

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

Commission on Public Schools



**Commission on Public
Schools**

**Sample School
Self-Reflection
Report**

Sample, ZZ

May X, 2018 - May Y, 2018

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School and Community Summary

School and Community Summary

Sample is located approximately 35 miles west of the capital of ZZ. As of the 2010 census, Sample was home to just over 19,000 residents. Once home to mills and factories, the town has recently seen a resurgence of its downtown including new restaurants and local specialty shops. New housing developments continue to be built, expanding the residential footprint of the community. The median income of Sample residents is just below \$76,000 per year. Just over 45 percent of residents have a college degree.

According to data from the department of education, 21.5 percent of families attending the Sample Public Schools are considered economically disadvantaged.

The Sample Public Schools consists of four schools. Two elementary schools serve grades preK- 4; one middle school serves students in grades 5-8; and one high school houses grades 9-12. The district services 2,010 students in grades preK-12. Students from Sample have the option of enrolling in a technical high school for grades 9-12. Approximately 40 students leave after grade 8. Enrollment in the Sample Public Schools has been declining. Four years ago, the district had 2,775 students. Enrollment trends indicate a projected enrollment of 2,499 for the 2021-2022 school year.

The average per pupil cost is \$14,500, below the state average of \$15,000. The proposed fiscal year (FY) 19 school department budget is \$42,400,500. This sum is comprised of \$38,000,131 from town appropriations, which is over 55 percent of the total town budget. The Town of Sample has been and continues to be generous with respect to allocating resources to its public schools.

The drop-out rate in 2016 was 1.6 percent. The four-year adjusted graduation rate for 2016 was 92.9 percent. The student attendance rate for the 2016-2017 school year was 95.5 percent. Eighty-nine percent of students from the Class of 2017 continued their education after graduation at either a 2- or 4-year college. Three and one-half percent enrolled in a trade or vocational program, one percent enlisted into the military, and six and one-half percent entered the workforce.

Sample School increased its relationships with local businesses. Beginning with the Class of 2018, 35 seniors will end their high school careers early to experience a six-week internship with a variety of local businesses. Sample also has a partnership with Local Community College (LCC), which affords students the opportunity to enroll in four college courses through LCC during their junior and senior years and earn transferable college credits.

Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate

Core Values

Perseverance: We work hard to achieve our goals and overcome challenges

Responsibility: We take ownership of our learning and value service to our community and our world

Integrity: We act with honesty and hold ourselves accountable

Diversity: We treat all with dignity and work to build a strong school community

Excellence: We hold ourselves to high academic and social expectations

Beliefs

We will prepare students to be active citizens in a global environment.

We will engage each student in learning.

We will expand each learner's ability to think critically and independently.

Vision of the graduate is being revised.

Standards & Principles

Part 1 - A Look Back

A LOOK BACK

Sample School and the Sample Public Schools recently completed a multi-year project to map curriculum. The newly developed maps include clearly articulated curriculum units with essential questions, outcomes, assessment strategies, and connections to state standards. This effort largely dominated the professional development agenda from 2011-2016. To compliment the curriculum mapping work, the high school focused on increasing rigor across all content areas and levels. For example, the social studies curriculum was completely redesigned and is now a well-articulated four-year sequence that is largely project-based and requires students to interact with many primary source documents. The math department adopted a new math program for grade 8 math through pre-calculus. This program is aligned with common core standards and goes beyond teaching students the process required to solve complex math problems by teaching them why the process works. Additionally, identifying effective strategies to assess student learning has been a large focus across all departments. Professional learning time has been dedicated to understanding Webb's Depth of Knowledge and how this framework aligns to lesson objectives and aligned activities.

Increasing supports for students with social emotional needs has been a priority over the past three years. Sample School added a school adjustment counselor, another school psychologist, and one more special educator since the last decennial visit and a therapeutic academic support classroom to support students with social emotional disabilities and help students who are transitioning back to school from hospitalizations.

The staff at Sample School continues to take great pride in the opportunities the school provides students. Special education programming has expanded over time to include a series of sub-separate core academic courses designed to support students who are unable to learn in the typical classroom environment. Co-teaching has expanded significantly and co-taught sections exist for most core content area courses. Training was provided by consultants for four Sample School teachers to be co-teaching mentors. Stipends for the mentors were grant funded; however, the grant funding ended in 2017, which has significantly reduced the amount of co-teaching support provided to educators. Sample School is in the second year of the implementation of the Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone program, which offers students a two-year course sequence where students learn high-level research skills. In 2015, Sample School earned certification through Project Lead the Way (PLTW). As a result, students enrolling in the four-year PLTW pre-engineering course sequence have the opportunity to earn college credit through the Technology Institute. Sample's commitment to and success with PLTW helped earn two PLTW grants, which will support a new computer science and biomedical pathways beginning in the fall of 2018.

There are a few recommendations from the 2007 decennial visit that remain a priority today including

- develop and implement a formal curriculum review cycle. A task force developed a 6-year curriculum review cycle; however, this initiative ended in June 2018 so there is no formal review process
- provide teaching staff with professional development opportunities that will allow them to maintain and build upon their successful assessment practices. A new district-wide professional development advisory committee has been established and is working to create a comprehensive professional development program with offerings that relate directly to curriculum development, instructional practices, and assessment strategies
- provide all teachers with the time necessary to collaborate with colleagues. Common planning time has expanded but is still not available to all teachers teaching common courses
- implement a formal program for providing each student with an adult member of the school community to personalize each student's educational experience. A committee is currently working on a program, which will provide students with opportunities to work in small groups with adults on academic extension activities, community service projects, and to receive social-emotional supports
- ensure the temperature in all classrooms is conducive to learning. Air-conditioning was added to the science wing since the last decennial visit. Additional work has been completed to improve the HVAC system, including the addition of a full-time HVAC technician for the district. High temperatures continue to be an issue in two classroom pods that are without air-conditioning

Foundational Element 1.1a - Learning Culture

The school community provides a safe environment.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 1.1A

Sample School meets Foundational Element 1.1a. Policies and procedures are in place to help ensure the safety of adults and students. All doors to the building, except for one door at the main entrance are locked daily at 7:30 a.m. All exterior doors are locked and all visitors will need to request entry through a separate camera and remote locking system operated and monitored in the main office. In 2013, the district adopted the Alerts, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (ALICE) active shooter response protocol. An interactive training session for students and staff was conducted at Sample School in collaboration with local law enforcement. Currently, the Sample Police Department is working with the school department to produce a training video and plans have been set to hold another interactive training before the end of the school year and every fall thereafter. Sample School maintains policies that promote a safe social and emotional environment for students. Consequences for poor student behavior are administered consistently and the severity of disciplinary consequences closely aligned to the severity of the action. As a result, there are low instances of physical violence, use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco products, and bullying. A full-time school resource office (SRO) maintains a constant presence in the school and makes himself visible in hallways, at dismissal, during lunches, and works as a guest speaker in classes periodically. Data from the NEASC survey shows that the majority of students feel connected to the school, feel welcome, and feel safe. The faculty survey shows that adults feel safe and respected and a very high percentage of parents indicated on their survey that they feel safe.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 1.2a - Learning Culture

The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 1.2A

Sample School does not meet Foundational Element 1.2a. The school adopted a new set of core values and beliefs about learning in the spring of 2016 and a written document exists. The faculty began the process of creating a vision of the graduate in the fall of 2017. This process is ongoing and is expected to continue through the fall of 2018. To date, the faculty has worked together to identify what graduates are expected to be able to "do" and to "know." This activity yielded many ideas that will be categorized and narrowed down to form the school's ultimate vision of the graduate.

RATING

Does Not Meet the Standard

Foundational Element 2.2a - Student Learning

There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments across the school.

NARRATIVE

The school does not meet Foundational Element 2.2a. There are written curriculum maps for all major courses in the core content areas and for all elective courses outside of the core content areas. Overall, the maps follow the Understanding by Design model, but slight differences in formatting exist. Each map outlines units of study, essential questions, enduring understandings, transferable skills, and instructional and assessment strategies. Curriculum maps still need to be developed for some elective courses within the core content areas and small formatting modifications are needed to ensure consistency.

RATING

Does Not Meet the Standard

Foundational Element 3.1a - Professional Practices

The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.

NARRATIVE

The school meets Foundational Element 3.1a. There is an active school improvement plan (SIP), which was approved by the Sample School Committee in the fall of 2017. The SIP is written in alignment with district-level goals.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Foundational Elements - 4.1a - Learning Support

The school has intervention strategies designed to support learners.

NARRATIVE

The school meets Foundational Element 4.1a. Sample School employs a variety of intervention strategies designed to support learners. Intervention programming includes focused reading intervention, a math skills course, a study skills course, and academic support classes for students receiving special education services. A therapeutic classroom exists, staffed by a special education teacher, a paraprofessional, and a dedicated school psychologist, to support students with social emotional needs and to help students transition back to school from hospitalizations. Additionally, administrators, school counselors, and school nurses facilitate weekly student study support team meetings. Students who are struggling in school for any reason can be referred to SSST by any member of the faculty. Once a referral is in place, the team develops an individualized intervention plan with timelines designed to support the specific student.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 5.1a - Learning Resources

The school site and plant support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.

NARRATIVE

The school meets Foundational Element 5.1a. The physical plant, including all classrooms, labs, and specialty areas, supports the delivery of curriculum, programs and services. Student interests are sufficiently supported through a variety of facilities including the gymnasium and indoor track, outdoor fields, a TV studio, mini theater, computer and science labs, an auditorium and stage, a robotics lab, spaces for health and wellness classes, and space for a variety of extra-curricular programs that take place after school. The library media center and the cafeteria are sufficient to meet all needs. The school facility was built in 2003 and has been well-maintained. The building is clean. Repair and maintenance issues are almost always addressed "in-house" by one of the licensed trades man employed by the district. A maintenance person specializing in heating and air conditioning addresses ongoing minor heating and cooling issues throughout the building. While much of the building is air conditioned, there are pods of classrooms without air conditioning that can become uncomfortable during the first and last few weeks of each school year.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Standard 1, Principle 1

The school community provides a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the implementing phase of Principle 1.1. The school community consistently provides a safe, positive, respectful and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought. There are several opportunities where the curriculum supports this principle. First, students have access to a fully developed elective course focusing on conflict resolution. This course trains several peer mediators each year who provide peer mediation services during the school year to students experiencing peer conflict. A clear protocol exists to refer students for peer mediation. This same group of students visit classrooms at the middle school level to facilitate workshops on conflict resolution. Second, the guidance and wellness departments collaborate to deliver a comprehensive curriculum focusing on a variety of topics related to this principle including bullying, substance abuse, depression, mindfulness, stress management, human sexuality and relationships. Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, the wellness department will offer an elective that focuses on mindfulness. This new elective was added in response to data from the biennial Youth Risk Behavior Survey and a local survey administered by the wellness faculty.

There are policies and protocols that define and support respectful treatment of all members of the school community. For example, the student council, an active system of student government consisting of elected student officials from each grade level, addresses school climate and culture issues. A variety of clubs and special programs exist that support student interests and needs including a Gender and Sexualities Alliance (GSA); a program that connects special education students with peers; and an annual community celebration honoring the achievements of our English learner population. The ensures all learners are known and valued and have equitable access to a full range of school programs and services. The school demonstrates a culture of learning focused on the strengths of both students and adults. For example, the English and social studies departments incorporated habits of mind reflection papers into the curriculum and teachers participate in monthly department meetings to discuss the alignment and the effectiveness of the written curriculum. The school's elective offerings are robust and diverse, allowing students to select courses that align with their interests and strengths. Students have access to a robust program of studies that includes courses at multiple levels designed to address a wide variety of learners. All core content areas include sub-separate academic classes, college preparatory level courses, honors level courses, and Advanced Placement courses. Students can access peer-tutors after school in the school's writing center and math center, and a special tutoring center exists for English Learners. Through a well-established co-teaching model, a number of mainstream core content area classes are taught jointly by a content area teacher and a special education teacher. All sub-separate core content area classes are co-taught in this manner. According to results from the NEASC student survey, 91 percent of students feel welcome and 96 percent of students feel safe in school.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 1, Principle 2

The school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources.

NARRATIVE

The school is developing Principle 1.2. The school's core values, beliefs about learning, have been articulated, however, the vision of the graduate has yet to be articulated. The school community engages in a dynamic collaborative and inclusive process informed by current research and best practices to identify, commit to, and regularly review and revise its core values and beliefs about learning. In the meantime, teachers use both informal and formal modes of assessment to drive changes within curriculum content and the ways in which content is delivered to students in keeping with the beliefs about learning. A committee of educators representing all content areas, is working to suggest revisions to the school schedule that would enhance student ability to own the learning process and avail themselves of supports available. Departments are focused on content and skill development for students within their discipline. For example, students in science classes are expected to be able to write a lab report with greater sophistication as they move through the science curriculum. Social studies students learn how to write a document-based question (DBQ) with greater proficiency from grades 9-12.

It is the hope that together, the core values, beliefs about learning, and the vision of the graduate will inform policy, procedure, decisions and resource allocations. However, they are not yet reflected in the school culture and curriculum. As the vision of the graduate evolves, communication of core values and beliefs to the community will be enhanced. As the vision has not yet been articulated, and it has yet to be made available to the greater community.

RATING

Developing

Standard 1, Principle 3

The school community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student and can demonstrate how each student is known, valued, and connected to the school community.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the developing phase for Principle 1.3. Sample School community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of students. The student handbook that is presented to the school board each year and distributed to all students and parents each fall. All educators are required to distribute syllabi for their courses and post grades and assignments online regularly using Aspen, the school's student information management system. Every student and every parent have an individualized Aspen account to access grades, assignments, and attendance. The school administration conducts class meetings every fall to set academic and behavioral expectations and discuss the importance of personal responsibility and maintaining a positive and inclusive school community.

Sample School is proud of its robust program of studies, which includes a variety of courses designed to meet the needs, interests, and academic readiness of all students. Prerequisites for Advanced Placement (AP) and honors level courses have been adjusted to make these challenging courses accessible to a wider variety of learners. As a result, we continue to see a high percentage of students enrolled in AP and honors classes. Sample's commitment to develop curriculum using the *Understanding by Design* framework across all disciplines helps provide continuity with respect to course expectations for all students. Sample School supports many extracurricular activities in the areas of athletics, music, theater, visual arts, television production, politics, health and wellness, science, and technology. These activities play a critical role in the school's efforts to support the emotional, social, and intellectual growth of our students. Extracurricular activities and clubs help balance the needs of diverse learners and provide skills to achieve a positive school/life balance.

To help provide and plan services to support the social and emotional needs of our students a student study support team meets weekly to discuss student referrals from teachers for academic, social, emotional, or medical reasons. A referral process is also in place for students needing to access the school's therapeutic academic support classroom (TAS). TAS is staffed by a special education teacher, school psychologist, and paraprofessional and supports students with social and emotional needs as well as students returning to school from hospitalizations. Sample School is in the process of designing an advisory program to further support students who need academic support, academic extensions, and/or social emotional support. This program is being designed to help students make meaningful connections with peers and adults in the building and to further strengthen the overall school community.

Sample School students participate in the local area adolescent health survey every other school year. Data from the 2016 survey indicates a slight decrease in the percentage of students engaging in many risky behaviors, including drug use, alcohol use and smoking. However, the results indicate an increase in student stress and sexual behaviors. The school counseling and wellness departments are continuing to collaborate to adjust curriculum to address some of these issues. Sample School needs to continue to develop programming that supports students with mental health issues and emotional disabilities. The district was awarded grant funds for the 2018-2019 school year, which will be used to engage with a consultant to further develop the existing therapeutic classroom into a full operational program. For many years, Sample School focused heavily on civic engagement through a meaningful and multidisciplinary service learning program. This program was abandoned over time and many faculty members express a need for a school-wide service focus.

RATING

Developing

Standard 1, Principle 4

The school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the implementing phase for Principle 1.4. The professional culture varies from department to department; but overall, the staff is committed to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection. As a whole, the school has developed a committee of an integrated group of educators representing all content areas working together to develop and revise a new schedule designed to enhance student learning and build an advisory-like program. The committee was originated by a small group of teachers and has grown over time, has been allowed to do research and school visits, and present their findings to the full staff. This is part of the effort to continuously improve the school's schedule to better suit the needs of students. Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, the district committed to a 1:1 Chromebook program. Through this program, students in grades 9 and 10 were provided with Chromebooks this year. Students in all grades at the high school will be issued Chromebooks by the start of the 2019-2020 school year. The 1:1 Chromebook program promotes innovative teaching practices and learning experiences. However, the staff has had the opportunity to participate in limited professional development this year related to the 1:1 Chromebook program. The district has established a committee of teachers and administrators to monitor the ongoing implementation of the 1:1 initiative. This committee needs to work in conjunction with the district professional development committee to ensure that ongoing professional development for teachers occurs. The school demonstrates a commitment to research-based instruction and reflective practice by offering courses through Research for Better Teaching (RBT) to instructional staff and Analyzing Teaching for Student Results to the administrative team. The school administers the PSAT to all students in grades 9 through 11 every October, and the math and English departments use data from the PSAT, and state testing data when making decisions about curriculum and instruction. Social studies and English teachers were provided professional development with Chris Hakala, a psychology professor specializing in memory and learning at Quinnipiac College.

The professional culture promotes a growth mindset through goal making in the teacher evaluation program. Staff are supported in maintaining expertise in their content area and content-specific instructional practices through professional time and reimbursement for classes/workshops. Some departments use professional development time to read and discuss professional text in order to improve practice. A small, teacher-run Critical Friends group meets regularly to share challenges and discuss instructional strategies. Staff members also use professional development opportunities to share better teaching practices. Educators are trusted to run professional development workshops; for example, a staff member who is fluent in Google Classroom ran a class to educate other staff members. Teachers work collaboratively to develop curriculum and assessment, and professional development time and instruction in curriculum development has been provided. Staff consistently use data from the PSAT, SAT, state testing, and the school climate survey to develop curriculum and school wide programs. The district is currently using grant funds to work with an outside consultant to evaluate the effectiveness of our therapeutic academic support classroom. Last year, teachers from the high school were members of a district-wide curriculum review task force. This group was tasked with collaborating, reviewing, and providing feedback on curriculum maps, but the initiative was abandoned at the district level this year.

Professional collaboration is demonstrated by weekly department meetings, monthly faculty meetings, common planning time when possible, professional development opportunities and workshops, and IEP meetings, which involve parents, students and teachers. These are mandatory meetings yet the collaborative opportunities help ensure each educator's responsibility to all learners, and reflection about teaching and learning based on research.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 1, Principle 5

The school's culture promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 1.5. The school's culture fosters and promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth. For staff, teachers are encouraged to try innovative ideas and assess the results, to lead professional development for other staff, and attend various professional in and out-of-district professional development activities. There is a shared sense of responsibility for students to understand the needs of others as evidenced by programs like student government. All subject areas allow and use student reflection and promote learning from mistakes. All subject areas also have visual or written classroom norms and rely on student-led conversations. Sample School's emphasis on the importance of persistence and the opportunities for revision of student work is shown through assessment revisions in all subject areas and through after school student assistance opportunities such as, but not limited to, the math center, the writing center, academic tutoring, and after-school teacher help. Student-led and faculty-supported after-school groups such as, but not limited to Genders and Sexualities Alliance (GSA), Conflict Resolution, UNICEF, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), and Connections all promote a dynamic shared sense of agency and responsibility and allow students opportunities for personal growth. Sample School's emphasis on the importance of persistence and the opportunities for revision of student work is shown through assessment revisions in all subject areas and through after school student assistance opportunities such as, but not limited to, the math center, the writing center, academic tutoring, and after-school teacher help.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 1, Principle 6

The school has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the implementing phase for Principle 1.6. The school models an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning. Whenever possible and appropriate, the school administrators involve staff members in leadership activities focusing on school improvement, and culture and climate. A committee, comprised of teachers, counselors, and administrators was formed to discuss the challenges in helping support students missing extended periods of school due to physical or mental health issues and developing protocols. This committee administered a survey and presented to the full faculty on multiple occasions. A committee was formed to discuss and develop an advisory-type program where students can extend their learning, connect with adults, engage in community service, and receive social and emotional supports. The committee includes staff members from all departments and meets monthly. They have administered surveys and presented to the faculty. In the spring of 2018, the committee will finalize a proposal for a schedule change to accommodate this potential program. The social studies department developed a special education tool kit to help social studies and special education teachers support student success. In 2015, when faculty members indicated a need for a change to the school's summer reading program, several people volunteered to work on the summer reading committee, led by the K-12 curriculum director, to revamp the program. This same committee has met regularly since the new program was adopted to review feedback data collected after each summer reading period and make necessary adjustments. Staff members participate on several district-wide committees that focus on a variety of topics including the educator evaluation committee, the professional development committee, a committee to select a new student management system, and search committees to select building and district administrators. The superintendent affords the building principal with the decision-making authority necessary to lead the school. The principal and his leadership team are able to work with the faculty to implement school-based policies and practices that support a school-wide vision for teaching and learning. The teacher evaluation process encourages teachers to create goals that are self-reflective and that focus on improving student learning.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 1, Principle 7

The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the developing phase for Principle 1.7. The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibilities in a number of ways. Staff encourages social awareness, upstanding behavior, and fair and respectful treatment through a variety of programs, courses, and activities. Some of these include the school's comprehensive grades 9-12 wellness program, social justice course offered to students in grades 9-12, Gender and Sexualities Alliance, peer mediation program, annual disabilities puppet show where the advanced theater students create a puppet show to teach younger classes about bullying and disabilities, and recycling club. The school provides a safe learning environment for students of all genders. In 2016 and 2017, staff were provided training in gender identity. Sample School relies on democratic values of agency, civil dialogue, equality, and commitment to the common good to inform the curriculum, characterize classroom behavior and guide school governance through community council, AP Government, ethics course, social studies classroom discussions, school TV station, online school newspaper, student handbook, and course syllabi outlining student behavior expectations. All grade levels have student government elections. The school culture encourages learning experiences that connect to or make an impact on the community beyond the school campus both locally and globally. Students developed a community piano project and raised \$2,000 for substance abuse. The National Honor Society and National Art Honor Society members complete community service hours. A physics Lab activity supported a canned food drive. Students have many opportunities to travel outside of the United States through various school programs. Students present at the annual International UNESCO environmental conference in Portugal each January; the world cultures program provides students with the chance to travel to the Peruvian Amazon each spring where they bring donated clothes and medical supplies to local Peruvian villagers; students in upper-level Portuguese courses have the opportunity to travel to Sao Tome, an island off the west coast of Africa; and a mini-exchange program with a school in Germany. Students travel to Malawi through with Doctors Without Borders. Life-skills culinary students prepare hot foods monthly for a local soup kitchen.

Sample School should continue working towards the implementation of the advisory-like program and consider ways to infuse community service into the curriculum and extra-curricular life of the school.

RATING

Developing

Standard 1 Strengths

STRENGTH

The safe, respectful, and inclusive school climate

STRENGTH

The commitment to the development of ARC an advisory-like program that is being developed by teachers from multiple disciplines, counselors, and administrators (Standard 1, Principle 3)

STRENGTH

The implementation of the 1:1 Chromebook program, which promotes innovative teaching and learning (Standard 1, Principle 4)

STRENGTH

The opportunities for staff to participate in school-change efforts through various committees (Standard 1, Principle 6).

STRENGTH

The many clubs and activities that foster civic engagement and social and personal responsibility (Standard 1, Principle 7)

Standard 1 Areas of Growth

AREA OF GROWTH

Complete the development of the vision of the graduate and work to ensure that the vision along with the already established core values and beliefs about learning, drive student learning, professional practices and the allocation of learning resources (Standard 1, Principle 2)

AREA OF GROWTH

Develop the therapeutic academic support (TAS) classroom into a more comprehensive program with clear expectations that are able to provide services for students needing long-term support as well as students returning from hospitalizations (Standard 1, Principle 3)

AREA OF GROWTH

Identify a multi-year professional development plan related to the 1:1 Chromebook program to ensure that all teachers are positioned to incorporate research-based technology into everyday teaching and learning (Standard 1, Principle 4)

AREA OF GROWTH

Develop programming that helps to infuse civic engagement and community service more formally into the curriculum (Standard 1, Principle 7)

Standard 2, Principle 1

The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success and provides feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving this vision.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the developing phase of Principle 2.1. Sample School is in the process of developing a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success and provides feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving this vision. Students, staff, and parents completed the NEASC self-reflection survey in the fall of 2017. Results were tabulated and shared with the staff to analyze and determine the vision of a Sample School graduate. Using data from these surveys, staff is working to develop the school's vision of the graduate. Although the school has yet to complete the vision of the graduate at this writing, there are several elements already in place to ensure that students attain transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success. The English language arts and social studies teachers implemented habits of mind into their curriculum. Teachers use habits of minds to address critical thinking, independence, creativity, communication, and effective writing for each student. All of these skills are transferable skills that prepare learners for college and workplace readiness. Sophomore students participate in an annual "reality fair" where students are given a salary and are asked to budget their money to buy products and services necessary for daily life. This event is run in collaboration with area businesses who provide students with greater knowledge and understandings of future life situations. All departments have completed curriculum maps and implemented standard rubrics and common assessments for their curriculum. Each curriculum map is a live document and is updated regularly to reflect changes to the curriculum. Once the vision of the graduate has been established, a process will be created to review and provide feedback to students and their parents.

RATING

Developing

Standard 2, Principle 2

There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate.

NARRATIVE

The school is developing Principle 2.2. There has yet to be a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate. There is a written curriculum for all courses that is accessible to all teachers; however, the format differs slightly from one department to another. All core classes have curriculum maps that include units of study with guiding/essential questions, content, transferable skills, and instructional strategies. These maps also identify assessment practices including discipline-specific, higher order thinking skills, and transferable skills. All departments work to perfect curriculum maps and consistently update and revise them to keep with the current trends and innovations. Although the format differs from one department to another, the process and method of creating, implementing, and revising the maps have been agreed upon by content experts in each discipline. Because the vision of the graduate is being developed, it will need to be incorporated into the curriculum.

RATING

Developing

Standard 2, Principle 3

Curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.

NARRATIVE

Sample School is in the implementing phase for principle 2.3. The curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge by making connections to prior knowledge across disciplines; placing emphasis on learner application of knowledge and skills; and emphasizing a deep understanding using interdisciplinary authentic learning experiences. All disciplines are structured to build upon prior knowledge of prerequisite courses as well as throughout each individual course. Teachers use interdisciplinary and disciplinary methods to ensure that learners demonstrate proficiency in their coursework. The English and social studies teachers integrate Habits of Mind reflections into their curricula and match essential questions in the grade 9 curriculum. Teachers in the English, social studies, and world language departments plan lessons to supplement the material learned in other disciplines. Teachers in science and mathematics collaborate in an effort to make cross-disciplinary connections. The mathematics curriculum emphasizes the application of real-life skills. Students are provided with many opportunities to engage with the community of Sample as well as with other communities in the state, country, and around the world to gain deeper understandings. A few examples of these opportunities include student attendance at town meetings, visits to local preschools, community concert performances, and visits to the Sample River for science classes. Another annual event that engages students with the Sample community is the English learner end-of-the year ceremony to celebrate the achievements of our English learners. This ceremony is followed by a multicultural reception of foods from the countries our students represent. Students have project-based learning opportunities throughout their high school experience. Some of these include internships both inside and outside of school, art exhibitions and community science exhibitions, and published articles for the school's newspaper.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 2, Principle 4

Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the implementing phase of Principle 2.4. Teachers are always striving to ensure that instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student. And, teachers strive to ensure instructional strategies are designed to individualize and personalize learning for all students. The levels of courses are essentials, academic, honors, and Advanced Placement. Across many of our core classes, the co-teaching model has been implemented to help meet the needs of all students, and ensure special needs students in these inclusion classes have full access to the curriculum. Teachers are expected to provide a lesson objective for each class that is posted on the white board or provided electronically to ensure all students understand and can identify what they are expected to learn. Exit tickets are often used to ensure students meet the established lesson objective. Based on the assessment of exit tickets, teachers review and reteach concepts in future classes. Teachers observe the students in their classes and review their work to determine their strengths, weaknesses, and the best methods of instruction. In addition to written reports, students are often able to demonstrate mastery of learning through verbal presentations, video recordings, role playing and other methods to suit students' abilities. In the spring of 2017, the Sample Public Schools offered a "Skillful Teaching" course for teachers across all grade levels. The course focused on strategies, formative and summative assessments, and various methods to meet the needs of all students. Teachers proactively implement instructional practices to meet the needs of diverse learners and continue reviewing and revising instructional practices as needed.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 2, Principle 5

Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 2.5. Sample School students are active learners who have many opportunities to lead their own learning but in a limited way. Students are provided choice about topics, books to read, and creativity over their course content and assessments. Project-based learning is embedded across the curriculum. Projects are designed with student choice/creativity in mind, to highlight student individualized expression and personal interests. Teachers and students have thoughtful discussions about class learning objectives and outcomes. Students are taught to self-reflect and think metacognitively about their own learning and personal growth. Technology and humanities teachers embed reflective assessments into their courses. Students also have the autonomy to choose elective courses through their entire high school experience and core level classes during their junior and senior years. Internship opportunities are provided to students in the child growth and development classes and to seniors during their final semester. Students are often encouraged to select their own topics during long-term assignments and the medium by which they present information. Students are regularly expected to present and defend topics in front of peers and adults and receive meaningful feedback for changes. An area where we could improve is allowing students to make choices rather than choose from choices teachers create.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 2, Principle 6

Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 2.6. Learners engage in inquiry, problem-solving and high order thinking skills in courses across multiple disciplines. Students in grades 9-12 are provided daily opportunities to engage in activities that prioritize deep understanding, analysis, synthesis, creativity, making connections, and understanding relationships. Students are regularly challenged to use their critical and creative thinking skills. Through science laboratory investigations, students are asked to analyze data and make inferences by asking questions during the collection of data. Students are expected to interpret graphs and apply this to trends in scientific principles. In biology, all students complete a performance assessment involving blood testing. Students are given a child's blood type and the blood type of the child's mother and tasked with determining if the proposed father's blood type can confirm if he is the biological father of the child. In English Language Development class, students are encouraged to work in a group setting to promote the use of the English language by asking questions and providing solutions that relate to their every-day academic and social environment. In academic support classes, students who receive special education services are taught self-advocacy skills to help them prepare for post-secondary life, problem solve, and master strategies to compensate for their learning disabilities. In English and math classes, students are required to fill out self-assessment rubrics to reflect upon their work and assess their progress. In all classrooms, students are asked to demonstrate understanding in multiple formats, including both group and individual projects. Students are challenged cognitively and are required to develop and exercise a full-range of thinking skills and learning dispositions.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 2, Principle 7

Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 2.7. Learners demonstrate their learning through a wide variety of formative and summative assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum. To achieve this, teachers differentiate instruction, use Response to Intervention strategies and multiple scaffolds to support learners as needed. Based on formative and summative assessments, teachers regularly and consistently check to ensure that students are understanding concepts and are mastering skills. Assessment strategies include using entrance and exit tickets, online practice, small group activities, verbal share-outs, and online discussion threads. Departments use common summative assessments that serve to ensure consistent and equitable learning opportunities across grades and courses. These types of assessments include presentations, research projects, and performance-based assessments. Department-wide common rubrics ensure students are provided with expectations prior to assessments. Students have many opportunities to demonstrate their learning to peers during class and to the broader audiences in the community at-large.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 2, Principle 8

Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 2.8. Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning. Students are given multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate their learning. Teachers provide consistent, systematic, specific and timely corrective feedback and give students opportunities to revise and improve their work. A variety of formative and summative assessments is employed across all courses and departments. The English department has worked to norm the assessment of essays and papers to ensure consistent grading. Many classes offer exemplars to provide a visual example of complete work that reflects high, middle, and low achievement levels to help students better understand expectations. Constructive feedback is provided to students during drafting of their essays. The world language department provides guides for peer feedback and self-assessment of student work. The mathematics department implemented Eureka Math courses from grade 8 through pre-calculus courses to ensure consistency of learning. Students are given opportunities in all disciplines to revise and resubmit their work to demonstrate mastery of content. Teachers would benefit from more time to collaborate on grading to improve consistency in creating rubrics and in scoring.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 2, Principle 9

Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 2.9. Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning. Students use technology in informed, effective, and ethical ways to communicate clearly and creatively. This is accomplished through the use of 1:1 Chromebooks in grades 9 and 10, speech to text software, Turnitin, and Aspen. Students use technology to access, support, document and supplement their learning including IXL, Khan Academy, and Google Research. They use Evernote and Google Classroom applications. Technology is used in an effort to broaden students' perspectives both locally and globally and to allow them to share their work with an audience beyond the school community. Students use technology to collaborate digitally and engage in learning beyond the constraints of the school building and school day. Students have access to Virtual High School (VHS) courses and use Skype to communicate with students overseas. Students broadcast news and updates via social media and the school's online newspaper, The Big Red. Students utilize the local education cable channel to reach the community of Sample. Technology is quickly becoming embedded in all aspects of the curriculum across all disciplines. Staff members would benefit from ongoing professional development related to instructional technology. This is even more critical as the school moves towards full implementation of the 1:1 Chromebook program. All students will have these devices by the start of the 2019 school year.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 2 Strengths

STRENGTH

The incorporation of "Habits of Mind" reflections in all major English and social studies courses to foster critical thinking, metacognition, independence, creativity, and effective writing (Standard 2, Principle 6)

STRENGTH

The curriculum maps that include units of study, guiding/essential questions, content, transferable skills, instructional strategies, and assessment practices for all core courses (Standard 2, Principle 2)

STRENGTH

The use of the co-teaching model, which pairs special education teachers with content area teachers (Standard 2, Principle 4)

STRENGTH

The project-based learning, which is firmly embedded throughout the social studies curriculum and to a lesser degree being incorporated in the English, science, and world language curricula (Standard 2, Principle 7)

STRENGTH

The engagement of students in learning activities across all disciplines that push them to solve problems, use an inquiry-based model, and use higher order thinking skills (Standard 2, Principle 6)

STRENGTH

The use of common summative assessments that help ensure consistent and equitable learning across grade levels and courses, including traditional pencil and paper tests, presentations, research projects, and curriculum embedded performance assessments (Standard 2, Principle 7)

STRENGTH

The completion of the first year of a three-year implementation of a 1:1 Chromebook program (Standard 2, Principle 9)

Standard 2 Areas of Growth

AREA OF GROWTH

Complete all curriculum and maps in a common format for all courses in all subject areas (Standard 2, Principle 2)

AREA OF GROWTH

Provide teachers with opportunities to collaborate on instructional strategies, assessments, and grading (Standard 2, Principle 4)

AREA OF GROWTH

Identify the types of professional development teachers need to support their use of Chromebooks as instructional tools and develop a plan to deliver this professional development (Standard 2, Principle 9)

Standard 3, Principle 1

The school engages all stakeholders in the development and implementation of a school improvement/growth plan, which reflects the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the implementing phase of Principle 3.1. Many stakeholders are engaged in the development and implementation of a school improvement/growth plan, which reflects the school's core values and beliefs about learning, but not yet the vision of the graduate. There is a school improvement committee, which meets monthly to design, discuss, and implement the school improvement plan (SIP). The school improvement committee is run by the principal and consists of parents, teachers, school board members, and students. The SIP plan establishes three school-specific goals that are directly aligned to the district improvement plan (DIP). Each measurable goal is written to include specific actions, benchmarks, and outcome/products. In 2016, the SIP report included a goal of completing curriculum maps for all departments. A secondary outcome of this goal was the creation of a curriculum review committee. The goal of the committee was to ensure that all curriculum is examined and updated as necessary, and to keep the curriculum writing process fluid and current. Both the completed maps and the curriculum review committee demonstrate a desire to promote a strategic mindset that incorporates backward design. However, the use of the curriculum review committee was discontinued in the 2017-2018 school year. The third goal in the 2017-18 SIP is to develop and publish the school's vision of the graduate as prescribed by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), exhibiting Sample School's continued commitment to students. An area of improvement for would be to better communicate the vision/goals of the SIP with faculty and staff. Fewer than half of faculty reported that they participated in the creation of the SIP. Only 42 percent of teachers said that they were familiar with the SIP.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 3, Principle 2

Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the implementing phase of Principle 3.2. Educators often engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being. Teachers regularly reflect on their performance through the teacher evaluator system, focusing on specific standards aligned to state and district goals. Department meetings occur regularly. Teachers share best practices, examine assessment data, and develop practices to improve student learning. The school promotes professional development and supports teachers in continuing their education through graduate courses. A critical friends' group of staff has met periodically since 2016. In 2017, the district created a professional development advisory committee to identify professional development needs and monitor implementation and quality. There is still room to grow in this area. Only 15.5 percent of staff find professional learning community meetings very or quite helpful for professional growth. Many staff members express a need for more professional development in particular areas so that they can improve student learning and instruction, such as digital citizenship and technology training to support the 1:1 Chromebook program that is already underway. Others expressed that peer mentoring is inconsistent, and that non-evaluative peer-observations, which can be a powerful tool to improve instruction, are not a common practice.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 3, Principle 3

Educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 3.3. Educators regularly examine a variety of evidence of student learning and well-being to improve instruction, assessment practices, programs and services. Departments have developed common unit, mid-year, and final assessments for most courses. Teachers use backwards design to ensure students are meeting learning goals for each unit and to inform instructional choices. The majority of staff feel like they often use student work and assessments to make instructional decisions, and 74 percent of staff report using student work to make instructional choices at least two times per week as indicated in the faculty survey questions 14F and 21. Social studies teachers devoted department meeting time to discussing student work with the goal of norming grading practices and looking for areas that need improved instruction. Teachers across the school use state testing data to find weaknesses in student subgroups and skill areas. However, there are areas in which we could improve. Some teachers express that there is not enough common planning time to devote to examining student work and instructional practices. Others feel that there could be better communication of data, especially between regular educators and special educators.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 3, Principle 4

Collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of curriculum.

NARRATIVE

The school is developing Principle 3.4. There are some collaborative structures in place that support coordination and implementation of the curriculum. For example, there are regular after-school times once per week set aside for teachers to collaborate with their department and also with colleagues who teach the same course. Co-teachers also have common planning time. Seventy-three percent of staff report revising curriculum with colleagues at least once per month. Through this regular collaboration, departments such as world language, social studies, and English language learner programs have vertically aligned their curricula. More than half of the staff reported that collaboration with colleagues helped them improve student learning “a great deal” or “quite a bit.” However, some staff report that there is not enough common planning time. This is particularly an issue for staff who teach multiple courses, and English learner teachers and special educators, who need to meet with several groups of colleagues.

RATING

Developing

Standard 3, Principle 5

School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.

NARRATIVE

The school is in the implementing phase of Principle 3.5. School-wide organizational practices are specifically designed meet the learning needs of each student. A variety of Advanced Placement (AP), college prep, elective, essentials, English learner, and Virtual High School courses are offered. Many classes are co-taught by special education teachers and content area teachers, and sometimes include support from paraprofessionals. Elective courses support core courses to strengthen and enrich the overall program. For example, there is an educational exchange with another school for courses that we do not offer and that school sends some students to our heterogeneously grouped ninth grade English and history classes. We could use an academic intervention class for students who failed classes in grade 8 and struggle with the ninth grade's curriculum to help reduce the failure and retention rate of ninth grade students. The school would benefit from additional resources to support ELs in elective classes.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 3, Principle 6

Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning.

NARRATIVE

The school is developing Principle 3.6. There are several productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning. Staff and students develop relationships with the community of Sample through a variety of activities that take place at Sample School and in the town of Sample. We involve parents in parent-teacher conferences, course selection night, curriculum night, college planning programs, financial aid information night, scholarship night, a transition program to welcome incoming ninth grade students each summer, and the school improvement council. Local community organizations, including the Rotary Club, work with the school. Community members serve on school council. Sophomores at Sample School participate in an interactive event in which students explore and reflect on real life financial decisions such as credit, debit, and budgeting. Seniors engage in an internship program, where students go out into a working field of their choice at a local business. Some students take part in the Early College Program, a dual enrollment opportunity that allows them to earn credits from Local Community College while in high school. As a school, we could do more to bring in additional local professionals from a variety of fields, work with more community and local businesses, and local colleges. We also don't have enough opportunities to engage parents as partners, even though they are invited to many activities.

RATING

Developing

Standard 3 Strengths

STRENGTH

The ways in which teachers regularly reflect on their performance through the teacher evaluation system and meet as departments once per week in the afternoon to examine data, teaching strategies, and assessments (Standard 3, Principle 2)

STRENGTH

The use student work and assessments to make instructional decisions at least two times per week by the majority of staff (Standard 3, Principle 3)

STRENGTH

The social studies, English learner, and world languages departments that have vertically aligned their curriculum (Standard 3, Principle 4)

Standard 3 Areas of Growth

AREA OF GROWTH

Include the faculty in various ways when developing the annual school improvement plan because as many as half of the staff report that they are not familiar with the plan and its goals (Standard 3, Principle 1)

AREA OF GROWTH

Develop and implement more interventions for students who have not successfully passed math and English classes in the ninth grade and are at high risk of failing future English and math courses, increasing the risk of grade 9 retention and ultimately, a negative impact on the graduation rate (Standard 3, Principle 5)

AREA OF GROWTH

Have more outside entrepreneurs, craftsman, and other professionals come in to speak to juniors and seniors who may be considering post-secondary options other than a traditional four-year college and develop other parent, community, and business partnerships (Standard 3, Principle 6)

Standard 4, Principle 1

All students receive appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success.

NARRATIVE

The school is developing Principle 4.1. There are appropriate and programmatic intervention strategies in place to support students' academic, social, and emotional success; however, not as many as are needed. The cornerstone of this process is facilitated through the instructional support team (IST). IST is comprised of administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, and nurses. They meet weekly to identify at risk students and brainstorm intervention strategies specific to the individual. At risk students are identified through referrals by staff/faculty initiated via referral form, and/or through a review of academic, personal and social/emotional factors by school counselors. Possible interventions from IST in response to a referral include parent meetings, implementation of a curriculum accommodation plan, referral to a counselor, or special education evaluation. Following the implementation of an intervention, weekly reviews of student progress are conducted and adjustments are made as needed. Non-programmatic supports are also available to students including tutoring through the writing and math centers, after-school help from teachers, peer mediation, or online resources. While the school has a robust offering of supports, there is room for improvement. One area of potential improvement is to increase communication with staff/faculty regarding the curriculum accommodation plan in order to increase building-wide awareness and understanding of implementation. Other areas of potential improvement would be in the development of additional academic interventions for non-special education students, an increased awareness of social/emotional issues, a more clearly defined protocol for students who disclose concerning information to teachers, and a dedicated time for regular education teachers and school counselors to consult about special education students with special education teachers. A multi-tiered support system or Response to Intervention strategies would formalize the program further and provide even more structured support to students and staff. Last, students who have behavioral problems and are constant disruptions in class would benefit from specialized programs or other supports to help them be successful learners.

RATING

Developing

Standard 4, Principle 2

All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 4.2. Many students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel. The counseling department consists of a director of school counseling, four school counselors, a career counselor, one school adjustment counselor, two school psychologists, and one secretary/registrar. The school counselors carry a caseload of approximately 210 students. In addition to meeting with students individually about academic, post-secondary, and social-emotional issues, school counselors deliver a written, development school counseling curriculum in classrooms. This curriculum consists of six to seven written lessons per grade that cover a range of developmentally appropriate topics such as healthy relationships, goal setting, career research, and post-secondary options using Naviance as a primary tool. Counselors document all services, direct and indirect, provided to students and parents noting the main topic of the service. There are eight evening presentations offered for parents to learn timely information. These presentations cover topics such as the college application process, the importance of high school, and course selection/planning. Specialized programs and opportunities are also offered to students such as Accuplacer Testing, a dual enrollment program with a local community college, a senior internship program, college representative meetings, and on-site admissions with a community college. Counselors are available every day during lunch in the college/career library for students to drop in for help. Students can make appointments with their counselor using an online appointment program. Counselors meet weekly as a department and collaborate with the school adjustment counselor and school psychologists to discuss referrals and outreach with community and mental health agencies. Counselors often collaborate with outside mental health workers, Department of Children and Families, and Psychological and Psychiatric Services, Inc.

Areas to improve in the school counseling department include providing more targeted counseling professional development and connecting with more community resources. Counselors spend much of their time with students who have significant social emotional issues, which decreases the time counselors can spend providing tier 1 supports for all students regarding academic and post-secondary needs and preventive programming.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 4, Principle 3

All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 4.3. All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel. There are two full-time nationally certified registered nurses, who have ongoing access to the director of nursing services, the Sample Public Schools Resource Nurse, and a Department of Public Health (DPH) Regional Nurse Consultant. A school physician is available to Sample Public Schools on an as-needed, consultation basis. Nursing staff frequently collaborate with other building staff including teachers, counselors, psychologists, adjustment counselor, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech language pathologist, and administrators. Nurses provide a variety of preventative health services and direct intervention services. These include annual screenings for vision, hearing, scoliosis, height/weight/body mass index, and screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT). Immunization reviews are conducted according to DPH regulations. Health records are maintained, reviewed, updated, and secured. Medication is administered and monitored as directed by licensed health care providers and DPH regulations. Nurses provide ongoing assessment and/or intervention for students with chronic and acute health concerns such as diabetes, asthma, seizure disorders, life threatening allergies, acute illness, and injuries. Nurses refer students suspected of sustaining traumatic brain injury (TBI) to health care providers for medical evaluation. If diagnosed, students are placed on a TBI protocol and the nurses coordinate with the student's teachers, school counselors, athletic department personnel, and administrators to ensure necessary accommodations are implemented to assist in the recovery process. Students' physical and mental health needs are assessed and referrals made to appropriate internal and/or external resources. For example, internal referrals may include the school adjustment counselor or school psychologist. Direct external referrals in a crisis situation might include emergency services for physical or emotional needs. Nurses also refer families to nutritionists, allergists, therapists, or others for additional/complimentary services. Nurses are spending an increased amount of time during the day assisting students with social-emotional challenges, including anxiety and depression, which decreases the time they have to implement preventative services.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 4, Principle 4

All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 4.4. All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel. Library services at Sample School are provided to all students through the learning commons, which is staffed by a licensed media specialist and a dedicated library paraprofessional. Services are offered before school, throughout the school day, and after school providing students with multiple opportunities throughout the day to access the library materials and resources in a comfortable environment. The library collection is robust and is selected to meet the recreational and academic needs of students, faculty and staff in print, digital, and audio formats. The selection of materials for inclusion in the school library is done in response to curricular needs in conjunction with student interests and needs. The learning commons is a comfortable space and offers a few seating options and access to computing technology. In order to best serve the school community, the media specialist takes an active role in collaborating with faculty from basic assistance, such as locating resources for class, to fully integrated co-teaching using research and reading oriented topics. The media specialist is available to students throughout the day. Students are encouraged to consult the media specialist for assistance with locating reading material, research questions, assistance with technology in the library, and other general needs.

While the media specialist works to connect with all students, efforts need to be made to integrate into more areas of the curriculum. As students' needs change, the library media department wants to ensure that it remains responsive to the community, include space needs that will require the reconsideration of layout and furniture and informational needs that necessitate material selection and weeding. There is also a need to provide space for more collaborative learning between teacher and students and students to students.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 4, Principle 5

Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.

NARRATIVE

The school is developing Principle 4.5. Staff works to provide all English language learners, special needs students, and students with 504 plans with appropriate programs and support services that support their learning from licensed personnel. English language learners are supported by professional staff including a director of English learner education, two dedicated ELL teachers, a school counselor for ELL students, and a family outreach coordinator. Core subject area teachers maintain sheltered English immersion (SEI) endorsement as required by the state. An academic seminar course is offered to ELL students who could benefit from additional support for English language acquisition. As a part of academic seminar, a school counselor, in collaboration with the academic support teacher, provides support for ELL students by meeting with individuals quarterly. English language development courses are offered to students based on their ACCESS scores. Translation services are available for families in a variety of settings; however, availability of a translator during in person meetings is, at times, problematic necessitating last minute accommodations. Special needs students are supported by professional staff including a special education coordinator/team chairperson, 10 special education teachers, 18 paraprofessionals, 1 speech and language therapist, 2 school psychologists, a school adjustment counselor, 1 physical therapist, 1 occupational therapist, and 1 assistive technology staff person. Students are placed in the least restrictive environment that meets their learning and social emotional needs as defined in a student's individualized education program (IEP). A co-teaching model for special education services with common planning time is used. Three-year re-evaluations and annual reviews are filed in accordance within the required timeline. For students needed additional classroom support, there are alternative environments. The therapeutic academic support program provides space, services, and supports for students with social/emotional disabilities. Life Skills courses are provided for students with severe disabilities and require an environment that includes academic and vocational skills. Students with 504 plans are monitored by the 504 coordinator and supported by accommodations within the regular classroom and any other assistance as required by their plans.

All students on IEPs or 504 Plans are monitored during the year for progress through periodic meetings with special education teachers, school counseling and other specialized staff, content area teachers, or the 504 coordinator. With all programs and support services, additional common planning and/or meeting time would be beneficial to ensure services are coordinated, students receive appropriate services, and are successfully learners.

RATING

Developing

Standard 4 Strengths

STRENGTH

The adequately staffed counseling services with counselors who have reasonable caseloads that allow them to implement a school counseling curriculum in classrooms and provide specialized programs and opportunities for students (Standard 4, Principle 2)

STRENGTH

The variety of preventative health services and direct intervention services provided by two full-time nurses (Standard 4, Principle 3)

STRENGTH

The learning commons, which is widely used by teachers and students and the integrates co-teaching of research and reading topics with teachers (Standard 4, Principle 4)

Standard 4 Areas of Growth

AREA OF GROWTH

Increase communication and implementation of the CAP and develop additional academic interventions for non- special education students that are widely accepted, understood, and used by the faculty (Standard 4, Principle 1)

AREA OF GROWTH

Implement specific intervention programs and time to better collaborate with special education staff on special education students, interventions, and resources (Standard 4, Principles 1, 5)

AREA OF GROWTH

Increase programs to address the needs of students with severe social emotional and behavioral issues that impact students' learning and ability to be in school and/or class (Standard 4, Principle 1)

Standard 5, Principle 1

The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 5.1. The community and district provide sufficient school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services. Sample School provides a safe, secure, healthy environment that supports the diversity of the student body. All entrances to the building are locked. All visitors are required to check in at the main office upon entering the building after being buzzed into the school. Staff are required to wear a picture identification at all times. A school resource officer is housed in the high school during school hours and there are security cameras positioned strategically throughout the building. The building is adequately sized for the current population of 1,000 students. There are appropriate spaces to support student learning and the curriculum. There are enough classrooms for instruction, including the delivery of support services for special education and (ELL) students. The cafeteria and gymnasium are large enough to accommodate the number of students and staff for their uses, as is the auditorium. Science labs and technology rooms are in abundance and sufficiently sized. The school library is a sufficient area. There are two large-group instruction rooms and a little theater. Classrooms are large enough to hold up to 30 students with enough furniture for all students and staff. There are a variety of spaces where teachers can plan in groups. There is limited space for teachers to lock belongings; each student has a locker. Whiteboard space in classrooms is limited. The diversity of student interests is sufficiently supported through a variety of facilities including the gymnasium and indoor track, outdoor fields, a TV studio, little theater, computer and science labs, an auditorium and stage, a robotics lab, and spaces for health and wellness classes, and a variety of extra-curricular programs that take place after school. The building is clean and well-maintained. The custodial staff cleans daily. Over the summer routine deep cleaning, painting, larger repairs, and equipment replacement are completed. The mechanical systems are in good working order, with the exception of the HVAC system, which functions inconsistently. Temperatures fluctuate significantly in both warm and cold weather. The buildings and grounds department work with the school to monitor temperature data. The building meets all applicable federal and state laws and is in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 5, Principle 2

The school/district provides time and financial resources to enable researched-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 5.2. The school/district provides sufficient time and financial resources to enable researched-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services. There are three full-day professional days and six half-day professional days into the school calendar each year. The content of the professional time provides opportunities to enable researched-based instruction such as mindfulness training, technology integration, and curriculum development and review. Time is used for the development and improvement of school programs and services. The school and the district facilitate weekly professional time for 60-minutes after school. These weekly meetings rotate between staff meetings, department meetings, and teacher-directed time. Topics include building initiatives, mandated trainings, professional collaboration, and curriculum writing and review. All district professional development resources are centrally controlled by the assistant superintendent's office. Curriculum directors will continue to direct professional development initiatives for their departments. When possible, the principal provides substitute coverage for teachers to observe their colleagues teaching, in an effort to strengthen, align, and improve teaching practices, and to support professional collaboration through peer observation. The school and district provide a limited amount of paid professional time during the summer months for teachers to collaborate on curriculum development and revision. Common planning time is organized for a number of teachers working within the school's co-teaching model. There is a desire among staff for common planning time for teachers who are teaching like-courses to collaborate.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 5, Principle 3

The community and the district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 5.3. The community and the district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. There is a wide range of school programs and services including special education, English language learners, course selection, electives, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, clubs, music, drama, community TV, and athletics. There is a sufficient funding for technology and library information services and adequate resources to provide teachers and students with access to technology, including computer labs, school-wide Wi-Fi, interactive projectors, Chromebooks for students, staff computers, and iPads. There is sufficient funding for instructional materials and supplies for teachers, students, and staff. There is sufficient funding for co-curricular learning programs such as field trips both during and after-school and educational events. Furniture, technology, and equipment are properly maintained and replaced when necessary. Lastly, although the enrollment is declining, the needs of the student body stay the same and the budget continues to support those needs by providing sufficient professional and support staff to ensure appropriate class sizes.

Governing bodies could improve communication with respect to the budget, the budget process, the budget outcome, and the rationale behind that outcome. More dependable funding is needed to improve programs such as co-teaching, therapeutic academic support systems, broader science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programming, special education and English learner programs.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 5, Principle 4

The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities.

NARRATIVE

The school is implementing Principle 5.4 The school/district maintains short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities. A schedule of regular maintenance and repair for the building can be found in the high school maintenance and repair plan. Ongoing and projected capital improvements are documented in the town's capital improvement plan. There is also a plan in place to implement capital improvements to the building/facilities. At this point, the plan is in progress and partially fulfilled in accordance to how much can be funded by the budget. A maintenance plan to ensure a safe, secure, and adequate building and campus is in place and reviewed periodically. As enrollment changes, staffing needs are taken into consideration and the necessary adjustments are made in a timely fashion. Every few years, the district undertakes an enrollment study to plan for any changes. The school district has a five-year technology plan in place with short-term and long-term goals for the maintenance and upkeep of current technology, and purchasing of new technology. The school is in year one of a three-year implementation of a 1:1 student Chromebook program beginning with the students in grades 9 and 10. By the start of the 2019-2020 school year, all students at the high school will have Chromebooks. All teachers are issued school laptops, which are on a 4-year replacement cycle, and classroom desktop computers are maintained annually and replaced as needed. Stationary and mobile computer labs are maintained appropriately. Every classroom has short-throw, interactive projectors. A four-member technology staff is in place to provide maintenance, service, and repair of technology throughout the school year.

RATING

Implementing

Standard 5, Principle 5

The school has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations.

NARRATIVE

The school is developing Principle 5.5. The school has built the infrastructure and put specific protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations. The school maintains a safety protocol by having staff and students practice evacuation procedures multiple times a year and emergency protocols are posted in every classroom. Online and in-person automated external defibrillator (AED), cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and blood borne pathogens and bodily fluids trainings are offered to staff. There are three AEDs on campus accessible in unlocked wall cabinets strategically located throughout the building. Two additional AEDs are assigned to the athletic office and are brought to athletic practices and games. The school nurses provide verbal and written documentation to staff on students with special physical/medical needs such as but not limited to allergies, diabetes, and asthma. The nurses also provide regular communication and documentation to appropriate teachers, staff, parents, and coaches in accordance with the district's concussion policy. These communications take place daily. Parents feel confident that school administrators and staff are well-trained and equipped to respond in crisis situations. The school could better communicate information about safety and security protocols to parents, staff, and students. Flip charts with crisis protocol information that were in all classrooms at one time are outdated and missing from many teaching spaces. The district has committed to the alert, lockdown, inform, counter, evacuate (ALICE) safety protocol. There has been little training for staff and students about ALICE as of yet.

RATING

Developing

Standard 5 Strengths

STRENGTH

The facility, which provides the space necessary for the delivery of high quality instruction, student learning, and participation in extracurricular activities (Standard 5, Principle 1)

STRENGTH

The well-maintained building and school campus and the appropriate funds allotted for regular and unforeseen repairs (Standard 5, Principle 4)

STRENGTH

The community and school committee support of an annual school budget that adequately supports the implementation of curriculum, co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities (Standard 5, Principle 3)

STRENGTH

The ample professional development time provided to educator's each year, including three full-days, six half-days, and one 60-minute meeting per week (Standard 5, Principle 2)

STRENGTH

The precautions taken to ensure a safe environment for all students, staff, and faculty

Standard 5 Areas of Growth

AREA OF GROWTH

Improve district communication regarding the annual budget (Standard 5, Principle 3)

AREA OF GROWTH

Procure more dependable and necessary resources to support programs and initiatives including co-teaching, social and emotional supports for students, STEM programming, and academic support for English learners (Standard 5, Principle 1)

AREA OF GROWTH

Repair or modify the HVAC system in order to provide an environment conducive to teaching and learning (Standard 5, Principle 4)

Part 3 - Capacity for Continuous Growth as a Learning Organization

PART 3 NARRATIVE

While the educators at Sample School are committed to providing a differentiated academic program that ensures all students are appropriately challenged, the school does not yet have a shared definition of learning. Data from the NEASC faculty survey indicates that teachers need more time to collaborate on curriculum, instructional practices, and assessment strategies. This kind of collaboration is critical to the development of a shared vision for student learning. During the 2016-2017 school year, a locally developed survey was administered focusing on grading practices. Data from this survey revealed very disparate attitudes among teachers with respect to the purpose of grades and the importance of using different strategies to ensure that students had multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery. Common planning time is desired by many teachers and provided when possible for those who are co-teaching courses. This limited common planning time has historically been supported by professional development focusing on co-teaching strategies. Funding for this professional development was eliminated in the 2017-2018 school year. The district is in the final year of a three-year district improvement plan and a strategic development committee has been formed tasked with creating the next three-year improvement plan. The school develops an annual school improvement plan in collaboration with the school improvement council, a committee comprised of faculty representatives, students, and parents. The school improvement plan is aligned to the strategic initiatives in the district improvement plan.

Professional development has varied from department to department over the past several years. Since 2011, a significant amount of professional development time has been dedicated to writing curriculum maps. With curriculum largely written, the focus is beginning to shift. The district provides adequate time and funding for professional development, but without a well-articulated professional development plan, time is not always used effectively. Teachers have four 60-minute after school meetings each month including one faculty meeting, two department meetings, and one teacher-directed meeting, six early release days, and three full-days for professional development. This year, the district created a professional development advisory Committee with representatives from each school to help develop a long-range professional development plan.

Educators at Sample School are provided formal feedback through the evaluation process. All licensed educators establish professional practice and student learning goals at the start of each new cycle and are evaluated on their progress towards meeting these goals. The system also requires evaluators to conduct observations and complete formative and summative reports where feedback on performance relative to the standards and indicators of the evaluation system is provided.

Overall, the capacity for continuous growth as a learning organization is on a positive path. Staff and administrators believe in and support a growth mindset model for improvement.

Part 4 - Goals and Vision for the Future

PART 4 - NARRATIVE

Sample School's goals and vision for the future largely fall into three categories: (1) instructional initiatives; (2) social-emotional supports; and (3) differentiated programming. With respect to instructional initiatives, work is needed to complete curriculum maps and to ensure that maps are all in the same format. This project has been a top priority in the district for several years, and while there is some fatigue among teachers with respect to writing curriculum, the process must be ongoing so that curriculum remains relevant and effective. The Curriculum Review Task Force (CRTF), a committee of educators from across the district, tasked with reviewing and providing feedback on existing curriculum, was discontinued during the 2017-2018 school year after only one year of existence. The school and district need to identify a new curriculum development and review process to replace the CRTF. In addition to writing curriculum, the high school staff needs to address inconsistencies with respect to grading practices and attitudes. While it is not necessarily the desire of the faculty to implement a school-wide grading policy, the faculty needs to work to ensure that experiences are the same in courses, regardless of the teacher. The 1:1 Chromebook program is an initiative connected to teaching and learning. As the Chromebook program moves towards full implementation in 2019, teachers need targeted professional development to ensure that they are integrating these devices into their instructional practices. The district and school are working to develop a district-wide Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to help provide a framework for teachers as they work to differentiate instruction and assessment strategies to support a wide-range of learners. This new system will inform updates to the Building Curriculum Accommodation Plan (BCAP) and Instructional Support Team (IST) process. The district's MTSS framework will also help the high school improve tier 2 and tier 3 interventions for students struggling academically, socially, and emotionally. Lastly, the school is in the process of developing an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). This team, which will be comprised of staff members representing all departments will be responsible for the development of the school improvement plan, for identifying the school's instructional focus, and for planning professional development that will support the goals and vision of the school.

The emotional health of students has been a focus for several years. Since 2011, the district has supported multiple positions designed to support students with social and emotional disabilities and mental health diagnoses. Looking ahead, there are multiple initiatives that are designed to improve the level of services students have access to now. In 2013, a therapeutic academic support (TAS) classroom was added. This room was initially staffed with one special education teacher and one paraprofessional and used the services of the school's social worker on an as needed basis. In 2016, the room was relocated to a larger space and a school psychologist position was added to serve TAS exclusively. In 2017, the district hired a consultant to conduct a program evaluation of TAS, and in 2018, the district was awarded a grant to work with a small team from a transition program. Through the grant, a TAS redesign team has been identified and will begin working this spring on a multi-year project to redesign and expand the services offered through TAS. While TAS currently serves a relatively small population of students, the time and attention these students require is intensive. Staff hopes that a redesigned program will provide services for a wider variety of students, ultimately keeping them regulated and in their classes. Maintaining a positive and safe school climate is important to members of the school community. That said, a group of committed educators have formed a committee to explore and design a school-wide program to help students academically, support them emotionally, and foster meaningful relationships between adults and students. The proposed program is expected to be piloted during a portion of the 2018-2019 school year. This initiative has been in the study and planning stages since 2016. A pilot will provide the school with critical data to inform decisions about full implementation as it is a critical part of Sample School's long-range vision.

As the traditional model of schooling continues to blur, it is important to explore programming that provides students with different options. There is a need to increase existing partnerships with local colleges. Enrollment in the Early College Program, which provides juniors and seniors with the opportunity to earn college credits while in high school is small and needs to expand. The senior internship program, which began in the spring of 2018, should be marketed to more students going forward. The school needs to explore dual credit opportunities with local community colleges for existing programs like pre-engineering, TV production,

and early childhood education. Online learning opportunities that currently exist through Virtual High School (VHS) should be further explored, particularly to help those students with school avoidance issues or in need of credit recovery options.

Collectively, accomplishment of these items will increase opportunities and options for students; decrease drop-out rates that have been increasing for specific sub-groups; increase the overall graduation rate; and connect more graduates with post-secondary experiences whether in a traditional college setting or technical training program.

Part 5 - Priority Areas for NEASC School Growth Plan

PRIORITY AREA FOR GROWTH #1

Develop a vision of the graduate that includes the skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success.

- Standard 1, Principle 1.2
- Standard 2, Principle 2.1
- Standard 3, Principle 3.1

Reasoning: Because the core values and beliefs have been reviewed and updated, the current learning expectations need to align and provide students with more challenging opportunities needed as they leave high school. This will ensure meeting Foundational Element 1.2a.

PRIORITY AREA FOR GROWTH #2

Complete the process of writing curriculum maps for all courses that include essential questions, concepts, content, and assessments and ensure that each map is formatted using the same *Understanding by Design* template. Use this process to formally highlight where technology can be fully integrated into the curriculum through the 1:1 Chromebook program. (Standard 2, Principles 2.2., 2.3, 2.9)

Reasoning: To complete curriculum for teachers to use as a living document and meet Foundational Element 2.2a.

PRIORITY AREA FOR GROWTH #3

Add new programs and modify the existing programming and systems designed to support students with social and emotional disabilities (Standards 2, 3, 4 Principles 2.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2)

Reasoning: There is a need to redesign the therapeutic classroom (TAS), improve the use and instructional support team (IST), update the curriculum accommodation plan (CAP), and the development of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework to ensure the individual learning needs of all students are met. MTSS will provide a framework for teachers as they work to differentiate instruction and assessment strategies to support a wide- range of learners. The MTSS framework will help improve tier 2 and tier 3 interventions for students struggling academically, socially, and emotionally.

PRIORITY AREA FOR GROWTH #4

Develop and implement a program to challenge and support students academically, enhance social and emotional development, and strengthen relationships between adults and students. (Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, Principles 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 2.1, 3.5, 4.1)

Reasoning: It is important to ensure students feel well-known and valued. This program would be similar to an advisory program but structured to meet the needs of students.

PRIORITY AREA FOR GROWTH #5

Add programming that provides students with opportunities to learn and earn credit in non-traditional ways including dual credit programs with local colleges, online learning, and internship programs (Standards 1, 2, 3,

Principles 2.4, 2.7, 2.8, 3.6)

Reasoning: Although some of these programs are in place to some degree, there is a need to provide more to meet the needs of all students to enhance their high school experience, broaden their perspectives outside the walls of the school, and prepare them for their post-secondary experiences. Collectively, accomplishment of these items will increase opportunities and options for students; decrease drop-out rates that have been increasing for specific subgroups; increase the overall graduation rate; and connect more graduates with post-secondary experiences whether in a traditional college setting or technical training program