

**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

**COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE**

**Bristol Central High School**

**Bristol, Connecticut**

**March 7 – 10, 2004**

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## **STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS**

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

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges considers this visiting committee report of Bristol Central High School to be a privileged document submitted by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges to the principal of the school and by the principal to the state department of education. Distribution of the report within the school community is the responsibility of the school principal. The final visiting committee report must be released in its entirety within sixty (60) days of its completion to the superintendent, school committee, 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 Bristol Central High School in terms of the school's stated mission and the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Neither the total report nor any of its subsections is to be considered an evaluation of any individual staff member but rather a professional appraisal of the school as it appeared to the visiting team.

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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 five Commissions: the [Commission on Institutions of Higher Education](#) (CIHE), the [Commission on Independent Schools](#) (CIS), the [Commission on Public Secondary Schools](#) (CPSS), the [Commission on Technical and Career Institutions](#) (CTCI), and the [Commission on Public Elementary Schools](#) (CPES).

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

- Mission and Expectations for Student Learning
- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Assessment of Student Learning

### Support Standards

- Leadership and Organization
- 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 show continued progress addressing identified needs.

## **Preparation for the Evaluation 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 Bristol Central High School, a committee of eight members with the principal serving in an *ex officio* capacity supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people.

The self-study of Bristol Central High School extended over a period of 25 school months, from May 2001 to January 2004, and involved mostly professional staff members. The visiting committee was pleased to note that students and parents were part of the original mission committee.

Public schools evaluated by the Commission 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 Commission, Bristol Central High School also used questionnaires developed by the Office for Research and Education at the University of Maine 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. Four hundred seventy-seven students, 162 parents, and 80 teachers completed the survey.

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

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

- ◆ review of the school's self-study materials
- ◆ a total of 44 hours of classroom observation
- ◆ numerous informal observations in and around the school
- ◆ tours of the facility
- ◆ shadowing of 14 students for a half day
- ◆ individual meetings with 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 on the report was agreed to by team 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 committee's judgment will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better meet Commission Standards.

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

### **Overview of Findings**

Although the conclusions of the visiting committee on the school's adherence to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation appear in various sections of this report, the committee wishes to highlight some findings in the paragraphs that follow. These findings are not intended to be a summary of the report.

### **Quality of the Self-Assessment**

The self-assessment report completed by the professional staff at BCHS was comprehensive, well written, and provided the committee with evidence to support the strengths and needs of the school. The visiting committee was able to use the report not only to validate its work but also to guide the development of recommendations in each area.

In addition, BCHS's professional staff, parents, members of the board of education, and students were candid and open with visiting committee members during interviews and meetings. As a

result, many of the findings in the self-study were supported and the conclusions of the committee validated.

Finally, the communication between the school and the chair of the visiting committee was efficient and timely, resulting in a productive and meaningful visit.



## **Discussion of Significant Findings**

### **Teaching and Learning at Bristol Central High School**

The school's mission statement and expectations for student learning is a highly visible document throughout the building, appearing in every classroom and school office. It reflects the community's and the school's basic values of assisting students "to achieve their maximum learning potential and to develop their self worth in a safe environment." In addition, the staff and students are very aware of the contents of the mission and can summarize the expectations for student learning.

The climate of BCHS is very friendly, highly respectful, and very supportive. Staff, students, and parents consistently report that the school is "like a family." The theme of the school – Think Central, Talk Central, Be Central – appears throughout the building, and accurately reflects the importance of BCHS in the lives of the school's constituents. In such an environment, students are highly valued and staff members work diligently to assist students in meeting the school's mission.

Nine expectations for student learning have been developed and include academic, social, and civic goals. These expectations reflect past practices at BCHS and continue to guide the school's improvement efforts. A system of rubrics has been designed to measure the expectations for student learning, and now the challenge for BCHS is to use these rubrics to measure the success of each individual student in meeting the nine expectations for student learning and then to inform the community of school-wide progress on a yearly basis.

The curriculum at BCHS includes nine advanced placement courses, a 10<sup>th</sup> grade humanities program, college cooperative courses, business partnerships, tech prep classes, and a recently revised math program. In addition, a district-wide writing initiative is in place that ensures writing in *every* classroom, including physical education. Teams of core teachers sharing the same students exist in ninth grade. Common planning time for these teams afford teachers the opportunities to make connections between and among disciplines and to monitor student achievement as well as the curriculum.

Currently, a five-year cycle does exist for curriculum development, and a consultant has been working with members of the math department to revise curriculum. However, much more work with curriculum needs to be done. The high turnover of curriculum directors in the central office has negatively impacted curriculum articulation throughout the district. With a new person in place who clearly is committed to systematically addressing curricular issues, there is hope and an expectation that a strategic plan and standard for curriculum development and revision will be implemented. If the school's mission and expectations for student learning are to be achieved, such a plan needs to include three major goals: 1) ensure a rigorous curriculum with an emphasis on depth of understanding over breadth of coverage for all disciplines, 2) provide coordination and articulation between and among academic disciplines and sending schools, and 3) expand the number of professional staff members involved in development and revision of curriculum.

Many of the instructional strategies and practices at BCHS are consistent with the school's stated mission and expectations. There are examples of teachers instructing in ways that help students

write effectively, use logic to analyze and solve problems, and acquire, organize, and utilize information. While the BCHS school community is committed to helping students to achieve their maximum learning potential and to develop self-worth, there is inconsistent use of instructional strategies that are effective in meeting these goals.

There are several programs in place that provide opportunities to improve instructional practices. The New Teacher Academy and the state's BEST portfolio program provide opportunities for teachers new to the profession to receive feedback and guidance. The supervision and evaluation process, departmental meetings, and the Dine and Discuss program are additional opportunities for teachers to improve instruction. Teachers also use common lunch periods, after school time, and time between classes to discuss instructional strategies. However, to significantly improve instruction at BCHS, the discussion of instructional strategies, practices, and student work needs to become a major part of the professional culture of the school. Professional development devoted to the improvement of instructional practices and the training of all teachers on how to use technology to improve student learning will also be critical in the school's efforts to enhance instruction.

Students and parents are very clear about grading and reporting at BCHS. Syllabi are distributed at the beginning of all courses outlining the specific learning expectations and assessment criteria for each course. Rubrics are used regularly throughout the school. In some departments, common rubrics have been developed to assess student learning.

Communication about student performance is very important at BCHS, and is communicated eight times during the year with four midterm progress reports and four end-of-term report cards. In addition, parent conferences are held twice a year, and Parent Connect, a computer program to inform parents of student progress, is in the beginning stages of implementation. Telephone calls, voice mail, and e-mails are also used to keep parents informed about student progress.

In keeping with the school's mission to develop self-worth, student success and achievement is regularly celebrated via morning announcements, school newspaper, city newspaper, monthly parents' newsletter, and annual awards ceremonies.

School-wide rubrics to measure student success in meeting the academic expectations do exist, but they need to be implemented so that individual and school-wide progress can be determined and then reported. To increase the range of assessment strategies used in all classrooms, professional development opportunities need to be provided. In addition, a formal process to use classroom assessment data when revising and developing curriculum needs to be established as well as time for formal discourse of students work and assessment. With these changes in place, students at BCHS will be better able to meet the school's mission and expectations for student learning.

### **Support of Teaching and Learning at Bristol Central High School**

The leadership style of the principal is both open and collaborative. The principal's accessibility and student-centered style are evident throughout the building. Both teachers and students describe their interaction with the principal as familial; he listens with patience, care, and

concern. As a result, there is an obvious and genuine sense of ownership and commitment to the school by all constituents.

Teachers are an important force in ongoing school improvement. They serve as department coordinators, mentors of new staff, and committee members; over fifty per cent of the teaching staff serves as advisors and coaches for extra and co-curricular activities.

Department coordinators teach one less class, have no assigned duty, meet monthly with the administration, and largely perform managerial tasks; they do not evaluate teachers.

Although universally dedicated and informed, they are not given the training or the authority to effectively provide instructional leadership within the building.

The move to the A/B block schedule added an additional teaching assignment which has increased student load. Only fifteen percent of the teachers have student loads of 90 students per marking period. The additional teaching assignment and current student loads do not allow sufficient time to meet the individual needs of students. In addition, combined with the teaching load, the current schedule prevents adequate collaboration between teachers during the school day. The current teaching load impacts the overall ability of the current schedule to support the mission and expectations for student learning.

BCHS student support personnel enhance student learning by interacting and working with building professional staff and utilizing community resources to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students. The BCHS Student Assistance Team is the hub of

collaboration between BCHS and community resources and meets weekly to support the needs of at risk students. The school component of the team consists of two guidance counselors, the school nurse, school psychologist, two teachers and an assistant principal. Other team members include the school outreach worker, two youth services social workers, youth officer, truant officer, a private marriage and family therapist, and other services provided by the Bristol Police Department. Additional support services that incorporate both internal school resources and community resources include: the COVE bereavement group, the Positive Self Image Class, the school resource officer, and the Hispanic outreach worker.

The staff at Bristol Central High School makes an obvious and caring effort to personalize each student's educational experience. Guidance counselors meet at least twice a year with each student. The five counselors and a guidance director serve 1,450 students with a staff to student ratio of 1:320, exceeding the American Guidance Association's recommended standard of 300 to 1 and impacting the amount of contact time with each student. Similarly, the nurse to student ratio of 1:1,450 exceeds the standard of 1:750, and needs to be evaluated to assure that sufficient health services are provided to students.

The BCHS Library Media Center is understaffed with one full-time, certified library media specialist and one secretary. State guidelines recommend that a school with over 400 students have at least one LMS. The population of the school is approaching 1,500 and evidence supports the difficulty in scheduling classes and addressing the needs of independent study students simultaneously throughout the school day. Interviews with faculty members, parents, and students support the need for access to the library media center before and after school.

Additional LMC staffing would address these concerns and help make the LMC an even more vibrant resource for students and staff.

BCHS is a well-maintained and modern facility providing adequate space for instructional and administrative needs. Although an extensive renovation was completed in 2001, there are some facility needs that still must be addressed, including but not limited to inconsistent heating, cooling, and ventilation throughout the building and inadequate hot water in the family and consumer science area and the athletic locker rooms.

There are not adequate and dependable sources of revenue to provide and to maintain appropriate school programs, personnel, services, equipment, technological support, materials, and supplies to support student learning at BCHS. When compared to schools in its educational reference group (ERG H) and to the state, Bristol's per-pupil expenditure is approximately \$1,500 per pupil behind. There is insufficient staffing in guidance, library media services, and in nursing. Also, with the additional sixth teaching assignment, BCHS teachers have increasing student loads, and time for collaboration and professional discourse have been compromised. Despite years of insufficient funding, however, teachers remain positive. For the school's mission and expectations for student learning to be realized for each and every student, however, additional funding for staffing and programs must be provided.

## **SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Bristol, the Mum City, sits on 26.5 square miles of land and is located in Hartford County, 17 miles southwest of Hartford. It can be easily accessed by routes 6, 69, 72 and Interstate 84 (Exits 31 and 33).

Bristol has a population of 60,062 (2000), which makes it the ninth largest city in the state.

There has been a net loss of 578 people since 1990. Broken down, the population of Bristol is 92.4% white, 3.8% Hispanic, 2.5% Black, 1.2% Asian American, and .0015% Native American.

The median age is 36.

There are 23,747 households in Bristol. In 2001-2002, Bristol had 7.3% of its students come from non-English speaking households. This is a 1.1% increase since 1998.

The top employers are the Bristol Hospital, Theis Precision Steel, Barnes Group, Bristol Press, Cigna, ESPN, Ingersoll-Rand, and Rowley Spring. Home Depot and Walmart are two recent additions to the business sector. Screw and CNC machinery, tool making, wire EDM, specialty metal suppliers, and metal finishing are a big part of the work landscape.

Bristol has a labor force of 31,381 of whom 1,319 are unemployed resulting in a 4.2% unemployment rate (August 2002). This is slightly higher than the Hartford area's rate of 4.0%.

The city has a mayor and city council form of government. Frank Nicastro served as Mayor from 1993-2003. Gerard Couture was elected in November, 2003.



Bristol is lucky to have 750 acres of park, most notably, Page Park, Rockwell Park, and Muzzy Field. The park department sponsors numerous activities throughout the year for young and old alike including year round swimming at Malone Aquatic Center and free summer concerts at the Gazebo in Rockwell Park. Muzzy Field plays host to many regional baseball tournaments in the summer as well as football and soccer in the fall.

Other cultural opportunities include the Carousel Museum, the Clock Museum, The Bristol Symphony Orchestra, and Lake Compounce, the oldest amusement park in the USA. The Giamatti Baseball Center is the eastern regional center for Little League Baseball. The city also sponsors an annual Bristol Pride Day (at Lake Compounce) and “Balloons over Bristol” in the spring and an annual chrysanthemum festival in the fall.

The Bristol School District has 9,046 students in PK-12 as of October 1, 2003. This is an increase of 5.8% over the last five years. The race/ethnicity of the school district is 81.1% White, 9.8% Hispanic, 6.7% Black, 2.2% Asian American, 0.3% Native American. Projected enrollment for 2006 is 8,513.

The city of Bristol allocated \$42,288,430 or 56.55% of its budget to education ('02 – '03). This is an increase of \$2,784,209 or 6.42% from the previous school year ('01-'02).

The Bristol School district is in the “H” Education Reference Group (ERG). The ERG is a classification of districts whose students’ families are similar in education, income, occupation, and need, and that have roughly similar enrollment. The following school districts are in our

ERG:

Ansonia	Bristol
Danbury	Derby
East Hartford	Killingly
Meriden	Middletown
Norwalk	Norwich
Putnam	Stamford
West Haven	Norwich Free Academy

Bristol has 15 public schools. There are two 9-12 high schools, three 6-8 middle schools, and 10 K-5 neighborhood elementary schools. There are also a 9-12 Catholic high school, a 6-8 Catholic middle school, and five K-8 religious elementary schools.

Approximately 140 high school students in Bristol attend schools other than the Bristol Public Schools. There are 103 Bristol students at St. Paul Catholic High School. The remainder are at other schools including Kingswood/Oxford, E.C. Goodwin Tech, Southington High School Vo/Ag, and students being home schooled.

On the high school level, Bristol allocates \$7,103 per pupil (2002-2003). This is a decrease of 5.1% from the previous year. Allocation for the ERG is \$8,928 while the state's average is \$8,899.

### **The School**

Bristol Central High School has been in existence since 1959. In 1967, it was relocated to the western part of Bristol. Over the past five years, Bristol Central has undergone major renovations ranging from upgrading athletic fields and classrooms to equipping total

technological access within the school. All rooms will have TV monitors and computers with Internet access by 2004.

Bristol Central's moto is "Eruditio Diligentia Est", or "Learning Is Our Focus". The theme of the school is "Think Central, Talk Central, Be Central". The school's mission statement is: *The mission of Bristol Central High School is to encourage students to achieve their maximum learning potential and to develop their self worth in a safe environment.* Together they represent the positive direction Central is going in and the sense of pride for both staff and students.

Bristol Central has clearly defined its expectations for its students.

1. Students will read critically.
2. Students will write effectively.
3. Students will use basic logic to analyze and solve problems.
4. Students will communicate effectively in a variety of media.
5. Students will use both tangible and conceptual tools to complete work.
6. Students will acquire, organize, and utilize information.
7. Students will interact with others and work collaboratively as positive, contributing members of society.
8. Students will behave responsibly in both personal and community life.
9. Students will recognize, respect, and appreciate variety in culture and the arts.

Bristol Central has an enrollment of 1,443 as of October 1, 2003 in grades 9-12. This is a 22.3% increase in the past five years. The Bristol Central population is broken down into the following ethnic groups:

	2001-2002	October 1, 2003
White	85.2%	83.1%
Hispanic	8.1%	10.2%
Black	5%	5.1%
Asian American	1.2%	1.1%
American Indian	0.4%	0.2%

In addition to English, there are 11 primary languages spoken at Bristol Central where 9.7% of the student population speak the following languages:

Spanish	84
Polish	24
Albanian	17
French	3
Vietnamese	3
Greek	2
Arabic	1
Chinese	1
German	1
Swedish	1
Turkish	1

All rooms at Bristol Central are wired for video, voice, and Internet access. This is compared to 59% in our ERG and 78% on the state level.

The 2003-2004 staff has 103 certified teachers including six guidance counselors and 13 special education personnel, 1 school psychologist, 1 library media specialist, 8 secretaries, 11 custodians, 23 support staff members including two outreach workers, 1 youth police officer and 12 cafeteria workers. 6.4% of the staff are individuals belonging to a minority, an increase of 5.4% over the past five years.

Bristol Central teachers average 18.2 years of experience compared to 16.1 in their ERG and 14.5 statewide, 83.5% of the staff has a master's degrees or above, in comparison to 79% in ERG H and 76% in the state. Bristol Central has had five Bristol Teachers of the Year, three of whom are currently on staff. This is indicative of the experienced and dedicated staff at Central.

At Bristol Central, 16.5% of the staff has been trained as mentors, assessors, or cooperating teachers, in comparison to 23.2% in our ERG and 23.5% in the state.

The average class size at Central is 19 in 2003-2004. The average teacher/student ratio is 1:42.

By department:

Art	1:84.6
Business	1:96.2
English	1:119.8
Family & Cons. Sci.	1:95
Math	1:121.5
Music	1:168.5
Physical Ed/Health	1:154.2
Science	1:114.7
Social Studies	1:119.5
Special Ed.	1:50.7
Tech Ed.	1:90.2
World Language	1:113.7

Central is on an A/B Block schedule with 84 minute periods in a 4 period day. Central provides 1,008 hours of instruction per year or 5.6 hours a day.

At Central the freshmen are grouped into 4 teams. Teachers from English, social studies, science and math make up the team. The teams' names are Discovery, Endeavor, Nobel, and Quest. On the sophomore level, the English and social studies are linked in American Humanities.

Freshmen team teachers have a common planning time. The American Humanities teachers on the sophomore level have also been allotted planning time. Courses for all grades are usually divided into three levels: general, academic, accelerated. There are also nine advanced placement courses offered.

Central gets its students from two of the three public middle schools in Bristol as well as six non-public elementary/middle schools. Central also participates in Project Choice, receiving five students to the school from Hartford.

Bristol Central has an all-encompassing approach in dealing with student problems. Whether these problems are academic, attendance, social, and/or emotional, Bristol Central has an action plan to address these concerns.

The average daily attendance rate is 92.1%. Bristol Central has an accountability standard of 95%. Separate from the school's accountability standard, each student's minimum attendance goal is 95%. Each student is looked at individually for assessment in order to help them achieve their personal goal. Part of this action plan starts by identifying students with attendance problems in the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade. Prior to their arrival as freshmen at Central, these students and their parents have been contacted by Central's administration either by letter or parent, student, administrator conference regarding the importance of attendance. In school year 2001-2002, 35 such conferences were held during the summer, and the following summer of school year 2002-2003, 42 such conferences were held. This has resulted in an overall increase in attendance and will continue to positively affect both the achievement of the students' personal goals and the school's accountability standard of 95%.

Academic, social, and emotional student problems are addressed in a number of positive ways. Perhaps the umbrella organization for helping students is the BCHS Student Assistance Team. Students are referred to the SAT by teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, parents, peers, and self-referrals. The SAT is comprised of a special education teacher, regular teacher, a guidance counselor, an administrator, school nurse, school psychologist, school outreach worker, the city truant officer, and representatives from the Bristol City/School community such as the social workers from the Bristol Police Department, the Wheeler Clinic and Bristol Youth

Services. Situations are discussed and individual action plans are drawn up in order to best assist the students in whatever is of concern. The SAT is an extremely visible example of the exceptional teamwork, liaison, and cooperation between school and community.

Central's dropout rate is 2.3%, the ERG is 3.4% and the state's is 3.0%. This represents an overall decrease of 1.5% from the previous year, or a 40% reduction in the number of student dropouts. In continuing to address the dropout situation, a spin-off program from the attendance action plan and the SAT, called the next educational transition program (NET), has been established and addresses "at risk" freshmen students. Also, the BCHS Alternative Special Education Program (ASEP) is available. This program is for students with severe emotional and/or behavioral problems.

Central graduated 90.6% of the class of 2002. In order to graduate, one must receive 26.25 credits. The following courses must be passed:

- English – 4 credits
- Math – 3 credits
- Social Studies – 3 credits including 1.0 in U.S. History and .5 in Civics
- Science – 2 credits
- Physical Education – 2 credits
- Health - .25 credits
- Vocation/Fine Arts – 1 credit

The recent renovation of the high school included building a new state-of-the-art library media center. The new facility provides for a computer lab for class visits, 21 research stations, and an English Reference Room. This center provides access to over 14,000 books, videotapes, and other necessary resources for the school learning community.

At Central, 73.1% of the class of 2001 took the SATs. This is in comparison to 69.9% in the ERG and 77.6% in the state. The 73.1% is an 8.7% participation increase since 1996.

Test	School	ERG	State
Math: avg. score	478	480	503
Math: scoring 600 or more	13.6	16.1	22.1
Verbal: avg. score	496	480	502
Verbal: scoring 600 or more	13.6	14.5	20.5

At Central, action plans are in place to help students raise their scores. Guidance counselors have 25 CDs of SAT Diagnostic Prep Class which are available to any student. An SAT Prep class is available at the Adult Learning Center. Also, a math consultant has been hired to help re-write the math curriculum. In 2002, Central administered the ACT PLAN test to all sophomores. The ACT PLAN is a pre-ACT test specifically designed to measure the achievement of a student against a nationally standardized 10<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. The test was not administered in 2003 due to budget constraints. The PSAT test was given to all juniors at no cost and to any sophomores who wanted to take it. This does give the students experience in taking the SATs, identifies points of concern, and may raise scores.

The 2002 CAPT results are as follows:

<u>Central Avg.</u>	<u>State Avg.</u>	<u>Central</u> <u>% (at goal)</u>	<u>ERG</u> <u>% (at goal)</u>	<u>State</u> <u>% (at goal)</u>
Math Score: 244.2	250.3	33	33.7	44.1
Science: 241.8	249.0	33.5	33.3	43.2
Reading Across the Disciplines: 248.1	250.7	43.3	36.0	44.8
Writing Across the Disciplines: 243.2	248.1	47.1	42.3	51.0



It should be noted that 373 sophomores took the CAPT test. 16.5% or 58 students passed all four tests and will be designated as CAPT Scholars.

Central has rearranged class schedules during the CAPT testing to encourage more juniors to retake the test. 9.4% of the 138 who took the math test passed; 8.6% of 139 passed the science; 17.4% of the 138 who took the reading portion passed; and 17.8% of the 107 who took the writing portion passed. To further prepare the the CAPT, freshmen classes are given a version of the CAPT test. This helps identify where students need to improve in order to pass the CAPT. Starting with the class of 2006, Bristol Central will administer its own writing proficiency test to those who fail the CAPT version. It will be a requirement for graduation. The class of 2007 must also meet the district's performance standard in math. Also, this rearranged class schedule allows the advanced placement classes time to review for their upcoming exams.

Central offers nine advanced placement courses: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, U.S. History, American Government and Politics, English Literature and Writing, Calculus, Music Theory, Spanish. 17.3% of the class of 2001 participated in the AP program. The ERG had 13.2% and the state, 16.3%. 63.1% of the students enrolled scored 3 or more compared to 61.2% in ERG H and 70.5% in the state.

At Central, there are 1.3% or 19 students enrolled in the ESL program. The special education department serves 12.7% or 180 students. The Gifted and Talented program has 10.2% or 144 students.

In the Class of 2003, 53% went on to a four-year college, 20% to a two-year college, 7% to vocational or certificate programs, 2% to the military, 15% to employment, and 2% to other.

The parents of Central students are encouraged to participate in their child's school. There are opportunities to join athletic booster clubs and a performing arts booster club, as well as monthly parent meetings. Central's administration sends parents a Monthly Principal's Newsletter, providing any new and general information, such as upcoming events, and anything that has an effect on students such as commendations, honor roll achievements, as changes in staff or procedures is communicated to the parents via telephone or by letter.

In order to help the students at Central keep organized, a planner book is provided to all. The planner is simple, easy to use, and includes the following attributes: yearly calendar, weekly calendar, organized space to write in a variety of assignments, extra space for adding notes, comments, etc., a section for addresses and telephone numbers. It is hoped that the students will develop a successful and organized lifestyle through the use of this planner.

Central is partnered with many industries in Bristol. Among those active partners are Gold's Gym, GT Graphics, Hartford Insurance Co., and Bristol Hospital. Central students are also encouraged to participate in the job-shadowing program arranged by the career counselor. The BCHS Guidance Department cooperates with the department of defense in providing the opportunity for the administration of the ASVAB Test. The results of this test help guide students towards careers in the military or options for two-year and four-year colleges along with other possible suitable careers.

Central has an active mentor program for some of its students. There are currently 36 mentors assigned to Bristol Central students of which 15 are teachers. The students can request a mentor or they may be chosen to receive a mentor by their teachers. Central has a police officer and project outreach supervisor to help the needs of the student body.

Bristol Central has many co-curricular activities available to its students.

Language Clubs: Foreign Culture, French National Honor Society, Italian National Honor Society, Latin, and Spanish.

Vocational Education Clubs: DECA, FBLA, FCCLA, Vocation Honor Society

Special Interest Clubs: Amnesty International, Animal Welfare, Animee, Art, Band and Jazz Band, Bell City, Bible Club, Bristol Youth Chamber of Commerce, Cheerleaders, Chorus (Madrigal Singers, Production Company), Conn. Youth Forum, Dance Team, Debate Team, Fish and Game, Footlights, Garden Club, Gear Heads, Interact, Internet, Math League, Multicultural, National Art Honor Society, National Honor Society, Peer Mediators, The RamPage, SADD, Science National Honor Society, Signatures, Ski, STRIVE, Student Book Club, Student Council, Torch (Yearbook), and YES.

Central is a member of the southern division of Central Connecticut Athletic Conference. It offers an opportunity for its students to participate in athletics throughout the year. In the fall, boys can participate in football, cross country, and soccer; the girls have cross country, soccer, swimming, and volleyball. In the winter, the boys have basketball, indoor track, wrestling, and swimming; the girls have basketball and indoor track. In the spring, the boys have baseball, track & field, tennis, and golf; the girls have softball, track & field, and tennis.

Central culminates its year with its annual BCHS Awards Night. A total of 90 seniors received 56 scholarships. Also, Central awarded the McMaster-Moulthrop Foundation Scholarships to 49 seniors. Examples of other awards are: DAR, Boys State, Girls State, Scholar-Athletes, Phi Beta Kappa, Harvard Book, Fairfield Book, Trinity Book, St. Joseph Book, Mount Holyoke Book, Boston College Book, Bausch & Lomb Science Medal, Hugh O'Brien Youth Award, English Achievement, Social Studies Achievement, World Language Awards, Latin Achievement Awards, Vocational/Technical Awards, Science Awards, American Math Medal, Freshmen Team Awards, and Art Awards.

# **BRISTOL CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Bristol Central High School is to encourage students to achieve their maximum learning potential and to develop their self worth in a safe environment.

## **Expectations for Student Learning**

1. Students will read critically.
2. Students will write effectively.
3. Students will use basic logic to analyze and solve problems.
4. Students will communicate effectively in a variety of media.
5. Students will use both tangible and conceptual tools to complete work.
6. Students will acquire, organize, and utilize information.
7. Students will interact with others and work collaboratively as positive, contributing members of society.
8. Students will behave responsibly in both personal and community life.
9. Students will recognize, respect, and appreciate variety in culture and the arts.

**COMMISSION ON  
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**STANDARDS**

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**MISSION AND EXPECTATIONS  
FOR STUDENT LEARNING**

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**CURRICULUM**

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**INSTRUCTION**

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**ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT  
LEARNING**

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## TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARD

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# 1

## MISSION AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

1. The school's mission statement shall represent the school community's fundamental values and beliefs about student learning and the purpose of the school and be consistent with the district's mission statement.
2. The school shall have established expectations for student learning that:
  - reflect the school's mission statement;
  - identify high expectations for all students in academic, civic, and social areas; specifically state what all students should know and be able to do by the time they graduate from the school taking into account the skills, competencies, concepts, and understandings identified by district, state, and national standards and by professional organizations.
3. The mission statement and expectations for student learning shall be developed by the school community and approved and supported by the faculty, the school board, and any other school-wide governing organization.
4. The school shall utilize a variety of data to regularly review the mission statement and expectations for student learning to assure that they reflect student needs, community expectations, the district mission, and state standards.

5. There shall be a separate document developed by the faculty that defines the school's academic expectations for student learning in specific, measurable ways, describes specific levels of performance, and indicates which level is the indicator of successful accomplishment.
  
6. The mission statement and expectations for student learning shall guide the procedures, policies, and decisions of the school and shall be evident in the culture of the school.



## **CONCLUSIONS**

The mission statement and expectations for student learning was developed by the school community and approved and supported by the faculty and the school board. Bristol Central High School began the process of developing its current mission statement and expectations for student learning in May 2001 when a volunteer committee of teachers was organized to evaluate the existing mission statement and to create a more succinct document. In August 2001, the present NEASC committee, represented by teachers from all disciplines was formed. In September, a working draft was presented to the student council and parent advisory group for further input. In addition, faculty meetings were devoted to the discussion, review, and revision of the document. The mission and expectations for student learning was approved by the faculty on November 6, 2001 and by the board of education on February 6, 2002. (self-study, teachers, parents, students)

Bristol Central High School's mission statement represents the school community's fundamental values and beliefs about student learning, including student achievement to reach their maximum potential, the development of self-worth, and the establishment of a safe learning environment. In addition, the school's mission statement is aligned with the district's mission statement which is to educate all students to their full potential. Because it is a clear, concise, and an easily understood document reflective of the community's values, it provides a purpose and direction for the school. (parents, teachers, school board, NEASC self-study)

Nine expectations for student learning reflective of the school's mission statement have been developed and include such goals as reading critically, writing effectively and using basic logic.

These expectations incorporate academic, civic, and social goals and reflect high expectations for all students. The expectations state specifically what students should know and be able to do by the time they graduate. In addition, these expectations have been developed with attention to skills and competencies identified by state and national standards and by professional organizations. With these expectations in place, the school has clearly stated goals that each student must attain prior to graduation. (self-study, teachers, school board)

Bristol Central uses data from a variety of standardized tests to guide the assessment of the effectiveness of the school's curriculum and instruction as part of an informal review of the mission statement and expectations for student learning. Civic and social behaviors are also monitored informally through student participation in clubs and community service projects and the students' attendance and behavior records. The school has not yet developed a formal process to review the mission statement annually to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the school community. Creating a formal review process will ensure that the mission statement and expectations will remain a valuable and relevant document. (self-study, teachers, parents)

The document, School Wide Rubrics for Student Expectations, was written by subject area department members in conjunction with the mission statement committee. The document defines each of the school's academic expectations, describes specific levels of performance, and indicates the level required for successful accomplishment. When implemented, the School Wide Rubrics for Student Expectations will be an important instrument to measure individual student and school-wide performance in meeting expectations for student learning. (teachers, school board, teachers, student)

The mission and expectations for student learning guide the procedures, policies, and decisions of the school and are evident in the culture of the school. The Principal's Newsletter, student agenda booklets, program of studies, and a student/parent handbook prominently display the mission and student expectations for learning. Additionally, the mission statement and student expectations for learning are visible throughout all classrooms, in the hallways, and in the front entrance. Teachers have reviewed the document with each of their classes and the principal has discussed the mission and expectations with students at each of the grade level meetings. Students are familiar with the themes of the document and can cite them when asked. The basic climate of the school reflects the values and beliefs of the mission statement. Mutual respect and friendliness between students and staff is apparent. The students and faculty consistently comment on a feeling of safety and pride in the school. Furthermore, the mission and expectations has led to policy changes such as elimination of the general track in the ninth grade. The leadership, staff and students at BCHS embody the mission and expectation. (teachers, school board, classroom observation, students, self-study, central office administrators)

## **COMMENDATIONS**

1. The clear and concise nature of the mission statement and expectations for student learning
2. The visibility and general knowledge of the mission statement and the expectations for student learning by staff and students
3. The pervasiveness of the mission and expectation for student learning in the culture of the school

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. Develop a process involving all components of the educational community to regularly review the mission statement and student expectations

## TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARD

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# 2

## CURRICULUM

The curriculum, which includes coursework, co-curricular activities, and other educational experiences as described in the program of studies, is the school's formal plan to fulfill its mission statement and expectations for student learning. The curriculum links what the school believes and expects students to learn to its instructional practices. The strength of that link is dependent upon staff commitment to and involvement in a dynamic process of review, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum based on the school's expectations for student learning.

1. From the document that defines the school's academic expectations, each curriculum area shall identify those expectations for student learning for which it is responsible and shall have clearly articulated learning standards in support of such expectations.
2. Written curriculum documents shall be aligned with the school's expectations for student learning and shall guide content, instruction, and assessment.
3. The curriculum plan shall ensure that all students have sufficient opportunity to practice and achieve each of the school's academic expectations for student learning.
4. The content of the curriculum shall be intellectually rigorous and provide opportunities for the authentic application of knowledge and skills.

5. The curriculum shall be appropriately integrated and shall emphasize depth of understanding over breadth of coverage.
6. The school shall provide opportunities to extend student learning beyond the normal course offerings and the school campus.
7. There shall be effective curricular coordination and articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district to insure the expectations for student learning are being addressed.
8. Instructional materials, technology, equipment and supplies, and staffing shall be sufficient to allow for the implementation of the curriculum.
9. There shall be ongoing review and evaluation of the curriculum that takes into account the assessments of student performance in achieving the school's academic expectations for student learning.
10. The school shall commit sufficient time, financial resources, and personnel to the review and evaluation of curriculum.
11. The professional staff shall be actively involved in the development and revision of the curriculum.
12. Professional development activities shall support the development and implementation of the curriculum.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

At Bristol Central High School, nine expectations for student learning have been identified. All curriculum areas have assumed responsibility for each of those expectations and have developed learning standards to support each expectation. The recent district initiative that all students will write effectively in all disciplines, including physical education, is reflective of the school's and the district's commitment to the expectations. With departmental, teacher, and school commitment to these expectations, student learning is positively impacted. (self-study, teachers, leadership team)

Written curriculum at Bristol Central High School has been aligned with the academic expectations for student learning. The curricula show connections between specific course content and stated expectations for student learning. The five-year curriculum revision sequence is in place. Mathematics, English as a second language, technology, music (K-12), and art (K-12) have been completed in the suggested time frame with other departments scheduled to be rewritten within the five-year cycle. When all department curricula are complete, these guides will include current instructional strategies and assessment methods and will be helpful in providing for a more comprehensive and cohesive instructional program. Students will then be better able to meet the academic expectations for student learning. (self-study, teachers, leadership team)

The curriculum plan provides sufficient opportunities for all students to practice and achieve each of the school's academic expectations for student learning. The district literacy program involves all disciplines and grade levels. In ninth grade, team-teaching, the elimination of the general level track, and the establishment of foundation courses in English and math for

struggling students support the mission statement and expectations for student learning. The humanities program that combines social studies and English curricula in grades ten and eleven also provide opportunities for students to achieve the academic expectations. In the core areas of math, science, English, and social studies, students in grades ten, eleven, and twelve have four levels: general, academic, accelerated, and advanced placement. Plans for the future include the elimination of the general track in grades ten, eleven, and twelve by 2007. Students may choose electives which best match their individual talents and interests. Special needs students are included in the regular education program when appropriate. Learning centers, summer school programs, student study teams, and extra help are available to assist students in meeting the academic expectations of student learning. By providing students with opportunities to practice and achieve the academic expectations, the school enhances students' learning. (self-study, teachers, students, parents, leadership team)

Bristol Central High School provides an intellectually rigorous curriculum in select areas. Nine advanced placement courses are offered in the following subjects: English, Calculus, Music Theory, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, American Government, and Spanish. In addition, college cooperative courses with The University of Connecticut and Tunxis Community College are also offered. Some opportunities for authentic application of knowledge and skills are provided, including e-pal correspondence with European students, a school newspaper and literary magazine, participation in an on-site nursery school, and the running of a school store. However, academic rigor is not evident in all curricular areas. In classes and in the curriculum, students are not consistently challenged to think critically and are not provided sufficient opportunities for authentic application of knowledge and skills. With a more intellectually



rigorous curriculum, students will be better able to maximize their learning potential and be better prepared to meet challenges outside of school. (teachers, students, parents, classroom observations)

BCHS shows integration and depth of understanding over breadth in some elements of its curriculum. Integration is evident within the practices of the ninth grade teams and in the tenth and eleventh grade humanities program but is not specified in other programs and courses. Longer class periods in the block schedule provide opportunities to emphasize depth of understanding over breadth of coverage and are used effectively by some teachers. Simulations, debates, and research activities are used in some departments to foster a deeper understanding of the curriculum. Such activities, however, are not pervasive throughout the curriculum and are not embedded in instructional practices. With a more fully integrated curriculum that emphasizes depth over breadth, student learning and analytic processes involving problem-solving will be enhanced, and students will be more successful in meeting the expectations for student learning. (teachers, students, self-study team)

BCHS provides opportunities to extend student learning beyond the normal course offerings and the school campus. Several programs in place include internships with local businesses, work study, a Choate Summer Scholars program for talented science and math students, travel abroad opportunities, and the UCONN mini-medical program, which provides an intensive seminar program and series of lectures provided by medical school faculty. In addition, the Principal's Seminar meets before the start of the school day to encourage and assist students in participating in service projects to the school and community. Such opportunities help students in applying

what they learn and becoming active members of the community as well as meeting each of the expectations for student learning. (principal, students, parents, self-study)

BCHS has limited coordination and articulation between and among academic areas and sending schools. Parents cite inconsistencies in math placements by the two middle schools as an example of such limited coordination. In the past four years, there has been a high turnover in the central office staff, resulting in lack of continuity, poor communication, and some misunderstanding about the format of curriculum writing and the strategic plan for the revision and development of curriculum. The new director of teaching and learning is eager to improve the communication between schools with an emphasis on K-12 curricular coordination and articulation. Ninth grade team meetings, a monthly meeting with team leaders and administrators, and a weekly meeting are sometimes used to address coordination issues have not been sufficient. With a renewed emphasis on curriculum coordination and articulation throughout the district, curricular material will be more logically developed, and students will be better prepared to learn at every step of the way and better able to meet the expectations for student learning. (self study, teachers, central office)

Bristol Central High School's instructional materials, technology, equipment and supplies, and staffing are not sufficient to allow complete implementation of the curriculum. Insufficient staffing in select areas including guidance and library media services, incomplete installation of the new computer stations, and a shortage of copy equipment impact the ability of the teachers to fully implement the curriculum. Because of cutbacks in staffing in the business, science, and art departments the number of elective courses offered to students has been significantly reduced.

In addition, there is only one library media specialist who serves a school population of approximately 1,500. Although the creative efforts and initiatives of the staff to minimize such shortcomings are praiseworthy, the allocation of sufficient funds is needed for the curriculum to be fully implemented. (teachers, self-study, parents, board of education)

Bristol Central High School has a five-year cycle for curricular evaluation and revision. Some of the departments' curricula have been revised and are up to date; others are pending in the cycle rotation. Much of the curriculum revision is driven by standardized testing scores and national mandates such the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The school is currently developing a technology network to help guide the collection and analysis of student performance indicators. When complete, administrators and faculty members will have an accountability plan to measure the degree to which the school's own expectations for student learning are met and what curricular and instructional changes are needed to improve student performance in meeting the expectations for learning. (self study, teachers, leadership team)

Bristol Central High School commits time, has financial resources, and commits personnel to review and evaluate curriculum. Time for curriculum development includes: staff development days, Tuesday after-school meeting times, and release time during the school year, and summer vacation time used for such work is compensated. The curriculum planning council, the office of teaching and learning, and the 6-12 curriculum coordinators help guide the efforts. In the school itself, a University of Hartford math consultant was hired to help with revision of the math curriculum. Although BCHS has devoted time, financial resources, and personnel to curriculum

review, additional school-based systems need to be developed and implemented so that curriculum is better informed by classroom assessments and is actively used by a greater number of professional staff. With greater input and a more substantive review of curriculum, the documents created will have a greater impact on teaching and student learning. (leadership team, self-study, teachers)

Many of the professional staff members of Bristol Central High School have been involved in the development and revision of curriculum. However, the bulk of this task falls to a core group of teachers who volunteer for summer work, run department meetings, and attend professional development seminars. Guidance department members, the library media specialist, and the special education and alternative education staff are not currently involved in this process. Subsequently, not all professional staff are regularly involved in curriculum revision and lack ownership of these documents as a result. (self-study, teachers, coordinators)

There are some professional development activities that support the development and implementation of the curriculum. Three full days of staff development and thirty-four one-hour after-school sessions are provided on numerous topics such as computer technology, curriculum development, and differentiated instruction. Although these sessions are helpful and relevant, little follow-up support occurs beyond the day of the workshop. Administrators and teachers are genuinely interested in ongoing professional development in the area of curriculum, yet no specific focus guides the direction of curriculum work. With a more focused professional development program, more effective curricular development and implementation will take place, and learning will be positively impacted. (teachers, self-study, leadership team)

## **COMMENDATIONS**

1. District-wide writing initiative across all disciplines that support the mission and expectations for student learning.
2. The team teaching approach for ninth grade that supports interdisciplinary opportunities for students.
3. Genuine and overt interest in curriculum development by the administration and staff
4. Interdisciplinary humanities program in grades 10 and 11
5. Tech-prep program and partnerships with several institutions of higher education
6. Hiring of math consultant to assist with math curriculum revision

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Develop and implement a strategic plan and standard format for curriculum development and revision
2. Ensure a rigorous curriculum for all disciplines with an emphasis on depth of understanding over breadth of coverage
3. Provide coordination and articulation between and among academic disciplines and sending schools
4. Complete the five-year plan for the development and revision of curricula in all subject areas and ensure alignment with state frameworks as well as with the school's mission and expectations for learning
5. Expand the number of professional staff members involved in the development and revision of curriculum
6. Provide the necessary resources and funding to fully develop and implement the curriculum

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARD**

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### **I**NSTRUCTIO**N**

The quality of instruction in a school is the single most important factor affecting the quality of student learning and is the link between curriculum, learning expectations, and student performance. Instructional practice must be grounded in the school's mission and expectations for student learning, supported by research in best practice, and refined and improved based on identified student needs. Consequently, teachers are expected to be reflective about their instructional practices and participate in professional dialogue with their colleagues about instruction and student learning.

1. Instructional strategies and practices shall be consistent with the school's stated mission and expectations for student learning.
2. Instructional strategies shall include practices that personalize instruction, make connections across disciplines, engage students as active self-directed learners, involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding, and provide opportunities to demonstrate the application of knowledge or learning.
3. Teachers shall provide formal and informal opportunities for students to assess their own learning.

4. Teachers shall use feedback from a variety of sources such as other teachers, students, supervisors, and parents as a means of improving instruction.
5. Teachers shall be knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches and reflective about their own practice.
6. Discussion of instructional strategies, practices, and student work shall be a significant part of the professional culture of the school.
7. Adequate time and financial resources shall be committed to ensuring the continuous improvement of instruction.
8. Technology shall be utilized to support instruction and to improve student learning.
9. The school's professional development programs shall provide opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional practices and be guided by identified instructional needs.
10. Teacher supervision and evaluation processes shall be used to improve instruction for the purpose of improving student learning

## CONCLUSIONS

Many of the instructional strategies and practices at Bristol Central High School are consistent with the school's stated mission and expectations. There are numerous examples of writing across the curriculum ranging from classes in physical education and the arts and humanities to classes in the core curriculum. It is also evident that there is effective communication among staff, administration, and students in the building through the use of the television, newspapers, verbal announcements, and school productions. Higher order thinking skills are also present in some classroom activities. Several teachers engage their students in performance-based assessments and practical application of knowledge. However, in some classrooms students were not truly engaged in activities that required them to read critically, write effectively, or to use basic logic to analyze and solve problems. Although BCHS has made a concerted effort to integrate the mission and expectations into its instructional practices, this is not done on a consistent basis throughout the school. (parents, self-study, teachers, student work, students, panel presentation, and classroom observations)

Currently teachers teach three classes daily in an A/B block schedule. Efforts to engage students as active self-directed learners and to personalize instruction can be observed. However, considering the number of students assigned to each teacher in six teaching assignments, teachers express concern that it is very difficult to monitor each student individually so that students may maximize their learning potential as stated in the school's mission. Many teachers initiate connections across the disciplines, and interdisciplinary work occurs in several departments. The humanities program combines English, history and the arts, and world languages classes incorporate culture, art, history, and music. However, creating connections across disciplines is



impeded by the lack of common planning time, especially in the upper grades. Some teachers do engage students in higher order thinking skills through a variety of activities ranging from labs to classroom discussions, and some teachers also provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge through hands-on activities, performance-based assessments, cooperative learning, and written self-assessments. Although these instructional strategies and activities may take place in some classrooms, they are not consistently utilized in all classes, thereby impacting some students' ability to maximize the mission and expectations for learning. (teachers, students, self-study, student work, parents, classroom observation, student work)

There are some formal and informal opportunities for students to self-assess their own learning and evaluate one another as peers. In several classes, students are provided opportunities to assess their work as well as the work of others, but these practices are inconsistent. With an emphasis on self-assessment in all disciplines, students will be better able to become self-motivated and better achieve their maximum learning potential as stated in the school's mission. (student shadowing, classroom observations, student work, teachers, self-study)

Teachers use a variety of feedback from peers, students, and supervisors to evaluate and improve instruction. Formal evaluation of teachers by administrators occurs according to district policy. The New Teacher Academy and BEST portfolio training are additional opportunities for teachers new to the profession to receive feedback to improve instructional practices. New teachers are also assigned a mentor in the department to assist them in becoming acclimated with school culture and instructional practices. Teachers also use daily student feedback to revise and modify instruction as they monitor and check for understanding. Although there is no evidence

of a formal forum or instrument to obtain parent feedback about instructional strategies, teachers are receptive to receiving feedback from a variety of sources, and actively modify instruction accordingly. (teachers, parents, students, leadership team, self-study)

Several sources of current research are available to teachers at BCHS in departments and in the library. The administration also provides research-based literature about instruction. To keep current, teachers partake in informal conversations during lunch, participate in the Dine and Discuss program, and attend district-wide professional development programs. Despite these efforts, teachers overwhelmingly express a strong desire for ongoing opportunities to expand and enhance their knowledge of instruction. (teacher interviews, meetings with teachers, self-study, student work)

There is a variety of opportunities provided for teachers in the BCHS community to discuss both instructional strategies and student work. Teachers have monthly department meetings in which they are able to evaluate current instructional practices. Teachers who are members of the freshmen teams or sophomore humanities teams are provided with common planning periods to dialogue about student work, instructional techniques, and student performance. Many departments have a common lunch period during which impromptu conversations about instruction occur. Teachers also stay after school, use planning time, or meet between classes to have informal peer discussions about instructional methods. However, while many teachers make opportunities to engage in dialogue about instruction and student work, it is not a significant and ongoing part of the school culture. (self-study, teachers, teacher meetings)

Time and financial constraints make continuous improvement of instruction a challenge at BCHS. With faculty members teaching three out of the four class periods, there is little time for ongoing collaboration, peer observation, or in-service training. Although district policy limits the number of teachers out of the district on any given day, the principal has found ways to honor most, if not all, teacher requests for off-site training. Individual teachers are provided \$200 per year to use for professional enhancement. Many faculty members expressed the desire to allocate such funds to building management where an instructional improvement team might have the flexibility to appropriately designate funds for continuous improvement of instruction. (self-study, teachers, parents, meetings with teachers)

The use of technology in support of instruction and as a method of improvement of student learning is improving at BCHS. Current instructional practices utilize graphing calculators, math software packages, the Internet, calculator-based laboratories, computer-aided drafting, CISCO, video technology, and Microsoft XP. However, the teacher use of many of these tools is limited in daily instruction. Both students and teachers express a need for more computers as well as easier and more frequent access to technology. Teachers request BCHS to provide more professional technology training to meet individual and instructional needs. Although there is a technology academy, it does not provide ample training opportunities for all staff members. The current lack of accessible training inhibits the effective use of technology in instructional practices. (self-study, teachers, classroom observations, student shadowing, students, parents, student work)

BCHS provides some opportunities for teachers to engage in professional development.

Teachers are provided three professional development days per year as well as weekly meetings focused on school-wide and departmental needs. Despite a board policy that limits the number of teachers who may leave the district on a given day, the BCHS administration puts a great deal of effort into accommodating teachers' desire to attend offsite professional development activities.

Teachers report that these three staff development sessions are not effective in improving instructional practices. Lack of relevancy to teaching assignments and inadequate follow-up are cited as reasons for little or no impact on instructional practices. A more focused and substantive professional development program devoted to the improvement of instructional practices will help improve the quality of teaching. (teacher meetings, teachers, self-study, central office personnel)

Formal observations are the primary tools used to evaluate and improve instructional strategies so that student learning is enhanced. Formal observations include pre- and post-discussions with administrators. These conferences serve as a venue for teachers to reflect upon and to assess teaching and learning in their classroom. As a result of this reflective and evaluative process, teachers are able to examine their instruction and are better able to evaluate what improvements are needed to maximize student learning. In addition, the BEST portfolio and the New Teachers' Academy are available to teachers new to the profession and can serve to improve instructional practices. The teacher supervision and evaluation processes at BCHS help improve instruction and student learning. (teacher meetings, teachers, self-study, school leadership team)

## **COMMENDATIONS**

1. Frequent informal communication between teachers regarding instructional strategies
2. The interdisciplinary opportunities provided by the freshman and humanities teams
3. The instructional support provided to new teachers in the New Teacher Academy
4. The principal's commitment to professional development opportunities outside the district
5. The receptiveness of teachers to use feedback from a variety of sources to improve instruction

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Institute an ongoing and substantive professional development program to improve and expand instructional practices based on building needs and best practice
2. Ensure that all teachers have the necessary training to use technology to improve student learning
3. Ensure that all teachers use instructional strategies and practices consistent with the mission statement and expectations for student learning
4. Make the discussion of instructional strategies, practices, and student work a significant part of the professional culture of the school
5. Ensure that technology is adequate and accessible to all students and staff
6. Investigate the impact of teaching six classes on student learning and particularly on the ability of students to meet the school's mission and expectations for student learning
7. Provide significantly more flexibility to building leadership for professional development activities devoted to improving instructional practices

## TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARD

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# 4

## ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Its purpose is to inform students regarding their learning progress and teachers regarding ways to adjust their instruction to better respond to the learning needs of students. Further, it communicates the growth and competence of students to parents, school officials, and the public. The results of student learning must be continually discussed and used to develop short-term and long-term strategies for improving curriculum and instruction.

1. Teachers shall base their classroom assessment procedures on clearly stated expectations for student learning.
2. Specific learning criteria based on specific expectations for student learning shall be the basis for grading and reporting.
3. Teachers shall use a variety and range of classroom assessment strategies to determine student knowledge, skills, and competencies and to assess student growth over time.
4. Teachers shall use the results of classroom assessment of student learning to evaluate and revise the curriculum.
5. Teachers shall use the results of classroom assessment of student learning to improve their instructional practices.

6. Teachers shall meet to discuss and share student work and the results of classroom assessment for the purpose of revising the curriculum and instructional strategies.
7. Teachers shall communicate to students and their families how student work and progress are being assessed.
8. The school's professional development programs shall provide opportunities for teachers to develop a broad range of assessment strategies for classroom use.
9. The administration and faculty shall use agreed upon levels of performance, indicators of successful accomplishment, and other data to assess the progress of students in achieving the school's stated academic expectations for student learning and regularly report the findings to the public.
10. The administration and faculty shall use assessment data to determine student success in meeting the school's stated civic and social expectations and regularly report the findings to the public.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Bristol Central High School staff successfully ensures that students are informed of the school's stated expectations for student learning. These expectations are reviewed during September grade level assemblies each year and with parents as well through the distribution of the school handbook and principal's newsletter. The school's learning expectations are prominently posted in each classroom; in addition, some teachers post daily learning objectives in their classrooms. In some departments, the teachers have identified the learning expectations which most specifically apply to their department and tailor their assignments to them. In many classes, individual assignments are distributed to students with cover sheets detailing specific expectations being addressed. Assessments are often aligned with these expectations. Thus, students and their parents have a clear understanding of the expectations for student learning, and, in many cases, teachers ensure that assessment procedures will be aligned with those student expectations. (teachers, parents, student work, survey, self-study)

Specific learning criteria based on specific expectations for student learning are the basis for grading and reporting at Bristol Central High School. Syllabi are distributed at the beginning of all courses outlining the specific learning expectations and assessment criteria for each course. In some departments, department-wide common rubrics have been developed to assess student learning. For particular individual assignments, students are informed of the grading standards and criteria via rubrics, presentations of objectives and explanations, or models. In general, the use of rubrics by individual teachers is part of the school culture. The school-wide rubrics for assessing student learning have been developed but are not as yet fully integrated into all course syllabi or into classroom assessment procedures. Therefore, the criteria for grading and



reporting remain individually-determined rather than reflective of the entire school's mission and expectations for student learning. (student work, teachers, survey, central office administrators, student work, self-study)

A variety of classroom assessment strategies is being used by some teachers at BCHS. There is a combination of both traditional strategies and alternative assessments such as oral reports, Power-Point demonstrations, journals, role-playing, and group projects. Parents and students express concerns that within some classes, the assessments lack diversity and do not accommodate different learning styles. With the exceptions of final exams and math midterms, students report that departmental exams are not standardized. Several departments have begun to use common assessments of student learning, however results are compiled and then reviewed by the department. Although portfolios for some students are stored in the BCHS Guidance Career Center there is no plan in place to use them to measure learning over time or achievement of the academic expectations for student learning. In some departments, portfolios are used as assessment tools. The lack of pervasive use of a wide variety of assessment strategies impacts the school's ability to meet the individual needs of all students. (parents, guidance personnel, teachers, survey, student work, student shadowing, self-study)

State standardized testing has served as a major impetus for curricular change. The results of these tests have caused new topics to be added to the English curriculum, a change in the order of presentation of material in biology and mathematics, and the creation of a new mathematics course based on CAPT-like problems. No direct and formal link between classroom assessment results and curricular revision is evident. Revisions tend to come from external rather than

internal sources, thereby limiting the teachers' ability to shape the curriculum based on student performance in class or on the school's expectations for student learning. (teachers, self-study, meetings with teachers)

In some classes, timetables are adjusted to allow more time for adequate understanding, and these modifications and revisions are made based on student progress. Groups of teachers will often share techniques with each other informally and modify their own instruction based on the experiences of their colleagues. A wide variety of methods such as role-playing, visual aids, and group work is used to monitor comprehension of subject material. Individual teacher and departmental assessments of student learning sometimes drive changes in instructional practices. Teachers, students, and parents disagree about how consistently this accommodation takes place, however. If this were to happen on a more consistent basis, student learning would be maximized. (survey, teachers, parents, self-study, school leadership team, assessment subcommittee)

The staff of Bristol Central High School recognizes the need to discuss and share student work and assessment results to revise curriculum and instructional strategies. There are monthly departmental meetings in which these topics are discussed. The freshman team meets every other day, and the sophomore humanities teachers share common prep time. These are the only times formally set aside for teachers to discuss these issues. Teachers often informally discuss student work and assessments at lunch and during impromptu conversations. Likewise, departments have met sporadically to resolve department-specific problems regarding curriculum and instructional strategies. However, the lack of school-wide common planning time of other

formal opportunities for teacher discussions, or of a consistent climate of collegial sharing of information and results are sources of frustrations for many teachers, and limit collaborative decision-making related to teaching and learning. (assessment subcommittee, school leadership team, teacher interview, self-study, teachers)

Both the administration and staff realize that communication with students and their families about how student work and progress are being assessed is essential. The expectations for student learning both from the school and for each course are distributed to students and parents at the beginning of the year. Student progress is reported via official means eight times per year through four midterm progress reports and four end-of-term report cards, although not all teachers report mid-term progress. Parent conferences are held twice per year, and weekly progress reports can be requested by parents. A syllabus distributed to students at the beginning of each course outlines the assessment procedures for that particular class. Therefore, official lines of communication have been established to inform parents periodically of student performance and progress. (self-study, teachers, parents, administration)

The infrastructure exists for several avenues of communication with parents and families. Teachers and parents may communicate on an as-needed basis through telephone, voice mail, and e-mail. Parents report that communication tends to be reactive rather than proactive, however. Complete implementation of Parent Connect, a computer program to inform parents of student progress, has not been realized. This results in parents reporting feelings of frustration with obtaining accurate and current information about their child's progress. (survey, parents, assessment committee, students, student shadowing, school leadership team)

The Bristol School District's professional development programs provide minimal opportunity for teachers to develop a broad range of assessment strategies. Very few professional development days have addressed the topic of assessment, and teachers must often seek their own professional development opportunities regarding assessment. Because funding for these opportunities is limited and it is difficult to arrange time away from the school to attend these conferences, some departments have been able to bring in outside personnel to conduct departmental seminars dealing with specific topics in assessment. This lack of professional development seriously compromises the exposure of teachers to current and effective assessment practices and procedures. (survey, self-study, teachers, teacher interview, school leadership team)

The administration and faculty have agreed upon levels of performance, indicators of successful accomplishment, and other data to assess the progress of students in achieving the school's stated academic expectations for student learning, yet the school-wide assessment of the students in these areas has not yet been fully implemented. Although other performance data such as SAT and CAPT scores have been made available to the public, parents and students have reported that results of school-wide assessments are not communicated clearly to them. Public recognitions of student achievement that include the honor roll, academic picnics, and national honor society inductions are advertised and made public. Until the implementation of assessment devices for the school's academic expectations for student learning is in place and clearly reported and explained to the school community, recognition and reporting of student progress is limited to

traditional activities many of which remain unsatisfactory. (assessment committee, self-study, student work, parents, students)

The rubrics to assess student success in meeting Bristol Central's stated civic and social expectations have been developed but are not as yet implemented. Both in and out of school, students do take part in many activities designed to instill a sense of civic pride and good citizenship. Local newspapers report on these activities to the public at large. Within the school, morning announcements highlight the achievements of individuals and groups. In addition, student civic and social activities are reported to parents through a quarterly student newspaper, a monthly parents' newsletter, and an annual awards ceremony. Since the assessment device for the school's civic and social expectations has not been implemented, public recognition of these student achievements cannot be accomplished. (assessment committee, self-study, student work, parents, students)

## **COMMENDATIONS**

1. The variety of alternative assessments used by some teachers
2. A collegial spirit in informal discussions of student work
3. The use of teacher-made rubrics to measure student learning
4. Multiple methods of communication with parents
5. Celebration of student achievements in school and community

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Implement the use of school-wide rubrics for assessing expectations for student learning in all classes.
2. Establish a formal process to use classroom assessment data when revising and developing curriculum
3. Increase the amount of time for formal discussions of student work and assessment
2. Provide training on how to use Parent Connect, and require the use of the system by all teachers
3. Provide all teachers with professional development activities to increase the range of assessment strategies
4. Fully implement the assessment devices for the school's academic expectations for student learning and regularly report the findings to the public
5. Fully implement the assessment devices for the school's social and civic expectations and regularly report the findings to the public
6. Develop a process to use the school-wide rubrics to assess the achievement of each student of the expectations for student learning and to communicate these results to individual students and parents

**COMMISSION ON  
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
SUPPORT STANDARDS**

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**LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION**

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**SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING**

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**COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING**

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## SUPPORT STANDARD

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# 5 LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

The manner in which a school provides leadership, organizes itself, makes decisions, and treats its members profoundly affects teaching and learning. Faculty and administration must be clear and reflective about and responsible for the decisions and practices they have implemented in organizing and structuring their programs and in creating a culture that supports learning for all students.

1. The principal shall provide leadership in the school community by building and maintaining a vision, direction, and focus for student learning.
2. Teachers shall provide leadership essential to the success of school improvement.
3. The school board and superintendent shall ensure that the principal has sufficient autonomy and authority to guide the school in its mission and in meeting the school's stated expectations for student learning.
4. The organization and structure of the educational program shall promote the school's mission and expectations for student learning.
5. Student grouping patterns shall reflect the diversity of the student body, foster heterogeneity, and be consistent with the school's mission and expectations for student learning as well as current educational research.



6. The schedule shall support the school's mission and expectations for student learning and should be designed to provide the most effective implementation of curriculum and instruction.
7. School leaders shall accord meaningful roles in the decision-making process to students, parents, and members of the staff to promote an atmosphere of participation, responsibility, and ownership.
8. Each teacher shall have a student load that enables him/her to provide sufficient attention to the needs of individual students.
9. The school shall provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate within and across departments.
10. All school staff shall be involved in promoting the well-being and learning of students.
11. Student success shall be regularly acknowledged, celebrated, and displayed.
12. The climate of the school shall be positive, respectful, and supportive, resulting in a sense of pride and ownership.
13. The professional culture of the school shall be characterized by thoughtful, reflective, and constructive discourse about student learning and well-being in both formal and informal settings.

## CONCLUSIONS

The leadership style of the principal of Bristol Central High School is both open and collaborative. Staff members, teachers, parents, and students help build a vision, direction, and focus for student learning. The principal actively solicits feedback from the school community in order to identify and create a model for student success. The principal's vision and commitment to the elimination of the general track throughout the school reflects the belief that all students can and need to be challenged. The principal's accessibility and student-centered style are evident throughout the building. Both teachers and students describe their interaction with the principal as familial; he listens with patience, care, and concern. As a result, there is an obvious and genuine sense of ownership and commitment to the school by all constituents. (students, student shadowing, teachers, observation)

Teachers are an important force in ongoing school improvement initiatives that support the mission and expectations for student learning. They serve as department coordinators, ninth grade team leaders, tenth grade humanities team members, and mentors for new staff members. Individual teachers also provide leadership on committee assignments such as the NEASC Self-Study, the student assistance team (SAT), and the governance council. Approximately fifty percent of the teaching staff serves as advisors and coaches for extra and co-curricular activities. Teachers provide a strong, collegial support for one another and for the leadership team. (self-study, teachers, observations)

The principal develops the budget and technology priorities for the building and directs the hiring and evaluation of staff. He divides administrative tasks among two assistant principals

and department coordinators. The staff, central office, and school board have a high level of confidence in his leadership and recommendations. He has demonstrated remarkable resourcefulness in budgetary matters. In addition, the principal has been granted the autonomy to arrange teacher coverage for out-of-district workshops. Since the district utilizes a site-based management system, the principal is accorded sufficient autonomy and authority to guide the school's mission and expectations for student learning. (self-study, observation, central office personnel, school leadership team)

The school is organized by traditional subject areas. Department coordinators teach one less class and have no assigned duty so that they can perform managerial and clerical tasks.

Although these coordinators meet monthly with the administrators, the content of the meetings is largely organizational. In the past, the district saw the arrival and untimely departure of a series of central office administrators who supervised curriculum and instruction. However, a new director of the department of teaching and learning is eager to improve and communicate data-driven curriculum goals. At the present time, responsibilities for the implementation of school-wide curriculum goals are not clear but are being developed. Department coordinators are universally dedicated and informed but are not given the time, the training, or the authority to effectively provide instructional leadership within the building. As a result, the educational program is not structured to facilitate organizational change to support the school mission and expectations for student learning. (observations, teachers, central office personnel)

There is a variety of grouping patterns at Bristol Central High School. The three level system - accelerated, academic, and general - is grade weighted. In addition, advanced placement classes

offered are weighted more heavily than accelerated course offerings. Beginning with the Class of 2007, the general and academic levels were merged and are now called academic. This leveling system directly impacts the school's ability to maintain class enrollment reflective of the diversity and heterogeneity of the student body. Some AP and accelerated students opt out of more heterogeneous offerings because of the effect it has on their class rank, and some academic and general students don't venture into more academically challenging classes because of a fear of not belonging. In addition, AP and accelerated classes do not currently reflect the diversity of the student body. Consequently, a system producing homogeneous classes is preserved, and diversity is not evident school-wide. Special education programs group students in varying arrangements according to accommodations and needs. All self-contained classrooms are clustered in the same hallway and are not fully integrated throughout the high school. Although attempts are being made to foster some heterogeneity at the lower levels, grouping patterns at BCHS are not based on current pedagogic principles nor do they allow all students to achieve their maximum learning potential as stated in the mission. (student, self-study, guidance, teachers)

While significant time and planning has been committed to the A/B block schedule, there are many concerns that need to be addressed. Longer instructional periods and the ability to use varied instructional patterns and collaborative techniques can be benefits of the block model. The move to the block system added an additional teaching assignment that has increased teachers' student load. Only fifteen percent of the teachers have a student load of 90 students per marking period. The current student load at BCHS does not allow sufficient time to meet the individual needs of students. In addition, the current schedule combined with the teaching load

prevents adequate collaboration between teachers during the school day. The current teaching load prevents the current schedule from supporting the mission and expectations for student learning. (self-study, teachers, parents)

The school leadership team solicits input from parents, students, and all members of the school staff when making decisions. According to the Maine Survey and interviews, however, many students report that their opinions do not matter on substantive issues, such as attendance and discipline policy-making. Parents are encouraged to become members of the governance council, parent group, and various booster clubs. The governance council, made up of parents, teachers, administrators, and elected student leaders, discusses relevant issues to help to guide the school's decision-making process. Although student council provides some interaction with school leadership; its role is primarily one of activity planning not of decision-making. Teachers and other staff members provide support and input to school leaders and help to implement initiatives. Most stakeholders have an opportunity to be heard, resulting in a general atmosphere of participation, responsibility, and ownership. (self-study, teachers, parents)

Most teachers, with the exception of ninth-grade teams and the tenth-grade humanities program, do not currently have formal opportunities to collaborate within or across departments during the school day. Still, there is some evidence of teacher-initiated multidisciplinary projects. Thus, most collaboration among teachers occurs on an informal basis during conference periods, department meetings, or during shared lunch periods. (teachers, self-study, administrators)

A common staff goal of ensuring the well-being and academic success for all students is evident in the positive climate of the high school. The student assistance team (SAT) meets to discuss students referred by teachers, counselors, administrators, or parents. Assistance to students in need is provided by other staff members and systems such as a peer mediation group, a bereavement group, an in-school mentoring program, an outreach counselor, and a school resource officer. As a result of support service personnel and a dedicated clerical, custodial, and cafeteria staff, students describe a genuine sense of support and care from the school community. (observations, self-study, students, teachers)

Student success is regularly acknowledged, celebrated, and displayed. Trophies, plaques, and recent newspaper clippings celebrate athletic achievement. Exemplars of student work are displayed in hallways, classrooms, and offices. The principal hosts a CAPT Scholar Breakfast, academic banquets, National Honor Society Banquets, and a transition awards night for students and their families. Academic and sport awards are given annually. Honor roll is published in the newspapers---school and local---and is posted on the office bulletin board. (observations, self-study, teachers)

The climate of Bristol Central High School is positive and supportive. Parents, students, and teachers share a genuine respect for one another. Teachers, support staff, and school leaders interact with mutual regard and desire for a common goal, that of student success. There is an overarching pride exhibited throughout the school community. For example, over fifty percent of the students participate in extracurricular activities, and students report a strong sense of school spirit. The school motto, “Think Central, Talk Central, Be Central,” reflects the shared pride and

ownership of the entire BCHS community which is repeatedly described as a “family.” (self-study, parents, teachers, students)

Monthly department meetings, ninth grade team meetings, tenth grade humanities teams, monthly leadership team meetings, and weekly guidance meetings provide opportunities to discuss student learning and well-being. Teachers report the need and the desire for more formal opportunities for professional discourse, but acknowledge that with six teaching assignments and the accompanying responsibilities, formal opportunities are difficult to arrange. The process of the NEASC self-study has inspired meetings and has stimulated many individual teachers to discuss instructional strategies, curriculum, and assessments. However, there are few ongoing, formal, mechanisms to help teachers develop and implement programs and initiatives for improved student learning and achievement. (teachers, administrators, self-study)

## **COMMENDATIONS**

1. The strong and effective leadership of a caring and compassionate principal
2. The dedicated, involved student-centered faculty and support staff
3. The additional math and English support classes for the ninth grade team
4. The elimination of general classes
5. The positive, supportive school climate

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Reduce the number of teacher assignments in order to maximize student learning and to personalize instruction
2. Define and clarify the role and responsibilities of department coordinator
3. Ensure that grouping patterns reflect the diversity of the student population
4. Evaluate the current schedule to assure it provides the most effective implementation of curriculum and instruction
5. Establish a procedure to give students a more meaningful role in the decision-making process in the school
6. Provide formal opportunities for ongoing faculty collaboration and professional discourse



## SUPPORT STANDARD

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# 6 SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

The school's student support services include guidance and health services, special education, personal, career, and social counseling and access to outside referrals along with library/information services. Student learning is dependent upon adequate and appropriate support programs and services. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of integrated resources to enhance and improve student learning and to support the school's mission and expectations.

1. The school shall allocate resources, programs, and services so that all students have an equal opportunity to achieve the school's stated academic expectations for student learning and to participate in the educational program.
2. The school shall allocate resources, programs, and services so that all students have an equal opportunity to achieve stated civic and social expectations.
3. Each student shall have an adult member of the school community who serves to personalize that student's educational experience.
4. The school's student support services shall be consistent with the school's mission and expectations for student learning.
5. Student support and library/information services personnel shall be knowledgeable about the curriculum and involved in its implementation, evaluation, and revision.

6. All school resources for learning shall be regularly evaluated and revised to support improved student learning.
7. Student support personnel shall enhance student learning by interacting and working cooperatively with professional and other staff and utilizing community resources to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students.
8. There shall be a system for effective and ongoing communications with students, parents/guardians, and school personnel designed to keep them informed about the types of available student support services and about identified student needs.
9. The school shall provide and maintain library/information services program and materials that are fully integrated into the school's curriculum and instructional program and are consistent with the school's mission and expectations for student learning.
10. The library/information services program shall foster independent inquiry by enabling students and faculty to utilize various school and community information resources and technologies.
11. A wide range of materials, technology, and other library/information resources shall be available to students and faculty in a variety of formats and utilized to improve teaching and learning and to be reflective of the school's student population.
12. Library/information services shall include, but not be limited to, sufficient certified professional personnel.

13. Students, faculty, and support staff shall have regular and frequent access to library/information services facilities and programs as an integral part of their educational experience before, during, and after the school day.

14. Policies shall be in place for the selection and removal of information resources and the use of technologies and the Internet.

15. Student records shall be maintained in a confidential and secure manner consistent with federal and state law.

## CONCLUSIONS

Bristol Central High School allocates existing resources, programs, and services in great number and variety. The library media center provides a structured program of media services open to all students and staff. The guidance department has an appropriate and systematic plan to assist students in course selection and academic planning. Nine advanced placement courses and eleven tech prep courses provide students with opportunities to earn college credit. In addition, BCHS participates in the Tunxis Community College High School Partnership Program where qualified BCHS students may earn college credit by taking classes at the Tunxis campus. In addition, BCHS offers the Cisco Networking Academy, an industry standard technology training program. Students with unique learning needs are offered a variety of resources that maximizes their learning experience, including a wide spectrum of special education services. In general, resources at BCHS are allotted effectively. (teacher interview, observation, self-study)

BCHS has a variety of strategies and programs to insure that all students have an equal opportunity to achieve stated civic and social expectations. A peer mediation program, a mentoring program that utilizes BCHS staff and community volunteers, women's issues and men's issues programs, and the student assistance team provide opportunities to address civic and social expectations. In addition, the school utilizes the services of a variety of outside support agencies such as Bristol Youth Services and the Wheeler Clinic. When combined with guidance staff members, the career counselor, school psychologist, and special education personnel, these efforts give all students an opportunity to meet the civic and social expectations contained in the mission statement. (self-study, teacher, school support staff)

The staff at Bristol Central High School makes an obvious and caring effort to personalize each student's educational experience. Guidance counselors meet at least twice a year with each student. The five counselors and a guidance director serve 1,450 students with a staff to student ratio of 1:320 that exceeds the American Guidance Association's recommended standard of 300 to 1. Such a high ratio impacts the amount of contact time with each student as well as services provided; guidance services are generally reactive rather than proactive. The nurse to student ratio of 1:1,450 greatly exceeds the National School Nurse Association's recommended ratio of 1:750 regular education students. In addition to specific responsibilities to the school, the nurse maintains records for the child care room and pre-K program. Case managers monitor special education students. In addition, the mentoring program, staffed by BCHS faculty and community volunteers, serves 36 students. Provision of students with an adult member of the faculty to personalize their educational experience is achieved through the informal efforts of many faculty members. However, there is no formal plan in place to systematically optimize all the BCHS student experience with an adult member of the school community. (self-study, support staff, students)

Efforts by student support services at Bristol Central High School are consistent with the BCHS mission statement and expectations for student learning. Support staff members display familiarity with the mission statement and evidence the use of the expectations in their daily work. The school nurse implements a variety of preventative programs such as the health fair, an assembly to discuss drunk driving, and smoking cessation clinics that promote healthy and safe lifestyles. Special education staff focuses on critical reading, writing, and study skills to promote maximum student learning. The guidance staff uses the use of the mission statement in various

written communications with parents and students. The career guidance program includes work-based career exploration, resume writing, and interviewing skills. The services provided by the BCHS support staff are consistent with the mission and help promote achievement of the expectations for student learning. (support staff, central office staff, self-study)

The professional support staff at BCHS demonstrates a general knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. The guidance department has collaborated with instructional staff in the revision and implementation of the freshman teaming concept, resulting in a change from three academic teaching levels to two. A written guidance curriculum has been developed but implementation is compromised by the high student/counselor ratio. The library media specialist (LMS) demonstrates an intimate knowledge of the school curriculum and is actively engaged in implementing course curriculum in collaboration with classroom teachers. The LMS has taken the initiative to develop research pathfinders in which students are guided through the research process on a specific assignment. These pathfinders are utilized when classes and individual students access the library. The support staff and the LMS are knowledgeable in their respective areas but do not collaborate with other departments in curriculum revisions and evaluation. With such limited curricular involvement, the ability of support service to impact student learning is compromised. (guidance counselors, library media specialist, support staff members self-study)

Some school resources for learning are evaluated and revised to support improved student learning. The process and duration of the evaluation and revision cycle depends on the resource. The LMC does an annual resource review based on student and class use records. In addition, students are frequently required to complete surveys evaluating the quality of resources in the

LMC. The guidance staff has a system based on the guidance director's monthly meetings with the Greater Hartford Guidance Director's Association, information received from college and university admissions departments, regular meetings with students and staff members, and parent surveys that measure perceptions about service and communication. Other programs such as the student assistance team, the school resource officer, and tech prep partners also provide input. The school nurse and special education teachers are regularly evaluated by district administrators; in addition, the special education program is audited by state officials. BCHS has developed evaluation and revision policies for school resources for learning to support student learning.(support staff, self-study, central office staff)

BCHS student support personnel enhance student learning by interacting and working with building professional staff members and utilizing community resources to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students. The student assistance team is the hub of collaboration between BCHS and community resources. The school component of the team consists of two guidance counselors, the school nurse, school psychologist, two teachers, and an assistant principal. Other team members include the school outreach worker, two youth services social workers, the youth officer, truant officer, a private marriage and family therapist, and other services provided by the Bristol Police Department. The SAT team meets weekly to support the needs of at risk students. There is also a variety of other support services that incorporates both internal school resources and community resources. Some of the programs include the COVE bereavement group, the Positive Self Image Class that addresses a variety of self-esteem issues, the school resource officer, outreach worker, and Hispanic outreach worker, all of which also

provide individual support. The effort at collaboration within the school and community enhances student learning. (self-study, teachers, support staff)

Bristol Central High School has a systematic, on-going communications strategy. The efforts include plentiful print communications that include but are not limited to guidance letters, posters, and pamphlets that are on display in the LMC and the nurse and guidance offices, a monthly school newsletter, a student parent handbook, and a student planner. BCHS maintains a user-friendly website that includes the school mission statement and other school information. The school hosts an array of meetings and fairs to meet student and parent needs including the CAPT Scholars Breakfast, grade 8 parent and student orientation meetings, and the annual club fair. The special education department is in contact with parents by mail and phone a minimum of twice a marking period. Other support staff members such as the truant officer, school resource officer, and community outreach workers and the ESL tutor, regularly communicate with parents. Therefore BCHS provides significant and consistent communications to all school stakeholders. (self-study, support staff, teacher interview)

A library media program has been developed and implemented to support classroom instruction and departmental curriculum. The library media specialist collaborates with individual teachers to provide instruction that supports information literacy and engages students in the research process. The expectations for student learning are addressed in the media program and are reflected in the research pathfinders. The development of the research pathfinders supports the curriculum content and positively impacts student learning. The library media acquisitions are largely curriculum-driven as evidenced by the holdings available to staff and students. The



library and information services provide curriculum support and serve as an integral part of the students' research skills instruction. (self-study, teachers, support staff meetings, students)

The adoption of the information literacy curriculum has served to provide students with instruction that will enable them to perform independent research. Initial instruction is primarily aimed at ninth and tenth grade students who are scheduled into the LMC at least once a year.

The LMS develops extensive curriculum-related research pathfinders to encourage students to utilize the variety of resources available in their school library. The school library's holdings exceed 15,000 books covering a wide variety of curriculum-based topics. A system is in place to allow for access to the city's public library and the state's inter-library loan system as well as the Middletown Service Center, Bristol Hospital, and the University of Connecticut Medical Center. In addition, the LMS has established a professional growth plan that provides individualized orientation to the LMC for new teachers and selected staff. (self-study, library media specialist, parents, teachers, students)

The BCHS library media center provides information resources in a variety of formats including print, non-print, and multi-media. The LMC has made numerous databases available to students with access from school and home. A system is in place to make available resources from other libraries in the state accessible via inter-library loan. The LMC has 22 computers with Internet access that are available for student and faculty use. The LMS has purchased access to databases in addition to the state's digital library program which is available to students at school and at home. The collection of books and materials offered by the LMC is reflective of the diverse

population in the school and community. (support staff, self-study, observations, teachers, students, parent meetings)

The library media center is staffed by one full-time, certified library media specialist and one secretary. The population of the school is approaching 1,500. There is obvious difficulty in scheduling classes and addressing the needs of independent study students simultaneously throughout the school day. Interviews with faculty, parents, and students support the need for access to the library media center before and after school. Limitations in staffing hinder the ability of existing personnel to meet the needs of the students and teachers. (parents, teachers, students, support staff, self-study)

The LMC is open from 7:10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., allowing for 57 minutes of open access to the LMC before and after school. Additionally, students report that getting a pass to the library during the study hall period is a complicated and selective procedure. The general perception among students in grades 9 and 10 is that the library is an intimidating environment. However, perceptions of the older students seem to indicate that the LMC is a useful and welcoming place of study and research. The staff seems equally divided in their perception and use of the LMC and its staff as an instructional resource. Students and staff members have indicated that while the instruction in the research process is well-meaning in intent, it has become somewhat restrictive and cumbersome and, at times, has served to discourage use of the LMC. Current staffing patterns combined with limited access hinder the library's ability to become an integral part of the school's community. (teachers, students, teacher and student interviews, self-study, support staff meeting)

Board of education policy details guidelines for LMC material selection. Reconsideration policies regarding challenged materials are also in place. Criteria for the weeding and discarding of dated materials have been established by the LMS and are in active practice. The LMS reviews the collection annually and has established a library collection development plan to ensure that the curricular needs are reflected. Acceptable use policies for the Internet, school networks, and school/district web pages have been developed and are in the BOE policy book. Additionally, copyright issues have been addressed in these board policies. The Bristol Public Schools also has a form to modify the web filtering system to block or unblock particular websites. There also is BOE policy in place that guides the development of school and district-related web pages for educational purposes by staff and students. These policies are accessible to the public, timely in nature and serve to guide sound educational practices. (board policy review, LMS, self-study, support staff)

The administration, guidance, special education, and health services staffs maintain student records in a secure and confidential manner. A comprehensive record system is maintained through the National Computer Systems Program. The SASIxp program is used to track student data including biographical data, attendance, schedules, grades, discipline, and other pertinent data. SASI information can be obtained only by staff who have appropriate passwords; in addition, the system is tiered so specific passwords can obtain only certain levels of information. BCHS also maintains a student permanent record folder that is stored in a secure fireproof vault. Access to all records is limited to administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers. BCHS

maintains an access record that tracks use in accord with the Buckley Amendment. Confidential records for special education are also securely stored in the vault and an access file is maintained. With no fax machine in the nurse's office, confidential health records are faxed to the main office, however, creating the possibility of a breach of confidentiality. BCHS provides secure and confidential storage of student records. (school leaders, facility tour, self-study)

## COMMENDATIONS

1. The support staff's efforts to personalize the educational experiences of students
2. The number of tech prep offerings
3. The career guidance program
4. The wide range of school and community support programs that help student meet the mission and expectations for student learning
5. The implementation of the information literacy curriculum
6. LMC orientation programs for students and new staff members

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a formal plan to insure that each student has an adult member of the school community to personalize that student's educational experience
2. Expand support staff and LMS roles in school-wide curricular initiatives
3. Reduce the guidance counselor-to-student ratio in order to better personalize the student's educational experience
4. Evaluate the staffing in the nurse's office to determine if the delivery of health services is sufficient
5. Provide a more efficient way for the nurse to receive faxes that guarantees the confidentiality of students
6. Increase LMC personnel to better meet the needs of staff and students
7. Expand hours and accessibility to the library media center before, during, and after the school day

## SUPPORT STANDARD

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# 7 COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Active community and parent participation, facilities which support school programs and services, and dependable and adequate funding are necessary for the school to achieve its mission and expectations for student learning.

1. The school shall engage students and their families as partners in the students' education as well as encourage their participation in school programs and parent support groups.
2. The school shall foster productive business/community/higher education partnerships that support student learning.
3. The school site, plant, and equipment shall support and enhance all aspects of the educational program and the support services for student learning.
4. The school site, plant, and equipment shall be maintained to ensure an environment that is healthy and safe for all occupants.
5. There shall be a planned and adequately funded program of building and site management that ensures the maintenance and repair of facilities and equipment as well as the thorough and ongoing cleaning of the facility.
6. There shall be ongoing planning to address future program, staffing, facility, and technology needs as well as capital improvements.

7. The physical plant and facilities shall meet all applicable federal and state laws and be in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.
8. The community and the district's governing body shall ensure an adequate and dependable source of revenue to provide and maintain appropriate school programs, personnel, services, facilities, equipment, technological support, materials, and supplies for student learning.
9. Faculty and building administrators shall have active involvement in the budgetary process, including its development and implementation.
10. Equipment shall be adequate, properly maintained, catalogued, and replaced when appropriate.
11. School board decisions, policies, and procedures and district plans shall support the implementation of the school's mission and expectations for student learning.

## CONCLUSIONS

Bristol Central High School engages students and their families as partners in students' education. In the NEASC self-study, data shows that 73.1% of responding parents agree that they are invited to participate in school and/or classroom activities. Teachers also strongly agree that the school encourages parental involvement. Students and their parents receive a monthly newsletter and progress reports, and report cards are mailed home four times a year. In addition, the school website provides parents with current information on all school activities. The school has numerous booster clubs including ones for athletics, football, and the performing arts. In addition, parents are invited to participate in the monthly meeting of the governance committee and the monthly principal's parents group. Parent involvement is also encouraged by outreach efforts from the student assistance team that refers them to support services within the school and community. Although parents are encouraged to participate in their child's education, an increase in actual parent involvement would enhance the school's efforts and better promote the school's mission. (self-study, teachers, parents)

Bristol Central High School provides many opportunities for students to participate in business and community partnerships. These include job shadowing, internships, work credit, and volunteer experiences. The school business partnership program provides a significant number of mentoring opportunities in a variety of settings. In addition, school and local business cooperation through the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and Bristol Bringing Students to Labor (BRISToL) provides potential employment opportunities for students within the community. There is a strong partnership between Bristol Central High School and Tunxis Community College that allows students to take classes and earn credit either on the college



campus or on-line. The certified nursing assistant program is available to students interested in the medical field. Also, students take part in such community-based activities as Operation Connect that eases the transition of middle school students into the high school. Students are also actively engaged in community service projects such as volunteering in the local soup kitchen and blood drives. As a result, students have a positive impact in the community, and consequently, student learning is supported. (self-study, teachers, panel presentation)

Bristol Central High School is a well-maintained and modern facility providing adequate space for instructional and administrative needs. An extensive renovation was completed in 2001, yet there are some problems that still need to be solved in order to enhance all aspects of the educational program. There are only two large capacity copy machines for the entire instructional staff; additional copiers would increase accessibility and use by the staff. While computers have been purchased for all teachers, some have not yet been installed while others have been installed in less than desirable locations within classrooms. The media-center adequately supports teachers and their curriculum, but increased staffing would make it more available to students, staff members, and the community and would better promote the mission of the school. (school support staff, self-study, teachers, facility tour)

The school site, plant, and the equipment are generally well-maintained. The NEASC self-study indicates a high level of satisfaction with the maintenance of the facility. However, despite the recent renovation, there are facility needs that must be addressed in order to provide a safe and healthy environment. Inconsistent heating, cooling, and ventilation throughout the building are common problems and are most noticeable in the administrative office area and in one computer

lab. In addition, the family and consumer science area and the athletic locker rooms lack adequate hot water. (school support staff, self-study, meetings with teachers, teacher interview)

There is a building and site management plan that ensures the maintenance and ongoing cleaning of the facility. Requests for repairs are filled in a timely manner. Adequate personnel and supplies maintain the building appropriately. Overall, with the exception of ventilation and temperature control issues, there is much satisfaction in the maintenance of the school facility and equipment. It is obvious that the faculty and staff take pride in the building. (facility tour, teachers, students, self-study)

A district plan that addresses future needs including staffing, increasing enrollment, technology, and capital improvements does exist. This improvement plan, however, was developed with limited involvement of teachers, students, and community members. More involvement from members of the school and community would help ensure that the plan promotes the school's mission and expectations for student learning. (school board, school leadership, teacher interview, meetings with teachers)

BCHS meets all applicable state and federal laws and is in compliance with local fire and health regulations. The entire facility is handicapped accessible. The custodial staff and maintenance crew are sufficient in number and perform scheduled checks of the fire and sprinkler systems. These systems are inspected regularly to ensure compliance with the National Fire Alarm Code. On a regular basis, OSHA and the Connecticut Department of Public Health inspect the school for compliance. (self-study, facility tour, teachers, school support staff, interviews with teachers)

The community and the district's governing body does not consistently ensure adequate and dependable sources of revenue to provide and maintain appropriate school programs, personnel, services, equipment, technological support, materials, and supplies for student learning. There is a large student to teacher ratio that negatively impacts the ability to provide individual attention to students. The facility does provide an adequate learning environment; however, the school lacks appropriate school programming in such areas as remedial instruction, library media staffing, and guidance support services. In addition, copier equipment and technology support is inadequate. Teachers also report a lack of adequate funding for materials and supplies. The per-pupil expenditure is an area of great concern; Bristol lags behind its educational reference group ERG H average and the Connecticut's per-pupil expenditure by approximately \$1,544. As a result of high teaching loads and insufficient funds, individualized student attention, access to certain elective programs, and other staff services are limited. (self-study, central office administrators, school board, teachers, students)

The building principal develops the school budget based on established district goals. A process for soliciting input from teachers and other staff members regarding budgetary needs includes department request processes and site-based budget committees. Department coordinators, however, do not approach the budgetary process in a consistent manner thereby limiting some teachers' active involvement in the development of the budget. With the implementation of a more consistent process, all teachers and staff members will be assured active involvement in the budgetary process. (teachers, school leadership, meetings with teachers, school board)

Equipment in BCHS is adequate to meet the instructional and facility needs. BCHS uses trained personnel for repair and maintenance and also subcontracts specific services that cannot be handled by the custodial staff. Although the renovation project has provided the building with an acceptable level of equipment, there is a need to increase the number of working copy machines and teachers' computers to better meet instructional needs. (facility tour, teacher interview, meetings with teachers, support staff)

The board of education's budgetary decision-making does not adequately provide for the desired mission and expectations of student learning to be fully realized. Students are presented with a safe and clean environment, but many of the support services that impact student learning such as staff development, remedial instruction, class size, and guidance support are lacking.

Approximately half of the teacher and parent respondents to the NEASC survey do not agree that school board policies and decisions align with the school's expectations for learning and the mission statement. With a clearly defined plan developed and supported by community members and school constituents, the implementation of the school's mission and expectations for student learning will be enhanced. (meetings with teachers, parents, self-study, school board, teacher interviews)

## **COMMENDATIONS**

1. A dedicated custodial staff that maintains a clean facility
2. Business, community, and higher education partnerships that support student learning
3. The recently renovated physical plant

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Ensure an adequate and dependable source of revenue to provide and maintain appropriate school programs, personnel, services, facilities, equipment, technological support, and materials and supplies for student learning
2. Complete the installation process of all teacher computers and place them in appropriate locations in the classroom
3. Regulate heat, air conditioning, and ventilation
4. Improve efficiency of copier services
5. Increase parent involvement in existing school programs and parent support groups
6. Implement a process that assures active involvement of the faculty and staff in the development of the budget
7. Include teachers and staff members in the development of a strategic plan to address future staffing, program, and facility needs

## 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 Bristol Central High School. The faculty, school committee, and superintendent should also be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting committee recommendations.

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

A school's continued accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing valid recommendations of the visiting committee and others identified by the Commission as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. To monitor the school's progress in the Follow-Up Program, the Commission requires that the principal of Bristol Central 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 Commission in its notification letters to the school. School officials are expected to have completed or be in the final stages of completion of all valid visiting committee recommendations by the time the Five-Year Progress Report is submitted. The Commission may

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

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

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

The hospitality and warm reception received by members of the visiting committee while at Bristol Central High School were greatly appreciated. Teachers, students, parents, and board of

education members as well as building and district administrators were open, candid, and very accommodating.

### ***COMMITTEE ROSTER***

Gary Gula  
Chair  
Canton Junior/Senior High School  
Canton, CT

Betsy Maxwell  
Watertown High School  
Watertown, CT

Frank Balisciano  
Ansonia High School  
Ansonia, CT

Nicole Rossi  
Newtown High School  
Newtown, CT

Ralph Buzzard  
Bassick High School  
Bridgeport, CT

Dr. Charles Warner  
New Haven Public Schools  
New Haven, CT

Gail Cooper  
Maloney High School  
Meriden, CT

Jill Zaloski  
Masuk High School  
Monroe, CT

Thomas DiCorletto  
Assistant Chair  
Granby Public Schools  
Granby, CT

Kimberly Elmer  
Windsor High School  
Windsor, CT

John Fox  
Quaboag Regional Middle/High School  
Warren, MA

Kevin Javillonar  
Brookfield High School  
Brookfield, CT

Jacueline Lamarre  
Bacon Academy  
Colchester, CT



## Commission on Public Secondary Schools

### Substantive Change Policy

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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 of the change on the quality of education in the school. The following are potential areas where there might be negative substantive changes:

- ◆ available programs, including fine arts, practical arts, and student activities
- ◆ available facilities, including upkeep and maintenance
- ◆ level of funding
- ◆ school day and/or school year
- ◆ administrative structure, including the number of administrators and supervisors
- ◆ number of teachers and/or guidance counselors
- ◆ number of support staff
- ◆ student services
- ◆ the use of distance educational programs or courses
- ◆ educational media services and personnel
- ◆ student enrollment
- ◆ grades served by the school
- ◆ the student population that causes program or staffing modification(s), e.g., the number of special needs students or vocational students or students with limited English proficiency.

