lunch and corroborated the long wait time at the cafeteria during the 25-minute lunch wave. The Coginchaug school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. While the outstanding condition of the school site and plant, along with the variety of resources, provides an optimal environment for teaching and learning, the lack of space for special education services in the main building creates isolation for the special education students thus preventing their inclusion in the school community. The long wait in the cafeteria for lunch prevents some students from finishing their lunch, which can negatively affect their concentration and consequently their learning. (self-study, students, parents, facility tour, student shadowing and administrators)

The school maintains up-to-date documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with fire, health, and safety regulations. The school district's director of facilities and grounds is responsible for

maintaining all documentation and for scheduling all required inspections from local, state, and federal agencies; the documents are located in the custodians' office. According to the school district director of facilities the entire school has adequate ventilation, temperature control, and air quality. The maintenance of all fire alarms and fire extinguishers is conducted regularly. There is ample and appropriate storage for chemicals and hazardous materials and these items are properly disposed of. The entire facility is handicap accessible with elevators serving the main classroom wing and gymnasium. Local officials perform periodic inspections and report their findings to administrators. According to the custodians, faculty members and the school's self-study, when a safety issue arises it is given priority and immediate attention while less critical maintenance issues are prioritized according to safety and educational impact on students and might be addressed during the summer. The school maintains up-to-date documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with fire, health, and safety regulations. (facility tour, faculty, staff, self-study)

The professional staff at Coginchaug is committed to engaging parents and families as partners in each student's education and to reaching out specifically to those families who have been less connected to the school. Coginchaug Regional High School's professional staff actively engages parents and families as partners in each student's education in a variety of ways, such as daily emails of the announcements to inform parents and families of upcoming events and activities, and the publication of a regular column on district news and the students' newspaper The Devil's Advocate in the local newspaper. Teachers and school personnel regularly contact parents by phone and email with positive feedback, as well as with issues of concern. There are two parent teacher conferences yearly. Additionally, guidance counselors meet with students and parents to discuss current progress and to assist in post-high school planning. The parent portal on PowerSchool, the school's student data and grading software, is available to all parents for accessing their child's records and progress at any time. Formal report cards are provided quarterly and can also be viewed through the parent portal of PowerSchool. The planning and placement team process, organized by the special education department, actively involves parents in the Individual Education Plans of their students through regular meetings. Outreach efforts are made to engage parents through

a wide range of evening programs. These include Get Acquainted Night, transition programs for students entering grades nine and ten, Junior Parent Night, Financial Aid Night and Advanced Placement Night. In an effort to reach out to families less connected to the school, school faculty members and staff conduct home visits, use certified mail if they are unable to reach parents by phone or email, and schedule meetings to accommodate parents' schedules. Transportation to meetings is also available for parents who might need it. According to the Endicott Survey over 81 percent of the professional staff reports that the professional staff actively engages parents and families as partners in each student's education, and a majority of parents reports that the professional staff actively engages parents and families as partners in each student's education. The professional staff at Coginchaug is committed to engaging parents and families as partners in each student's education and to reaching out specifically to those families who have been less connected to the school. However, there is a cross section of parents that has not yet been actively engaged as partners in their children's education and who consequently might not be able to adequately support their children in their academic endeavors. The professional staff continues to develop ways to reach these parents too. (self-study, staff, parents, Endicott Survey)

The school develops productive parent, business, community, and higher education partnerships that support student learning and is in the process of expanding those partnerships. The school community benefits from in-house college visits, job fairs, and college fairs. Coginchaug Regional High School maintains a database of a consortium of parents willing to host students for job shadow experiences. Under the direction of the transition team, special education students participate in job shadowing, internships and school-to-work programs throughout the community. The transition team hopes to expand the job shadowing to include all students. Additionally, the school participates in the Summer Work Force Alliance program with the towns of Durham and Middlefield. Parents and school staff have created a local wellness council to promote healthy decisions for the school community. The food service staff has Healthy Food certification, and has been prompted to revise and improve food choices for students, thus promoting healthy eating habits. Many students participate in various ways in the Durham Fair, an annual event that brings students together with community members. There are numerous community and outreach programs

to involve students in community service and to help with post-secondary education plans. An internship program with the University of New Haven brings graduate student interns into the school for a full year, which supports student learning. Through partnership programs students have the opportunity to extend their learning by attending classes at the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, or participating in Destination Durham, a cooperative venture with the Town of Durham and the local cable network. According to the Endicott Survey, a majority of parents agrees that the school has effective partnerships with parents, community organizations, businesses and higher education to support student learning. Coginchaug Regional High School maintains productive business, community, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. (provide sources for this indicator)

Commendations:

1. The wide variety of high quality school programs and services
2. The strong parental and community support for co-curricular and athletic programs
3. The exceptional level of cleanliness of the facility
4. The commitment to the Strategic Plan
5. The active involvement in the development and implementation of the budget
6. The food service staff's commitment to promoting healthy eating habits
7. The addition of classroom technology, especially the tablet initiative
8. The alliance with community businesses and professional groups to expand opportunities for authentic learning experiences for students
9. The adequate, dependable, and consistent level of funding to support the school's programs and services
10. The well-maintained facility and grounds
11. The active engagement of parents

Recommendations:

1. Provide adequate and dependable funding to ensure a full range of technology support
2. Provide adequate and dependable funding for ongoing professional development

3. Develop and implement a long-range plan to address enrollment changes and staffing needs

4. Review and revise space allocations to ensure an inclusive environment

5. Develop a process, which ensures that all students have adequate time to eat their lunch

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

A school's initial/continued accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing valid recommendations of the visiting committee and others identified by the Committee as it monitors the school's progress and changes, which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. To monitor the school's progress in the Follow-Up Program the Committee requires that the principal of Coginchaug Regional High School submit routine Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports documenting the current status of all evaluation report recommendations, with particular detail provided for any recommendation which may have been rejected or those items on which no action has been taken. In addition, responses must be detailed on all recommendations highlighted by the Committee in its notification letters to the school. School officials are expected to have completed or be in the final stages of completion of all valid visiting committee recommendations by the time the Five-Year Progress Report is submitted. The Committee may request additional Special Progress

Reports if one or more of the Standards are not being met in a satisfactory manner or if additional information is needed on matters relating to evaluation report recommendations or substantive changes in the school.

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Committee has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Committee within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change, which negatively impacts, on the school's adherence to the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact, which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Committee's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 15. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report, which is required of each member school to ensure that the Committee office has current statistical data on the school.

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

Coginchaug Regional High School

NEASC Accreditation Visit

March 17 – 20, 2013

Visiting Committee

Philip Conrad, Chair Rockport Middle/High School Rockport, MA 01966	Julie Gutierrez Killingly High School Dayville, CT 06241
Charles Dumais, Assistant Chair Newtown High School Newtown, CT 06482	Andrew DiPippo Glastonbury High School Glastonbury, MA 06033
Paula Panos Joel Barlow High School Redding, CT 06896	Karen Seltenriech Fairfield Ludlowe High School Fairfield, CT 06824
DerbaNihan Region 6 Litchfield, CT 06759	Erik Juergens Springfield Central High School Springfield, MA 01109
Kathryn Eidson Tolland Public Schools Tolland, CT 06084	Helly Potter Amity High School Woodbridge, CT 06525
Meredith Jacob Simsbury High School Simsbury, CT 06070	Wendy Youngblood Shepaug Valley High School Washington, CT 06793
Christopher Cosma Suffield High School Suffield, CT 06415	Sara DelMastro Ansonia High School Ansonia, CT 06401
Tom Harrington Bacon Academy Colchester, CT 06415	Erik Holst-Grubbe Shepaug Valley High School Washington, CT 06793

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

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

Commendations:

- The commitment to the district's core ethical values
- The culture of kindness and inclusion
- The introduction of tablet technology in the social studies department
- The safe, positive and supportive school culture
- The expanded opportunities for authentic learning experiences for students
- The establishment of formal process to review the school's learning expectations
- The use of assessment results/data in the review of the school's core values, beliefs, and
- The emphasis on depth of understanding through inquiry, problem solving, authentic learning, and higher order thinking
- The district's core ethical values are embedded in the culture
- The math teachers' meeting to discuss placement criteria for students
- The level of collaboration with sending schools in developing curriculum articulation
- The opportunities students have be active, self-directed learners
- The two interdisciplinary courses that combine English and social studies in cross-disciplinary learning
- The emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking is prevalent throughout most of the school
- The enhancement of student learning by the teachers who encourage inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills
- The opportunities students have to apply their knowledge and skills to authentic tasks
- The use of both school-wide and course-specific rubrics in assessing student work aligned to the learning expectations
- The establishment of a common curriculum template
- The multiple opportunities students have to practice and achieve the school's learning expectations
- The alignment between the written and taught curriculum
- The vertical alignment of the K-12 curriculum with the Common Core
- The financial support for staffing levels, instructional supplies and materials, and professional development programs
- The access students have to job shadowing and work experience opportunities
- The teachers' development of performance-based assessments

- The teachers who generously give their time providing additional support and alternative strategies to their students
- The purposefully organize group-learning activities designed by teachers
- The teachers' focused effort to examine student work to improve instructional strategies and student learning
- The teachers who serve model roles as adult learners and reflective practitioners
- The incorporation of course rubrics and school-wide rubrics into instruction by some staff and departments
- The clear understanding students have of the learning expectations and unit-specific learning goals
- The common planning time in the core academic content areas
- The implementation of formal data team meetings
- The teachers returning work to students quickly and with specific feedback
- The practice of some teachers who allow students to resubmit work after corrective feedback
- The analysis and examination of CFAs and CAPT scores to improve teaching and learning
- The initial progress in reporting individual student achievement of the school's learning expectations
- The range and variety of assessment practices employed by teachers
- The visible ownership of the core ethical values

- The advisory program that assists students in achieving the 21st century learning goals
- The establishment of data teams to assist teachers in support of the 21st century learning goals
- Building-wide student-to-teacher ratio that assists in support of the 21st century learning goals
- The principal's modeling of electronic communication as a learning tool
- The safe, positive, respectful, and supportive school culture that fosters student responsibility for learning, shared ownership and pride
- The high level of student participation in the school's numerous co-curricular activities
- The numerous ways in which students' accomplishment are honored
- The number of professional development and in-service days

- The focus of teacher supervision and evaluation on improved instruction
- The instructional leadership provided by the building administrators
- The leadership roles assumed by teachers
- The collaboration among the superintendent, principal and board of education
- The individual teachers who engage in Scientific Researched Based Intervention (SRBI)
- The support services staff who work in a highly collaborative manner for the benefit of all students
- The special education staff who have supported a community of inclusion and acceptance based on core ethical values
- The timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students
- The use of technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services, and all students
- The school counselors who deliver a developmental counseling program in collaboration with health/physical education, English, science, social studies and math departments
- The integration of the library/media services into curriculum and instructional practices of the school
- The wide variety of high quality school programs and services
- The strong parental and community support for co-curricular and athletic programs
- The xceptional level of cleanliness of the facility
- The commitment to the Strategic Plan
- The active involvement in the development and implementation of the budget
- The food service staff's commitment to promoting healthy eating habits
- The addition of classroom technology, especially the tablet initiative
- The alliance with community businesses and professional groups to expand opportunities for authentic learning experiences for students
- The adequate, dependable, and consistent level of funding to support the school's programs and services
- The well-maintained facility and grounds
- The active engagement of parents

Recommendations:

- Include all stakeholders in the review of core values, beliefs, and 21st century academic expectations for learning and academic and social expectations
- Ensure research, multiple data sources and district and community priorities are reflected in the review of the core values, beliefs, and 21st century academic expectations for learning and academic and social expectations
- Create clear language linking the school's statement of core values to the 21st century academic expectations for lifelong learning and the social and civic expectations
- Prioritize the various statements of values and expectations used to measure student achievement
- Develop and implement school-wide analytic rubrics with targeted high levels of achievement for each academic, civic and social learning expectation
- Create rubrics to measure individual and school-wide achievement in all of the core values and learning expectations
- Resolve use of rubrics, including social and civic expectations and 21st century academic expectations for lifelong learning
- Promote common language and vision regarding the core values and beliefs
- Develop shared vocabulary for all stakeholders
- Link the 21st century learning expectations to specific instructional strategies and assessments within the written and taught curriculum
- Consistently incorporate inquiry, problem solving, authentic learning, and higher order thinking in all courses
- Increase interdisciplinary opportunities for all students
- Implement a process to ensure the alignment of written and taught curriculum in all content areas
- Review current allocations of space for all programs
- Provide training on data-driven curriculum revision and instruction
- Develop and implement a process to ensure teachers instructional practices are continuously examined to align with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
- Develop and implement a process to ensure teachers instructional practices emphasize inquiry, higher order thinking, problem solving and integrating technology for all students in all levels

- Ensure differentiation and formative assessments used to adjust instructional practices are consistently used in all instruction

- Provide formal opportunities for teachers to collaboratively improve their instructional practices through engaging in professional discourse

- Increase effectiveness and efficiency of the process of examining student data

- Provide training for the Pearson Inform software

- Gather and analyze data for the growth of learning over time of the 21st century learning expectations

- Develop and implement a formal process to assess individual student progress in achieving all 21st century learning expectations

- Develop and implement a formal process to communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families

- Implement a process to report the school's progress in achieving learning expectations to the community independent of standardized testing

- Expand data team time to all content areas

- Revise curriculum and improve instructional practice through the examination of student work

- Create, regularly review, and revise grading and reporting practices within and among departments

- Align assessment practices with academic learning expectations

- Improve data team protocols with fidelity across all departments, including disaggregation of data and reporting systems

- Utilize formal feedback to implement personalized advisory programming

- Define the role of common planning time and data teams to improve teaching and learning

- Ensure that common planning time is equitably scheduled and utilized

- Incorporate best practices for data team protocols

- Maximize the use of teachers as resources for building-wide professional development

- Expand professional development opportunities for all teachers

- Review the methods in which information is provided to families

- Improve communication with all families especially those most in need

- Seek professional development opportunities to expand use of Naviance and PowerSchool

- Implement a system of sharing all SRBI interventions
- Expand teacher involvement in Student Success Plans to ensure all students achieve 21st century skills
- Revise and document the developmental guidance curriculum
- Develop and implement a process to use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve guidance, health, library/media, and Special Education support services
- Insure that all members of IEP and 504 teams can attend these important student meetings.
- Provide adequate and dependable funding to ensure a full range of technology support
- Provide adequate and dependable funding for ongoing professional development
- Develop a long-range plan to address enrollment changes and staffing needs
- Review and revise space allocations to ensure an inclusive environment
- Develop a process, which ensures that all students have adequate time to eat their lunch