

**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

***REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE***

**Brockton High School**

**Brockton, Massachusetts**

October 5-8, 2014

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**STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS**

**THE DISTRIBUTION, USE AND SCOPE OF THE**

**VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

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

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Statement on Limitations</b> .....	ii
Introduction.....	1
School and Community Summary .....	4
School’s Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations.....	9
<b>Standards</b> .....	11
Teaching and Learning Standards.....	11
Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations.....	12
Curriculum .....	17
Instruction .....	25
Assessment of and for Student Learning .....	33
Support of Teaching and Learning Standards.....	41
School Culture and Leadership.....	42
School Resources for Learning .....	52
Community Resources for Learning .....	61
<b>Follow-Up Responsibilities</b> .....	69
 <b>APPENDICES</b>	
A. Roster of Visiting Committee Members .....	71
B. Committee Policy on Substantive Change.....	72
C. List of Commendations and Recommendations .....	73

## INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

### Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

### Support Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

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

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

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Brockton High School, a committee of thirteen members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate

subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people.

The self-study of Brockton High School extended over a period of 22 school months from June 2012 to September 2014.

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

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

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

A visiting committee of 22 evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Brockton High School. The Committee members spent four days in Brockton, Massachusetts, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school meets the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools and institutions of higher education diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Brockton High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 50 hours shadowing 22 students for a half day
- a total of 22 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility

- individual meetings with 41 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers
- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

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

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

## **SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SUMMARY**

Brockton, commonly known as the City of Champions, with an area of 21.5 square miles, is located in the northwest corner of Plymouth County in southeastern Massachusetts. The most densely populated community in Plymouth County, with a population of 93,810 residents (2010 Consensus), Brockton is a heavily developed urban community, which prides itself on its diversity of cultures and lasting legacy of competitive spirit.

Present day Brockton was first settled in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and originally was known as North Bridgewater—a geographic area that today is comprised of the communities of Brockton, West Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, and Bridgewater. Brockton became a city in 1881.

When farms gave way to factories, Brockton enjoyed a reputation as an epicenter for the shoe and textile industries. Known then as “Shoe City,” Brockton’s economy was industry-based. Recently, Brockton has shifted from an industry-based economy to a service-based economy, with the major industry being health services. Brockton is home of three hospitals, Brockton Hospital, Caritas Good Samaritan Medical Center, and the Veterans’ Administration Hospital. The second largest employer, The City of Brockton, employs upwards of 3,000 municipal workers.

The Brockton income per capita, according to the Department of Revenue 2009 figures of \$16,916, is 54% of the state average of \$31,265. The median income of a Brockton household is \$39, 507, which is 25% lower than other communities in the region.

The City of Brockton is one of eleven member communities forming the Gateway Cities Coalition. As a gateway community Brockton has seen its immigrant population of Brockton grow from 18.4% in 2000 to 24.8% in 2010. Nearly one-third (28.4%) of the population reported English as their second language, particularly Creole Portuguese (Cape Verdean), and Creole French (Haitian). Recent estimates indicate that 75% of Brockton residents are people of color.

According to enrollment data as of June 1, 2014, Brockton Public Schools is the fourth largest school system in Massachusetts, providing quality education to 17,041 students in pre-kindergarten to grade 12. The district has two early education schools (pre-K to K), ten elementary schools, two grades K to 8 schools, six middle schools (grades 6-8), one therapeutic day school (grades 3-12), three alternative schools (one grades 5-12 and two grades 9-12), one large comprehensive high school, and an adult learning center. As well, the district has a Therapeutic Support Services program, which provides nine building-based programs servicing students with emotional impairment in grades pre-K-12.

The Brockton High School complex is located on Route 123, three quarters of a mile east off Route 24, and approximately two miles from the city center where city hall,

the David E. Crosby School Administration Building, the police station, the central US Post Office, the Brockton Area Transit intermodal center, and the district and superior court houses are located.

The physical plant of Brockton High School consists of nine buildings, covering one third of a mile and 13.5 acres of floor space. Included in the complex are the administration building, four academic houses, one core building, a 2,500-seat gymnasium, a fine arts building, and a field house. Other facilities located on the grounds are the 10,000-seat Marciano Football Stadium, Asiatic Public Skating Rink, the Manning Public Swimming Pool, the Campanelli Baseball Stadium, and the Poliseno Soccer Field. On the school grounds and throughout the complex there are several computer labs, one student-run restaurant, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, three gymnasiums, two weight rooms, and one school store. There are four cafeterias, three instructional resource centers (IRCs), one access center, a biotechnology lab, and a greenhouse. The fine arts wing contains the 1,600 seat Nelson Auditorium, The Little Theatre, a television studio, a choral room, band room, piano classroom, and many, varied art studios/classrooms. In the five main buildings there are many science laboratories, eight directed academics classrooms, a planetarium, numerous office suites, hundreds of classrooms, and various other amenities.

Brockton High School students represent the diversity of the city demographically. Collectively, Brockton High School students speak 49 different languages. Brockton High student population is comprised of 59% designated as Black, including African American, Cape Verdean, Haitian, Jamaican, and others, 24% White, 12% Hispanic, 2.5% Asian, 2% Multi-race, and .5% Native American. In 2014, 80.23% of the enrolled 4,168 students were from low-income households, up from 67.3% in 2008, which was approximately 10% higher than the 2003 reported 57.2%. In 2014, 40% of Brockton High School students reportedly speak another language at home, approximately 17% receive English language learners (ELL) services, and approximately 11% receive special education services. The ELL population has steadily risen over the past decade, growing from 8.7% in 2003, to 12% in 2008, to 17.2% in 2014. As well, the number of students receiving special education services has risen from 10% in 2003, to 10.1% in 2008, to 11% in 2014.

In 2013, state wide, students were absent less than 10 days as reported by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) was 68% while Brockton High School students who were absent less than 10 days for the same school year was reported to be 62%. The statewide drop-out rate for the same year was 2.2% while the dropout rate for Brockton High School was 1.5%. Concurrently, the DESE reported the graduation rate for a four-year cohort state wide in 2013 to be 85%, and the graduation rate for Brockton High School was 84.3%. For the same year, according to the DESE District Analysis and Review Tool (DART), Brockton High School students post-secondary plans included 42% attending four-year colleges or universities, 45% attending junior colleges or community schools, 3% attending technical or other schools, 3% enlisted in military service, 4% anticipated immediate employment, 3% were unknown, and 1% reported as other.

According to the DESE School Profile, Brockton High School employs 257.5 teachers, 18 guidance counselors, and 4 school adjustment counselors with 99.2% of these teachers licensed in his or her teaching assignment and teachers generally teach three classes per day. There are also 26 administrators, which, includes the English, social science, mathematics, and science department heads who teach at least one class.

Brockton High School maintains a five-period daily schedule, which follows a registration room period at the beginning of each day. Full-year and semester-long classes meet every day or on an alternating day schedule, either day A or day B. As example, Freshman English Language Arts (ELA) is a full-year course, which meets every day, whereas an elective, such as Drawing and Painting I is a half-year course, which meets on either day A or day B. Brockton High School offers main content courses at three levels honors, college preparatory advanced, and college preparatory. Brockton High School offers Advanced Placement (AP) courses in art, English literature and composition, English language and composition, calculus, biology, chemistry, physics, US history, European history, world history, Latin, Spanish, and college sociology. During the 2013-2014 school year, enrollment in these courses totaled 296 students. During the 2005-2006 school year, the Brockton Public School District began offering Brockton students the option of enrolling in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. Since the inception of the IB program the total enrollment in all IB courses, including art, English language arts, mathematics, biology, Chinese, Latin, Spanish, and communism, as well as the Theory of Knowledge course (offered to only full-diploma IB students), has grown to 200 students.

While at Brockton High School, students can participate in a variety of programs and community service opportunities. Brockton High has over 40 student clubs; the array includes Boxers Buddies, Key Club, the gay-straight alliance, National Honors Society, the peer mediation program, student council, and the executive committee to name a few. The Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program and the medical interpretation certification program afford students specified programs of study toward potential post-graduation employment tracks. Various programs addressing academic support and achievement include, not exclusively, the credit recovery program, the after school enrichment program, and the vocational education after-school tutoring program. Additional programs address college planning, including the application and financial aid processes. Brockton High School, through collaboration with local institutions of higher education, offers dual-enrollment opportunities with Massasoit Community College, Bridgewater State University, and Stonehill College. As well, students can participate in annual events providing services to the community, which include the student council Haunted Hallway Halloween celebration, and the Holiday Giving Tree, the record breaking Santa Hat Day, as well as the yearlong Boxer Buddies program pairing general education students with special education students.

Collaboration with community organizations and institutions is a long-held and celebrated key component of the relationship between Brockton High School and the City of Brockton and the successful contributions to and engagement with the community of Brockton High School students. These collaborations include the Summer of Work and

Learning Internship and Community Service Program, the Massachusetts Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) Chapter State Leadership Conference, families for change, the department of veterans affairs walk and roll program, wellness and college fairs, and community parades, as examples.

True to the legacy of Brockton's boxing greats Rocky Marciano and Marvin Hagler, Brockton High School's mascot is the Brockton Boxer, yet the term boxer has come to encompass not only Brockton athletic teams and subsequent athletes, but all Brocktonians, especially all Brockton High School students, staff, and faculty. The spirit of competitiveness and the pride of being a Brockton Boxer permeate the hallways, classrooms, meeting rooms, playing fields, theatres, and music rooms throughout the school. The community is proud of all their Brockton Boxers and their accomplishments whether on the playing field, the performance stage, or in the academic realms.

Brockton citizens and Brockton High School administrators, faculty, students and their families proudly celebrate Brockton High School's eleven years named as an International Center for Leadership in Education Model School and five years of earning a U.S. News Best High Schools Bronze Medal, to name a few achievements. This celebration and pride extends to the several years of increasing record numbers of students receiving John and Abigail Adams Scholarships (293 graduates of the 2014 class). The high regard and celebrity of Brockton High School's academic achievement brings a myriad of educator visitors from throughout the nation annually, as well as recognition from leading education researchers and writers such as Mike Schmoker, and national publications including *The New Yorker* magazine. Included in the accolades and awards celebrated are the most recent 2014 achievements: multiple Posse Scholarships, State Theatre Awards, DECA Awards, Gold Key Art Awards, JROTC Governor's Cup, National Track and Field qualification, and state qualifications in both National History Day and Science Fair competitions.

The celebrated and continuous academic achievement and student success, which Brockton High School has become synonymous with, is a result of a decade of leadership built upon a four-step process of (a) empowering a team, (b) focusing on literacy, (c) designing and disseminating scripted professional development focused on the implementation of school-wide literacy instruction, and (d) monitoring student work with collaborative conversations and making revisions based on this analysis of student work and subsequent data. The implementation of this process occurs through the efforts of the restructuring committee, co-chaired by the curriculum and instruction administrator and a faculty member, and consisting of a diverse representation of administrators, counselors, and teachers. This committee examines existing data, determines student needs and school-wide concerns, consults current research, and brainstorms potential solutions and designs professional development to address the identified needs. Throughout this process, the restructuring committee apprises faculty members of the pertinent information and concerns through the World Café discussion forum and inter-disciplinary meetings. The restructuring committee utilizes the faculty feedback from these forums to continue the process of designing, implementing, monitoring, and revising the professional development in inter-disciplinary and departmental groupings, and Faculty

Expos addressing literacy initiatives. Historically, the literacy initiatives have addressed concerns regarding active reading strategies, non-fiction reading and open response writing, vocabulary, openers and closers, reading visuals, graphic organizers, formative and summative assessments, instructional technology, and classroom management and participation strategies. Prior to and during the 2013-2014 school year, faculty and staff discussions, committee work, and professional development focused on school-wide rubrics and grading policies, teacher evaluation, teacher corrective feedback, advisory, and parental participation.

# **BROCKTON HIGH SCHOOL CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS**

Brockton High School teaches students in a safe, supportive environment the knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors necessary to become responsible and productive members of a diverse society.

## **Rigor**

- Invest in high-quality research-based practices
- Provide an educational program that reflects local, state, and national assessments
- Provide for on-going evaluation and revision of existing courses and programs
- Promote the development and use of “best practices” for effective instructions
- Utilize data to develop curriculum, inform instructional practices, implement interventions, and design professional development
- Establish high academic standards and measure their attainment using a variety of assessments
- Provide access to the technology that supports teaching and learning

## **Relationships**

- Engage with parents, community groups, civic agencies, local businesses, universities, and elected officials as partners in the educational process
- Involve students and parents in setting academic goals and celebrating accomplishments
- Enhancing intellectual and emotional connections among adults and students
- Encourages and fosters positive, working relationships with students, families and the community
- Foster effective communication among staff, students, parents, families, and the community
- Provide a safe, respectful, responsive, and inclusive learning environment that promotes physical, emotional, social, and mental wellness
- Encourages responsible and democratic leadership in community and society

## **Relevance**

- Create a learning environment that models and reflects understanding and appreciation of all cultural identities
- Provide an educational program that reflects local, state, and national assessments
- Provide opportunities and resources to promote student success on local, state and national assessments
- Provide a variety of enrichment programs and extra-curricular activities designed to develop students’ talents, creativity, and self-esteem

- Enhance student access to curriculum through interdisciplinary collaboration
- Strive to meet the individual needs of our students by promoting greater personalization within the learning communities of the school
- Provide for on-going evaluation and revision of existing courses and program
- Monitor and ensure personal growth through assessment, decision-making and goal-setting

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Expectations**

Across all disciplines, students will demonstrate:

### **Academic Skills**

- Literacy in reading, writing, speaking and reasoning
- Innovation, flexibility and adaptability in thinking patterns and work habits
- Frame, analyze, and synthesize information in order to solve problems, answer questions, and apply (*knowledge*) to new situations
- Creativity through self-expression

### **Civic and Social Skills**

- Appreciation, respect, and understanding of similarities and differences among people
- Personal responsibility, character, and ethical behavior
- Cooperation and collaboration to solve problems and accomplish goals

### **Technological Skills**

- Productive use and understanding of technology
- Use of technology to obtain, exchange, evaluate, and organize information
- Ability to select appropriate technology for a given task

**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES, INC.**

**COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION**

**For High Schools, Middle/High Schools, and K-12 Schools  
Effective for Schools Hosting Visiting Committees beginning in the Year 2005**

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**Teaching and Learning Standards**

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

**Curriculum**

**Instruction**

**Assessment of and for Student Learning**

**1**

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

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

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

## Conclusions

The school community successfully engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. At Brockton High School, a sub-committee of teachers and administrators identified key integral skills for Brockton High School students to achieve in order to be deemed successful and was responsible for crafting and editing the identified skills into the core values and beliefs document that is ubiquitous throughout the school, on the school's website, in classrooms, and in published documents such as the student-parent handbook. Parent participation was limited, although there were opportunities for parents to participate and contribute. Similarly, student input in crafting the document was modest; however, the core values and beliefs document was submitted to the student advisory committee after the document was completed. Faculty, parents, and students were able to articulate in general terms the school's mission statement and core values. Therefore, since the administrators and faculty and staff members continue to utilize a focused and formal process for articulating the core values, then students, teachers, and parents will be able to reference the core values and learning expectations, and will be able to better comprehend the connections between the daily school activities and the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, school leadership team, parents, teachers, students)

The school has challenging and measurable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, civic, and technology competencies, yet, at this time, most of the elements of the academic expectation and the elements of the technology expectation are not adequately defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. The identified 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for students at Brockton High School are based upon the core values and focus on academic, civic and social, and technological skills. As articulated, the expectations are measurable; however, the school-wide rubrics for the learning expectations, which are still only in draft form, focus primarily on literacy standards (i.e., the speaking, reasoning, reading, and writing rubrics specifically address the first bullet under academic expectations), although there is a school-wide rubric that addresses the civic and social skills. However, there is no evidence of a school-wide rubric that specifically address the other bulleted strands of academic expectation (i.e., innovation, synthesizing, and creativity). Furthermore, the technology expectation, which is a discrete learning expectation, is embedded to a limited degree within the academic rubric focusing on academic reasoning, but there is no school-wide rubric that directly addresses the three skills listed for demonstrating success in technology skills. Teachers articulate the use of school-wide rubrics synonymously when using the literacy objective rubrics, and modify them to reflect content within their classes, mitigating the effectiveness of having school-wide rubrics. The school-wide rubrics use a common language between them in identifying levels of achievement: exemplary, proficient, progressing, and emerging. Students use the rubrics inconsistently; however, with evidence of students scoring themselves across individual cells rather than assessing their level of

achievement. The civic and social rubric is aligned well with the expectations on the core values document. Consequently, while the school has challenging and measurable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, civic, and technology competencies, when there are sufficiently defined school-wide analytic rubrics for all learning expectations, students will be able to fully attain the targeted high levels of achievement defined in the school-wide rubrics. (panel presentation, observation, school leadership team, teachers, students)

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, yet the school-wide analytic rubrics are not fully developed and evident in curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and are in the process of guiding the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. During the 2012-2013 academic year the new core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations were created and adopted by Brockton High School. Brockton High School's implementation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations are an outgrowth and extension of the literacy program focusing on reading, writing, speaking, and reasoning that was created in 2002. The core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations include all the identified key elements under the headings of rigor, relevance, and relationships, and the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations address the development of skills across all disciplines that focus on academic skills, civic and social skills, and technology skills. The focus on literacy includes evidence-based reading, writing, speaking, and reasoning in all subject areas in all classes on a daily basis. Brockton High School promotes academic rigor and personalization to meet the individual needs of its diverse student body. Teachers express high expectations for all students to achieve at high levels. There are adequate amounts of support to accelerate student learning and interventions and extra support is readily provided as needed. For example, students have access to rigorous IB and AP classes and dual enrollment courses at local colleges. Targeted intervention for students is provided through the school's direct academic study program, and the adjustment counselors work collaboratively with teachers and assistant housemasters on a regular basis. Brockton High School is a nurturing and safe environment that supports, celebrates, and builds upon school pride and students' academic and social accomplishments. Some examples include the "Random Acts of Kindness" program, the school's peer mediation program, the numerous business and community partnerships, the periodic school spirit days, and the school newspaper (Boxer Round Up). The focus on literacy includes evidence-based writing in all subject areas in all classes on a daily basis. Teachers utilize a variety of department-crafted, and subject-specific rubrics and success criteria to assess student work on a regular basis. Brockton High School has yet to implement the school-wide rubrics for the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations in all disciplines. Since the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, they drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, they are truly reflected in the culture of the school. (panel presentation, observation, school leadership team, teachers, students)

The school is not in the process of reviewing and revising its core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities. Rather Brockton High School is in implementation and monitoring phases regarding the new core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Nonetheless, the school regularly reviews and assesses data from a variety of sources, including Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and subject area benchmarks to inform and guide the school's literacy strategies and professional development needs. A clear, coherent, scripted school-wide professional development plan for teachers is directly informed by data from standardized testing and subject-specific benchmarks primarily related to literacy. Teachers engage in research-based professional development which promotes and supports their school-wide core values of rigor, relevance, and relationships. Some examples of this include text-based discussions on the book *Teach Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov, and the partnership with the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE), which was founded by Dr. Willard Dagget. These school-wide professional development opportunities have led to greater consistency in a common academic language and instructional strategies which are grounded in research and based on effective practice that promotes the school's core values of rigor, relevancy, and relationships. However, the school has yet to establish a formal, consistent, and uniform process to monitor and assess the impact of the 21<sup>st</sup> century core values, beliefs, and the 21<sup>st</sup> century expectations on student learning. Continued and ongoing application, review, and refinement of the new core values, beliefs, and learning expectations will ensure that the guiding concepts will be fully incorporated into all disciplines and all aspects of the school. Therefore, when the administration and faculty review and modify the core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations based on research and multiple data sources, they will continue to promote a strong, positive culture that drives curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom and guides the school's policies, procedures, decisions and resource allocations. (self-study, observation, school leadership team, teachers, students)

### **Commendations:**

1. The extent to which the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are embedded in the culture of the school
2. The clearly written, accessible, and easily identifiable core values and beliefs document
3. The academic, civic and social, and technological skills that are clearly defined
4. The civic and social rubric that is aligned to the core values document
5. The terminology of desired level of achievement that is consistent across the developed school-wide rubrics for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
6. The core values and beliefs that serve as the basis for the school culture

7. The school-wide focus on literacy and evidence-based writing across all subject areas
8. The high expectations for student learning and academic achievement
9. The school's engagement in a collaborative and consistent process to collect and disaggregate MCAS data and data from content-specific benchmarks to inform professional development and to assess school-wide goals

**Recommendations:**

1. Design and implement school-wide analytic rubrics that address all stated academic expectations for student learning
2. Design and implement a technological rubric that specifically addresses the technological skills stated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Provide the faculty and staff members with professional development regarding the design and implementation of the school-wide rubrics for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
4. Ensure that there is a collaborative system in place to monitor, quantify, and assess the school-wide impact of the core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations on individual student learning and on the collective learning of the student body
5. Ensure that the school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.
6. Ensure student input in decisions related to the review and revision of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
7. Ensure active parent participation in decisions related to the review and revision of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

## 2

## Curriculum

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

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

## Conclusions

The curriculum in some areas is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Some areas of the written curriculum (e.g., guidance department) shows clear alignment with the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, containing specific references to each area of the expectations, along with a variety of instructional strategies and assessment practices. Some areas of the written curriculum (e.g., mathematics) are available only in the form of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and do not indicate any specific alignment to the Brockton High School 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Some areas of the written curriculum (e.g., science) are only partially completed and contain specific information relative to only a few of the courses offered by the department and with limited references to the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Nonetheless, examples of the implementation of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations as taught in the classroom were observed in a variety of areas across the curriculum. Literacy is stressed throughout the school's curriculum as taught in the classroom on a daily basis. Students are asked to write regularly in academic classes as well as in classes traditionally categorized as elective (e.g., chorus, ceramics). The curriculum does reflect innovation, flexibility, and adaptability in response to new and developing areas of study (e.g., the new bio-tech program, television production studio). Project-based instruction which provides students with the opportunity to frame, analyze, and synthesize information in order to solve problems, answer questions, and apply knowledge to new situations can be found in different disciplines such as the English department. Creativity and self-expression are encouraged widely throughout the curriculum (e.g., in ceramics where students create products which are representative of themselves and their culture, and are encouraged to explore their artistic interests beyond the scope of the course). A system of school-wide rubrics that will assess the civic and social skills elements of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, applicable to every discipline, is currently under development. When complete, these rubrics can be used to assess and document the development of students' civic and social skills. In terms of the elements of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations keyed toward technology, students in the classroom are asked to use a variety of technology from Elmo projectors and projected images of the computer screen to accessing web-assisted learning opportunities (e.g., Moodle) on classroom computers and mobile telephones. Students use this technology to exchange, evaluate, and organize information. Classroom teachers instruct students how to understand the technological resources available to them and how to use these resources productively. However, the technology at Brockton High School is "woefully inadequate to provide students with 21<sup>st</sup> century instruction and skills" (Brockton Public Schools: Entry Plan, 2014, p. 16). Hence, there is a need to increase the availability and quality of targeted research-based, computer-assisted interventions. Hence, once the curriculum has been purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, then all students will be able to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the school has established for all students. (self-study, facility tour, observation, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers, students)

The curriculum does not utilize a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; rarely references the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; occasionally provides a variety of instructional strategies; and infrequently suggests a variety of assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. Each curriculum is written in a format unique to the individual discipline, rather than utilizing a format common to all disciplines. Some disciplines refer to the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; provide a variety of instructional strategies; and suggest a variety of assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. However, these references, provisions, and suggestions are not universal across all disciplines and do not follow a common format, although there are some common threads in most curricular areas (i.e., instructional strategies such as openers, closers, written agendas, daily objectives). Some departments provided only the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework as the written curriculum, with no reference to essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; instructional strategies; and significant tasks or assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics. Therefore, when curriculum for all disciplines is written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; instructional strategies; and significant tasks/assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics, teachers, students, and parents will understand what is expected in all curricular areas. (self-study, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

The curriculum generally emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, frequently employs higher order thinking, employs cross-disciplinary learning where practicable, consistently employs authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and often employs informed and ethical use of technology. Teachers are careful to emphasize depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving when they asked students to research topics on current events or to solve mathematics problems in multiple ways. Students in several disciplines (e.g., English, bio-tech, and world languages classes) are encouraged to develop their own questions in conducting research and to function as independent and empowered learners, thus developing their higher order thinking skills. Teachers in disciplines as diverse as English, chorus, and ceramics actively look for ways to make cross-disciplinary connections naturally and meaningfully to enrich students' understanding and appreciation of the material. Programs such as the Fine Arts Café, the branch of Harbor One Bank, DECA, the auto tech program, the electrical engineering tech program, the sustainable garden, and the peer mentoring and tutoring program provide students with authentic learning opportunities inside the school. Internships available in the local community (e.g., in doctors' offices or local hospitals) provide students with authentic learning opportunities outside of school. Teachers reinforce the informed and ethical use of technology in the classroom, by both modeling the use of technology when it is made available to them by the school, and by monitoring the use of technology owned and brought to school by their students. Hence, when the

curriculum consistently emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, as well as informed and ethical use of technology, the students will be successful in achieving the core values and expectations for student learning and will more readily see the connections between what is being learned in school and what they experience outside of school. (observation, facility tour, parents, teachers, students)

There is little clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum. Written materials from the guidance department seem to represent the curriculum as it is actually taught in the classroom, and make reference to the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The various lesson plans included in the materials (e.g., from mathematics; science; and business, technology, and career education) are aligned to state standards and often make reference to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. They seem to represent the individual lessons as they are actually taught in the classroom. However, an over-arching written curriculum is lacking. The world languages curriculum presents a fully detailed course of study for all languages taught at Brockton High School throughout grades 9-12. The world languages curriculum has been aligned with the Common Core State Standards and the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning. However, this curriculum lacks clear references to the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The JROTC curriculum is highly detailed and clearly represents the course of study studied by students enrolled in that program through detailed plans for every lesson. However, this curriculum also lacks clear references to the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Consequently, when the school emphasizes clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum, parents and students will be ensured that the result will be a cohesive curriculum. (self-study, observation, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist informally between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district. Brockton High School "would do well to replicate the K-8 alignment of the curriculum" within the district and to promote greater integration of technology in all curriculum areas (Brockton Public Schools: Entry Plan, 2014, p. 15). At the present time, departments coordinate the implementation of their literacy strategies between individual courses within the school, as well as on the departmental level. There is clear collaboration between and among members of each department. This collaboration is facilitated by the "office suite" arrangement in departments. The steering committees within the departments provide a structure for coordinating efforts to continually adapt and update the curriculum, as well as to implement changes. The world languages curriculum clearly delineates the vertical alignment between the high school and middle school programs across all languages. Personnel in the district office, in coordination with department heads at the high school, facilitate the vertical alignment of curriculum between the middle school and high school levels of the disciplines (e.g. English, language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science). The school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations (specifically with respect to literacy training) are being implemented in some middle school programs. Therefore, when there is planned,

effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district, all students will have increased opportunities to experience curricular consistency in terms of scope and sequence district-wide. (self-study, observation, central office administrators, school leadership team, department heads, teachers)

Instructional materials, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center varies in the level to which it is sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. However, staffing levels and technology are insufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. The school is able to staff all areas of the curriculum. New courses are able to be added to the curriculum, and can be staffed when they are added to the adopted curriculum (e.g., the sculpting course added this year in the art department). Sufficient instructional materials exist to fully implement the curriculum; however, there is a shortage of textbooks for some classes. Despite this, teachers are proactive in working around the lack of books. Teachers supply some classroom instructional materials. Each teacher has a classroom computer available, and computer projectors exist in all classrooms. Computer laboratories are available for some disciplines on a sign-out basis (e.g., world languages) and as dedicated spaces for others (e.g., mathematics). However, these computer labs often have an insufficient number of machines to allow each student to have his or her own, which restricts the school's ability to implement the curriculum fully. An instructional resource center or access center exists in each house of the school. These spaces provide additional technological resources for students, along with library materials and a place to work. One IRC is available for student use each day after school. Some teachers are altering lessons and lesson plans due to inability to access technological resources, whether due to malfunctioning equipment, lack of computer lab space, or restricted numbers of computers. The lack of available technology prevents some teachers from fully implementing the curriculum. Other equipment is generally sufficient to allow the curriculum to be fully implemented. However, lack of functioning fume hoods in the science labs prevents the implementation of certain lessons or laboratory experiments. School facilities are generally sufficient to allow teachers space to work and teach their classes. The school has facilities to house co-curricular programs (e.g., auto and electronics labs, the cooking programs, and the Fine Arts Café). However, some spaces (e.g., science labs) lack sufficient space for the number of students assigned to the class. Many classrooms are completely full or overcrowded, making it difficult for teachers to implement the curriculum fully (e.g., difficulty conducting laboratory experiments in science classes where class enrollment often exceeds the number of designed work stations) and raising questions about the safety of the conditions under standards established by OSHA and ADA. It was noted that many overcrowded classes are taught next door to empty rooms. When the staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are generally sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities, students and the larger community reap the

benefits. (self-study, observation, facility tour, school leadership team, parents, teachers, students)

The district provides the school's professional staff with insufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. Steering committees exist within each department. Individuals who serve on the steering committees receive a stipend for their service and are responsible for revising and updating curriculum. However, there are insufficient financial resources to fund these committees fully. Nonetheless, some individuals continue their work when the funds run out, while others did not. Steering committees are sufficiently staffed, being composed of approximately a quarter of the members of each department. Beyond the work of the steering committees, time for the development, evaluation, and revision of curriculum is allotted as a portion of selected faculty meetings that are convened twice per month after school hours. Many faculty members concur that there is insufficient time to engage in formal curriculum evaluation, review, and revision work. Informal collaboration exists within the office suite structure in each house. Teachers make use of these opportunities to revise and evaluate curriculum. The restructuring committee, literacy subcommittee, curriculum supervisors, and school-wide administrators cull school-wide data from state reported data for MCAS, school-wide analysis of student work, statistics pertaining to student achievement in a myriad of programs, assessments, as well as academic, artistic, and entrepreneurial competitions and opportunities. This information includes students achieving honor roll status, John and Abigail Adams Scholarship recipients, National Honor Society inductions, Foreign Language Honor Society members, college applications and acceptances, Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), SAT II, ACT, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate scores, A++ Certification, and the certified nursing assistant (CNA) certifications. The restructuring committee reviews school-wide data to examine which skills students are using to complete these assessments and to earn their commendations. At the school-wide level these data are employed to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the school's literacy initiative. The department heads use these data in conjunction with the steering committees to determine what elements of the curriculum need to be revised or updated. Hence, when the district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research, parents, students, and the community at-large will be assured that students are engaged in learning that will prepare them for their future endeavors. (self-study, observation, survey, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

### **Commendations:**

1. The curriculum developed by the guidance department that is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
2. The school's commitment to developing literacy skills

3. The ease with which teachers are able to make cross-disciplinary connections naturally and meaningfully
4. The variety of authentic learning opportunities available for students in some classes
5. The alignment with the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations that is observable in individual lesson plans provided by some departments
6. The structure of steering committees in each department that streamlines the adaptation and revision of curriculum
7. The culture existing within the school that consistently makes the best use of what materials exist and creatively acquires supplemental materials when necessary
8. The emphasis on depth of understanding
9. The use of data to determine which skills students are using, the effectiveness of the literacy initiative, and to identify areas of revision within in the curriculum

### **Recommendations:**

1. Design and implement the curriculum purposefully across all departments to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
2. Develop and implement written curriculum guides for all disciplines with a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; references that are aligned with the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; provides instructional strategies; and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics
3. Articulate in a written curricular format, standard to all disciplines, how the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology
4. Formalize a system of effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district
5. Ensure the availability of technological resources in order to fully implement the school's curriculum and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
6. Ensure the availability of textbooks for all students when applicable in the class to fully implement the school's curriculum and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations

7. Implement measures to reduce class size, particularly in areas where there are limited work stations, and make better use of available space to enable teachers to fully implement the school's 21<sup>st</sup> learning expectations
8. Promote and support the effective integration of technology in data analysis in curriculum areas to enhance lessons, support interventions, and engage students
9. Provide teachers with ongoing differentiated professional development program to effectively infuse technology into the curriculum to support, extend, and enhance their classroom practice

# 3

## Instruction

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

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

## Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practices are often examined to ensure consistency with some of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. All teachers at Brockton High School are required to complete a training program focusing on the literacy initiative during their first year of teaching. To ensure attendance and completion, the administration modifies teachers' schedules with regard to their prep and duty periods to ensure that workshops are completed during the school day. These training sessions, conducted by the two instructional resource specialists, introduce the newly hired teachers to the Brockton High School initiatives on open response questions, active reading strategies, and reading visuals. Through a new teacher evaluation system, administrators and department heads review lesson plans to ensure literacy components are included in all subject areas. In addition to subject objectives, a literacy objective is required. Staff participation in workshops focused on teaching strategies from the book *Teach Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov promotes different methods to hold students responsible for adhering to the school's core values, beliefs, and, to a degree, the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. These methods include cold calling, no opt out, everybody writes, and upgrading. Other than the literacy components, there is little or no evidence that aspects of the academic expectations, and the civil and social, and technological aspects of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations are being examined on a regular basis. When teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with all the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, students have an enhanced ability to meet all the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, school leadership team, teachers)

Teachers' instructional practices often support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations by personalizing instruction; engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning; sometimes engaging students as active and self-directed learners; emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking; applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; regularly engaging students in self-assessment and reflection; and integrating technology when possible. There are many examples of personalization in the classrooms at Brockton High School. A physical education teacher adapted instruction for an injured student by offering projects that meet the needs of the students (physical therapy) while addressing the wellness goals of the class. Bilingual teachers worked with students in their native language in English, mathematics, science and medical interpretation classes. ELL teachers allowed students to choose their method of reviewing for tests from a menu of choices. A social studies teacher had students bring six objects that define who the students are and share them with the class to get to know the students. The JROTC instructor used a survey on strengths and weaknesses for all member students as part of the curriculum. Many teachers worked with students after school in the cafeteria. In ceramics, students created vessels inspired by their community and that they can identify with. A mathematics teacher used student names when giving examples to solve a problem. In a social studies class, a teacher had students write about personal experiences. In wellness classes, freshmen described the healthiest person they know and completed a survey on their own wellness; other students wrote about times

when they felt stressed and in cardio-fitness class, students recorded their steps and calculated their mileage. In a Spanish IB class, the students presented PowerPoint presentations about their own lives while their classmates chose what notes to take based upon the presentation. When the Chinese teacher was out on maternity leave, she went out of her way to communicate with her students via phone or meeting on her own time to assure that they had access to practicing their language skills. Examples of cross-disciplinary learning were evident in almost all classes by virtue of including literacy objectives in each class. Additionally, in the cooking class, it was evident when the students learned about fractions in relation to measurement of ingredients. In a freshman social studies class, the students read an article about Ebola and wellness. In an algebra class, students read an article about hunger and addressed problem solving. Students translated medical terminology into their native language in medical interpretation class. Poetry reading was included in the chorus class. There was a word wall in the video production class. In cardio-fitness, students used mathematics to calculate mileage, mean, median and created graphs of their fitness activities. Student work showed examples of reading and visual literacy in science classes. There were some examples of engaging students as active and self-directed learners, but this was not pervasive in a majority of classes. Examples were evident in the ELL chemistry class when the teacher asked the students “What is it you should have learned?” Many teachers posed questions to the students based on homework and class work. In theater technology, students are given the opportunity to work on the crew to apply skills used in class. The JROTC curriculum had self-paced options in each lesson plan. In video production, students were responsible for organizing, planning and executing projects. In a bilingual English class, students looked up synonyms and shared words in their own languages, and in the bilingual mathematics class they asked questions of each other. Students brainstormed and contributed to a list of characteristics of a good friend in a freshman English class. There were also a few examples emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking including ranking characteristics of a friend in an English class. In the medical interpretation class, students were able to make meaning of complex words. Teachers often used the reasoning rubric in mathematics, science, and languages courses. Students participated in a project on biology and biotechnology about insects that included field trips on an ecology walk, to Nantucket, Boston College (to study urban ecology), and summer research. In this project, they took photos, collected samples, counted, labeled, and described different species. While there were examples of applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, the application of knowledge and skills on authentic tasks was not evident in many classes. Authentic applications were evident in nursing classes where students learn to wash hands, make beds while earning their CNA or cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification. In the theater arts classes and in video production, students built sets that were used in theater productions and set up shots working with video equipment. Students with disabilities made craft products and sold them to the school community during lunch periods. Students in the bilingual English as a Second Language (ESL) class learned to write thank you notes to the substitute teacher who was there for a month. Examples of engaging students in self-assessment and reflection were discussed in art classes where students reflected on the process of creating art paying attention to their growth and their frustrations. In a mathematics class, students

wrote letters to themselves about their grades on report card day. Guidance counselors visited classrooms multiple times per year, and asked students to reflect on their successes in their freshman year. In chorus, students were asked to reflect on their singing. In JROTC, students wrote and discussed their reflections on health and nutrition. In the ELL chemistry class, the students used mind maps. From student work, it was evident where students often self-assessed using a class-specific or assignment-specific rubric. During student shadowing and in discussions with teachers, there were examples of classes using an exit ticket and closer activities as a way of reflecting before students leave the classroom. In the drama class, students were to review videos of their work and reflect on the criteria given by the teacher. Examples in the classroom integrating technology include use of Elmos and overhead projectors in many classrooms. A freshman social studies teacher used Moodle for the students to access readings on their own computers or smartphones. An English teacher modeled the Modern Language Association (MLA) format using an overhead projector to demonstrate to students how to format their essays. Some teachers used Engrade as a portal for student work. A pre-calculus teacher used a Starboard to demonstrate changes in cosine and sine as the angle changes. In JROTC, the teacher used the SMART Board to show slides of an Army-prepared PowerPoint presentation. In the video production class, students used editing software, computers and video equipment. In a junior honors English class, the students used the computer lab to access the class Moodle site. In a college prep 11<sup>th</sup> grade social studies class, students used online research databases to work on National History Day project. In the medical interpretation class, the students used the computer lab to access Edmodo and Google Docs. There was a Socratic quiz available for students as well. A teacher in the business classes had students use Windows 7 and Microsoft Excel. The same teacher taught coding in 21<sup>st</sup> century technology expectations and then used iPads to show how the apps work. Word processing, videos online (YouTube) and on CD were used in a variety of classes as well. Additionally, there are courses offered in engineering, robots, manufacturing technology, and information technology that afford students the opportunity to authentically apply knowledge and skills. Since many teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning, engaging students in self-assessment and reflection, and integrating technology, their students are positioned to meet each of their academic, civic and social, and technology expectations for learning. When all teachers do likewise, all students will be in a position to meet each of the Brockton High School academic, civic and social, and technology expectations for learning. (self-study, observation, teachers, students)

Teachers often adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment, especially during instructional time; in most instances strategically differentiating; purposefully organizing group learning activities; and frequently providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Brockton High School teachers have a strong commitment to providing quality instruction. They consistently use openers and closers in organizing their lesson plans and in teaching. Their strategies may include asking for prior recall of a definition or concept based on their knowledge of information from courses that are prerequisites

for their course. At times, teachers may be asking for information in a starter activity that encourages students to make connections from life skills or from cross-curriculum information. For example, an art teacher asked for students to identify community attributes, a mathematics teacher asked for recall of terminology, and a theatre teacher asked students to use higher thinking skills to create a movement presentation. Teachers are strategically differentiating instruction by asking questions to have students check their understanding of a topic. It may be an adjustment in explaining an assignment to different students in a bilingual class, or it may involve clarification of a vocabulary definition through an activity in which all students are involved but the teacher takes time to clarify information for individual students. Teachers are also involved in organizing group activities that also reinforce the learning that is taking place. This may happen in paired activities where students practice newly learned skills or in group activities where students work together in a technology or science class to explain a process. Teachers are also sensitive to providing alternative strategies for learning. For example, in ESL classes, it may involve a “fun” alternative activity to reinforce vocabulary development. Students at Brockton High School feel comfortable with the individualized attention they receive even in large classes because teachers have created a receptive, positive atmosphere where the lesson often includes an opener and closer, a strong teaching unit, and a literacy strategy. Teachers often use graphic organizers to support student learning. Consequently, because teachers embed formative assessment within their lessons and accommodate individual learners by strategically differentiating instruction, purposefully organizing group-learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom, they are providing quality instruction; therefore, all stakeholders can be assured that students are provided the support they need to achieve the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, observation, teachers, students)

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by frequently using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments; extensively examining student work; sometimes using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers and supervisors; examining current research; and across the school, engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. At Brockton High School, teachers participate in a World Café in which small groups of teachers meet together in interdisciplinary groups to discuss instructional topics centered on essential questions developed by the restructuring committee. A teacher mentor program is also a method in which Brockton High School staff engages in professional discourse in which feedback is shared. There are nine scheduled meetings throughout the year between the mentor and mentee. Each meeting has a topic that guides the discourse and training. Through the teacher evaluation system there is feedback given to the teachers from a supervisor. Supervisors are either department heads or housemasters. However, there is no method by which parent feedback regarding instruction is collected and analyzed. Through analysis of data from assessments, the nursing staff realized that there was a deficiency in vocabulary retention. This was in the third year course. The teachers then modified their instruction in the lower level courses to increase vocabulary retention in continuing students. Examples of student work in regards to the literacy initiative (essays) are collected and analyzed by

administration and department heads. This drives changes to instruction. Periodically, cross-disciplinary meetings specifically assess student open response writing samples and the subsequent teacher feedback and rubric scores for improving instruction and assessment of open responses. There was an inconsistency in regards to “benchmark” exams that teachers administer. Some tests and their results were given to department heads. It varied from department to department how or even if the data was then presented back to the teachers to help modify instruction. Social studies teachers are able to access unit, or benchmark test scores through the software program Test Wiz, allowing them to analyze classroom data based on prior exams and current class performance. However, the results from these tests are not often shared nor discussed. In faculty meetings, teachers review the results from MCAS as a whole, with item analysis conducted by members of the school-wide restructuring committee and steering committees in the English, mathematics, and science departments. Teachers at Brockton High School are actively implementing an initiative in which corrective feedback is emphasized. Depending on the subject, some course evaluation surveys are filled out by the students, for the teachers to read and utilize in their instructional modification. It is evident that the current research in the book *Teach Like A Champion* is being utilized regularly in the teacher mentor program. Given teachers’ ongoing commitment to improve their instructional practices, individually and collaboratively, by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments; examining student work; using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents; examining current research; and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, they employ best practices for each student. (self-study, panel presentation, observation, teachers, school leadership team, students)

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, actively maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Brockton High School teachers are committed to ongoing reflection as adult learners. They model to their students what learning is all about. Teachers are enthusiastic about their commitment to improving their skills to be 21<sup>st</sup> century learners themselves. Teachers have consistently been involved in professional development, which included training in Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL), Moodle, WriterKey, Math Sheltered English Program (MSEP), Probe Training, Inquiry Training, World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) training, and Access Training courses, among others. Many teachers have also organized teacher-led training for fellow teachers at Brockton High School. The steering committee, made up of teachers who want to improve the learning community, focuses on Common Core State Standards. The literacy initiative training meets bi-monthly to develop literacy prompts in order to train teachers and to implement literacy in the classroom. A majority of teachers have a master’s degree and a smaller number of teachers have a doctorate for a total of approximately 80 percent who have earned advanced degrees. Teachers clearly recognize the importance of training and being an active learner. There is consensus that the training helps to relate literacy standards to subject areas. The district-wide goal of growth in writing through corrective feedback is clearly in evidence in the classrooms of

Brockton High School. Since teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices, parents and students can be ensured that the curriculum will be up-to-date, relevant, and purposeful. (self-study, observation, school leadership team, teachers)

### **Commendations:**

1. The weekly review by department heads of teacher lesson plans that ensure the inclusion of the Brockton High School literacy initiative
2. The commitment of the restructuring committee to improve instruction
3. The literacy training program in which all new Brockton High School teachers are required to participate, and the school's willingness to rearrange schedules so that teachers participate in the program during school hours
4. The extensive use of personalization of instruction in both electives and core academic classes
5. The broad engagement of students in cross-disciplinary learning, including the use of literacy objectives in all curricular areas
6. The widespread engagement of students in self-assessment and reflection
7. The facilitation of cooperation and collaboration of students in academic and elective classes
8. The differentiation within the classroom for various student interests and abilities
9. The use of small groups to promote and reinforce learning
10. The use of alternative strategies to pace instruction for all levels of student learning
11. The commitment of the world languages department to using common assessments and course rubrics to inform instruction
12. The practice among teachers of reflecting on being lifelong learners and modeling that within the school and to the community
13. The commitment among teachers to excellence in education by participating in ongoing professional development
14. The teachers' willingness to share their expertise both formally and informally
15. The teacher mentoring program

## **Recommendations:**

1. Ensure that instructional strategies address all the components of the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations in all disciplines
2. Ensure that all teachers are regularly engaging students as active and self-directed learners, emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking, and applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Ensure that all teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning, engaging students in self-assessment and reflection, and integrating technology, their students are positioned to meet each of their academic, civic and social, and technology expectations for learning
4. Develop and implement a method by which parent feedback regarding instruction is collected and analyzed

**4**

**Assessment of and for Student Learning**

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

1. The professional staff continuously employs a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
2. The school's professional staff communicates:
  - individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to students and their families
  - the school's progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to the school community.
3. Professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.
4. Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed.
5. Prior to summative assessments, teachers provide students with the corresponding rubrics.
6. In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments.
7. Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments.
8. Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work.
9. Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.

10. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following:
  - student work
  - common course and common grade-level assessments
  - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
  - standardized assessments
  - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
  - survey data from current students and alumni.
  
11. Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

## Conclusions

The professional staff does not employ a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. While the open response literacy rubric, by design, aligns with the school's literacy objectives, Brockton High School has not adopted a formal process or implemented school-wide rubrics for all of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Although Brockton High School has some school-wide rubrics and a variety of teacher and course-specific rubrics that measure student progress, there is no evidence of an aligned school-wide rubric for all components of the academic (other than the literacy components of reading, writing, speaking, and reasoning) and technological skills of the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Teachers need to have "access to relevant and reliable data sources to make informed instructional sources" (Brockton Public Schools: Strategic Plan, 2014, p. 6). As part of their overall learning experience, at this time students only minimally understand the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. When the professional staff continuously employs a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, they will more effectively be able to understand the degree to which students, individually and collectively, are realizing their 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, students)

The school's professional staff does not communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to students and their families and does not communicate the school's progress in achieving the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to the school community. As a result of not having clearly defined 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectation rubrics or a process to collect data from school-wide rubrics, Brockton High School is not able to report individual student or school-wide success in meeting the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Although teachers use multiple sources to communicate course-specific objectives and learning expectations (e.g., email, Engrade, Remind101, Edmodo, Moodle, and WriterKEY), there is no formal system to collect, store, and communicate to the community at-large the individual and collective degree to which students achieve the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Hence, once the school's professional staff regularly communicates individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to students and their families and the school's progress in achieving the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to the school community, parents, students, and the community-at-large will understand the progress that individual students and the school is making to achieve the knowledge, skills, and dispositions established by the school. (self-study, panel presentation, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Professional staff consistently collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data in some areas to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. Although the professional staff periodically collaborates to examine the results of state and national assessments, predominately MCAS, WIDA, and literacy initiative data, there is little evidence that they review other formative assessment data on a regular basis to

disaggregate and determine patterns of inequities. Nonetheless there is a clear dedication among the faculty and staff members to close the achievement gaps for all students. Although there are examples of addressing inequities in learning throughout the school, there is a less formal process for collecting, disaggregating, and analyzing data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. Considering the sporadic systems in place for collecting, disaggregating, and analyzing data, there are pockets of excellence across some departments including the mathematics department (which administers benchmark exams to students taking specific courses and disaggregates and analyzes the results), bilingual teachers (who use the results from Access Testing to respond to inequities in student achievement), and guidance counselors (who use a variety of assessment results to assist students). Brockton High School needs to “promote and support effective integration of technology in data analysis to efficiently identify student areas of strength and needs and modify instruction accordingly to improve student performance” (Brockton Public Schools: Strategic Plan, 2014, p. 6). By improving the student information management system and making use of the available components of the system, teachers will be provided with access to relevant and reliable data sources to make informed instructional decisions, to promote the use of data for an improved single source access to data and longitudinal studies, and to maintain a comprehensive storage solution for backup, disaster recovery, and e-mail archiving. In addition, administrators and teachers will have access to relevant and reliable data sources as the basis for their decision-making process (including formal and informal, formative and summative, and the data derived from common assessments and performance tasks), and they will develop a collaborative culture that uses data to improve instructional practice. Consequently, when the professional staff regularly collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement, each parent and student can ensure that the professional staff will be in a better position to make decisions that will impact the learning of each student. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, students)

Prior to each unit of study, teachers do not communicate to students the school’s applicable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. Although most teachers clearly state day-to-day learning objectives, there is little or no reference to the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations as they relate to the course content. As a result, students have little understanding of what is expected of them in terms of what is stated in the school’s 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Only a slight majority of teachers believe that they communicate to students the school’s learning expectations, but the school-wide rubrics are only in draft form and are not yet regularly used during daily instruction. When teachers communicate to students, prior to each unit of study, the school’s applicable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed, students have a better understanding of what is expected and what each goal will entail. (self-study, observation, teachers, students)

Prior to summative assessments, teachers often provide students with the corresponding rubrics. Teachers have consistently provided their students with the school-wide open response literacy rubric or course-specific rubrics that are being used to assess student learning on a summative assessment. While few teachers across all

disciplines are using the school-wide rubrics consistently, most teachers use rubrics specifically tailored to the learning needs of students and the course objectives for their lessons. The vast majority of students concur that they understand in advance what work they have to accomplish to meet teacher course expectations. When all teachers provide students with the corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments on a consistent basis, students will understand what is expected in terms of what they have learned in order to attain mastery. (self-study, observation, survey, teachers, students)

In each unit of study, teachers frequently employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. On a school-wide basis, teachers at Brockton High School assess individual student learning through individual assignments, grades, quarterly progress reports, quarterly report cards, analytic scoring rubrics, special education portfolios, content and unit portfolios, oral presentations, departmental benchmarks, and various computer laboratory programs. The overwhelming majority of Brockton High School teachers use a variety and range of assessment strategies. As a result of teachers employing a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments in each unit of study, students can be assured that the assessment strategies will be more reliable in terms of assessing student learning. (self-study, observation, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Teachers are able to collaborate in formal ways on a limited basis regarding the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Formal time to collaborate on a school-wide level is scarce. However, teachers within the same department share an office suite, and the proximity fosters informal collaboration, discussion about content and craft, and formal and informal mentoring on a regular basis. Less regular and formal collaboration time is also found through steering committees, comprised of teachers within the various departments, who work with the department head on matters concerning the department. These steering committees collaborate on the creation of department initiatives and assessments and the review of data, completed summative assessments in some departments, student samples, and other department-specific projects. Department heads schedule and conduct steering committees meetings on a monthly basis throughout the year. Consequently, when teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments, teachers are better able to assess student learning for each student. (self-study, panel presentation, school leadership team, teachers)

Teachers usually provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. Most teachers at Brockton High School have been working on providing students with specific and corrective feedback, with some professional development introducing strategies to help students use the feedback to improve their work. However, the timeliness of the feedback provided to students by a significant number of teachers is an area of concern. While students feel that teachers should provide corrected work in a timelier manner, more than one out of three students indicate that teachers do not assess or correct school work in a reasonable amount of time. When teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise

and improve their work, both teachers and students can better address existing needs. (self-study, observation, survey, teachers, students)

Teachers across the school use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Teachers at Brockton High School use various types of formative assessments. Typically, each class begins with an opener activity, which activates student learning and provides the teacher with insight about a student's ideas or progress at the beginning of class. Teachers end class with a closer activity, which they use as a formative assessment to evaluate how much of the material a student has grasped and can use the results to determine whether or not they must review, reteach, or provide individual students individualized instruction. In addition to the openers and closers, teachers employ many other types of formative assessments, such as self-reflection before and after a quiz, tests or other summative work, formative quizzes and checks for understanding, technological and hard copy surveys, and pre-tests to evaluate which skills to concentrate on during class. Teachers are also seen circulating during individual or group work making general observations about student progress. As a result of teachers regularly using formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning, they are in better positions to assist students in achieving mastery of course objectives. (self-study, panel presentation, observation, teachers, students)

Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, to a limited degree examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following: by regularly reviewing student work; inconsistently using common course and common grade-level assessments; periodically using standardized assessments; using limited data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions; but do not use individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations or survey data from current students and alumni. As a school, Brockton High School personnel considers looking at student work as an important component of assessing and revising curriculum and improving instructional strategies. Brockton High School personnel have focused on looking at student work in the restructuring committee and during department and interdisciplinary school-wide meetings. During these meetings, teachers share student work and discuss the work in relation to its assessment. Brockton High School also uses MCAS results for English, mathematics, and science to track school improvement and target school-wide instructional changes and to monitor individual student progress toward proficiency. Despite regular examination of student work as well as MCAS data, there are significant shortcomings in other types of evidence. Lack of common planning time makes it difficult to use common course and common grade-level assessments. Brockton High School does not have a fully developed process for implementing the school-wide rubrics and assessing the degree to which, individually and collectively, students are achieving the school's adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions is not available on a regular basis or is inconsistent at best. Brockton High School does not survey current students and alumni for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. Therefore, when teachers and

administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following: student work; common course and common grade-level assessments; individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; standardized assessments; data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions; and survey data from current students and alumni, then they will be in a sound position to make changes to all aspects of the learning process to ensure that all students can achieve the academic, civic, and social expectations for learning. (self-study, panel presentation, school leadership team, teachers, students)

Grading and reporting practices are seldom reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. Although teachers individually or collaboratively may review and revise their grading practices in a general manner through the analysis of formative and summative assessments, there is not a formal and regular process in place where grading and reporting practices are reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, and more specifically in regard to the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Consequently, when grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, parents, students, and the community at-large can be assured that they are receiving valid and reliable information regarding student achievement and progress toward meeting the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers)

### **Commendations:**

1. The professional staff's dedication to teaching all students to close achievement gaps
2. The mathematics, bilingual, and guidance departments regularly collect, disaggregate, and analyze data regarding student learning
3. The frequent use of course-specific and school-wide open response literacy rubrics by many teachers
4. The wide variety of assessment strategies
5. The office suite setup that allows for informal collaboration between and among teachers
6. The focus on providing corrective and specific feedback
7. The wide use and range of formative assessments
8. The examination of student work and MCAS data for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice

## **Recommendations:**

1. Develop and implement a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess the whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
2. Develop and implement a system to assess, collect, and communicate to students and their families the individual student progress toward meeting the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Develop and implement a system to assess, collect, and communicate to the community at-large the school-wide progress in achieving the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
4. Develop and implement common summative assessment in all core subjects
5. Develop and implement a formal process to regularly collect, disaggregate, and analyze data within all departments to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement
6. Ensure that all teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed prior to each unit of study
7. Develop and implement a plan for formal department-wide collaboration time to disaggregate and analyze assessment data from a variety of sources
8. Ensure that all teachers provide feedback to students and parents in a timely manner
9. Develop and implement consistent practices to receive data from all sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
10. Implement school-wide rubrics that address the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
11. Develop and implement a system to survey current students and alumni for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practices
12. Develop and implement a formal and regular process to review and revise grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

## **Support of Teaching and Learning Standards**

**School Culture and Leadership**

**School Resources for Learning**

**Community Resources for Learning**

**5**

**School Culture and Leadership**

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

1. The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.
2. The school is equitable, inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
3. There is a formal, ongoing program or process through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
4. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff:
  - engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning
  - use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices
  - dedicate formal time to implement professional development
  - apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
5. School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning.
6. The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.
7. Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students.

8. The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.
9. Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.
10. Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.
11. The school committee, superintendent of schools, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
12. The school committee and superintendent of schools provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

## Conclusions

The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. The parent-student handbook details attendance expectations, discipline expectations, and the equitable treatment of all students. These expectations are monitored, enforced, and revised as evidenced by the recent change to their electronic use policy. Attendance and discipline policies demonstrate high expectations as evidenced by their 90 percent attendance rate. The principal uses a protocol of regularly scheduled meetings to disseminate information and to receive feedback. She addresses the student body via the intercom system on a regular basis. In situations that require immediacy, the building administrators utilize two-way radios to share information efficiently in a timely manner. The comparative annual data from 2011 to present indicate a downward trend of disciplinary actions and incidents of violence. For example, during the 2011-2012 school year, the number of ten-day out-of-school suspensions was 32. During the 2013-2014 school year, the number of ten-day out-of-school suspensions was 24. This downward trend is attributed to changes in the enforcement of the discipline policy. Several interventions have been added prior to a student being removed from school. These interventions include the Freshman Handbook Course, Homework Course, Saturday Work Crew, and the demerit buy back policy. The school focuses effort on programs to improve school climate. Evidence of this includes 42+ clubs including Boxer Buddies, GSA, and Peer Mediation. Since the school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning, the results are shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all that provide an environment where everyone is given the opportunity to succeed and has resulted in sustained learning. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, survey, parents, teachers, students)

The school is generally equitable and inclusive, but does not ensure access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Furthermore, the self-selection process regarding AP and IB courses results in populations within these courses that does not reflect the diversity of the student body. Course level placement for students in core courses is determined on an individual basis by examining data including standardized assessment such as MCAS and WIDA, teacher recommendations, course grades, and other information deemed relevant. Core courses are not heterogeneously grouped, although health and other electives are heterogeneously grouped classes. The Brockton High School administration team and faculty members recognize that they are in the "infancy" stages with regard to fostering heterogeneous core course offerings and are presently exploring the possibility of a heterogeneously grouped the Freshmen World History course. Hence, all students do not have equitable access to all core courses offered by Brockton High School. However, once the school is equitable, inclusive, and ensures access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are

populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, all students will have access to a curriculum designed to help students achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, observation, panel, teachers)

There is no formal, ongoing program or process through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to a school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. There is no formal program or process at Brockton High School which connects an adult in the school (in addition to the school counselor) with a student. Students enrolled at Brockton High School are assigned to a green, red, azure, or yellow house. Each house consists of a housemaster, assistant housemaster, adjustment counselor, and a guidance counselor who seek out students or whom students seek out on a regular basis. All students have a registration room, with a homeroom teacher throughout each school year at Brockton High School. Many students have informal advisory or mentoring relationships with some adults of the school. Sports teams coaches, clubs advisors, and special education liaisons, assigned to special education students, may serve in mentoring relationships with students. The restructuring committee has an advisory sub-committee working on a potential model that may address this indicator in the future. Hence, when there is a formal, ongoing program or process through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations has been implemented, each student in the school has an individual or individuals who regularly serves as an advisor to each student. (self-study, panel, teachers, students)

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff consistently engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning; effectively use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices; purposefully dedicate formal time to implement professional development; and collaboratively apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The Brockton High School faculty makes effective use of formal and informal opportunities to raise questions and reflect on teaching and learning. All faculty members participate in an established protocol known as the World Café. This protocol is used to discuss and give input on the implementation of school-wide initiatives. The restructuring committee is comprised of administrators and faculty who meet to discuss all matters affecting student achievement. This committee meets for four hours, one Saturday a month. Department heads are used effectively in terms of instruction to introduce areas of inquiry, design strategies, and implement strategies for effective teaching. The restructuring committee primarily works to consistently review, design, and implement new and effective strategies directed toward improving instruction and student learning. The school's focus on literacy skills and giving feedback to students are examples of initiatives the restructuring committee assisted in implementing through in-service workshops. Teachers are grouped into common work areas (i.e., teacher suites), which facilitate informal conversations around best practices, sharing of professional resources,

and behavior management techniques and strategies. There is a mentoring program in place for new teachers. During the 2013-2014 school year, mentoring program meetings focused on the Teach like a Champion book by Doug Lemov. Activities which stem from the book are central to the meetings and provide formal instruction for faculty new to the building. Brockton Public Schools provide a variety of in-house, in-district, and out-of-district professional development opportunities. Brockton High School supports professional development and makes use of individual teacher strengths by making space available for teacher-created professional development offered to the faculty in the school and the district. Meetings are held twice per month that can be used to disseminate information and to provide support for new initiatives and the effective implementation of those initiatives. The faculty provides high quality 21<sup>st</sup> century instruction, to the degree possible based upon available instructional supplies, materials, and equipment. Teachers are supported with a system of coordinated, responsive, high-level, and targeted professional development at every grade level and in every class. However, faculty members do need to be provided the necessary levels of targeted professional development opportunities for technology to infuse and integrate technology into the curriculum and for the use of technology for the ongoing literacy initiative. Since the principal and professional staff engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning; use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices; dedicate formal time to implement professional development; and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve student learning, the school is better able to develop and implement ongoing and targeted professional development. (self-study, panel presentation, school committee, teachers)

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. The school administrative team meets weekly to discuss student behavior, co-curricular activities, as well as policies and procedures. The school administrative team also meets weekly with department heads to discuss issues of student achievement. Bi-monthly meetings are held to disseminate information to teachers and to provide professional development and support. Each department has a departmental steering committee to gather evidence on content knowledge and to support professional development. This process was used during the 2013-2014 school year to develop benchmark assessments to inform teacher instruction on targeted areas of improvement pertaining to open responses and non-fiction reading responses. Regular training focusing on the new state evaluation system was also started during the 2013-2014 school year. Informal conversations focusing on improving curriculum and instruction stem from the formal trainings and continue during the 2014-2015 school year. New faculty members attend regularly scheduled literacy training workshops which focus on initiatives and instructional professional development presented in recent years. Therefore, because school leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning, the result is improved instruction for all learners. (self-study, panel presentation, teachers, students)

The organization of time does not formally support research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.

Brockton High School is divided in the green, red, azure and yellow houses. The current daily schedule of Brockton High School consists of five periods, allowing students to receive 66 minutes of class time during each period. The daily schedule was originally developed to allow for more class time to address individual needs and for students to have additional time to complete task-based assessments. However, this schedule does not address the needs for teachers to meet collaboratively within the school day. Furthermore, the master schedule has not been recently reviewed or no alternatives have been formally discussed. There is no common planning time at Brockton High School, just preparation time. Common planning time is currently voluntary and informal but is enhanced by the use of “office suites” where teachers may meet during free or preparation periods. This work is done through monthly faculty meetings or at department meetings. There is a need to ensure greater collaboration between all departments and levels to reduce the achievement gaps between subgroups of students. Hence, there is a need to “preserve and expand common planning time for educators at all levels to develop lessons, problem-solve, and review data regularly and collaboratively” (Brockton Public Schools: Strategic Plan, 2014, p. 4). Common planning time is not built into the schedule for teachers to review data, brainstorm, problem solve, share ideas, and improve instructional practice (i.e., discuss the learning needs of students, instructional strategies, preparation for cross-disciplinary collaboration). When the organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students, teachers will be better able to ensure that all students are achieving the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, teachers)

Student load and class size enable some teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. Class sizes “are much too high in many areas,” particularly those areas where work stations are limited (Brockton Public Schools: Entry Plan, 2014, p. 21) As a result, the district needs to increase the capacity of Brockton High School to implement, assess, monitor, and support instructional excellence at all levels and to optimize the learning experiences of all students by providing developmentally appropriate class sizes. Despite recent economic difficulties, Brockton High School has been able to retain staff and refill positions of teachers who have left the school or have retired. Teachers are responsible for teaching three courses which results in a student load of less than an average of 100 students a day. Although the average class size generally ranges from 28-32 students, teachers are able to personalize learning and provide feedback. Despite the large class sizes teachers also make connections with students but find it challenging due to a lack of classroom materials for many activities. For example, three chemistry classes were observed to have more than 30 students with limited space. Many classes have more than 33 students per class and many have more students than available work stations. Art classes were also observed to have 35-40 students per section. Consequently, when student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students, the focus will be more effectively personalized to ensure students achieve the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning outcomes. (self-study, observation, school leadership team, teachers, students)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. In accordance with the adopted core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations of the school, the principal and building leaders focus on the use of best practices to develop students' literacy skills. Collectively, the principal, associate principal, housemasters, department heads, and district-wide coordinators ensure the alignment of the Brockton High School instruction with the Common Core State Standards. The principal and associate principal insist that individuals seeking to develop any new programs or initiatives also ensure the alignment of the new program with the Brockton High School core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Hence, because the principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, the result is a constructive school culture that helps all students reach their individual potential. (self-study, panel presentation, central office administrators, teachers)

Teachers and parents have a number of opportunities, although students have fewer opportunities, to become involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. Teachers have multiple opportunities to actively engage in decision-making roles. The informal organization of the teacher suites allows faculty members to express concerns, share information, and promote school initiatives. The departmental steering committees provide formal opportunities for teachers to become directly involved with curriculum development and implementation. Beyond the steering committees, teachers can apply to serve on the school's restructuring committee. This committee, made up of teachers and administrators, is responsible for the development of instructional strategies that targets areas of instruction identified as needing improvement. The committee is also responsible for the dissemination of information related to professional development focusing on those instructional strategies. Examples of this work include work on reading graphics and on open response questions. Parents have formal and well-defined roles as well. Through the school council parents have the opportunity to voice concerns, raise awareness of major issues, and participate in developing supporting initiatives that directly reflect their ownership and responsibility in the decision-making process. Decisions affecting the whole student community are developed through a process that has been developed over time. The World Café is a process used by all faculty members to discuss initiatives from the restructuring committee and to plan implementation of the initiatives. When teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership, all shareholders feel a sense of responsibility and ownership in the school. (self-study, panel presentation, school leadership team, parents, teachers, students)

Teachers actively exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. Teachers play an integral role in determining, designing, and implementing department and school-level programs essential to the improvement of the school. Teachers have multiple opportunities to serve on committees on both the department and school level. Teachers who do not serve specifically on committees are well versed in the methods of communication between the

levels. A classroom teacher has access to floor teachers, department head, housemaster, assistant housemaster, as well as the principal and associate principal. The top-down and bottom-up lines of communication allow teachers to proactively participate in improving student learning. An active and effective grant-writing program is in effect throughout the district and at Brockton High School. Grants initiated by faculty members through this program have provided seed money for the biotech program, greenhouse improvements, and the overhaul of the automotive program. These success models encourage members of the Brockton High School faculty and staff to bring forward their ideas to improve the school. Therefore, because teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning, students are afforded many valuable learning opportunities inside and outside of school. (self-study, observation, facility tour, school leadership team, teachers)

The school committee, superintendent of schools, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The relationship of the superintendent of schools and the principal is strong, collegial, and the boundaries are clear. When funds were needed at Brockton High School, the school committee was supportive in finding needed funds. School issues regarding a variety of current educational topics are discussed in meetings. Communications between and among the school committee, superintendent of schools, and principal occur formally in once-per-month meetings, where the principal has a seat on the executive council. Informal meetings take place twice per month, and phone, and email communications take place as needed. Since the school committee, superintendent of schools, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, a shared vision for improvement of student learning is being implemented. (self-study, panel presentation, school committee, central office administrators)

The school committee and superintendent of schools continuously provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. A vast majority of teachers and parents indicate that the principal does have decision-making responsibilities for instructional programs that are supported by the school committee and superintendent of schools. New members to the school committee receive an orientation to the district policies during which these expectations are explained. Through policy development and funding of initiatives, the superintendent of schools and the school committee work collaboratively from their respective positions of authority to support the principal. The school committee further supports the principal's authority by voting their approval of school-level initiatives such as the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Since the school committee and superintendent of schools provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school, the principal is able to establish a shared vision of the school and to guide the implementation of the core values, beliefs and learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, school committee, school leadership team)

## **Commendations:**

1. The decrease in out-of-school suspensions
2. The safe, positive, supportive and respectful school culture
3. The number of informal mentoring and advisory relationships students have developed with adults
4. The restructuring committee which provides inclusive leadership
5. The teachers' willingness to informally and voluntarily meet for purposes of common planning, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and discussion of student learning needs
6. The school's retention of teaching positions and replacement of staff who have left or retired
7. The personalization of learning in light of the number of large classes
8. The World Café which provides a forum for small groups of teachers to meet together in interdisciplinary groups to discuss instructional topics
9. The frequent collaborative discussions about current educational topics among stakeholders
10. The active and effective grant writing program
11. The supportive and productive relationship between and among the school committee, superintendent of schools, and principal
12. The effective leadership of the principal, other building administrators, and department heads
13. The leadership roles assumed by the faculty
14. The opportunities for faculty, students, and parents to be meaningfully involved in the decision-making process
15. The collaboration between school administration and faculty members

## **Recommendations:**

1. Continue to develop and encourage teacher leadership roles at all schools to support district and school-based initiatives
2. Create and implement a formal ongoing program or process to insure each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the

student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations

3. Develop and implement a schedule that supports common planning time and cross-disciplinary collaboration of teachers during the normal school
4. Cap class size based upon designated work stations and maintain appropriate class sizes to fully implement the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations

**6**

**School Resources for Learning**

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

1. The school has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students that support each student's achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
2. The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.
3. Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.
4. School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
  - deliver a written, developmental program
  - meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling
  - engage in individual and group meetings with all students
  - deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers
  - use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
5. The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
  - provide preventative health services and direct intervention services
  - use an appropriate referral process
  - conduct ongoing student health assessments
  - use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

6. Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
  - are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum
  - provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum
  - ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school
  - are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
  - conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's
  - 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
  
7. Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
  - collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
  - provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students
  - perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

## Conclusions

The school has extensive timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students that support the vast majority of each student's achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Each student is assigned to one of four houses and a guidance counselor who follows the student all four years. Each house has a housemaster, an assistant housemaster, and an adjustment counselor. Through this model specific point people are available for students, teachers, and parents to access as student needs arise. Via the house offices, students are directed to the appropriate services. A whole-school literacy program has dramatically improved student performance. Literacy objectives and instruction were noted in classroom observations across the school. Observations in several bilingual classes noted students with as little as four months in the country writing and speaking with a rich content vocabulary. Academically at-risk students find support via the credit recovery program, extensive tutoring services, and the on-site alternative pathways to graduation. The credit recovery program allows students to catch up in their current courses in order to prevent course failure. The credit recovery program has cut the need for summer school by two-thirds; however, more resources are needed in order for bilingual students to fully benefit from the credit recovery program. Tutoring occurs both during the school day and after school. The co-teaching model provides special education students with access to a diverse program of studies. Additionally, the student support team identifies and supports general education students who are not making effective progress. Adjustment counselors provide a range of services including group support and instruction in areas such as anger management, stress reduction, self-esteem, academic motivation, and substance abuse education. Adjustment counselors consult with staff, parents, teachers, and outside agencies. They provide crisis intervention, behavioral intervention and assessments, home assessments, and home visits. Project Grads allows teen parents to continue their high school education while receiving supports as new parents. Since the school assesses and documents individual needs in a timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students there is support for each student's achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, observation, facility tour, panel presentation, school leadership team, parents, teachers, school support staff, students)

The school frequently provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. Brockton High School invites all families to participate in the school community and to be a partner in each child's education. Upon enrollment, families are given a brochure in their first language of how to access school resources. Bilingual students attend special orientation meetings with their counselors and trained mentors through the Success at Brockton High School Program. Some teachers use Engrade, providing some families to have online access to student grades. Quarterly progress reports are distributed for all students, and many teachers send home weekly progress reports for at-risk students. Adjustment counselors meet with students and parents as needed to address a variety of issues including academic difficulty, behavior management, and peer relations, and personal, emotional, and social

issues or all of the aforementioned issues. The guidance department writes and distributes a quarterly guidance newsletter with information such as upcoming workshops, SAT dates, and transitioning. Guidance services are listed in the course of study and parents participate in the scheduling process. As needed, counselors and nurses provide referrals to outside agencies. School adjustment counselors perform home assessments. They also perform home visits, especially for attendance issues typically with the attendance officer. Brockton High School sends emails and phone notifications to parents about school council meetings, school-wide and special events, and invitations to participate in surveys. The school's website is also regularly updated with pertinent information. Consequently, because the school regularly provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services, parents and students may know about and take more advantage of the many services and programs at the school. (self-study, panel presentation, parents, teachers, school support staff)

Support services staff frequently use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Guidance counselors go into classrooms to present a variety of material to students using technology and programs such as Plan for the Future with freshman, and introduce the Massachusetts Education Financing Authority to access scholarship, loans and financial aid information. The nursing department uses technology to track students and to share limited medical information with teachers and administrators through the Infinite Campus, the school's management information system. This program allows the nursing team to flag students with severe allergies, diabetes, seizures, and others medical issues. The nursing team also has their own program called SNAP, which holds the records to each individual student; school staff members do not have access to view the records. Some teachers in the bilingual department bring students to the IRCs in order to teach students basic computer skills, such as turning on the computer and typing and editing in Microsoft Office. Teachers are independently identifying and responding to these skill deficits, but formal technology instruction for all students is not evident. The IRC also has card catalogs accessible online through Destiny which has its own link on both student and teacher Internet pages. When support services staff regularly use technology, they will be able to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student and to support 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, observation, teachers, school support staff, students)

School counseling services, in most areas, have an adequate number of certified and licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental program; guidance counselors meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling; collectively engage in individual and group meetings with all students; deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and a vast majority of the time use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. There are a variety of programs offered by the counseling services at Brockton High School. There are an adequate number of guidance counselors; however, more access to services for social and emotional health provided by adjustment counselors would

provide necessary support to ensure each student can achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The school population of approximately 4,200 students gives a ratio of about 250 students to one guidance counselor; but there are only four school adjustment counselors for the entire population. There is one school psychologist whose primary responsibility is testing and two therapeutic support counselors who are mainly responsible for students with special needs. The guidance department has developed and implemented several programs to include a guidance curriculum catering to each grade level by offering freshman seminars, early college planning, Your Plan for Future, strategies for success resume building, preparing for Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test (PSAT) and SATs, college admission seminar, college fairs, financing your education, college admission panel, anger management, assertiveness, bullying prevention, lunch support and substance abuse. The guidance department developed a calendar with the seminars and workshops which coordinate with their curriculum. Guidance has designed and implemented tracking forms to include review of credits, orientations, attendance transcripts, special education meetings and 504 plans; these are used to monitor students' progress in mainstream and special education. A manual was created and implemented for implementing assessment tools for an effective school counseling program including pre- and post-tests from the Likert Scale to monitor success of each student. School adjustment counselors have a formal program through which they send home a pamphlet to service the student in need; the parent or guardian must sign off since these services are offered during the school day. They offer support groups to include anger management, self-esteem, substance abuse, academic motivation, and stress reduction. The students are self-referred, parent referred, or referred by a Brockton High School staff member. The school adjustment counselors also conduct assessments and home visits; reach out to community supports from counseling agencies, department of children and families (DCF), and crisis screening from the mobile team. The school psychologist assists the student in achieving the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectation by administering testing such as cognitive testing to students referred by parents or guardians. The testing assists the student with appropriate placement and services giving them the opportunity to succeed. The relevant data to ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectation is assessed through the graduation rate, college acceptance, and a collection of data forms from the written curriculum. Therefore, since the school counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental program; meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling; engage in individual and group meetings with all students; deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, students will learn and be supported as they achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, parents, students)

The school's health services have an adequate number of certified and licensed personnel and support staff who provide preventative health services and direct intervention services; a vast majority of the time use an appropriate referral process;

adequately conduct ongoing student health assessments; but infrequently use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The 3.5 licensed personnel and one paraprofessional provide health services to approximately 4,200 students. Nurses provide services ranging from simple triage to care for medically fragile students. As needed, the nursing staff members make referrals to outside agencies such as Neighborhood Health and work closely with a liaison to better serve the students of Brockton High School. Within Brockton High School, the nursing staff works closely with the adjustment counselors, either making referrals or providing support when a student returns from an out-placement treatment facility. Students enter the health suite and are met by a certified staff member and immediately triaged and either treated or sent to another professional for further treatment. Data collected using the district-wide computerized data management tool, SNAP, indicates that the staff provides clinical care and communicates with parents, guardians, community agencies, and appropriate staff regarding health promotion and various health screenings. The health professionals provide screenings to ninth grade students to include vision, hearing, height, weight and scoliosis. During the 2013-2014 school year, over 1,000 screenings were conducted. Additionally, in the 2013-2014 school year, 19,342 clinical cases were managed; 16,633 instances of communication and case management were handled, along with 299 cases of health promotion, and 60 cases of support in counseling. Nurses were observed placing one responsibility on hold as they attended to other issues. The health staff track and manage students' immunization records for the prevention of communicable diseases. Students clearly have the necessary access to health services and are provided with the necessary resources to achieve the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. However, there is no ongoing data analysis or feedback from the school community to improve services. Since the school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who provide preventative health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, the health services have the ability to ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, survey, teachers, school support staff)

Library/media services are integrated into the vast majority of curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified and licensed personnel and support staff who are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum; frequently provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and some other information services in support of the school's curriculum; ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers during, and after school; are mostly responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning; but infrequently conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The IRC staff engages in Brockton High School's curriculum through the orientations for all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and ELL classes. Many examples, such as collaborations on National History Day, Social Action research paper,

science fair, demonstrate how the IRC staff work collaboratively with teachers on units of study that involve research or technology usage or both. The librarians instruct students on how to utilize computers and conduct research to prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Due to the configuration of the building there are three IRCs and one access center. The access center is utilized for credit recovery with the online software Odessey and for tutoring during the school day and after school. Due to the fact that the IRCs are split among the building, the 32,000 volume print collection is split as well with each concentrating on a particular part of the collection. A limited number of paid online databases are available for student use. These include CQ Researcher, Country Reports, Noodle Tools and Read to Know. The green IRC contains literature, fiction, art, music, family, consumer science, crafts and hobbies. The red IRC holds the business, career, economics and social science collections. The yellow IRC houses literature, fiction, science, health, mathematics, and sports. Students need to move between IRCs if a topic of research crosses content areas. Each IRC is equipped with 33 computer stations, a color printer, a black and white printer, and a scanner. The periodicals are separated by title into each IRC and rotated on a regular basis. The IRCs are staffed by three full-time library/media specialists and one paraprofessional who rotates to each IRC through the day to cover the librarian's planning period. The district's coordinator of library services and the instructional technology specialist have offices at Brockton High School. There is one IRC open after school for student use on a rotating basis. At times there are over 60 students signed into the IRC for the afternoon. There is no time available in morning for the IRCs to be open for student use. During freshman orientation, the library/media specialist surveys students regarding their reading preferences, library experiences, and technology needs. The staff members are open to accepting student book requests and with limited funding order as many title as deemed appropriate. Over the course of the past several years, the budget has been cut severely. During fiscal year (FY) 2012 the allocated budget was \$6,240 while in FY 2013 and 2014 the allocated budget was \$4,280. However, the library/media specialists were able to spend \$2,500 on print materials this year. Students believe that they have the necessary access to library services which provides them with the necessary resources to achieve the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. However, there is no formal ongoing data collection or feedback from the school community to improve services. Consequently, when the library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum; provide some materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum; ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers during and after school; are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning; and conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, the library/media services will improve and help to ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, facility tour, survey, teachers, school support staff, students)

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified and

licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; frequently provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; and informally perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Brockton High School has an adequate number of certified and licensed personnel and support staff who are easily accessible to students and teachers via the house system. Each student is assigned to a guidance counselor and can access a dedicated adjustment counselor. ELL students are typically assigned to bilingual guidance counselors. There is frequent communication among all stakeholders and teachers, including those in the special education and bilingual departments; guidance counselors; administrators; and other support staff. All stakeholders are responsible for identifying students in need of services and referring them to appropriate personnel. An active peer mediation program supports students dealing with interpersonal conflict. The peer mediators are leaders in the school. Students are also referred for peer tutoring by guidance counselors. These students are pulled from their directed academics classes. Peer tutors are also available to help students access the IRCs in advance of major projects. Peer tutors are trained in a one-day in-house training "Learn Together." Student progress is monitored and supports are immediately implemented as needed. Co-taught and bilingual classes support students with special needs and ELL students in an inclusive environment. Liaisons send out weekly progress reports on students with needs, and consequently connect with both teachers and parents on a regular basis. Teachers in Life Skills classes collaborate with teachers in general education classes to provide opportunities for some students to audit classes with their typically developing peers. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, adaptive physical education teachers, speech and language pathologists, and assistive technology specialists provide supports to students, allowing them to access the school's curriculum. Assessment of the effectiveness of the school's services is largely informal. Data from standardized testing are used as one criteria for student placement in classes. Testing through the special education process also helps determine student services. When needs are identified, the members of the school collaborate formally and informally to address needs; however, a more structured process of tracking student performance will ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. Hence, because support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; and occasionally perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, support services personnel work to ensure students are making effective progress in their courses, but do not ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, school leadership team, parents, teachers, school support staff)

## **Commendations:**

1. The determination of school personnel to connect with every student
2. The varied programs to meet the diverse student needs
3. The welcoming attitude and open communication between Brockton High School personnel and their families
4. The comprehensive developmental guidance program with assessment tools to determine student learning
5. The school's health services personnel who provide preventative health and direct intervention services as well as ongoing health assessments
6. The easy access students have to health services as needed
7. The integration of the library/media service into the curriculum
8. The comprehensive support services program that addresses the special needs of Brockton High School students
9. The comprehensive 9<sup>th</sup> grade orientation program and the newly developed orientation program specifically for ELL students
10. The respectful, supportive school culture that emphasizes every student matters every day

## **Recommendations:**

1. Increase the available social, emotional, and mental health services available for students
2. Develop and implement a formal evaluation process to provide data and feedback from the school community to the health services personnel and support staff to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Provide library services before school
4. Develop and implement a formal evaluation process to provide data and feedback from the school community to the library services personnel and support staff to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations

**7**

## Community Resources for Learning

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

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

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

## Conclusions

The community and the district's governing body provide limited funding for a wide range of school programs and services. The community and the district's governing body provide modest funding for professional and support staff and for ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, and there is limited funding for a full range of technology support, equipment, and instructional materials and supplies. The community and district's governing body provide limited funding for a wide range of programs and services. An examination of the budget indicates per pupil spending of \$12,382 for FY 2010-2011, \$12,999 for FY 2012, and \$12,991 for FY 2013. The after-school intramural program was eliminated due to budget concerns, but was reinstated due to community support through "Save our Sports" community fundraising. Brockton High School lacks sufficient professional and support staff to fully implement the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. The budget reflects level funding for teachers despite student increases. The substitute teacher budget was reduced from \$998,000 to \$508,000, necessitating placement of some students in study halls. The custodial staff was reduced district-wide, resulting in the loss of two full-time positions for 2014-2015 school year. Class sizes in excess of 30 students can readily be observed. Students can also frequently be observed sitting two or three students at a given workstation. Classrooms are crowded with limited space available for group work, with few options for students to "spread out" or to otherwise utilize additional space for project work. Nonetheless, the faculty and staff feel that there is adequate funding for the professional and staff support. The lack of professional development around such initiatives such as training the faculty and staff for the opening of the parent portal on Infinite Campus has resulted in the parental portal not being available to parents and staff members. Budget funding for professional development was essentially level over four-year period. Computer and other technology resources in classrooms are limited mainly and are used by teacher primarily for demonstration and display purposes. Classrooms lack such basic services as dependable phones and intercoms for communication. There is a limited budget increase for basic instructional supplies and materials. The technology network crashed during a simulated test for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment indicating limited network capacity to serve hundreds of devices. However, the building is generally in good repair and there is generally consistent funding for routine maintenance. Hence, when the community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies, students will be able to strengthen their social, academic, and civic skills to prepare them for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, facility tour, parents, teachers, students)

The school generally plans, and moderately funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant; to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment; and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. Areas of the Brockton High School facilities are in need of repair and consideration. Hence, the

development and implementation of a long- and short-range strategy for building, maintenance, and refurbishing of Brockton High School needs to be adequately funded to provide for projected student populations and to fully implement the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. At the present time, the predominant reliance on state funding provides an 18-month lag in “real time” funding, posing inaccurate reflections of the student population and needs. As a result, the development and implementation of a long-range strategic maintenance and refurbishing schedule based on the evaluation of the current status of Brockton High School will also need to be accompanied by an increase in local resources and the development of funding for capital improvements. At the present time, the district moderately funds programs to repair and maintain building. A rug replacement program was halted due to lack of funds and other priorities. Carpets in classrooms and the auditorium are worn, stained, and in need of replacement. The building is relatively clean and orderly, with sufficient furniture to serve the needs of each classroom and office. Student bathrooms are functional, but many contained sinks and toilets wrapped and taped with trash bags. Recent renovations to boys’ locker rooms included replacement of antiquated lockers with seating for gym and team instruction. The roofs of each building were replaced during the 2010-2011 school year, the windows were replaced the following year, and new locks were installed in 2014. While a work order process exists for routine maintenance, a more timely reporting system back to staff and students on the status of repairs is lacking. Consequently, because the school develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant; to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment; and to keep the school clean on a daily basis, students and staff work in a clean, safe environment. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, facility tour, survey, central office administrators, parents, teachers, students)

The community moderately funds and the school lacks a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs but there are long-range plans for facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. The school lacks long-range plans to improve specific programs and services; however, the school guidance department and the school leadership team are constantly working to improve services provided to the students in light of the emergence of increasing enrollment. The long-range plan exists to meet specific facility needs and includes upgrades to HVAC, audio and lighting for auditorium, generators, the fine arts elevator, and technology throughout the building. Replacement of the carpet with vinyl tile has been completed in some classrooms. The capital plan statement of interest lists replacement with tile at \$1 million. Therefore, when the community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements, the facility will be modernized and be better able to support programs and services. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, facility tour, central office administrators)

Faculty and building administrators are always actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. In the spring of each year, the housemasters and department heads compile a list of building and departmental needs based upon faculty input. The school leadership team, including the principal, associate

principal, and housemasters utilize the list of requests and needs and creates a proposed operating budget. Each leadership team member submits his or her findings to the principal who consolidates the requests and forwards the requests it to the central office administrators. The central office administrators then create an operating budget for the next school year based upon the recommendations and needs expressed by the principal. Since the faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget, administrators and faculty have input on the use of the limited funds available. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, central office administrators, school leadership team, teachers)

The school site and plant minimally support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. The large, well-maintained but aging building adequately educates and feeds approximately 4,200 students each day. The physical layout of Brockton High School, which includes four houses, creates a school with many positive attributes, but as with any school, there are areas needing improvement to help the school function optimally. For the guidance department, the four houses have provided the counselors space, which allows them to meet comfortably with their students, and affords them with clear access to the housemasters' offices and the assistant housemasters' offices. The four-house structure of Brockton High School facility supports food services, which is equipped with a central kitchen. Meals are prepared in a central location and then transported to the four house kitchens. The one central nurses' office services the whole school. As such, the nurses' office layout affects the level of service provided. The school nurses and administrative staff have recently revised the layout of the waiting room and triage areas to improve care for students. A vast majority of students and parents agree that the school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services, while only half the faculty and staff members feel that the school site and plant supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services. Hence, when the school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services, teachers can focus on teaching and students can focus on achieving the adopted academic, civic, and social expectations for learning. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, facility tour, survey, teachers, school support staff)

The school always maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations. The school and central office possess and maintain all necessary documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations. The Brockton Public Schools' Facilities Office maintains a relationship with vendors to ensure all fire extinguishers are serviced and up to date, as well as a yearly state contract with a fire alarm vendor who maintains and performs annual inspections for all fire alarms in all of the schools. On a yearly basis, Brockton High School reports from the Brockton Board of Health in the form of a Food Establishment Inspection report. Brockton Public Schools also maintains copies of Board of Health Reports on file at the central office. Brockton High School conducts and maintains Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act Program (AHERA) reports for the schools and hires consultants to conduct these AHERA reviews. Since the school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all

applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations, administrators, teachers, students, and parents can be assured that the primary focus will be on teaching and learning. (self-study, observation, facility tour, school support staff)

All professional staff consciously engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. "Brockton High School needs to do a better job of reaching out to Brockton families to show what the school offers" (Brockton Public Schools: Entry Plan, 2014, p. 18). To this end, Brockton High School needs to "explore new ways to engage families effectively" (Brockton Public Schools: Strategic Plan, 2014, p. 8). The school and teachers will need to continue to reach out to families in targeted languages using a variety of vehicles. By devising and implementing a communication and "professional development" plan that is sensitive to the needs of a diverse community that can clarify concepts of "cultural competence and cultural proficiency," families will be provided assistance in navigating and understanding the school and the school system (Brockton Public Schools: Entry Plan, 2014, p. 24; Brockton Public Schools: Strategic Plan, 2014, pp. 9-10). Furthermore, expanding the school's website to provide actionable data for the Brockton High School staff, parents, students, and the community will allow key stakeholders to make informed decision. Furthermore, to better enhance parent and school communication, the school needs to "promote effective, interactive channels of communication" and activate the "parent portal" component of the management information system to connect parents with the school and teachers through the web-based communication system (Brockton Public Schools: Technology Plan, 2012-2015, p. 3; Brockton Public Schools: Strategic Plan, 2014, p. 9). The school does engage some parents as partners in their student's education. The vast majority of faculty members and the majority of parents support this perspective. Translation of printed school materials for families is provided in French, Portuguese, and Spanish, and translators of numerous languages are readily available to assist in parental contact. Community contact and outreach is ongoing in various ways, including numerous printed materials such as the guidance newsletter, Brockton Parents Magazine, and a weekly column by the principal in the local newspaper. Evidence of email contact, Connect Ed phone system, parent-teacher conferences and open houses is provided. It is clear that faculty and staff are generous with their time and concern for families, often meeting and working outside of traditional school hours and off campus. Teachers use several student information systems for class-to-home communication as well, although the full capacity of Infinite Campus, the management information system utilized by the Brockton School Department, is not presently being utilized. Consequently, because all professional staff members actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school, all students will be able to achieve the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations. (self-study, observation, panel presentation, school leadership team, parents, teachers, school support staff, students)

The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. The school makes every attempt to

make the school welcoming to parents and the community, despite the fact that the primary language of the majority of parents and guardians is a language other than English. To facilitate effective communication and outreach with diverse parent groups that include Cape Verdean, Portuguese, Haitian, and Latino communities among others, Brockton High School employs community liaisons and conducts parent academy workshops. Brockton High School also hosts a monthly parent advisory council and special education parent advisory council. Numerous partnerships exist between Brockton High School and local businesses which include Harbor One Bank, Brockton Enterprise Newspaper, Mass Bio Ed, Mass Life Sciences Foundation, 3M, Lowe's, and Best Buy to name a few. In addition, Brockton High School actively promotes community partnerships which include working arrangements with the Brockton Mayor's Office Youth Summit, Kiwanis Club, West Acres Nursing Home and others. Several arrangements exist between Brockton High School and area colleges including Massasoit Community College, Bridgewater State College (i.e., the Friends and Mentors for Change [FAM] Program for at-risk youth), and Stonehill College. Since strong partnerships with parent, community, business, and higher education exist, students are afforded a wide range of educational opportunities that otherwise would not be available to them. (self-study, school committee, central office administrators, school leadership team, parents, teachers, students)

### **Commendations:**

1. The wide range of programs and services provided to students
2. The successful effort to retain staff in a challenging budget climate
3. The adequately maintained building, despite limited funding and the age of facility
4. The positive attitude and "can do" spirit of the staff despite large class sizes and limited funding for technology and supplies
5. The overall cleanliness and orderliness of a large, aging building by a diminishing number of staff working under increasing budgetary constraints
6. The recognition of emerging themes centering on increasing enrollment and long-range facility needs
7. The resilience of students and faculty to focus on teaching and learning in light of budgetary constraints
8. The dedication and devotion of the faculty and staff to meet the needs of their diverse population and to actively engage families

## **Recommendations:**

1. Ensure that funding is appropriate to support the materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum to improve services and to ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
2. Reduce class size and make appropriate allowances for work space requirements for courses, in particular science and the arts, to optimize 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Provide additional resources to ensure adequate substitute coverage when teachers are absent, sufficient technology in classrooms, and classroom materials and supplies
4. Design and implement repair order protocol that includes timely reporting of the repair status
5. Develop and implement long-range plans to improve specific programs and services and to address increasing district enrollment
6. Open and use the parent portal function of Infinite Campus

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

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

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

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Committee has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Committee within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts on the school's adherence to the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Committee's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page 68. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Committee office has current statistical data on the school.

The Committee urges school officials to establish a formal follow-up program at once to review and implement all findings of the self-study and valid recommendations identified in the evaluation report. An outline of the Follow-Up Program is available in

the Committee's *Accreditation Handbook* which was given to the school at the onset of the self-study. Additional direction regarding suggested procedures and reporting requirements is provided at Follow-Up Seminars offered by Committee staff following the on-site visit.

The visiting committee would like to extend its appreciation to the members of the Brockton School Committee, the district and school level administrators, parents, faculty and staff members, and especially the students of Brockton High School for the hospitality extended to each member of the visiting committee.

## APPENDIX A

### Brockton High School

#### NEASC Accreditation Visit

October 5-8, 2014

#### Visiting Committee

**Donald D. Gainey, EdD** – Chair

Nova Southeastern University  
North Scituate, RI 02857

**Anne McKernan** – Assistant Chair

Enfield Public Schools  
Enfield, CT 06082

**Marilyn L. Thompson** – Assistant Chair

Portsmouth High School  
Portsmouth, RI 02871

**Robert Ayala**

Brien McMahon High School  
Norwalk, CT 06854

**Beth Ann Battey**

Classical High School  
Providence, RI 02903

**Aimee Bronhard, EdD**

B.M.C. Durfee High School  
Fall River, MA 02720

**Deborah Carreiro**

Taunton High School  
Taunton, MA 02780

**David L. Chambers**

New Britain High School  
New Britain, CT 06051

**Sandra Chestnut**

John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science  
Roxbury, MA 02120

**Mary C. Evans**

Franklin High School  
Franklin, MA 02038

**Michael Fiato**

Lawrence High School  
Lawrence, MA 01841

**Christopher J. Gelinas**

Waltham High School  
Waltham, MA 02452

**Mary Ellen Janeiro**

Andover High School  
Andover, MA 01810

**Karen Lapuk**

Manchester High School  
Manchester, CT 06040

**Beverly Larson**

Warren Harding High School  
Bridgeport, CT 06610

**Raymond MacLean**

Keene High School  
Keene, NH 03431

**Paul Menard**

Nashua High School North  
Nashua, NH 03063

**Kristin L. Newton**

Cambridge Rindge and Latin School  
Cambridge, MA 02138

**Michael Obre, EdD**

Danbury Public Schools  
Danbury, CT 06810

**Travis Read**

Springfield Central High School  
Springfield, MA 01109

**Andrew Schacht**

Bristol Eastern High School  
Bristol, CT 06010

**Jon Tyler**

Westfield High School  
Westfield, MA 01085

## APPENDIX B

### NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

#### Committee on Public Secondary Schools

#### SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

Principals of member schools must report to the Committee 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 Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of a substantive change must describe the change itself as well as detail the impact on the school's ability to meet the Standards. The following are potential areas where there might be negative substantive changes which must be reported:

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

## **List of Commendations and Recommendations**

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

#### **Commendations**

1. The extent to which the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are embedded in the culture of the school
2. The clearly written, accessible, and easily identifiable core values and beliefs document
3. The academic, civic and social, and technological skills that are clearly defined
4. The civic and social rubric that is aligned to the core values document
5. The terminology of desired level of achievement that is consistent across the developed school-wide rubrics for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
6. The core values and beliefs that serve as the basis for the school culture
7. The school-wide focus on literacy and evidence-based writing across all subject areas
8. The high expectations for student learning and academic achievement
9. The school's engagement in a collaborative and consistent process to collect and disaggregate MCAS data and data from content-specific benchmarks to inform professional development and to assess school-wide goals

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Design and implement school-wide analytic rubrics that address all stated academic expectations for student learning
2. Design and implement a technological rubric that specifically addresses the technological skills stated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Provide the faculty and staff members with professional development regarding the design and implementation of the school-wide rubrics for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
4. Ensure that there is a collaborative system in place to monitor, quantify, and assess the school-wide impact of the core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations on individual student learning and on the collective learning of the student body

5. Ensure that the school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.
6. Ensure student input in decisions related to the review and revision of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
7. Ensure active parent participation in decisions related to the review and revision of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations

## **Curriculum**

### **Commendations**

1. The curriculum developed by the guidance department that is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
2. The school's commitment to developing literacy skills
3. The ease with which teachers are able to make cross-disciplinary connections naturally and meaningfully
4. The variety of authentic learning opportunities available for students in some classes
5. The alignment with the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations that is observable in individual lesson plans provided by some departments
6. The structure of steering committees in each department that streamlines the adaptation and revision of curriculum
7. The culture existing within the school that consistently makes the best use of what materials exist and creatively acquires supplemental materials when necessary
8. The emphasis on depth of understanding
9. The use of data to determine which skills students are using, the effectiveness of the literacy initiative, and to identify areas of revision within in the curriculum

### **Recommendations:**

1. Design and implement the curriculum purposefully across all departments to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations

2. Develop and implement written curriculum guides for all disciplines with a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; references that are aligned with the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations; provides instructional strategies; and assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics
3. Articulate in a written curricular format, standard to all disciplines, how the curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry and problem solving, higher order thinking, cross-disciplinary learning, authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, and informed and ethical use of technology
4. Formalize a system of effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district
5. Ensure the availability of technological resources in order to fully implement the school's curriculum and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
6. Ensure the availability of textbooks for all students when applicable in the class to fully implement the school's curriculum and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
7. Implement measures to reduce class size, particularly in areas where there are limited work stations, and make better use of available space to enable teachers to fully implement the school's 21<sup>st</sup> learning expectations
8. Promote and support the effective integration of technology in data analysis in curriculum areas to enhance lessons, support interventions, and engage students
9. Provide teachers with ongoing differentiated professional development program to effectively infuse technology into the curriculum to support, extend, and enhance their classroom practice

## **Instruction**

### **Commendations**

1. The weekly review by department heads of teacher lesson plans that ensure the inclusion of the Brockton High School literacy initiative
2. The commitment of the restructuring committee to improve instruction
3. The literacy training program in which all new Brockton High School teachers are required to participate, and the school's willingness to rearrange schedules so that teachers participate in the program during school hours

4. The extensive use of personalization of instruction in both electives and core academic classes
5. The broad engagement of students in cross-disciplinary learning, including the use of literacy objectives in all curricular areas
6. The widespread engagement of students in self-assessment and reflection
7. The facilitation of cooperation and collaboration of students in academic and elective classes
8. The differentiation within the classroom for various student interests and abilities
9. The use of small groups to promote and reinforce learning
10. The use of alternative strategies to pace instruction for all levels of student learning
11. The commitment of the world languages department to using common assessments and course rubrics to inform instruction
12. The practice among teachers of reflecting on being lifelong learners and modeling that within the school and to the community
13. The commitment among teachers to excellence in education by participating in ongoing professional development
14. The teachers' willingness to share their expertise both formally and informally
15. The teacher mentoring program

### **Recommendations:**

1. Ensure that instructional strategies address all the components of the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations in all disciplines
2. Ensure that all teachers are regularly engaging students as active and self-directed learners, emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking, and applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Ensure that all teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning, engaging students in self-assessment and reflection, and integrating technology, their students are positioned to meet each of their academic, civic and social, and technology expectations for learning

4. Develop and implement a method by which parent feedback regarding instruction is collected and analyzed

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

### **Commendations**

1. The professional staff's dedication to teaching all students to close achievement gaps
2. The mathematics, bilingual, and guidance departments regularly collect, disaggregate, and analyze data regarding student learning
3. The frequent use of course-specific and school-wide open response literacy rubrics by many teachers
4. The wide variety of assessment strategies
5. The office suite setup that allows for informal collaboration between and among teachers
6. The focus on providing corrective and specific feedback
7. The wide use and range of formative assessments
8. The examination of student work and MCAS data for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice

### **Recommendations:**

1. Develop and implement a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess the whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
2. Develop and implement a system to assess, collect, and communicate to students and their families the individual student progress toward meeting the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Develop and implement a system to assess, collect, and communicate to the community at-large the school-wide progress in achieving the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
4. Develop and implement common summative assessment in all core subjects
5. Develop and implement a formal process to regularly collect, disaggregate, and analyze data within all departments to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement

6. Ensure that all teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed prior to each unit of study
7. Develop and implement a plan for formal department-wide collaboration time to disaggregate and analyze assessment data from a variety of sources
8. Ensure that all teachers provide feedback to students and parents in a timely manner
9. Develop and implement consistent practices to receive data from all sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
10. Implement school-wide rubrics that address the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
11. Develop and implement a system to survey current students and alumni for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practices
12. Develop and implement a formal and regular process to review and revise grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning

## **School Culture and Leadership**

### **Commendations**

1. The decrease in out-of-school suspensions
2. The safe, positive, supportive and respectful school culture
3. The number of informal mentoring and advisory relationships students have developed with adults
4. The restructuring committee which provides inclusive leadership
5. The teachers' willingness to informally and voluntarily meet for purposes of common planning, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and discussion of student learning needs
6. The school's retention of teaching positions and replacement of staff who have left or retired
7. The personalization of learning in light of the number of large classes
8. The World Café which provides a forum for small groups of teachers to meet together in interdisciplinary groups to discuss instructional topics

9. The frequent collaborative discussions about current educational topics among stakeholders
10. The active and effective grant writing program
11. The supportive and productive relationship between and among the school committee, superintendent of schools, and principal
12. The effective leadership of the principal, other building administrators, and department heads
13. The leadership roles assumed by the faculty
14. The opportunities for faculty, students, and parents to be meaningfully involved in the decision-making process
15. The collaboration between school administration and faculty members

### **Recommendations:**

1. Continue to develop and encourage teacher leadership roles at all schools to support district and school-based initiatives
2. Create and implement a formal ongoing program to insure each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Develop and implement a schedule that supports common planning time and cross-disciplinary collaboration of teachers during the normal school
4. Cap class size based upon designated work stations and maintain appropriate class sizes to fully implement the adopted 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations

### **School Resources for Learning**

#### **Commendations**

1. The determination of school personnel to connect with every student
2. The varied programs to meet the diverse student needs
3. The welcoming attitude and open communication between Brockton High School personnel and their families
4. The comprehensive developmental guidance program with assessment tools to determine student learning

5. The school's health services personnel who provide preventative health and direct intervention services as well as ongoing health assessments
6. The easy access students have to health services as needed
7. The integration of the library/media service into the curriculum
8. The comprehensive support services program that addresses the special needs of Brockton High School students
9. The comprehensive 9<sup>th</sup> grade orientation program and the newly developed orientation program specifically for ELL students
10. The respectful, supportive school culture that emphasizes every student matters every day

### **Recommendations:**

1. Increase the available social, emotional, and mental health services available for students
2. Develop and implement a formal evaluation process to provide data and feedback from the school community to the health services personnel and support staff to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Provide library services before school
4. Develop and implement a formal evaluation process to provide data and feedback from the school community to the library services personnel and support staff to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations

### **Community Resources for Learning**

#### **Commendations**

1. The wide range of programs and services provided to students
2. The successful effort to retain staff in a challenging budget climate
3. The adequately maintained building, despite limited funding and the age of facility
4. The positive attitude and "can do" spirit of the staff despite large class sizes and limited funding for technology and supplies

5. The overall cleanliness and orderliness of a large, aging building by a diminishing number of staff working under increasing budgetary constraints
6. The recognition of emerging themes centering on increasing enrollment and long-range facility needs
7. The resilience of students and faculty to focus on teaching and learning in light of budgetary constraints
8. The dedication and devotion of the faculty and staff to meet the needs of their diverse population and to actively engage families

### **Recommendations:**

1. Ensure that funding is appropriate to support the materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum to improve services and to ensure each student achieves the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
2. Reduce class size and make appropriate allowances for work space requirements for courses, in particular science and the arts, to optimize 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
3. Provide additional resources to ensure adequate substitute coverage when teachers are absent, sufficient technology in classrooms, and classroom materials and supplies
4. Design and implement repair order protocol that includes timely reporting of the repair status
5. Develop and implement long-range plans to improve specific programs and services and to address increasing district enrollment
6. Open and use the parent portal function of Infinite Campus