

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

**Commission on Public Schools**



**Commission on Public Schools**

**Report of the Visiting Team for  
John Stark Regional High School**

Weare, NH

10-17-2022 - 10-18-2022

**Susan Schroeter, Chair  
Gary Dempsey, Principal**

# School and Community Summary

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## School and Community Summary

John Stark Regional High School (JSRHS) opened in 1987, marking the beginning of a 34-year union between the communities of Henniker and Weare in rural southern New Hampshire. John Stark is located in Weare, geographically near the border of the towns of Henniker and Weare. The school is located in Hillsborough County, approximately 15 miles from the state capital of Concord, New Hampshire.

The two towns are similar economically, racially, culturally, and ethnically. According to the 2020 census, the town of Henniker was composed of 5,018 residents and Weare of 9,091 residents for a total of 14,109 residents. The median income from 2015-2019 in Henniker was \$79,867 and Weare \$94,181. Henniker had 9.9 percent of residents living in poverty with Weare having 6.2 percent. The education level in Henniker showed 45.2 percent holding a bachelor's degree or higher while Weare had 37 percent with the same level of education. The populations of Henniker and Weare are racially homogenous with Henniker's population at 96.3 percent white, and Weare's representation at 96.5 percent white. Non-caucasian students comprise 3.9 percent of the total school population in the 2021-22 school year.

School Administrative Unit #24 (SAU24) oversees John Stark Regional High School and four other schools within the SAU: Henniker Community School (K-8 in Henniker), Center Woods Elementary School (PK-3 in Weare), Weare Middle School (4-8 in Weare) and James Faulkner Elementary School (K-5 in Stoddard). James Faulkner Elementary School students attend middle and high school in a different district. John Stark Regional High School currently (2021-2022 school year) serves 586 students in grades 9-12, as reported to the State of New Hampshire on October 1, 2021. This represents a trend of decreased enrollments. In the 2010-2011 school year, there were 803 students which was a decrease from the 2009 enrollment of 822 students. Grade level distribution of the current students is: grade 9, 173 students; grade 10, 159 students; grade 11, 142 students and grade 12, 115 students. Although the enrollment number has declined to the current number of 589, enrollment is projected to increase to an average of 660 students per year for the next four years.

The average per pupil cost is \$19,609.06, above the state average of \$17,758.00. The proposed 2020 fiscal year budget was \$14,425,926, however, it was not approved by the voters and the school is operating on a default budget of \$14,424,398.

According to the New Hampshire Board of Education, the 2019 dropout rate, based on an enrollment of 615, was 1.3% at John Stark Regional High School. The teacher-to-student ratio is 1:10 according to *US News and World Report*, though the class size has ranged from approximately 4 to 31. The four-year adjusted graduation rate is 90.41 percent. The John Stark post-secondary enrollment has been steadily increasing, while the state average has been declining with John Stark at 50 percent matriculating at either 2-year or 4-year colleges; 2 percent of graduates enrolling in trade or vocational programs; 6 percent enlisting into the military and 8 percent directly entering the workforce.

Students at John Stark have the opportunity to participate in a number of classes through Concord Regional Technical Center (CRTC) located at Concord High School in Concord, NH. Programs offered include cosmetology, automotive, criminal justice, culinary arts, and many more. In addition to programs offered through CRTC, students can take courses at John Stark in woodworking, welding, small engine repair, and Project Lead The Way engineering and manufacturing programs. These technical education programs offer extended learning opportunities through internships and apprenticeships with local community partners such as Protek-welding, PHAZE welding, MDS welding, American Steel, AWS, and Granite State Plumbing. Students can apply to participate in a peer leadership class which develops student leadership through a variety of hands-on activities. In addition, students can take a number of AP and honors courses in most subjects either offered at John Stark or through Virtual Learning Academy (VLACS).

Area colleges including New England College, New Hampshire Technical Institute, and Manchester Community College offer our students opportunities to get college credit while in high school through Project Running Start and other educational partnerships.

## **Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate**

### **Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate**

From the Student and Parent Handbook (pages 4-5) on the John Stark website:

#### **JOHN STARK REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CORE VALUES**

WE ARE A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS WHO ENGAGE OUR MINDS IN THE PURSUIT OF INDIVIDUAL ACADEMIC GROWTH, SOCIAL AWARENESS, AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. OUR LEARNING OCCURS IN A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT WITH REGARD, RESPECT, AND INTEGRITY- THIS IS THE JOHN STARK WAY.

#### **Beliefs About Learning:**

We are committed to the following beliefs about learning:

- Each member of our learning community - students, faculty and staff – is a lifelong learner.
- Every member of our learning community shares a collective responsibility for student learning and success.
- Literacy is the foundation of all learning.
- Integration and authentic application of knowledge, concepts and skills improve student learning.
- Learning opportunities extend beyond the school day and beyond the four walls of the classroom and school.
- Our learners have diverse needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles and this diversity is reflected in the school's curriculum, instructional and assessment practices, and co-curricular offerings.

### **21st Century Learning Expectations**

#### **Academic Competencies**

1. Communicate effectively through written, oral, and artistic means.
2. Acquire knowledge through listening, reading and viewing.
3. Demonstrate research skills that lead to informed decision-making and reasonable conclusions.
4. Use critical thinking to solve problems.
5. Apply technology to access information and to demonstrate learning.

#### **Social Competencies**

1. Take responsibility for his/her own actions, practice respect and regard for self and others, and demonstrate integrity.
2. Work as part of a team and be comfortable in both leadership and supporting roles.
3. Make healthy choices to enhance the development of lifelong wellness practices.
4. Understand the value of becoming a lifelong learner.

#### **Civic Competencies**

1. Appreciate diversity and respect all persons irrespective of their individual differences.
2. Participate in the school and greater community.
3. Be informed and involved citizens with an awareness of local, national, and global issues.

## **PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER**

From our SAU24 Portrait of a Learner site

SAU24 graduates are empowered with the skills and dispositions to achieve their goals and contribute to the world. Our learners are knowledgeable problem solvers and creators, effective communicators, and respectful collaborators. They are lifelong learners, prepared to follow their passions.

- A Knowledgeable Problem Solver and Creator adapts information and skills to persevere through challenges and innovate new solutions.
- An Effective Communicator is mindful of audience, engages in meaningful dialogue, and constructively conveys messages using a variety of methods.
- A Respectful Collaborator employs strong interpersonal skills, demonstrates compassion, and contributes as a positive community member.

# LEARNING CULTURE

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## Learning Culture

*The school provides a safe learning culture that ensures equity and fosters shared values among learners, educators, families, and members of the school community. These shared values drive student learning as well as policy, practice, and decision-making while promoting a spirit of collaboration, shared ownership, pride, leadership, social responsibility, and civic engagement. The school community sets high standards for student learning, fosters a growth mindset, and facilitates continuous school improvement to realize the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.*

1. The school community provides a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought.
  - 1a. The school community provides a safe environment.
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.
  - 2a. The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.
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.
4. The school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection.
5. The school's culture promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth.
6. The school has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning.
7. The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility.

# STUDENT LEARNING

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## Student Learning

*The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, disciplinary/interdisciplinary knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary to prepare learners for their future. Students are assured consistent learning outcomes through a defined curricular experience and have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in a variety of creative ways. Students actively participate in authentic learning experiences while practicing the skills and habits of mind to regularly reflect upon, and take ownership of, their learning.*

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.
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.
  - 2a. There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments.
3. Curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.
4. Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.
5. Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning.
6. Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.
7. Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum.
8. Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning.
9. Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning.

# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

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## Professional Practices

*The school maintains and implements a school improvement/growth plan, organizational practices, and productive community relationships to meet and support student learning needs. Educators engage in ongoing reflection, collaboration, and professional development to improve their practice and examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, programs, and services.*

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.
  - 1a. The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.
2. Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being.
3. Educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services.
4. Collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of curriculum.
5. School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.
6. Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning.

# LEARNING SUPPORT

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## Learning Support

*The school has timely, directed, and coordinated interventions for all students. The school provides targeted supports to meet each student's individual needs, including counseling services, health services, library/information services, and other appropriate support services to assist each student in meeting the school's vision of the graduate.*

1. All students receive appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success.
  - 1a. The school has intervention strategies designed to support students.
2. All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.
3. All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.
4. All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.
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.

# LEARNING RESOURCES

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## Learning Resources

*The school has adequate and appropriate time, funding, and facilities to support the realization of its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate. The school and school community provide time, funding, and facilities for student learning and support; teacher collaboration and professional growth; and full implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs in the school. The school has appropriate plans, protocols, and infrastructure in place to ensure consistent delivery of its curriculum, programs, and services.*

1. The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services.
  - 1a. The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.
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.
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.
4. The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities.
5. The school has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations.

# Introduction

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## Introduction

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

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees, which supervises the work of three Commissions: the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS); the Commission on Public Schools (CPS), which is composed of the Committee on Public Elementary, Middle, and High Schools (CPEMHS), and the Committee on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI); and the Commission on International Education (CIE).

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public school member institutions, CPS requires visiting teams to assess the degree to which schools align with the qualitative Standards for Accreditation. The Standards are *Learning Culture, Student Learning, Professional Practices, Learning Support, and Learning Resources*.

The accreditation program for public schools involves a five-step process: the self-reflection conducted by stakeholders at the school; the Collaborative Conference visit, conducted by a team of peer educators and NEASC representatives; the school's development and implementation of a growth/improvement plan; the Decennial Accreditation visit conducted by a team of peer educators and NEASC representatives; and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-reflection, the recommendations of the visiting team, and those identified by the Committee in the follow-up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school participate in the accreditation process over the ten-year cycle and that it show continued progress addressing identified needs.

### Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Reflection

Accreditation coordinators and a steering committee composed of the professional staff were appointed to supervise the school's self-reflection and Accreditation process. At John Stark Regional High School, a committee of 12 members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the Accreditation process. The steering committee organized an appropriate committee or committees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people by completing the school self-reflection.

Public schools evaluated by the Commission on Public Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their alignment with the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's core values, beliefs, vision of the graduate, and unique student population. John Stark Regional High School used questionnaires developed by the Commission on Public Schools to reflect the concepts contained in the Standards for Accreditation. These materials provided discussion items for a comprehensive assessment of the school by the professional staff during the self-reflection.

In addition, the professional staff was required to read and vote on Part 2 of the self-reflection to ensure that all voices were heard related to the alignment of the school to the Standards for Accreditation. All professional staff members were expected to participate in the self-reflection process either by participating on a committee or by participating in discussion and evidence gathering to support the school's alignment with the Standards.

### The Process Used by the Visiting Team

A visiting team of five members was assigned by the Commission on Public Schools to conduct a Collaborative Conference visit to John Stark Regional High School in Weare, NH. The visiting team members spent two days at the school; reviewed the self-reflection documents, which had been prepared for their examination; met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students, and parents; and observed classes to

determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Committee on Public Secondary Schools' and Public Elementary and Middle Schools' Standards for Accreditation. The team also reviewed the proposed priority areas for the school's growth plan to be developed as part of the Accreditation process.

Each conclusion in the report was agreed to by visiting team consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting team are included within each section of the report. The report includes commendations and recommendations that, in the visiting team's judgment, will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and implement its plan for growth and improvement.

This report of the findings of the visiting team will be forwarded to the Commission on Public Schools, which will make a decision on the Accreditation of John Stark Regional High School.

# Foundational Element Ratings

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## Foundational Element Ratings

Foundational Elements	School's Rating	Visitors' Rating
1.1a - Learning Culture	Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
1.2a - Learning Culture	Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
2.2a - Student Learning	Does Not Meets the Standard	Does Not Meets the Standard
3.1a - Professional Practices	Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
4.1a - Learning Support	Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
5.1a - Learning Resources	Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard

# Foundational Element 1.1a - Learning Culture

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## Narrative

The school community provides a safe environment. Students, staff, faculty, and families report feeling mostly safe at John Stark Regional High School. Parents stated their hesitations about sending their freshman to John Stark were comforted by their students once the school year got underway. Members of the LGBTQ+ community reported not feeling safe in restroom and locker room locations. Stakeholders report feeling safe inside the school from outside concerns. All exterior doors are locked and access needs to be granted to enter the building. There are cameras at each door and visitors are buzzed in. All visitors check-in at the main office. Regular drills are conducted to practice for emergencies. Some students with disabilities are concerned for their safety as there are a few places in the building that they would have trouble leaving if the elevator was not in use. Security personnel are active members of the staff and students report they know the security staff by sight.

## Rating

Meets the Standard

# **Foundational Element 1.2a - Learning Culture**

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## **Narrative**

The school has a written document describing its core values posted in their program of studies and student handbook. John Stark has statements regarding their goals and context about learning, vision of the graduate and portrait of a learner. These are also included in their common syllabus.

## **Rating**

Meets the Standard

# **Foundational Element 2.2a - Student Learning**

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## **Narrative**

The school does not yet have a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments. The work and development of the school's portrait of a learner, identification of competencies, delineation of learning targets, and the identification of this need in the strategic plan are an appropriate and strong foundation upon which to base the written curriculum.

## **Rating**

Does Not Meet the Standard

# **Foundational Element 3.1a - Professional Practices**

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## **Narrative**

John Stark High School meets this foundational element with the SAU 24 Strategic Plan adopted by the School Board on October 25, 2021. The strategic plan spells out a plan for all of the schools in the district. The John Stark part of the plan references organizations within the school and plans for using and strengthening those groups. The school appears to be making decisions on the "Strong Connections" pathway that align with the plan. They are creating the structures they believe will create, "team trust and traditions." The strategic plan is informing the school's decision making.

## **Rating**

Meets the Standard

# Foundational Element 4.1a - Learning Support

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## Narrative

The school has a range of intervention strategies to support students academically, behaviorally, and socially-emotionally. Tier 1 supports are significant, in which teachers formally and informally routinely review student work and needs within the classroom, through FLEX, and in partnership with support systems such as the Library Media Center. Furthermore, school counselors utilize a plethora of proactive strategies in individual, small, and large group settings. Moreover, students are identified once teachers reach out to a student's school counselor and/or participants on MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) Team and/or the Academic Review Committee recognize a need for additional interventions. Specific Tier 2 interventions for both academic and behavioral interventions include, but are not limited to, the learning lab, academic support center, student support center, and individualized meetings. Additional interventions targeted toward Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports include various pathways through adult education diplomas, Second Start, and Special Education. Though support systems are in place, it is important to review communication for all involved stakeholders to ensure consistency and data-driven practices to support student growth.

## Rating

Meets the Standard

# **Foundational Element 5.1a - Learning Resources**

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## **Narrative**

John Stark Regional High School provides school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services. The building includes a gymnasium, weight room, computer lab, science labs, library media center, a large atrium, an academic support center, and a career center. The cafeteria is spacious and is combined with a stage for performances. The grounds have sufficient and well-maintained athletic fields, a ropes course, and a quarter-mile track. The school building is clean, well-maintained, and is in compliance with federal and state laws, and local fire, health, and safety regulations.

## **Rating**

Meets the Standard

# Standard 1 - Learning Culture

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## Narrative

The school community generally provides a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that strives to ensure equity and honors diversity in identity and thought. Eighty-five percent of students report that they felt somewhat/usually/always safe at school, and seventy-five percent of the faculty indicate that they feel safe. Most respondents to the NEASC family survey report that the school feels safe. However, since that survey was disseminated, the school experienced a racially charged incident that left several members of the staff and student body feeling unsafe and unsupported. The drawn symbol was removed; however, it was redrawn. The school reports being committed to equity and honoring diversity in identity as evidenced in the student handbook. But there have been recent incidents of student overt racism and harassment that contradict this statement. Both students and faculty have reported that insensitive symbols have also been carved into furniture in the bathrooms. When situations of racially charged incidents aren't handled in a manner that leaves all stakeholders feeling safe, it can lead to other groups feeling susceptible to bullying and harassment and not feeling safe. Members of the LGBTQ+ community report feeling unsafe in restrooms and locker rooms. The student handbook clearly outlines the school's code of conduct and policy on bullying and harassment. Although the school has these policies in place, there is no anonymous way for students or families to report bullying and harassment. In addition, students often feel their counselors are not available for social-emotional issues, so students default to the crisis hotline phone number for support.

The school strives to provide an inclusive, supportive, and respectful culture. Teachers repeatedly report their favorite thing about the school was the teacher-to-teacher support and respect among the faculty and staff. Students and their families report feeling seen, cared for, empowered, and encouraged by their teachers in a respectful manner. They cited examples of ways the school provided support for student learners even after they graduated from the school, and the ongoing efforts to foster respectful support for lifelong learning. In March of 2022, the school re-implemented its staff training for the alert, lockdown, inform, counter, and evacuate (ALICE) protocol in response to violent critical incidents to actively ensure students and staff are safe. During the pandemic, faculty and student training lapsed. The school plans to resume an annual refresher for ALICE with faculty to occur at the beginning of the school year; the plan for that training has not been communicated yet.

The school has a peer leadership program for juniors and seniors. These upperclassmen meet regularly with the freshmen every few weeks to discuss and strategize issues and problems that may arise in high school and help support and guide them through those situations. Both students and faculty reported that they would like to reinstate the application process with teacher referral to become a peer mentor. By fulfilling an application process, only those truly qualified to become peer mentor leaders with training would also help support the program. Parents stated that their students don't always achieve every initiative on the first try and suggest that the application process would be one way to foster skills of perseverance to improve and learn. The school has a number of committees and programs that support students and staff, and strive to ensure emotional and intellectual safety in the building. Some teachers and staff participated in activities and training on diversity, equity, and sensitivity, and there is an increasing desire from teachers for training in areas such as these.

The school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate do not entirely drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources. The school's core values statement is located in the handbook, program of studies, and common syllabus. This document outlines the goals of learning at John Stark Regional High School - academic growth, social awareness, and community engagement - as well as the belief that "learning occurs in a safe and caring environment with regard, respect, and integrity." The newly developed district "portrait of a learner" does not directly incorporate or integrate all of the school's espoused core values, which were adopted during the school year 2009-2010 and have been a driving force, "The John Stark Way," in the school. Between 1988 and 2015 the school held "philosophy breakfasts" for a selection of students to reflect on the school's progress in meeting its stated goals. The administration intends to bring these breakfast opportunities back into practice now that we are living in a post-pandemic. Despite being in a number of student-facing documents, the core values and the school's three learning goals are seldom, if ever, used to assess or self-reflect on programs or classroom instruction.

Most visible in the school is the language used in the school's "context of learning": regard, respect, and integrity. These words are seen posted in classrooms and have been painted on the walls for all to see. As the school begins to embed the district portrait of a learner into its culture, integrating the traditions and language of "The John Stark" way will help to reinforce their belief that consideration of the whole learner is paramount to the success of all learners in the school.

The school community strives to take 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. In recent months, several incidents of racism and harassment have been noted. Students have access to the student handbook which is located on the school's website with specific sections dedicated to bullying and harassment policies. All educators are expected to give their students access to their course expectations at the beginning of the school year through Canvas which recently replaced Google Classroom. Parents and students have access to PowerSchool, which provides information about grades, tardies, and absences. The school has a varied program of studies that is designed to meet the academic needs and interests of all students. Courses are offered at all levels, including Advanced Placement, honors, open-level, and academic support classes. Students are able to select which level they wish to take. However, teachers report that one-third of students are not placed at the proper level for them (either too high or too low) which can lead to distractions in the learning spaces. Students report that misbehaved students are not held to high standards for expected behavior. During class observations in multiple classrooms, student behavior was ignored, distracting other students from their attempts to focus on their learning. New courses, such as military history, have been added recently to meet student interest. The program of studies includes individualized pathways that students can pursue such as computer and information technology, business and hospitality, building construction and trades, etc. Students' choices and needs are prioritized when determining classes for the upcoming school year. Teachers report that assignments to new courses aren't always communicated in advance and they often lack the time to plan for teaching a new curriculum. With so many options, teachers report having multiple different preps without time to meet the needs of their students effectively.

There is a variety of extracurricular activities including athletics, music, theater, politics, and technology. Students report that positive changes made in the athletic department have renewed the positive energy brought to improve the culture for all stakeholders. The implementation of the Student-Athlete Leadership Team (SALT) has also brought new excitement to the school. Before and after-school tutoring is provided in the library for any student who would like to receive more support in any of their classes. These extracurricular activities provide opportunities for students to feel included and welcomed into the school's community. Students and parents speak very positively about the pride they have for the music and arts programs at the school. The excitement felt in the welding classroom was also something to note.

John Stark has a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team that includes counseling staff, administrators, and the school nurse. The MTSS team meets bi-monthly to discuss students of concern. Available interventions include the academic support center, student support center, and individualized counseling. Student needs may be addressed through support classes, special education programming, 504 plans, school counseling curriculum, inventories on Naviance, FLEX time, team meetings, parent meetings, individualized behavior plans, after-school tutoring, peer tutoring, Title I for reading and/or mathematics, health plans, and alternative pathways to a high school diploma. The school has a process in place using their created MTSS form, however, it isn't being utilized to its fullest extent. The form is a longer process and is not user-friendly. Currently, teachers choose to verbally report situations of concern to guidance as opposed to filling out the form. In the classroom, teachers and students frequently referred to utilizing FLEX time to seek assistance with concepts or skills that they need to develop.

Teachers report interest in receiving data from student testing to help guide individualizing their instruction, specifically mentioning student reading scores that would benefit every teacher/student in all courses. Every two years, the students participate in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey which is completed anonymously. Data is reviewed to determine future programming to support all students' academic, social-emotional, and health needs. Every student is part of an advisory, a group of about 10 students that remain with the same faculty advisor throughout their years of high school. The focus is on building a relationship and network of support for each student. Parents speak positively of the care placed on their student during advisory and that their student will have the same advisor all four years to foster those positive, nonacademic setting relationships with an adult in the building. Students report they feel more comfortable going to their teachers with concerns over guidance as the teachers are more available.

Since the NEASC surveys were given, disciplinary action taken in 2021-2022 saw a rise in concerning behaviors centered around racial issues, disrespectful treatment of faculty by students, blatant disregard for teacher authority, and sexual harassment among students. There is a current conversation about both preventative and responsive programming to manage behavior and establish a building that is welcoming and safe for all. The school has several reactive pathways for actions shown but may benefit from more proactive strategies for all stakeholders. Some staff members believe that there is a lack of academic and behavioral accountability for students and hope for improvement. Teachers report a need for increased transparency and communication when situations occur to help support all stakeholders and increase their feelings of safety at the school.

The school community's professional culture demonstrates some commitment to improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, and reflection, but a lack of time and the use of protocols or other structures to facilitate collaboration impedes growth and innovation. There are monthly faculty meetings that are attended by 63 percent of the faculty. Professional learning communities (PLCs) meet on a weekly basis during the school day to provide collaborative time for teachers who teach the same course. Often these PLCs spend time planning the next week of instruction. However, some PLCs have integrated book studies and professional readings into their meetings as a means of improving instructional practice. Teachers report not having the time needed to focus on common assessments and lesson plans. Due to an excessive number of initiatives they are expected to maintain. Four instructional coaches are available to meet with PLCs to offer support to teachers and help promote evidence-based best practices. Teachers will ask the coaches to attend one of their common planning times. The district offers an annual "Common Day Workshop" in November where all district teachers and instructional support staff gather in one building and work together to learn and share common interests in practice. In 2020 and 2021, Common Day Workshop offerings included live in-person, virtual activities, and asynchronous options. Teachers are encouraged to share their expertise for the benefit of the greater community. Prior to COVID restrictions, this workshop day was especially valuable for vertical alignment work and roundtable discussions with teachers from the other schools. Teachers reported that in general, professional development isn't beneficial for most and would appreciate professional development offerings.

The school's culture promotes intellectual risk-taking and personal and professional growth. Through a competency-based education (CBE) model, the school has placed an emphasis on asking students to exhibit knowledge and growth through evidence-based practices. Parents report that the transition from traditional to competency-based grading has been confusing, but most agree that they have a more solid understanding of it now. Those students who are not ready or cannot prove their competency are given more targeted instruction or remediation to re-teach/re-learn the necessary competencies as posted on PowerSchool. Teachers and students utilize flex time to help accomplish this goal. The school-wide consistent reassessment procedures are beneficial for students. Teachers and parents report a concern that there are no consequences for assignments turned in late and that soft skills are not being reinforced as a result. Students are given a multitude of opportunities that promote intellectual risk-taking and personal growth within and beyond the core curriculum. During senior year, students pursuing the John Stark diploma are required to create and complete a capstone project. The capstone project is a student's pursuit of new learning as they work with a mentor to explore individual interests. After engaging in this new learning, students then display their experiences and learning and present it at an exposition night. At "Expo" students present to faculty, administrators, peers, and the public. Parents reported a desire for students to start working on their chosen capstone project when they are ready, more in alignment with competency-based grading, instead of the current earliest start date of the summer before their senior year. In the NEASC student survey, most students report learning that mistakes are a part of their learning process and

that they are taught to respect the views of others - even when they differ. NEASC faculty survey results report the same, though even more favorably.

The school has a somewhat inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning. The principal has set up a number of committees that aim to include all interested parties in policies and procedures within the school community, including the student executive council, parent advisory council, and regular meetings with the teacher's union officers. However, the faculty reported that it feels like there are too many committees and there is an unspoken pressure to be overly involved leading to feelings of burnout. Teachers express a desire for an increased voice in decision-making for initiatives at the school. Several surveys are disseminated to faculty and staff who then do not learn much about the results. Being transparent with the results of these surveys would help faculty and staff understand how and why decisions are made. The administrative team indicates that the results aren't always shared to keep the message positive, however, the faculty reports discomfort at being left in the dark. Faculty report opportunities to gather as optional, however, surveys pushed out following those opportunities don't have the "optional" tone implied. Throughout the process of committee and colleague collaboration, the final authority rests with the school principal with the oversight of the superintendent and the school board. It is also regular practice to have students speak at school board meetings about their experiences at the high school. This includes the regular reports presented by the three student school board representatives, as well as student presentations. Since its inception in 1987, John Stark has promoted the "John Stark Way," a triad of school core values, namely regard, respect, and integrity. Beginning in 2019, the superintendent began a community discussion about what skills the school and district would want in their graduates. The result was a district-wide SAU#24 "Portrait of a Learner", guiding all school policies, curriculum, and student expectations going forward. The NEASC survey results reveal that most faculty feel they have some to a great deal of influence over developing curriculum and which books and other instructional materials are used in classrooms, much of which is the result of conversations occurring in their PLCs. However, there are far more scattered opinions regarding their influence over leadership opportunities, being asked how to make the school better, planning how funds should be used, and about the content of in-service professional development days. Students report that even though they have a student government, they are unaware of which students to pass information or concerns on to to be their voice.

The school culture somewhat fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility. 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, 9-12 developmental school counseling curriculum, a social justice course offered to students in grades 10-12, the peer leadership program for grades 11 and 12 that works with ninth graders about various hot topics such as bullying and adjustment to high school, a Best Buddies program that combines general population students with the life skills students, and a unified sports program that works with Best Buddies and competes with other high school programs. Students repeatedly mention the pride they feel about the Best Buddies program. Students have participated in fundraising events to help those in their surrounding communities. All students are enrolled in an advisory with a faculty advisory for their four years in order to ideally help foster a longstanding relationship with an adult in the building and support them academically as well as on a social-emotional level. Parents report being pleased with this partnership and helping to establish another trusted adult relationship in the building for their student. Although the school has placed an emphasis on more social awareness and upstanding behavior, students report bullying and harassment still occur and report several places in the school feel unsafe for many.

The school culture encourages learning experiences that connect to or make an impact on the community beyond the school campus both locally and globally. The school offers a wide variety of clubs that provide opportunities for working with the community. All varsity sports teams also complete a community service project each season. The National Honor Society members complete community service hours through proposed projects. All students earning a John Stark diploma versus a core diploma must complete thirty-five hours of community service by graduation and must present their capstone projects at the annual exposition - an event the community is invited to attend. The school both relies on and aspires to democratic values of agency, civil dialogue, equality, and commitment to the common good to inform the curriculum, characterize classroom behavior, and guide school governance. This can be seen through the student council, the American studies interdisciplinary course, social studies classroom discussions, the student handbook, the school syllabi outlining student behavior expectations, and individual course expectations. All grade levels have executive councils and there is a vote on student school board members. In the past, students have had opportunities to travel outside of the United States through various school programs.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- community members
- department leaders
- facility tour
- NEASC survey
- parents
- self-reflection
- students
- teacher interview
- teachers

# Standard 2 - Student Learning

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## Narrative

The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success, but does not yet provide feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving this vision. SAU 24 developed a district portrait of a learner during the 2019-2020 school year using a process that included multiple stakeholders. This portrait clearly defines the skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions that the school community values. However, the school has not yet developed a process to measure students' acquisition of the skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions to provide feedback for learners and families and to communicate whole-school progress to the community. The roll-out of the portrait was described as 'clunky' by school personnel who indicate that it is not yet embedded in curriculum and instruction. The recent revision of the senior capstone to include elements of the portrait of a learner is a positive step, and the focus on drafting pacing/curriculum guides in the 2021-2024 SAU 24 Strategic Plan: Effective Structures and Effective Processes: Action Step 2 should be able to address this issue.

The school does not yet have 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 are elements of a written curriculum for all courses at John Stark. The school has plans in place to develop 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 that will integrate with the district's portrait of a learner. These plans are seen in Action Step 1 of the 2021-2024 SAU 24 Strategic Plan: Effective Structures and Effective Processes. Teachers and administrators report that the guides that are available do not yet connect to the portrait of a learner. The use of a common syllabus allows for consistency in communicating course expectations and assessment practices. At the time of the visit, there was not a plan in place to develop school-wide curriculum document.

Curriculum in a few courses ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge, but the lack of a formal curriculum for most courses often results in variable instruction that sometimes emphasizes a depth of understanding and other times is more focused on breadth of knowledge. Courses with a documented focus on depth over breadth include the Special Topics in Mathematics course, which employs inquiry-based instruction, and the American Studies course, an interdisciplinary English and social studies curriculum that encourages students to make connections and demonstrate a deep understanding of the concepts and "big ideas" that they are studying. The capstone project also affords students opportunities to develop a depth of understanding around a topic of personal interest. As the school works to complete the curriculum for all courses in all departments, teachers will be able to emphasize a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.

Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of many students. Teacher teams often meet in PLCs to plan instruction that meets individual student needs. Through the use of formative assessment, some teachers are able to strategically differentiate and individualize instruction. In art classes, many of the performance tasks are designed to allow students choice in how they demonstrate their knowledge and skills. As appropriate, teachers also employ flexible groupings to purposefully organize group learning as well as provide additional support and alternative strategies both within and outside the regular classroom. This was observed in most math classes. Flexible grouping allows there to be the structure and support necessary to provide all learners with access to rigorous learning opportunities within the regular classroom. Stark has committed to responding to student needs by using a forty-minute FLEX block during the day for students to partner with teachers in order to address learning gaps, reassess, and recover missed learning targets. This time also allows for some individualization of instruction. Teachers proactively schedule most students to their FLEX based on need and/or students are scheduled during the advisory block in consultation with their advisor.

Some John Stark students are active learners who have numerous opportunities to lead their own learning. Some teachers give students choices about topics to research, or books to read. Students in some classrooms are afforded opportunities to choose some course content and methods of assessment, but these practices are not pervasive across the school. Students are given opportunities to explore their interests through the course

selection process each year with the school counselors. The self-report cites the personal fitness elective as an example of instruction that is student-driven. In this course, students choose health-related and skill-related fitness topics as their focus and set goals for themselves. The science department's work in adopting NGSS standards will encourage inquiry and phenomena-based learning. In sophomore year, students can apply to a two-year vocational program at a regional technical center geared toward career-specific skills such as automotive, business, computer engineering, construction trades, cosmetology, criminal justice, culinary arts, education and behavioral science, emergency services, graphic design and creative media, health science, and theatre and film. In their senior year students who are pursuing the John Stark diploma complete a year-long capstone project where students select a topic of interest that they want to learn about independently, draft a proposal, and then complete the project with support from a self-selected coach in the building. Students can also design extended learning opportunities.

Students across all disciplines frequently engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking. Students are challenged to use critical and creative thinking as they engage in activities that promote understanding, analysis, synthesis, creativity, connections, and relationships. When planning instructional activities teachers identify the Depth of Knowledge levels embedded in those activities to ensure higher order thinking. Science laboratory activities, for example, ask students to analyze data and make inferences. Students are expected to interpret graphs and apply their interpretations to trends in scientific principles. In a Forensics elective, students look at clues and items present and use them to come to a conclusion in a scenario being investigated. In a civics course, students participate in active discussions and debates in the classroom, and in competitions at the local, state, regional, and sometimes national levels. For example, John Stark participates in the Granite State Challenge on NH PBS to demonstrate their academic talents.

Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that frequently inform classroom instruction and curriculum. Teachers use formative assessments such as entrance and exit tickets, online practice and educational programs, small group activities, labs, and a variety of types of discussions to inform and differentiate instruction. Some 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, multimedia projects, and performance-based assessments. Common rubrics ensure students are provided with expectations prior to assessments. English rubrics show a progression in the skills so that students become familiar with what they are learning and can see the progression in skills as well. Students have opportunities to demonstrate their learning to peers during class and occasionally to broader audiences, such as local art displays, performances such as the winter concert, theater productions that have sets, props, and costumes that theater technical courses help prepare, and the General's Exposition where seniors display their capstone projects.

Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive constructive feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning. Teachers provide consistent, specific, and timely feedback and give students opportunities to revise and improve their work. Teachers update grades every two weeks in order to ensure that parents and students have access to the most up-to-date assessment of student progress. The common syllabus makes reference to the school's remediation/reassessment policy that states "reassessment is an important component of ongoing learning wherein students continue to work until they demonstrate mastery. Through the remediation process, students can work to reassess summative work (and formative at teacher discretion) with re-teaching and re-learning." However, the remediation/reassessment policy is implemented inconsistently in different parts of the school. Part of the remediation/reassessment process includes asking students to look at the feedback that was provided as they worked on the assessment as well as what was given on the summative assessment. Teachers ask students to reflect on what they learned from the feedback and identify where they may have had a disconnect or gap in their learning. Sometimes this might result in the teacher assessing a skill in a different way than was done the first time.

Learners use technology in informed, effective, and ethical ways across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning. Students use technology to communicate clearly and creatively. This is accomplished through the use of 1:1 Chromebooks, speech-to-text software, and individual student emails. Students use technology, including Google Docs, Khan Academy, various online databases such as Ebsco and Gale, and NoodleTools, to access, support, document, and supplement their learning. They use Canvas applications, which have voice and video recording capabilities, as the online classroom platform which incorporates Zoom, online discussion threads, and shared documents. Technology is used to broaden students' perspectives both locally and globally and to allow them to share their work with audiences beyond the school community. Students collaborate digitally and engage in learning beyond the constraints of the school building

and school day through technology. It is quickly becoming embedded in all aspects of the curriculum across all disciplines. Almost all classrooms have a Smartboard. Teachers utilize programs such as Active Inspire with the Smartboards and allow students to engage with the board as well. Beyond the Smartboards, teachers also use programs such as Nearpod, Flipgrid, and EdPuzzle in their lessons. Teachers report that they would benefit from ongoing professional development related to instructional technology, especially with the recent changeover to Canvas from Google Classroom, adding that learning more about the various technological platforms they encounter while supporting students would be helpful. The school has also purchased a number of 3D printers to support the pre-engineering program, and teachers report that art, math, and science teachers are beginning to create projects that incorporate 3D printing.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- department leaders
- facility tour
- NEASC survey
- parents
- school board
- school leadership
- school support staff
- self-reflection
- student work
- students
- teacher interview
- teachers

# Standard 3 - Professional Practices

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## Narrative

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. The strategic plan is clear and was developed at the district level first and then at the school level. The rollout of the plan was muddled by the pandemic. So a re-rollout is necessary to make sure the school community is clear on the plan. Although the structure of the plan leaves room and time for the school staff to meet and work on curriculum and create structures that support the school's core values and beliefs about learning and the vision of a graduate, many staff and students do not believe that they have a voice in either the development or the implementation of the plan. Instead, they report that the structure feels like a "one-way street," and the work students and staff do in their small groups remains in the small group and does not make it back to the administration.

Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being. Educators at John Stark are given ample time for ongoing reflection and collaboration. Funding is also provided for ongoing professional development.

John Stark has a wealth of resources to address student learning and well-being to help improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services. The school has a tiered approach which starts with teachers in PLCs examining their instruction and moves to three school counselors, an adjustment specialist, a school psychologist, a math and reading interventionist, the student support center, and special education. Some students express concern about wait time in the counseling office, which has increased following their return after the pandemic. The school has many ways that students can access their education through the school's tiered process. One of those ways is the Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS). The MTSS team meets bi-weekly and is composed of administrators, school counselors, school psychologist, adjustment counselor, and the school nurse. The student's school counselor completes the MTSS referral form with the assistance of the teacher some of the time. This form identifies their concerns for the student and what actions have been taken so far. Teachers state that the form is cumbersome so they just tell the counselors "on the run" who the student is and the issue they are having.

Collaborative structures and processes somewhat support coordination and implementation of curriculum. While the school has the time and structures to support coordination and implementation of the curriculum, there are few protocols or clear expectations for the use of PLC and department common prep time. There is a strong culture of collaboration among teachers that, with structure and support could result in the completion of the curriculum, the examination of student work and other data to improve instruction and revise the curriculum, and time to develop assessments.

School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student. There are a number of different diploma pathways for students, and requirements for graduation are open. The John Stark Foundations Diploma is the NH State 20 credit minimum standard diploma. The JSRHS diploma requires a minimum of 22 credits and the NH State Scholars Pathway. There is a Concord Regional Technical Center pathway where students are required to complete four additional course in their chosen pathway. Some pathways include Arts, A/V Tech & Communication, Building and Construction, Business and Hospitality, and a student can even design their own. The school's industrial technology area has a waiting list and may require additional staffing. The Multi-Tiered System of Support assists students with the path they choose. The school also offers many clubs, activities, arts, and athletics to help students find joy in their everyday life. According to students and staff, the school is set up well for college-bound students, and they have been working to develop programs for those who choose alternatives to college when they leave John Stark.

Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning. The school is part of a community that is willing to support the schools. When speaking with students many of the highlights they mentioned in high school were with people who were brought into their classes from the outside community. They mentioned a world cultures speaker and a music partnership. When discussing industrial arts it became clear that a great deal of support was given to help support a growing area of the school by the outside community and they would be willing to do more. The community learning/service hours

forge these partnerships too as well as the Regional Technical Center partnership. All of these endeavors open more pathways for students. The capstone project also increases the interactions between students and the community. Many student organizations also deepen the education of students and their interactions with the community. Students also highlighted these as transformational and memorable. An area that students and staff highlighted as disappearing during the pandemic was a job shadow and internship program. There was a staff member dedicated to this endeavor, and students and staff said it added to the John Stark experience. John Stark offers to students a concurrent enrollment which allows students to earn both high school and college credits through partnerships with New Hampshire Technical Institute, Lakes Region Community College, New England College, and VLACS (Virtual Learning Academy Charter School).

## **Sources of Evidence**

- central office personnel
- classroom observations
- department leaders
- facility tour
- NEASC survey
- school leadership
- school support staff
- self-reflection
- students
- teacher interview
- teachers

# Standard 4 - Learning Support

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## Narrative

Many students receive appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success. The school has a range of intervention strategies to support each student's success and well-being. The school has a formal, defined process to identify and refer students who need additional assistance. Students who are in need of adjustments and additional support are identified by teachers by contacting the student's school counselor. The school counselor works with the teacher and gathers additional information on the student. Once the school counselor has worked with the student, teacher, and often the family, the school counselor brings the name of the student to the Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team via the MTSS Referral Form, if the student needs additional interventions. The MTSS team meets bi-weekly and is composed of administrators, school counselors, school psychologist, adjustment counselor, and the school nurse. Occasionally this team reviews data via a provided protocol. The team works to ensure that any available intervention that may help is being utilized, such as a student's participation in the Academic Support Center, Student Support Center, individualized counseling/behavior plans/peer mediation, time with academic interventionists specializing in math or reading/Title 1, before and/or after school tutoring, and participation in a Effective School Solution (ESS). Faculty state that have a hard time completing the required paperwork to document the MTSS referral process. The counseling group feels like the meetings are not timely and a student would fall through the cracks waiting for the bi-monthly meeting. The administration has come up with a band-aid to the process so as to not adversely impact students, but that process lacks the documentation and communication with the team that is needed. Recordkeeping is needed to inform curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. The school's FLEX program, is another intervention strategy, that allows teachers to assign students to their flexible groups on a given day should the teacher determine that the student needs extra support on a concept or skill. Students report that FLEX is a large benefit, though they also noted a lack of breaks in the day, which can hinder their academic and social-emotional progress. For Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, there are multiple avenues available to support students. These include, but are not limited to use of the learning lab, academic support center, student support center, connections with the school adjustment counselors, and referral to special education as well as connections with outside agencies such as mental health clinics, substance abuse support, ESS (Effective School Solution), division for children, youth and families, adult education diploma, and tutoring for the HiSET - possibly via the Second Start program in Concord. Support staff report that in the past two years since the rapid response hotline started, there have been parent meetings in which the hotline is recommended; however, the need for the school to call the hotline is extremely limited. Students indicate that although they know the staff cares, they may resort to the crisis hotline or trusted adult (often a teacher) due to support staff not readily available and working behind closed doors. Nearly all teachers report noticing and doing something when a student needs help, but only 45 percent of students report not using the academic and social-emotional support available to them. Staff indicates that although the MTSS system is in place, the process is not yet implemented with fidelity. An area of improvement includes increasing understanding and consistent implementation for both those on the academic review committee which meets weekly as well as the MTSS committee, which meets biweekly. Staff reports that a considerable amount of student identification and progress monitoring occurs informally in hallways, via email, and in classrooms. Furthermore, consistent communication regarding decision-making of programs, such as the alternative program ending, as well as student placement in tiered intervention, can best help serve all students while also increasing staff feeling valued through input that includes follow-up after they have identified a student. There are two unfilled positions in the student support center, and the school has requested that a family outreach specialist be hired to help families understand what support systems are available and to advocate for the support that each student needs.

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 currently consists of the director of student pathways, three school counselors, one school adjustment counselor, one school psychologist, a registrar, and a secretary. School counselors carry an approximate caseload of 200 students who stay with the same assigned counselor until they complete their high school education. Noted by both staff and students, school counselors use various proactive measures in order to meet the needs of learners. For instance, not only is there an online system in place for students to schedule a meeting with a

counselor, but also additional processes in place such as student sign-ups for small group and large group programs, such as those highlighting various post-high school pathways. Furthermore, school counselors set appointments for any student who did not proactively schedule themselves for an appointment. Both counselors and students report that counselors primarily schedule their meetings through grade levels throughout the year. Counselors are proud of their written developmental program, which provides individual, small group, and large groups both in classrooms and in the school counseling office. The curriculum intentionally addresses the American School Counselor Association's three domains - social/emotional, academic, and career/college ready - at each grade level. Meetings include topics/lessons, which include but are not limited to, transition, resources, self-advocacy, academic review, interest inventories, career exploration, and future planning. In addition to supporting students, the counseling department engages families by sending folders home regarding information from individual meetings, including a student's completed forms. There is also a partnership with New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation, which is present at three of the four events held by the counseling center for parents.

In addition to the proactive Tier 1 services, school counselors also provide responsive services as needed, referring students for further support either through informal conversation, through the weekly academic review committee and PLC meetings, or during the biweekly MTSS meetings. One area of recommendation is to tighten the process of identification, services provided, and review of student success in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. Currently, staff shared that there needs to be an online and shared system in which support staff has access to student data to create data-driven practices as well as a collective capacity to increase the productivity of committee meetings and to best serve students.

Additionally, students indicate that they have difficulty connecting with those in the school counseling department on an as-needed basis, such as when a crisis occurs. As a result, students seek a trusted adult such as a teacher, or use the crisis hotline. Staff reports that the student support center staff has decreased from three staff members to one, shifting low-level student needs to the counselors. The current methodology for supporting a student in crisis is to see if the school psychologist or social worker is available or to pull a counselor from a meeting. Furthermore, all at-risk assessments are conducted in pairs and family outreach occurs. The self-report cites a need for the school to assess the implementation of programs across the board to identify processes that keep the proactive work while also increasing student and caregiver understanding and usage of as-needed resources. Additionally, to help staff support students in need, documents and processes such as who is on the crisis contact list and how the staff is aware of reactionary steps when an unsafe situation arises can increase student support as well as staff morale.

All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate and licensed personnel. The health office consists of a registered nurse and a licensed nursing assistant. The health office is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 - 3:15. In addition to responsibilities such as health assessment/first aid, medication administration, AED monitoring, and field trip medical support, the nurse also completes vision and hearing screenings, provides care plans and health alerts in PowerSchool, and conducts annual staff training on threatening allergy, asthma, and diabetes. The nurse is in consistent communication with not only families, but also with staff by participating in emergency management, wellness teams, and IEP and 504 meetings. Multiple staff members report that the nurse provides timely information to allow them to best serve students; however, staff also shared their concerns regarding the transparency of information to best serve students. The staff would like to identify ways for the nurse to communicate and collaborate with the school counseling department and administration to increase the sharing of information that can best help the staff approach and support students. As surveys indicate, the staff appreciates the collaboration; however, students often do not know about or access all that the health office offers.

The library is fully staffed with one full-time New Hampshire-certified library media specialist and one full-time paraprofessional library assistant. The library is staffed between the hours of 7:30 am through 3:10 pm on school days. These hours are published on the library website and the library catalog home page. Visually, the library is a welcoming, well-lit space, providing students the option of completing work quietly or collaboratively. Various table sizes and locations in the library provide multiple spaces for various usage while bulletin boards and rotating displays are intentionally designed to engage students with topics related to library services. There is a small conference room for students and staff and a library annex that serves as a classroom space. Students can sign out on a sheet to use the multi-purpose room and several staff members make use of the room such as those who share a classroom, instructional coaches, and 504/IEP meetings. The library's collection offers a wide range of print and electronic resources to support all curricular areas. These titles have been chosen through

discussions with classroom teachers, recommendations from students, and through the application of the library selection procedure to support the curriculum. Students report that the library is available during FLEX hours, or during students' study halls. Students also indicate that teachers, specifically grade 9 teachers, connect with the library media specialist for help with NoodleTools and other research projects. In addition to a welcoming physical space, the library website, LibGuides, and embedded tutorials make many of the library services available to students and staff 24/7. Library databases can be found through the library website database tab and library catalog home page. The library print collection currently offers over 7,400 print resources with an average age of 2008. The breakdown is 47 percent fiction and 47 percent nonfiction. A recent diversity audit of the library print collection identified 38 percent of the collection as supportive of diversity, equity, and inclusion and 34 percent of the collection supports the development of social-emotional skills. Online, connections to efforts for inclusivity are present in visuals and book options. The library's electronic reference book resources can be found in the library catalog, and a tutorial is available on the website on how to identify titles.

The library media specialist works as requested with classroom teachers to support technology use such as copiers, printers, DVDs, Nearpod, Google questions/features, Loggit, and Adobe Spark. In addition, the library media specialist works collaboratively to support teachers' efforts in the classroom. Prior to COVID and before the adjustment of the grade 9 PLC, the library media specialist worked with 9th-grade teachers and a reading teacher regularly. Currently - and after physical collaboration turned to online tutorials - the library media specialist continuously reaches out to teachers, specifically those in the humanities, to collaborate. This includes but is not limited to assisting in the development of the new course called technology tools, collaborating with an American studies teacher to evaluate political campaign ads, and consulting with an art teacher about creating a visual literacy unit. Additionally, to support the English department's initiative of sustained self-reading, the library media specialist participates in book studies, goes to classrooms to promote books, and engages in activities such as "Blind Date with a Book" and "Uber Reads." Also, the library now provides free books for students through a cart in the library and a free little library located outside near the school entrance. The school library media specialist stocks these repositories through donations.

Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans are part of appropriate programs and services that support their learning from certified/licensed personnel. First, English Language Learners receive direct services from a New Hampshire-certified ESOL teacher. The ESOL teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to support and help ELL students be successful both academically and socially, and an ESOL student may be part of an academic support class that meets every other day and includes learning competencies and targets. Students may receive pull-out or push-in services depending on their English Language Proficiency level and school year report. In addition to the support class, there is communication with families. For instance, all families are asked to fill out a home language survey, and the ESOL teacher contacts families who indicate a language other than English is used in the household. Eligible students are given an ELL screener using the WIDA assessment tools. Similar to other individualized plans, the goals of ELL services are communicated to families and written parent/guardian permission is obtained while yearly scores/assessments conducted using ACCESS for ELLs are also communicated to families. Once receiving services, students are annually assessed using ACCESS for ELLs via WIDA. The ESOL teacher provides parents/guardians with the option of participating in parent/teacher conferences in the fall.

Students with 504 plans and IEPs receive appropriate programming and services to support learning by certified/licensed personnel. The student services coordinator runs all meetings and serves as the case manager. In addition to school-based supportive faculty such as special education teachers, counseling staff, the school nurse, and interventionists, the school contracts with a licensed speech-language pathologist, physical therapist, music therapist, teacher of the deaf, teacher of the visually impaired, occupational therapist, and assistive technology specialist. Moreover, specialized transportation is provided. Programming may include, but is not limited to, life skills courses, transition programming for students ages 18-21, resource room support, paraprofessional support, academic support center, and student support center. All students with 504s and IEPs are in compliance, meeting for annual reviews as well as, for IEP, triennials. The school counselors attend as student advocates at 504 meetings and also at IEP meetings by request of the case manager and when schedules align. All IEPs comply fully with the department of education requirements and regulations in NHSEIS. In 2020-2021, the special education department wrote a goal to actively engage 85 percent of their students in the transition planning process when developing the annual IEP. They report having met the 85 percent benchmark with 89 percent (57 of 64 students). Though almost all responses on the NEASC faculty and family surveys indicate that they believe students receive the services and support they need, some students disagree or are unsure that they are receiving the services and support that they need. Six percent of students chose

"mostly or totally untrue" and 18.5 percent of students selected "neither true nor untrue." Although students receiving individualized plans and/or those identified for tiered interventions are aware of supports, they feel that they have a limited voice to be seen, heard, and valued, and that supports such as counselor availability are limited. Moreover, although the Best Buddies program was highlighted as a large positive by both students and staff, students believe that further inclusivity of IEP students would be helpful for all students and staff.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- department leaders
- facility tour
- school support staff
- self-reflection
- students
- teacher interview
- teachers

# Standard 5 - Learning Resources

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## Narrative

The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services. All entrances to the building are locked once school begins. All visitors are required to check into the main office upon entry; after being buzzed into the school. All visitors must sign in and receive a name tag. Security cameras are positioned strategically throughout the inside and outside of the building. The building is adequately sized for the current student population of 618 students. There are 55 learning spaces (including fine and performing arts rooms and technology education labs), a gymnasium, a cafeteria that also functions as an auditorium, a library media center, a large atrium, an academic support center, a student support center, special education spaces, Title 1 service spaces, a career center, a computer lab, and a weight room. Classrooms are large enough to hold up to 25 students with enough furniture for all students and staff; science classrooms cannot exceed 24 students. Many of the classrooms, specifically in the math department, have non-permanent vertical surfaces. There are a few spaces where teachers can plan in groups. There is limited space for teachers to lock belongings; each student has an assigned locker. In addition to the indoor learning spaces, learning occurs beyond the walls with a ropes course, a football field, a quarter-mile track, two soccer fields, and a baseball/softball field. The school library is a sufficient space with areas for quiet reading and study groups. There are two shifts of buildings and grounds staff that clean and maintain the school during the school day and after school hours. There is a schedule for daily, weekly, monthly, and annual maintenance. There is a sign-off sheet in each classroom and bathroom to ensure a regular cleaning schedule. Regular inspections for fire, health, and safety regulations are completed by the local fire department. A new portion of the air quality system was installed in the building in July 2021. Currently, building and grounds, and technology requests are queued through online software called SchoolDude, but responses to tickets are inconsistent. The building meets all applicable federal and state laws and is in compliance with all federal and state safety regulations. Although there is a robust theater and music program, the school lacks an auditorium.

The school has sufficient time and financial resources to enable research-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services. The calendar designates five professional development days spread throughout the year and early release days in January and May. Staff and administrators report that the other schools in the district have different school calendars and it is a struggle to have meaningful workshops with colleagues. The collaboration process among professionals is valued. There is a dedicated block for each PLC to meet at least once a week. Faculty are encouraged to use the other blocks in any week to collaborate amongst and across departments. Every educator and paraeducator is given a stipend each year for professional development that aligns with their own personal professional goals. The SAU has four instructional coaches that will support educators in using evidence-based practices. The SAU offers a number of professional development opportunities that are evidence-based - including a Leadership Academy, SAUniversity courses, LETRS training, and Math training. Educators are encouraged to join building-level committees that include the UDL group, New Hampshire Assistive Technology Committee, the student success committee, and the safety committee. Educators are also encouraged to join SAU-level committees that include the professional development committee and the MTSS committee. During Monday advisory, Adaptive Scheduler is used in PowerTeacher Pro to schedule students with teachers. Teachers can request students to attend their FLEX block or students can request to attend a teacher's FLEX block. However, some students stated that they would like the flexibility to choose a teacher that they feel more comfortable with. For example, if they are struggling in a math class and with their teacher, they would like the opportunity to choose a math teacher they feel more comfortable with.

The community and the school board, provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning experiences. For as long as stakeholders can remember, the community has approved the operating budget as proposed. For example, in the school year 2022-2023, the budget was approved by 46 percent of the voters, a new teacher's 3-year contract by over 75 percent of the voters, and a new 2-year support staff contract by over 68 percent of the voters. The John Stark School Board oversees the budget and the programming at the high school. The community supports co-curricular activities that include theater, music, athletics, and clubs. There is sufficient funding for technology and library media resources. Every student is issued a Chromebook. Every faculty member is provided with a Chromebook

or laptop computer. Almost every learning space in the school has an interactive board. There are computer labs and computer engineering spaces. Every student and educator in the building has access to technology tools including the Google Suite and Read and Write for Google. There is sufficient funding for instructional materials and supplies for students, teachers, 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.

The school has 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. The current capital improvement plan includes technology improvements. All students are 1:1 Chromebooks. All student Chromebooks will be replaced on a four-year cycle. All teachers are issued school laptops, which are on a four-year replacement cycle, and classroom desktop computers are maintained annually and replaced as needed. A two-member technology staff is in place to provide maintenance, service, and repair of technology throughout the school year. Teachers and staff can request their services through an online helpdesk platform, which prioritizes and assigns work as needed.

John Stark Regional High School has the infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Weare Police Department and the school. There is a defined crisis response team at the school as well as a critical incident planning procedure. The school has a detailed written emergency operational procedure that includes a reunification process. This document is secured within the administration team. 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. Each room in the building has an emergency red first aid backpack that is updated annually. Students and staff evacuate the school to assigned spray-painted areas in the parking lot by grade and by advisory number. However, students note that the second-floor equipment for evacuating disabled students is outdated and that there are few protocols in place to get disabled students out of the building in a timely manner. Safety training is offered to staff at the beginning of each year. Emergency protocols are posted in every classroom in a labeled, separate evacuation pack. There are five AEDs on campus accessible in unlocked wall cabinets strategically located throughout the building. One additional AED is assigned to the athletic office and is brought to athletic practices and games by the athletic department. The school nurse provides verbal and written documentation to staff on students with special physical/medical needs such as but not limited to allergies, diabetes, and asthma. The nurse also provides regular communication and documentation to appropriate teachers, staff, parents, and coaches in accordance with the district's concussion policy. The school and district have re-committed to the alert, lockdown, inform, counter, evacuate (ALICE) safety protocol. Initial training has occurred, but this is still an area of growth.

## Sources of Evidence

- central office personnel
- classroom observations
- department leaders
- facility tour
- NEASC survey
- school board
- school leadership
- self-reflection
- students
- teacher interview
- teachers

# Priority Areas

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## Priority Area

The Collaborative Conference visiting team concurs with the priority area identified by the school.

**Priority Area for Growth #1 Goal Statement:** Write curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments across the school that integrates the school's vision of the graduate. (2.2a).

**School Response** - All teachers will have access to a complete curriculum that is in a consistent format across all content areas. That format will utilize backward design, incorporate enduring understandings and essential questions, concepts, content, and skills, as well as integrate the competencies embedded in our portrait of a learner. The process of reviewing and revising all curricula into a consistent format will assist with vertical and horizontal alignment, create a living document that clearly articulates learning outcomes and expectations, and assist in clear communication of the same to students and families. When complete, the curriculum will include assessments, as well as identifying, unit-by-unit, the anticipated timeline/pacing, essential questions that support the development of course competencies and enduring understandings, related activities, and resources. The school's commitment to Universal Design for Learning is evident in the unit planning tool which, in combination with the alignment to essential questions throughout all content areas, will promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. Completing this curriculum work will enable us to meet foundational element 2.2a.

**Visiting team response** - The school does not yet have a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments. The school must ensure that a written curriculum is created for every course in every department. Across all content areas and grade levels, develop and implement written documentation of curriculum with standards, essential/guiding questions, units of study, standards, suggested instructional strategies, and both formative and common summative assessments. The curriculum must integrate the school's portrait of a learner.

## Priority Area

The Collaborative Conference visiting team concurs with the priority area identified by the school.

**Priority Area for Growth #2 Goal Statement:** Create more opportunities for staff professional growth and community building as a whole (ie. whole school assemblies, pep rallies, community days) and through curriculum in advisory where students can build connections and increased trust to create a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought. In support of that vision, continue focus and training of ALICE Emergency Response Protocols to ensure effective responses in crisis situations. (1.1, 5.5)

**School Response** - It is essential that all students and staff feel valued and safe, and that there are practices in place to proactively combat threats to an inclusive, welcoming culture that is safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive. Recognizing that threats to safety may come from many sources, continuing to develop community capacity in relation to emergency response protocols is an indispensable aspect of this work. The pre-existing advisory program will be re-energized and utilized as a vehicle for the development of the school culture and community we envision.

**Visiting Team Response** - All members of the school community need to have agency and feel safe in communicating their concerns and needs. The use of advisory to foster strong relationships between adults and students should be enhanced and fostered.

## Priority Area

The Collaborative Conference visiting team concurs with the priority area identified by the school.

**Priority Area for Growth #3 Goal Statement:** Increase communication and clarity with all stakeholders (families, staff, and students) regarding the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate so that there is a clear, cohesive connection about how the portrait of a learner is evidenced in the school's vision and goals culminating in a positive impact on student learning. (1.2)

**School Response** - Having a clear and common understanding of our core values, beliefs about learning, and the portrait of a learner will enable that vision to drive teaching and learning at the school, direct professional learning, and inform the allocation of resources. We have a solid foundation, however, the disparate elements need to be unified and a common understanding of the way the portrait of a learner, John Stark Way, and our core values are interwoven is needed in order to move forward in a purposeful manner in addressing all other areas of growth. Once crosswalked, those core beliefs about who we are and who we aspire to be as learners will be the driver for our actions and decisions about student learning, professional practices, and the allocation of resources. That work has begun with the creation of an integrated set of rubric strips to evaluate students participating in the ninth-grade transition program called *We Are John Stark!* Students, teachers, and the John Stark community as a whole will benefit from a unity of vision as they work together with regard, respect, and integrity. Students will especially benefit from a coherent, cohesive path to graduation that honors each individual pathway while enabling all students to be knowledgeable problem-solvers and creators, effective communicators, and respectful collaborators.

**Visiting team response** - A clear and common understanding of core values is needed as the pandemic muddled the rollout of the plan. Although there structurally is time provided during the day for the staff to collaborate on initiatives either developed within departments or identified as a school overall, ensuring all stakeholders feel heard, seen, and valued requires identifying opportunities for two-way communication and opportunities for various stakeholders to gather together in order to truly gain a pulse on the school's culture and climate that directly coincides with teaching and learning. As a result of additional meeting time that is also contractually compliant in terms of increasing the frequency of staff meetings and student-involved committees will lead to a feeling of validation and ownership. The structure is there, but the time given will feel hollow if the work done by teachers and students stays in small committees.

## Priority Area

The Collaborative Conference visiting team concurs with the priority area identified by the school.

**Priority Area for Growth #4 Goal Statement:** Develop an effective system of communication in supporting the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student by utilizing and referring students to supports and interventions such as Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), the counseling center, and the academic and student support centers. (1.3)

**School Response** - In order to effectively support the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of all students, clear communication structures must be in place, understood, and readily accessible by all who need to use them. We will continue to build our MTSS-based structures, utilizing research-based best practices, the new SAU-wide social-emotional learning program, *Character Strong*, advisory, a revitalized flex, and the recommendations of the student success committee's fall 2021 report to strengthen and align those structures and supports. One aspect of this work that will be evident in fall 2022, is the creation of two learning labs, one for STEM and one for humanities. Staffed by teachers and interventionists, those labs will be available for drop-in support, temporary assignment through an MTSS referral process, and longer, more intensive, individualized support for students with specialized learning needs such as dyslexia or dyscalculia that may impact classroom learning success. All students will benefit from access to fluid, individualized support, a robust advisory that encourages the development of strong relationships within healthy boundaries, and clear processes that facilitate teacher identification and referral of students for intervention and support.

**Visiting Team Response** - Create a clear process to ensure that the multiple support systems available for students are used effectively through a data-driven, inclusive approach in which team members have access to information on current struggling students as well as previously applied interventions. This will help create collaboration in which staff feels valued, tiered interventions are utilized effectively, and - most of all - students are receiving academic, behavioral, and social-emotional interventions and support. Prioritize the identification of current structures that proactively address social-emotional learning.

## Priority Area

The Collaborative Conference visiting team concurs with the priority area identified by the school.

**Priority Area for Growth #5 Goal Statement:** Increase relationships within the community and with businesses to increase potential authentic student learning experiences such as shadow days and internships to develop student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning. (3.6)

**School Response** - Every student has a unique pathway, and John Stark is committed to providing those avenues to post-secondary success for each young person in our community. Essential to that work is identifying and cultivating strong community and business connections that enable students to participate in job shadows, apprenticeships, and internships, as well as earn industry-recognized credentials while still in high school. Pre-pandemic partners included Prototek in Contoocook, who have had several interns, and Multi-Weld Services, Inc. in Contoocook. Granite State Plumbing has expressed interest in partnerships, MDS Welding in Weare, and CJ Bolton Enterprises also in Weare. Ultimately, we would like to make it possible for students to earn an associate's degree during their time at John Stark. We will continue to work to expand our partnerships in those areas, work that was interrupted by the pandemic. One such example is our prior partnership with New Hampshire Technical Institute (NHTI) to run an "NHTI West" course, Raspberry Pi, taught by an NHTI professor on the John Stark Regional High School campus during the spring semester of 2020. NHTI recently raised the possibility of renewing that connection, and our two institutions plan to explore the next iteration of that partnership. Similarly, a discussion is underway with New England College, particularly related to our respective science departments and collaborative work in botany, chemical hygiene, professional learning, and dual enrollment. Once such connections are in place, students will benefit from the ability to work with their school counselors to design a course of study that engages them in authentic learning experiences and affords them access to the experiences and connections that will promote their postsecondary success.

**Visiting Team Response** - Continue to identify various pathways students can take while maintaining their engagement in obtaining a rigorous, relevant education personalized to their needs and ambitions. Identifying previous and current community members who align with current classroom practices and student-led work can provide job opportunities, community hours, and meaningful experiences for students. Moreover, by amplifying caregiver and community voices in student-run committees and organizations, other aspects noted in the Priority Areas will also increase in terms of cohesion in which all stakeholders will not only engage with students and staff but also be able to "walk the walk".

# Commendations

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## Commendation

The culture of support, collaboration, and respect between and among teachers

## Commendation

The multiple opportunities for students to revise their current work to improve understanding and mastery

## Commendation

The time provided for staff through the scheduling process to work with department members in PLCs and department meetings

## Commendation

The inclusive learning opportunities and instruction that meet the needs of special education students

## Commendation

The school facilities that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services

## Commendation

The positive, motivational painted messages throughout the school that promote a positive culture

## Commendation

The wide use of technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate learning

## Commendation

The classroom structure including furniture and layout that promotes the availability of embedded formative assessment

## Commendation

The clear, well-developed district strategic plan

## **Commendation**

The myriad of resources that support tiered interventions to meet the needs of all students

The many pathways to graduation provided by the school

The dependable funding from the community to support a wide range of programs, learning opportunities, materials, resources, and technology

The long- and short-term capital improvement plans that identify and plan for facility needs

The detailed emergency operations plan that includes a reunification plan

# Recommendations

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## Recommendation

Ensure that all students feel safe, respected, and included in a school that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought

Ensure that students and families are aware of mental health services and support available within the school and in the community

Consider providing a gender-neutral bathroom on each floor of the building to accommodate student needs

## Recommendation

Develop and implement a plan to complete a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, skills, instructional strategies, and assessment practices, ensuring that all curricula integrates the district portrait of a learner

## Recommendation

Involve educators in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership

Ensure that the work and ideas generated in PLC and department meetings are communicated to and received by building administrators in a way that encourages educators to exercise initiative, innovation, and leadership essential to the improvement of the school

Increase the productive community and business partnerships by bringing programs, such as the former job shadowing and internship programs, into the school

## Recommendation

Develop/revise and implement a formal, user-friendly, defined process to identify and refer students who need additional assistance

Develop and implement a process to meet the needs of students experiencing social-emotional setbacks in a timely manner

## Recommendation

Ensure maintenance and repair of the building and facilities are done in a timely manner

Ensure that there is a safety protocol in place for students with disabilities

## Recommendation

Ensure all students feel the school is a safe haven and that its students and staff are a trusted community by offering training and develop safety practices

## **Recommendation**

Ensure that students and staff are involved in the development and implementation of the strategic plan

## **Recommendation**

Develop and implement a plan to measure the skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions embedded in the portrait of a learner and provide feedback to learners, families, and the community

## **Recommendation**

Ensure that all staff is aware of students' mental health and well-being needs

# **FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES**

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This Collaborative Conference Report reflects the findings of the school's Self-Reflection and those of the visiting team. It provides a blueprint for the faculty, administrators, and other officials to use to improve the quality of programs and services for students in this school. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administrators yearly of progress made in aligning with the Standards for Accreditation.

The Commission expects school officials to use the results of the Collaborative Conference Report as well as the school's identified Priority Areas for Growth to draft a school improvement/growth plan, and to review and implement the findings of the Self-Reflection and Collaborative Conference Report. An outline of the next steps in the Accreditation process is included in the Commission's Accreditation Handbook, which is available on the Commission's website.

A school's initial/continued Accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing the school's improvement/growth plan based on the Priority Areas validated by the visiting team and recommendations identified by the Commission as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. The school will complete a Summary Report and host a Decennial Accreditation visiting team two years after the Collaborative Conference to show progress implementing the school's Priority Areas. The Decennial visiting team will identify recommended next steps as well as additional recommendations for the school to continue to align with the Standards for Accreditation and to improve outcomes for students.

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

The visiting team would like to express thanks to the community for the hospitality and welcome. The school community completed a Self-Reflection that clearly identified the school's strengths and areas of need. The time and effort dedicated to the Self-Reflection and preparation for the visit ensured a successful Collaborative Conference visit.

# **SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY**

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

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

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

# **Roster of Team Members**

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## **Chair(s)**

**Chair: Susan Schroeter** - Unity Elementary School

## **Team Members**

**Melissa Hickey** - William H. Hall High School

**Mr. Kevin Lee** - Kearsarge Regional High School

**Malorie Plummer** - Fall Mountain Regional High School

**Julie Stevenson** - Hanover High School