

**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS
AND COLLEGES**

COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

TEWKSBURY MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

October 23 – October 26, 2005

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

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 that seek voluntary affiliation.

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees which supervises the work of six Commissions: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE), the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS), the Commission on Public Secondary Schools (CPSS), the Commission on

Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), the Commission on Public Elementary and Middle Schools (CPEMS), and the Commission on American and International Schools Abroad (CAISA).

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

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

- Support of Teaching and Learning Standards
 - Leadership and Organization
 - School Resources for Learning
 - Community Resources for Learning

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

Preparation for the Evaluation Visit – The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Tewksbury Memorial High School, a committee of eight members including the principal supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people.

The self-study of Tewksbury Memorial High School extended over a period of 48 school months from September 2002 to May 2005. The visiting committee was pleased with the involvement of students, parents, and community members in the school self-assessment and development of the self-study report.

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

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

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

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

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 40 hours of shadowing 20 students for a half day
- a total of 22 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility
- individual meetings with 30 teachers about their work, instructional approaches and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

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

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

This report of the findings of the visiting committee will be forwarded to the Commission on Public Secondary Schools that will make a decision on the accreditation of Tewksbury Memorial High School.

Overview of Findings

Quality of the Self-Study

The self-assessment completed by the professional staff of Tewksbury Memorial High School was clear and well structured, showing that the staff understood the self-assessment process. The findings of the staff provided insight for the committee and assisted in the preparation of the final report. Each indicator was addressed and rated with significant documentation by the staff. Consequently, the visiting committee was able to come to an understanding of the strengths and needs of Tewksbury Memorial High School prior to the visit. The quality of submitted student work was excellent, with multiple examples of student work from across the curriculum. The visiting team was pleased with the materials provided for review before the team's arrival at the school and with the ability of the school to provide other information during the four-day visit.

Discussion of Significant Findings

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

Teaching and Learning at Tewksbury Memorial High School

The self-study of Tewksbury Memorial High School has identified the school's accomplishments and needs. The visiting committee has endorsed many, but not all, of the strengths and needs contained in the self-study documents, as well as adding comments and suggestions regarding areas of concern. The report will provide general recommendations to enable Tewksbury Memorial High School to move beyond its present accomplishments in a continuing quest for excellence. Prescribed activities will require further commitment by both the school and community.

The Tewksbury Memorial High School Mission Statement and Expectations for Student Learning represent the school community's fundamental values and beliefs about student learning. A cross-section of the school community approved the mission and learning expectations. The mission is posted throughout the school and included in the student handbook and curriculum guide, serving to assist teachers and administrators in decision-making. The mission emphasizes academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, communication, and problem-solving skills. The documents provide a solid foundation for the future and have the potential to initiate constructive analysis of the school's learning program and services.

The school's curriculum is aligned with the school-wide academic expectations and offers a variety of experiences that allow students many opportunities to practice and achieve the stated academic expectations. Through the curriculum guide students are informed of the connections between specific classes and the academic expectations. There are curriculum maps for many courses, and teachers and students know what is expected. The curriculum reflects a sequential and developmental approach to sound instruction and provides students with opportunities for the authentic application of knowledge. However, resources are currently limited in the areas of technology and supplies, and this has the potential of adversely affecting future curriculum delivery.

Instructional strategies and practices are aligned with the school's mission and expectations for students. Despite large classes, instructional practices personalize instruction, make connections across disciplines, and involve students in higher order thinking skills. There are varied instructional techniques in the majority of classrooms, but class size limits the use of portfolios, journals, and Socratic seminars. Computer equipment is outdated and limited in availability yet teachers make every effort to use what is accessible to support instruction. There is mutual care and respect between and among students and teachers, and, consequently, a positive learning environment is evident throughout the school. The teacher supervision and evaluation process is used to improve instruction and is regarded by teachers as beneficial.

Assessment is an integral component of the learning environment. Individual student progress is assessed based on school-wide rubrics adjusted to be course-specific. Teachers utilize a variety of assessment strategies, including research projects, group work, portfolios, traditional tests/quizzes, oral presentations, and laboratory experiences.

In most instances, expectations for courses and grading rubrics are provided to students and parents at the beginning of the semester. Students understand the academic expectations of their teachers and the specific learning goals each assignment is addressing.

Support of Teaching and Learning at Tewksbury Memorial High School

The principal provides leadership and has sufficient autonomy and decision-making authority to lead the school in achieving the mission and expectations for student learning. However, outside forces, financial challenges, technological issues, and structural considerations impede his authority and effect. He leads a strong, committed administrative team that is dedicated to the entire learning community. It is clear that the entire administrative team has a positive influence on student learning. The principal enjoys a positive relationship with the superintendent who supports his building-based initiatives. Teachers provide essential leadership to ensure student success through their work as mentors, coaches, club advisors, school council members, and other less formal roles. At

the present time, there is no formal program which personalizes each student's educational experience but rather an informal system that utilizes class advisors, coaches, and other adults who take on mentoring roles. The school is safe, and a respectful climate is evident.

The school offers a variety of programs and support services to achieve the school's stated academic expectations and creates a climate that supports these goals. The school makes efforts, given limited resources, to engage every student in the educational programs and services at the high school. The library media specialist is available to assist students and staff members with research projects, but her availability is limited by her current part time status in the building. The guidance counselors have caseloads that exceed the guidelines provided by the accrediting association. Consequently, seniors are adequately advised, but underclassmen do not always receive the necessary service. Students and staff members reported that they are well served by the health office but express a level of concern that, with the increased student population, she will not be able to deliver adequate services in a timely manner.

Tewksbury Memorial High School satisfactorily engages students and their families in the education process. The school is continuing to develop business, community, and higher education partnerships as an integrated part of the school curriculum. The original high school building was built in 1959, and the growth in student population has overtaken the inadequate increases in staffing, leading to overcrowded classrooms without adequate furniture or updated technology. There have been ongoing issues with roof leaks as well inconsistent heating and ventilation systems that have made some rooms uncomfortable, affecting student performance. The school does not have an adequate budget to provide and maintain a comprehensive program of studies and the necessary staffing.

TEWKSBURY MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Tewksbury Memorial High School is located on a 53-acre wooded lot in Tewksbury, Massachusetts. Tewksbury is situated 23 miles north of Boston, south of Lowell and Dracut, west of Andover, east of Chelmsford, and north of Billerica and Wilmington.

Tewksbury has over 800 industries and businesses. These businesses consist of large chain stores such as Home Depot, Wal-Mart, Marketbasket, McDonald's, and Burger King; large private businesses such as Cisco, Raytheon, and Lucent Technologies; several car dealerships; several banks; and numerous smaller independently owned enterprises such as restaurants, salons, small specialty stores, and construction companies.

According to the 2004 town census, the population of Tewksbury was 30,959. The 2004/2005 total school district enrollment was 4,863. There were 1,174 students attending Tewksbury Memorial High School during the 2004/2005 school year. The town's population has been steadily increasing (10% since 1994) and is expected to continue to increase to a total population of 33,320 in the year 2010. The high school's population has also been steadily increasing. The population of the high school has increased approximately 33% since the 2000/2001 school year.

According to the 2000 U.S. census, the Tewksbury community is approximately 96% Caucasian with the remaining 4% of the population comprised of African-American, Asian and Hispanic populations. The 2003/2004 total school district enrollment was 95% Caucasian and 5% comprised of African-American, Asian and Hispanic populations. These percentages have remained relatively constant.

The median family income is \$76,443, which is approximately 24% above the state average of \$61,664. Households with incomes below the poverty level account for approximately 2% of the population. The unemployment rate in Tewksbury is 5.2%.

In 2003, Tewksbury's per pupil expenditure was \$ \$6,712, which is 19% lower than the state's average per pupil expenditure of \$8,264. Sixty-three percent (63%) of educational funding was obtained through local resources. Thirty-seven percent (37%) was obtained through state, federal and other sources. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of local property taxes was allocated to the public schools. In 2002, Tewksbury's per pupil expenditure was \$6,665, which is 17% lower than the state's average per pupil expenditure of \$8,005. Sixty-two

percent (62%) of educational funding was obtained through local resources. Thirty-seven percent (37%) was obtained through state, federal and other sources. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of local property taxes was allocated to the public schools.

The Tewksbury School District consists of four elementary schools (grades K – 4), the Heath Brook, the North Street, the Loella F. Dewing, and the Louise Davy Trahan; the John F. Ryan Upper elementary schools (grades 5 and 6); the John W. Wynn Middle School (grades 7 and 8); and the Tewksbury Memorial High School (grades 9 – 12). In addition, the school administrative building also houses an Inclusion Pre-School Program. Tewksbury residents may also attend the Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (Shawsheen Tech), which is located eight miles south of Tewksbury in the town of Billerica. In 2004, 23% of Tewksbury's high school aged students attended Shawsheen Tech and 12% attended nonpublic schools. There are neither private nor charter schools in Tewksbury.

Tewksbury Memorial High School (TMHS) was built in 1959. It was a single-story building until 1982 when an additional two-story wing was constructed to house the science, business, technology, health, and foreign language departments. During the 1997/1998 school year, TMHS implemented a two semester, 4x4 block schedule in which each class meets for eighty-four minutes. Students are expected to take four, five-credit courses each semester.

Ninety-four percent (94%) of students entering TMHS attended eighth grade at the Wynn Middle School. The remaining 6% of students attended private or other public schools prior to attending TMHS. There are no non-resident students attending TMHS.

The program at TMHS is composed of six departments: Humanities (English and social studies), fine arts, applied arts, mathematics, science and wellness. The administrative team is made up of one principal and two assistant principals as well as three secretaries. The guidance department has four counselors, one of whom is head of the department, and one secretary. The average guidance counselor is responsible for 320 students. In addition, the special education department consists of one case manager, five teachers, five certified aides, three student-specific aides and one secretary. There is one department for humanities, one for science, one for mathematics and one for applied arts/PC technology, foreign language, health and physical education.

During the 2004/2005 school year, there were 67 full-time teachers and 1,174 students enrolled; however, the average teacher instructs approximately 75 students per semester. Teachers teach three eighty-four minute blocks daily with one block open for classroom preparation. Common planning time is only available on a random basis depending on the scheduling program. The teachers' contract requires a 184 day work-year and students are required to attend school 180 days per year. The current staff at TMHS shows a mixture of

veteran experience (46.6% of the staff has more than 15 years of teaching experience) and young enthusiasm (26.6% of the staff has less than six years). Over two-thirds (67.7%) of the staff has received a master's degree or higher. In addition, the staff also includes seven full-time (40 hours/week) custodial employees who are divided over three separate shifts.

The average class size is 26 students. However, classes generally range from 17 to 36 students per class. The average class sizes are as follows: English – 21, mathematics – 24, science – 23, social studies – 25, foreign language – 25, computer technology – 28, visual arts/performing arts – 29, applied arts/family and consumer science – 17, applied arts/technology education – 26, applied arts/business and marketing technology – 27, media – 32, and wellness – 25.

The percentage of students in special education classes has remained constant between 10% and 12% over the past several years, however, the incoming class of 2007/2008 will raise this to 14%. In 2003/2004, three students participated in the ESL program (two were Chinese and one was Korean), and in 2002/2003, five students participated in the ESL program (two were Chinese, one was Russian, one was Thai and one was Japanese). This accounts for less than 1% of the total student population.

Tewksbury offers four course levels: A.P., honors, level I and level II. However, most courses are not offered at all levels. All students must accumulate at least 140 credits to graduate. Students receive five credits for each semester course that they successfully complete. Beginning with the class of 2007, the following credits are required: 15 credits in English, 10 credits in World Studies, 5 credits in World History, 10 credits in American History, 20 credits in mathematics, 15 credits in science, 10 credits in computer technology, 10 credits in foreign language, 10 credits in visual and performing arts, 5 credits in applied arts, and 10 credits in wellness. These requirements leave students 20 credits with which to take elective courses.

Throughout the 2003/2004 school year, 22 students participated in the independent study program and approximately 150 students participated in the internship program. Juniors and seniors are allowed to participate in the internships, but seniors are given preference in scheduling. Students are able to intern with staff at the high school, other schools within the district, and at businesses within the community and surrounding towns. Students receive 5 credits for each semester in which they take an internship.

During the 2003/2004 school year, there were 62 out-of-school suspensions and in 2002/2003 there were 50. During the 2003/2004 school year, there were 310 in-school suspensions. In the past two years, there have been zero expulsions. During the 2003/2004 school year, 55 students (5%) were retained. The majority of these students take summer courses to make up the

lost credits so that they end up graduating with their classmates. The drop out rate for the 2003/2004 school year was 1.6% and during 2002/2003, the drop out rate was 3.2%. TMHS works closely with Middlesex Community College (MCC) so that many students who drop out of TMHS transfer to MCC to pursue a GED program.

During the 2003/2004 school year, student attendance averaged 94.3% and during 2002/2003 attendance averaged 93.8%. During the 2003/2004 school year, faculty attendance was 90% and during 2002/2003, it was 92%.

The high school population continues to grow and has increased approximately 33% since the 2000/2001 school year. There was a total of 881 students attending TMHS during 2001/2002, and there are currently 1,174 students (2004/2005). The anticipated graduation class size over the next four years is projected to increase from 250 (class of 2005) to 352 (class of 2008). Over 97% of 2004 graduates entered school together as freshmen.

Eighty-four percent (84%) of eligible TMHS students took the 2004 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). TMHS students scored higher than the national and state averages. Fifty-nine students (approximately 11% of juniors and seniors) participated in the advanced placement testing program achieving an average score of 3.61/5.00. During the past ten years, forty-five students have earned letters of commendation in the National Merit Scholarship Program. Of the Tewksbury students who took the 2004 MCAS exam, 99% received passing scores in mathematics and 97% received passing scores in English. Only 1% score in the warning category for mathematics and 3% for English. Every student in the class of 2004 reached the MCAS competency determination.

Seventy-three percent (73%) of the class of 2004 planned to attend a four-year college or university, 15% planned to enter the workforce or military service, and 7% were undecided. There is a number of post-secondary institutions located in the vicinity of Tewksbury. The University of Massachusetts at Lowell and Middlesex Community College are located in neighboring Lowell, MA. There are numerous private and public colleges as well as business and technical schools located within commuting distance of Tewksbury.

Recognition of student achievement is a hallmark of TMHS. Students' academic and athletic successes are recognized by attending awards nights or monthly award luncheons and by receiving "Hats Off" (Student of the Month) awards. In addition, students are recognized for honor roll status through the quarterly Renaissance breakfast as well as by monthly distribution of Red and Blue cards for personal improvement and individual achievement. Based upon academic performance, students are eligible for one or more of the following: The Principal's List, the Honor Roll, Academic Recognition, Academic Seal, National Honor Society membership (fifteen hours per year of community service is required in addition to the academic criteria), and the Renaissance Program.

TMHS provides students the opportunity to participate in over 25 different clubs and activities as well as 23 different sports programs.

Many of the school's clubs and organizations participate in numerous community service projects. These projects benefit local as well as national organizations such as the Tewksbury Hospital Charity Drive, the Annual American Red Cross Blood Drive, and the Annual Coat Drive, and students participate in walk-a-thons for Special Olympics, Breast Cancer, the Jimmy Fund, and the Walk for Hunger. The student organizations coordinate local community service such as raking leaves for senior citizens in the autumn, helping the elderly perform household chores, and cleaning up beaches. During the year, the high school's clubs and organizations conduct fundraising for organizations such as the Tewksbury Community Food Pantry, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Leukemia Society, Cystic Fibrosis Fund, Breast Cancer Awareness, UNICEF, and the Heart Fund.

The clubs and organizations also offer students the chance to participate in many cultural experiences. These have included participating in a Veteran's Day celebration during the school day, participating in Global Awareness Month, attending the JFK Library exchange, participating in the Tewksbury Hospital/Tewksbury High School partnership, attending the Shadow a Nurse Day, and participating in Career Day, and multiple assembly programs. There is also the opportunity for a student council member to serve as the student representative to the Tewksbury School Committee. Students also benefit from a wide variety of cultural activities and/or events both locally (in the Merrimack Valley) and internationally. Over the last five years, the foreign language department and the International Club have enabled students to participate in an exchange program with Australia, France, England and Spain. However, due to security concerns, Tewksbury students have been unable to travel abroad although they have hosted international students here at TMHS. Student groups have also traveled to New York City, Rhode Island and Florida. In addition, numerous field trips have been taken to various plays and concerts that are held in the area.

Individual benefactors, businesses, private groups and fraternal organizations contribute significant funds for scholarships and for special school-sponsored events. In 2004, over one million dollars was donated for scholarship awards (including money awarded by public and private colleges). The parents' advisory council (PAC), athletic clubs and booster organizations, the music parents' association, Renaissance Club, the Tewksbury Teacher's Association, and school councils have also contributed to the scholarship program. In 2002, the PAC alone raised \$15,600.00 in scholarship money for graduating seniors.

The TMHS's Improvement Plan has been used to identify critical areas upon which to focus the collective energy of our professional community. We

intend to use this document as a public commitment to continue improving the quality of education offered at TMHS.

The Tewksbury High School's Improvement Plan has focused on the following areas:

- review and evaluate the self-study for the NEASC accreditation process
- create a facility study committee to develop short and long-term recommendations
- improve involvement of administration, department chairs, and staff members in improving curriculum and instruction
- continue to increase the inclusion of technology within the curriculum
- continue to focus on school climate initiative
- continue to improve parent and school communication

Several initiatives have been implemented over the past two years and they include:

- a peer mediation group
- The applied arts department with community internships and computer application programs
- the humanities department using an interdisciplinary approach with a team-teaching environment
- ongoing staff development to support future curriculum changes

Based on the information gathered developing the school and community profile, the most important issues and challenges facing our school include:

- gaining public support to obtain funds to hire new faculty members in order to lower class sizes and to allow additional courses to be offered. The current class size is contrary to all block scheduling research, which states that class sizes should range from 15 – 18 students.
- gaining public support to obtain funding to construct a modern facility to address the issues of overcrowding and lack of technology in each and every classroom.
- obtaining a scheduling system that would allow flexibility to facilitate common planning time to improve curriculum planning and instruction.
- increasing parental involvement in the high school

TEWKSBURY MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL MISSION AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

MISSION

Tewksbury Memorial High School provides students with an experience that promotes academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, respect for others, and self-confidence. We foster the development of communication and problem-solving skills necessary to become successful, contributing members of society.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

A Tewksbury Memorial High School graduate will be able to:

ACADEMIC

1. communicate effectively – *obtain information and present ideas in a clear, articulate manner.*
2. solve complex problems – *assess and solve multi-step as well as multi-faceted problems and use appropriate problem-solving methods and higher order thinking skills.*
3. work with others toward a common goal – *accept personal responsibility and work interdependently in a group setting.*

CIVIC

4. contribute to the community and the global society – *participate in student and/or community service groups.*

SOCIAL

5. respect the rights of others – *follow rules of school, community, and society.*
6. exercise life skills that promote personal growth – *identify personal values, strengths and weaknesses, set goals, create a plan to achieve them.*

Teaching and Learning Standards

1. Mission and Expectations for Student Learning

The school's mission statement describes the essence of what the school as a community of learners is seeking to achieve. The expectations for student learning are based on and drawn from the school's mission statement. These expectations are the fundamental goals by which the school continually assesses the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Every component of the school community must focus on enabling all students to achieve the school's expectations for student learning.

1. The mission statement and expectations for student learning shall be developed by the school community and approved and supported by the professional staff, the school board, and any other school-wide governing organization.
2. The school's mission statement shall represent the school community's fundamental values and beliefs about student learning.
3. The school shall define school-wide academic, civic, and social learning expectations that:
 - are measurable;
 - reflect the school's mission.
4. For each academic expectation in the mission the school shall have a targeted level of successful achievement identified in a rubric.
5. The school shall have indicators by which it assesses the school's progress in achieving school-wide civic and social expectations.
6. The mission statement and the school's expectations for student learning shall guide the procedures, policies, and decisions of the school and shall be evident in the culture of the school.
7. The school shall review regularly the mission statement and expectations for student learning using a variety of data to ensure that they reflect student needs, community expectations, the district mission, and state and national standards.

CONCLUSIONS

The Tewksbury Memorial High School Mission Statement and Learning Expectations represent the school community's fundamental values and beliefs

about student learning. The school committee, Tewksbury Education Council, student council, staff members from a variety of departments, and students were involved in the development of the mission and expectations for student learning. Although some efforts have been made to increase parental involvement, there is a need to raise their level of participation and interest. Tewksbury Memorial High School has shared the mission and expectations with members of the school, school district, local governing body, and the larger community in a variety of ways. The mission statement and expectations are posted in classrooms, included in the student handbook and curriculum guide, published in the principal's newsletter, included in the school website, and broadcast on the community cable channel. The expectations have been painted in the front lobby, and the mission is communicated over the public address system during morning announcements and recited at the opening of certain assemblies. Additionally, the mission statement aligns with the district mission statement. It serves to unify the philosophical voice of the school community. (self-study, teacher interviews, meetings with teachers, panel presentation)

Input from various governing bodies together with the expertise of the faculty guided the formulation of the mission. Teachers note that the mission statement was a natural outcome and expression of the school and staff's educational philosophies and procedures. Relevant publications including the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and documents from the National Association of Secondary School Principals influenced beliefs about student learning. Tewksbury Memorial High School has responded to trends in education by eliminating the general track, adopting the block schedule format, promoting writing across the curriculum, providing rubrics for assignments, incorporating cooperative learning assignments, and working towards a more personalized classroom approach. Honors and advanced placement courses have been implemented to encourage intellectual curiosity and academic excellence, while the TMHS New Start Program focuses on building self-confidence and encouraging accountability. Members of the learning community are committed to providing a positive learning experience for all students. (self-study, central office personnel, teachers, student work)

The mission emphasizes academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, communication skills, and problem-solving skills. The academic expectations and definitions in reference to communicating effectively and solving complex problems relate to these elements of the mission. Respecting others, developing self-confidence, achieving success, and contributing to society are also elements of the mission. While academic expectations are clearly defined through the use of rubrics, the social and civic expectations are more difficult to define and measure. (self-study, observations, teachers, student work, students)

Consensus was finally reached in the expectations and definitions that were developed by the faculty. The staff identified and agreed upon a consistent format for the school-wide rubrics. Observation throughout the school and

conversations with students and faculty members show that the school-wide rubrics are used broadly throughout the learning environment. Department and individual teacher rubrics are also designed to define specific student expectations. The use of rubrics has provided a common terminology resulting in increased student achievement. (self-study, observations, student shadowing, student work, teachers)

The civic expectations are being met through student participation in the many school groups that give back to the community and society. These groups include Environment, Culture, Habitat Organization (ECHO), the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), student council, the National Honor Society, and many athletic teams whose members participate in community service and fundraisers for charity. Students are made aware of their roles in the larger community particularly through community service. Various data including statistics relating to attendance, tardiness, disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and expulsions measure social expectations. In an effort to evaluate civic and social expectations, drop out and graduation statistics should be considered as well. Goal-setting data available from the guidance department and data relating to the number of students who continue their education beyond high school would support the expectation that deals with exercising life skills that promote personal growth. However, the lack of rubrics to define levels of achievement of social and civic expectations impedes the school's progress in achieving these goals. (facility tour, self-study, teachers)

The mission statement and the school's expectations for student learning direct the procedures, policies, and decisions of the school and are evident in the culture of the school. The four period block schedule complements the mission, encouraging a more challenging curriculum covering a larger depth and breadth of subject area. New extracurricular groups such as Academic Decathlon, Math Club, and the Robotics Club have grown out of the mission statement's emphasis on intellectual curiosity. However, more co-curricular activities that inspire self-confidence and respect for others should be strongly promoted as stated in the school's social expectations. Other evidence that the mission guides school procedure, policies, and decisions includes The New Start Program and the addition of Honors English and History courses throughout all grade levels. The attendance/tardiness policies have been reviewed to ensure high expectations and should be re-evaluated on a regular basis. Though some new elements of technology have been purchased to improve communication skills, there is still a need in this area. (self-study, teachers, observations, students)

The school's mission and expectations have been reviewed approximately twelve times since the last NEASC evaluation, and a review process appears to be in place for future evaluations. Consultants have been utilized to guide the school through this process. Data from the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System helped to identify student needs and determine remediation programs. Data relating to tardiness and attendance have been used to review the

effectiveness of current policies in determining student success. The mission and expectations are consistent with the state standards and the *No Child Left Behind Act*. A formal review process with identified meeting times of September, January, and June has been established to assess the relevance of the current mission and expectations for student learning. TMHS has worked to ensure that the mission statement and expectations reflect student needs, community expectations, the district mission, and the state and national standards. These efforts are commendable and should be coordinated with goals to ensure that the mission statement continues to be a driving force in guiding procedures, policies, and decisions of the school. (teachers, central office personnel, teachers, self-study)

Commendations:

1. The establishment of a review process to assess the relevance of the current mission and expectations for student learning
2. The development of the mission statement and expectations through extensive study
3. The development of school-wide rubrics for learning expectations
4. The school-wide commitment to the mission and expectations for student learning throughout the learning community
5. The positive learning environment created by staff members and students
6. The students' awareness of their roles in the larger community especially through community service
7. The faculty's commitment to academic excellence and student achievement in a personalized learning environment

Recommendations:

1. Develop a plan to increase parental involvement and interest in reviewing the mission and expectations
2. Develop more thorough rubrics that define civic and social learning
3. Promote co-curricular activities that inspire self confidence and respect for others as stated in the school's social expectations
4. Ensure that the mission statement continues to be a driving force in guiding procedures, policies, and decisions of the school

Teaching and Learning Standards

2. Curriculum

The curriculum, which includes coursework, co-curricular activities, and other school-approved educational experiences, is the school's formal plan to fulfill its mission statement and expectations for student learning. The curriculum links the school's beliefs, its expectations for student learning, and its instructional practices. The strength of that link is dependent upon the professional staff's commitment to and involvement in a comprehensive, ongoing review of the curriculum.

1. Each curriculum area shall identify those school-wide academic expectations for which it is responsible.
2. The curriculum shall be aligned with the school-wide academic expectations and shall ensure that all students have sufficient opportunity to practice and achieve each of those expectations.
3. The written curriculum shall:
 - prescribe content;
 - integrate relevant school-wide learning expectations;
 - identify course-specific learning goals;
 - suggest instructional strategies;
 - suggest assessment techniques including the use of school-wide rubrics.
4. The curriculum shall engage all students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking as well as provide opportunities for the authentic application of knowledge and skills.
5. The curriculum shall:
 - be appropriately integrated;
 - emphasize depth of understanding over breadth of coverage.
6. The school shall provide opportunities for all students to extend learning beyond the normal course offerings and the school campus.
7. There shall be effective curricular coordination and articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district.

8. Instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, staffing levels, and the resources of the library/media center shall be sufficient to allow for the implementation of the curriculum.
9. The professional staff shall be actively involved in the ongoing development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum based on assessments of student performance in achieving the school's academic expectations and course-specific learning goals.
10. The school shall commit sufficient time, financial resources, and personnel to the development, evaluation, and revision of curriculum.
11. Professional development activities shall support the development and implementation of the curriculum.

CONCLUSIONS

Each curriculum area identifies those school-wide academic expectations for which it is responsible. The Tewksbury Memorial High School (TMHS) Curriculum Outlines, which delineate which academic expectations are covered in each course offering, are annually updated. Students are informed of the connections between specific classes and the academic expectations through the curriculum guide. Additionally, the community can access curriculum information through the school website. Through course outlines, curriculum guide, and instructional practices, students at TMHS know the components of the mission and expectations and make connections between their school experiences and the mission and expectations. (curriculum outlines, curriculum guide, website)

The curriculum is aligned with the school-wide academic expectations and offers a variety of experiences that allow students many opportunities to practice and achieve academic expectations. Students may opt to take level 1, level 2, or honors classes which cover the same content in differing ways. In each leveled course as well as special education classes, students engage in a variety of activities, projects, and assessments. Teachers may utilize the TMHS Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment Checklist that provides a tool to further remind teachers of the mission, expectations, school-wide rubric components, instructional strategies, and assessment tools. Offering additional options such as music, fine arts, and advanced placement would enhance the school's ability to promote academic excellence and intellectual curiosity among all types of learners. Strong curriculum outlines reach across all levels of classes and strongly connect to the student expectations. This ensures that each student is provided with opportunities to practice and achieve the TMHS academic expectations. (curriculum outlines, TMHS Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment

Checklist, teachers)

The written curriculum based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks describes and outlines content and makes connections to the TMHS mission-related goals and expectations for learning. Additionally, it contains instructional strategies and assessment techniques including a school-wide academic rubric. While formal curriculum outlines have been the standard at TMHS for some time, the NEASC Curriculum Committee reviewed the content area outlines, harvested the best ideas, then standardized the course outlines to include specific information in a single format. The resulting course outlines that have been created and maintained for every course allow easy access to the information therein. (course outlines, curriculum committee, teachers)

Many areas of the curriculum engage students in higher order thinking, inquiry, and problem-solving and/or authentic application of knowledge and skills. TMHS's motto, "Nothing Less Than Success", reflects the staff's dedication to offering varied activities and assessments, speaking to different learning styles, and challenging students. Although some teachers have noted that students in level 2 classes have more difficulty with instruction involving higher order thinking teachers continue to engage level two students in this kind of instruction. Teachers in process-oriented classes such as computer classes note that their students engage almost entirely in authentic application experiences. The presence of academic rigor at this level provides a firm foundation for TMHS students to pursue post-secondary opportunities. (teachers, parents, observations).

Because of the limitation of common planning time, space constraints, and insufficient staff, there are few examples of formal integration of curriculum. However, informal examples of curriculum integration are sprinkled throughout specific classes. Many teachers report offering a balance between the breadth of coverage dictated by the course outlines and depth of understanding within the specific content areas within that curriculum. Decisions concerning depth of coverage seemed to be teacher-driven. Additionally, teachers reported that level two classes tend to cover the breadth of the content without delving into specific content as a result of time constraints, especially with the larger class sizes. Lack of common planning time hinders teachers' ability to develop formalized opportunities to instruct for depth of understanding and to integrate content areas. (observations, students, curriculum committee)

TMHS extends learning beyond the normal course offerings and the school campus. Juniors and seniors may elect an internship either within the school building as a teacher assistant, within the community, or at area elementary schools. However, internships vary in the intensity and depth of the experience. Students may also opt for dual enrollment at UMASS/Lowell although it seems that few students take advantage of this opportunity as the cost is passed on to the student. Some special education students, as a part of their class work, visit

establishments in the community in order to practice life skills and learn about vocational opportunities, and some are placed in internships in the community. Some special education students work in-house organizing and delivering supplies, working in the kitchen, or as interns in programs such as the preschool. Although late buses are no longer in place, approximately 75% of the students have enrolled in a large, varied number of co-curricular and interscholastic athletics, and it is estimated that 60% of the students participates in more than one activity. Field trips are utilized to extend the school experience beyond the school campus, and many of the clubs focus on community service activity, referencing the mission and student expectations for learning. While a fee has been attached to these activities starting at the beginning of the 2005/2006 school year, parents report that the school staff has communicated repeatedly that students will not be excluded from these opportunities due to the inability to pay. By participating in these experiences, students are provided with additional ways to meet TMHS's mission "to become successful, contributing members of society." (self-study, teachers, parents)

There is moderate curricular coordination and articulation between and among all academic areas within the school. Despite the fact that there is no formal common planning time, some teachers make the effort to confer during lunch and prep periods. The district allocates funds for teachers to meet by department to review the curriculum and align it with the school's expectations. This work is done during full professional development days, during after school sessions, and during summer sessions. (teachers, publications, self-study)

There is a lack of curricular coordination and articulation between and among all academic areas and with sending schools. According to the self-study, K – 12 curriculum documents have been created, but they were not readily available for team review. With the exception of a technology teacher, most teachers report no contact with their middle and elementary school colleagues for curriculum development activity. Teachers report that the assistant superintendent of schools in charge of curriculum focuses primarily on elementary and middle school curriculum because of the building principal and the leadership of the department heads at the high school. As a result, there is a lack of district curriculum coordination at the high school level. (observation, teachers, students)

Allocation of materials, technology, equipment and supplies, and other resources to support the implementation of curriculum does not appear to be adequate. Textbooks are purchased on a regular basis, and library resources are acquired after consultation with departments. Some large class sizes have negatively impacted the availability of adequate lab equipment in science instruction, however. Large class sizes have also taken a toll on use of technology. Large teaching loads and the lack of adequate instructional space have made small group work difficult to arrange physically. Computers are outdated; access to the Internet is severely limited, and in other technology such as DVDs and

televisions demand exceeds supply. Use of an ineffective technology for taking attendance results in a loss of instructional time at the beginning of each block. (observation, teachers, department heads, school committee members)

Although there appears to be no regular curriculum review cycle, teachers at TMHS can request funds to perform curriculum revision and review. This has taken place during professional development days, during summer months, and after school. (teachers, self-study)

Samples of student work and examples of assessments are utilized during both formal and informal examination of the curriculum. College requirements, overlap of content between high-school courses, sequence of concept presentation, industry standard, and student preference as measured in surveys are also used for revision. Additionally, item analysis on standardized tests, including MCAS is a variable considered during curriculum revision. (curriculum guides, observation, teaching sample binders, self-study)

Departments review standardized test results and suggest curriculum adaptations to staff members in their departments. Curriculum review at the high school was accomplished as part of preparing for the NEASC visit. Ongoing curriculum coordination is limited by lack of common planning time. Similarly, some review of student work to draw conclusions about curriculum strengths and weaknesses is done informally between one or two members of a department who share the same preparation time. (superintendent, teachers, department heads)

The school utilizes professional development time to review and develop curriculum. However, very little content-area training has been provided by the district. Few teachers attend sessions outside the district because of lack of funding and the school committee's position that strongly discourages professional development activities that conflict with staff instructional time. System-wide training on the John Collins writing program was an emphasis in prior years; however, new faculty members and a recent lack of review training in John Collins has resulted in less emphasis on the method. (school committee, teachers, self-study, professional development plan 2005-2006)

Commendations:

1. The curriculum outlines that incorporate the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks, school mission, and student expectations for learning
2. The curriculum that provides opportunities for all students to learn
3. The course outline format that is consistent across all content areas
4. The access to all curriculum documents via the web site
5. The strong program of integrated co-curricular and interscholastic activities

Recommendations:

1. Initiate a plan for K–12 curriculum coordination with sending schools
2. Address the issue of inadequate technology, classroom space, and teaching staff in order to accommodate additional AP, elective classes, and class size.
3. Modify the district professional development plan to offer more high quality professional development
4. Increase opportunities for teachers to integrate curriculum

Teaching and Learning Standards

3. Instruction

The quality of instruction in a school is the single most important factor affecting the quality of student learning, the achievement of expectations for student learning, the delivery of the curriculum, and the assessment of student progress. Instructional practices must be grounded in the school's mission and expectations for student learning, supported by research in best practice, and refined and improved based on identified student needs. Teachers are expected to be reflective about their instructional strategies and to collaborate with their colleagues about instruction and student learning.

1. Instructional strategies shall be consistent with the school's mission statement and expectations for student learning.
2. Instructional strategies shall:
 - personalize instruction;
 - make connections across disciplines;
 - engage students as active learners;
 - engage students as self-directed learners;
 - involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding;
 - provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills;
 - promote student self-assessment and self-reflection.
3. Teachers shall use feedback from a variety of sources including other teachers, students, supervisors, and parents as a means of improving instruction.
4. Teachers shall be expert in their content area, knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, and reflective about their own practices.
5. Discussion of instructional strategies shall be a significant part of the professional culture of the school.
6. Technology shall be integrated into and supportive of teaching and learning.
7. The school's professional development program shall be guided by identified instructional needs and shall provide opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies.

8. Teacher supervision and evaluation processes shall be used to improve instruction for the purposes of enhancing student learning and meeting student needs.

CONCLUSIONS

Tewksbury Memorial High School's instruction is aligned with the school's mission and expectations for students. Teachers use a variety of instructional methods such as project-based learning and teacher-directed study, as well as small group instruction and self-directed investigation in a student cooperative setting. Effective communication is evident in the classroom. Students obtain information, solve multi-faceted problems, draw conclusions, and present ideas in a clear, articulate manner. Consequently, students accept personal responsibility, work within a group setting, and are provided with experiences that promote academic excellence and intellectual curiosity. Tewksbury Memorial High School utilizes the mission statement and student expectations to drive its instructional strategies and practices. (observations, teachers, self-study)

Despite large classes, the Tewksbury Memorial High School faculty employs instructional practices that personalize instruction, make connections across disciplines, engage students as active and self-directed learners, involve critical thinking, provide opportunities for students to demonstrate that they are able to apply what they have learned, and promote student self-assessment and self-reflection. Instruction is personalized at Tewksbury Memorial High School through a curriculum that is designed for students of several different ability levels. In the classroom whenever possible, teachers include personal accounts and use one-on-one contacts as well as peer editing. Although there are some prescribed interdisciplinary instructional practices such as the World Studies program, other examples are informal and inconsistent. Students are engaged as active learners through such endeavors as science lab research, the writing and performing of skits based on class content, the speaking of a foreign language during in-class activities, and the design and completion of art projects. Teachers use project-based lessons to encourage students to be self-directed learners. As a result of large classes, the use of portfolios, journals, and Socratic seminars is limited. However, these methods still demonstrate varying approaches to teaching and learning and promote higher order thinking and depth of understanding. Examples of student artwork adorn the walls of the school. Students have the opportunity in the marketing class to participate in the Distributive Education Clubs of America which runs the school store and competes with other clubs. The ecology class surveys the Merrimack Watershed to explore the ways in which Tewksbury residents are connected to the ecosystem. These activities demonstrate how students have a wide venue to explore their interests, and to demonstrate and apply knowledge. Teachers include some opportunities for students to self-assess their work. They provide rubrics for the students to clarify the requirements and the criteria for success.

Peer editing is prevalent in assessing student work in several disciplines, particularly in writing assignments and art projects. Students are aware of how their learning will be measured and become active, self-directed learners in the process. (self-study, teachers, students)

Tewksbury Memorial High School teachers solicit feedback from students and colleagues as a means of improving instructional practices. Most feedback occurs during informal conversations among teachers. As a whole, the faculty has not adopted any protocols that teachers use formally to examine and discuss assignments or student work products, or to share ideas across disciplines. Teachers have expressed an interest in implementing peer observations beyond the mentoring program. In several areas, teachers give students the opportunity to evaluate their classroom experience. For example, students in a history class write a teacher report card and foreign language teachers collect student evaluations of their classes. Communication with parents can take place through progress reports, telephone conversations, e-mail, and parent conferences. The faculty reports that informal visits from department chairs and formal scheduled observations by administrators occur regularly. Through these various means of communication, teachers receive feedback for their instructional strategies. (teachers, self-study, school leadership team)

Teachers at Tewksbury Memorial High School are knowledgeable in their content areas, well-informed about current research on effective instructional practices, and reflective about their own practices. All teachers at Tewksbury Memorial High School are “highly qualified” in their core academic area. Despite limited funding and availability, many teachers have participated in a variety of graduate courses and professional development programs geared to improve instruction. Though not the norm, there have been a few instances where teachers teach outside of their certified area. Teachers belong to many professional organizations both in education and in their particular subject area. Some teachers subscribe to professional journals and make use of websites to keep current with research and enhance instruction. Teachers are reflective about their own practice through their participation in the mentoring program, curriculum writing, and limited opportunities to share best practices with colleagues in the same discipline area. (teachers, self-study, school leadership team)

Discussion of instructional strategies, classroom practices, and student work is a part of the professional culture of the school. In addition to monthly department meetings, collaboration occurs regularly on an informal basis between interested colleagues. Staff members also meet during prep periods and over lunch. The special education department, guidance counselors, and the school nurse report that they pursue formal meetings consisting of one-on-one discussions to address individual student needs. Additional common planning time would allow other departments to engage in this type of communication. The formal mentoring program for new teachers is widely regarded as a strong program and

also contributes to the implementation of best instructional practices. Beyond the mentoring program, teachers are welcome to observe one another's classes, though this happens infrequently and is teacher-initiated. (self-study, meetings with teachers, teacher interview)

Although computer equipment is outdated and limited in availability, teachers make an effort to use technology to support instruction and improve student learning. Some teachers make use of PowerPoint presentations, web quests, and graphing calculators. Research assignments often require an Internet search as part of their research methodology. Computer labs have reached their maximum use, and the equipment in the labs needs updating. The physical space of the computer lab needs to be redesigned so its central function is as a teaching laboratory rather than simply a work space. Teaching tools in the form of LCD projectors, SmartBoards, or large screen televisions would facilitate group instruction. Similarly, in the regular classroom, wider access to televisions, DVD players, LCD projectors, SmartBoards, and the Internet would allow teachers to more consistently incorporate technology into their instruction. Teachers have expressed frustration in the areas of accessibility to labs, space for overcrowded classes in those labs, and the lack of speed and software support capabilities which make it difficult for teachers to use these resources effectively. (observation, teachers)

Given the resources and time available, the school provides some professional development for teachers to develop and improve instructional practices and address instructional needs. Course offerings and summer workshops are available. One of the primary goals of the district-wide professional development plan is instruction, the focus of which is differentiated instruction and technology. Despite this, teachers still express a need for additional training to enhance their effectiveness and to broaden their repertoire of instructional strategies. Although faculty members have some input into the topics for professional development within the district, many feel frustrated because the topics are not closely related to subject area disciplines. Despite step raises that serve as incentives for teachers to pursue further educational opportunities, teachers feel that insufficient funding is the main reason that more opportunities are not currently available. When teachers attend conferences and workshops at their own expense, a substitute is provided. While this provides a certain measure of opportunity, it has financial limitations. Participation in out-of-district workshops and seminars addressing instructional issues is discouraged during the school day, limiting the accessibility of professional development. While Tewksbury Memorial High School has made progress in the area of professional development, limited funding for and access to such opportunities has hindered sustained professional development for the continuous improvement of instruction. (teacher meetings, teacher interview, self-study)

The teacher supervision and evaluation process is used to improve instruction for the purposes of improving student learning. There is a set procedure for formal

observation and evaluation of teachers who hold non-professional and professional status. Additionally, department chairs observe teachers on an informal basis, leading to discussions about and evaluations of instructional strategies. Teachers and department chairs report that this system is functional and beneficial. The mentoring program support is a real strength for new faculty members. Teachers have suggested peer coaching, peer observation, and collaborative teaching as additional activities for informal evaluation. Time constraints and scheduling conflicts make this model difficult to implement as a means of providing feedback to teachers concerning their performance and professional growth. Although the formal evaluation process contributes to the improvement of instruction, minimal access to peer evaluation limits the opportunity for teachers to improve instruction. (teachers, self-study,)

Commendations:

1. The alignment of instructional practices with the mission statement
2. The professionalism and dedication of the faculty
3. The instructional strategies faculty members employ to engage students as active and self-directed learners
4. The use of informal feedback concerning instructional strategies from both students and teachers
5. The faculty's participation in the mentoring program

Recommendations:

1. Reduce class size
2. Develop and implement a fund to acquire new computer software and hardware
3. Implement a plan to assure effective access to computer labs and equipment for all classes
4. Formalize a plan to improve access to technology in individual classrooms and computer labs
5. Provide time for formal collaboration in planning interdisciplinary activities
6. Adopt protocols for discussing and examining instructional strategies
7. Develop a peer observation program
8. Provide time and additional funding for a professional development program that supports department, school, and district instructional goals

Teaching and Learning Standard

4. Assessment for Student Learning

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Its purpose is to inform students regarding their learning progress and teachers regarding ways to adjust the curriculum and instruction to respond effectively to the learning needs of students. Further, it communicates to the school community the progress of students in achieving the school's expectations for student learning and course-specific learning goals. Assessment results must be continually discussed to improve curriculum and instruction.

1. The school shall have a process to assess school-wide and individual student progress in achieving the academic expectations in the mission based on school-wide rubrics.
2. The school's professional staff shall use data to assess the success of the school in achieving its civic and social expectations.
3. For each learning activity teachers shall clarify to students the relevant school-wide academic expectations and course-specific learning goals that will be assessed.
4. Teachers shall base classroom assessment of student learning on school-wide and course-specific rubrics.
5. Teachers shall use varied assessment strategies to determine student knowledge, skills, and competencies and to assess student growth over time.
6. Teachers shall meet collaboratively to discuss and share student work and the results of student assessments for the purposes of revising the curriculum and improving instructional strategies.
7. The school's professional development program shall provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing a broad range of student assessment strategies.
8. The school's professional staff shall communicate:
 - individual student progress in achieving school-wide academic expectations to students and their families;
 - the school's progress achieving all school-wide expectations to the school community.

CONCLUSIONS

Teachers at Tewksbury Memorial High School have stated academic expectations clearly for students. There are school-wide rubrics in place to assess student progress towards effective communication, complex problem-solving and working with others toward a common goal. Currently, there is no formal long-term system to assess the school's achievement over time in using school-wide rubrics. School-wide academic achievement is measured using data from the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, and the college acceptance rate. Individual student progress is assessed in most classes based on the school-wide rubrics or a modified version of the rubric, adjusted to be course-specific. Course expectations and grading rubrics are provided to students and parents at the beginning of the semester by most teachers. Therefore, students and parents are aware of what is required for success. (students, parents, teachers)

Data on civic and social expectations is difficult to collect, and there is no formal process in place to do so. According to a survey completed during the self-study, 87.8% of students are involved in some form of community service. Most students are aware that contributing to the community is an expectation of the mission statement. Attendance and discipline records are kept by the administration, but they do not easily translate to an evaluation of the civic and social expectations. Some students may not be aware of the civic and social expectations promoted by the school. Therefore, growth of students in these areas is unlikely to improve until there are rubrics in place to evaluate student involvement and behavior and the students are aware of them and how they work. (self-study, students, teachers)

Many teachers clearly articulate school-wide and course-specific goals to their students. Teachers post the school expectations in their rooms. Students report that most of their teachers provide a rubric and clear expectations for assignments. Students are familiar with the language used in the rubrics. Teachers employ rubrics that contain school-wide academic expectations and course-specific learning goals. Consequently, students understand the academic expectations of their teachers and the specific learning goals an assignment is addressing. (students, teachers, student work)

The majority of teachers report using the school-wide rubric or a modified version of it in their classes. According to the self-study report, most teachers say they evaluate students' learning with clear, course-specific learning goals. The majority of students and parents say they have a good understanding of grading criteria in their classes. Therefore, academic expectations are clearly communicated by teachers. (student work, teachers, students)

Teachers employ a wide variety of assessments to determine student achievement. For example, students report completing assignments requiring

portfolios, posters, videos, presentations, group projects, lab reports, essays, quizzes, and tests. Class participation and homework are also part of student assessment as well as peer and self-assessments. In practice, there is no assessment of growth over time. However, teacher recommendations for student promotion to move onto the next level in a subject area and informal discussions with students and their parents often address long-term growth. According to the self-study, most teachers and students agree that a variety of assessments is used to evaluate student achievement, but approximately half of parents are not aware of this. Consequently, more needs to be done to communicate this information to parents. (teachers, student work, survey information)

Other than staff meetings, there is no formal provision for teachers to meet collaboratively to discuss and share student work and the results of assessments. No common planning time is available, and no early release days are scheduled for this purpose. Teachers do meet informally during lunch, prep periods, and after school to discuss and evaluate curriculum. Although most teachers report that they meet with colleagues to discuss curriculum, formal opportunities are not provided to allow teachers time for the development and refinement of curriculum and instructional strategies. As a result curriculum revision, teacher collaboration and development of interdisciplinary lessons are limited because there is no additional time allotted to pursue these activities. (teachers, self-study, panel presentation)

Professional development opportunities for TMHS staff members are limited. For the past three years, all professional development time has been focused on the NEASC self-study report. Few teachers report that opportunities are available to collaborate with colleagues in developing assessment strategies. Because of the lack of professional development opportunities, the development and refinement of assessment strategies are sporadic. (teachers, self-study, panel presentation)

The TMHS staff communicates information on individual student progress in a variety of ways. Progress reports are issued mid-way through the quarter. Report cards are issued four times each year, and parent teacher conferences are scheduled three times each year. Additional parent contacts are made as often as needed. Some teachers report student achievement in the civic and social expectations through comments on report cards. While academic expectations are clearly defined, civic and social expectations are not, however. The school's progress in achieving school-wide expectations is reported to the community through notification in the local newspaper, the quarterly school newsletter, and televised school committee meetings of MCAS scores, graduation rates, college acceptance, SAT and advanced placement scores. Data on civic and social expectations is more difficult to collect and disseminate. Information on student involvement, activities, and co-curricular achievements are also reported to the local media. TMHS has a web site that provides information on the school's mission and expectations, courses, curriculum, rubrics, and a listing of student activities and sports. TMHS utilizes all traditional

methods of communication to report individual student and school-wide progress. Therefore, this information is readily available to students, parents, and community members. (teachers, parents, students, self-study, panel presentation, teachers)

Commendations:

1. The widespread use of rubrics throughout the school
2. The faculty provides clear expectations to students
3. The use of a variety of assessments that enhances the learning experience for students
4. The faculty that communicates effectively with students, parents, and the community

Recommendations:

1. Design an evaluation tool to assess students on civic and social expectations prior to graduation
2. Inform parents of the variety of assessments being used by teachers
3. Provide formal common planning time for teachers
4. Offer additional professional development opportunities for teachers
5. Develop and implement a formal process to measure each students' academic achievement

Support Standards

5. Leadership and Organization

The way in which a school organizes learning for students, fosters leadership, and engages its members has a profound effect on teaching and learning. The professional culture of the school must be characterized by thoughtful, reflective, and constructive discourse about decision-making and practices, which supports student learning and well-being.

1. The school board and superintendent shall ensure that the principal has sufficient autonomy and decision-making authority to lead the school in achieving the mission and expectations for student learning.
2. The principal shall provide leadership in the school community by creating and maintaining a shared vision, direction, and focus for student learning.
3. Teachers as well as administrators other than the principal shall provide leadership essential to the improvement of the school.
4. The organization of the school and its educational programs shall promote the school's mission and expectations for student learning.
5. Student grouping patterns shall reflect the diversity of the student body, foster heterogeneity, reflect current research and best practices, and support the achievement of the school's mission and expectations for student learning.
6. The schedule shall be driven by the school's mission and expectations for student learning and shall support the effective implementation of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
7. Meaningful roles in the decision-making process shall be accorded to students, parents, and all members of the school staff to promote an atmosphere of participation, responsibility, and ownership.
8. Each teacher shall have a student load that enables the teacher to meet the learning needs of individual students.
9. There shall be a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult member of the school community in addition to the school guidance counselor who personalizes each student's educational experience, knows the student well, and assists the student in achieving

the school-wide expectations for student learning.

10. The professional staff shall collaborate within and across departments in support of learning for all students.
11. All school staff shall be involved in promoting the well-being and learning of students.
12. Student success shall be regularly acknowledged, celebrated, and displayed.
13. The climate of the school shall be safe, positive, respectful, and supportive, resulting in a sense of pride and ownership.
14. The school board shall support the implementation of the school's mission and expectations for student learning.

CONCLUSIONS

The principal of Tewksbury Memorial High School (TMHS) has sufficient autonomy and decision-making authority to lead the school in achieving the mission and expectations for student learning, but there are outside forces, financial challenges, technological issues, and structural considerations that impede his authority and effect. The principal leads a strong, committed administrative team dedicated to advancing teaching and learning in all areas of the educational community through autonomous decision-making based on the school's expectations. The principal also enjoys a healthy rapport with the superintendent who supports his building-based efforts as he allocates limited resources and personnel. He is directly involved in policy and budget development decisions, and he participates in two retreats that galvanize the leadership, assess progress, and formulate plans. Nevertheless, his authority over financial decisions is limited, and this has resulted in an inability to update technology and provide sufficient personnel. (central office administrators, school leadership team, self-study)

The principal has been in his position for three years, and during this time he has maintained an open-door policy as part of his initiative to provide effective communication with students, faculty and staff members, parents and administrators. He has provided leadership, and the faculty supports a shared vision to establish focus and direction on student learning. He has provided visible, tangible leadership in his meetings with groups such as the school council, teachers' advisory committee, and department heads. An increased number of faculty meetings provide opportunities for staff members to share ideas and examples of student work, success, and achievements. Therefore, the entire school community is more actively engaged in fulfilling the school's

mission and expectations that direct and focus energies and available resources on student learning. (self-study, teachers, school leadership team)

The faculty and administrators assume a variety of leadership roles in the school through their work as mentors, athletic director, coaches, club advisors, department heads, school council members, teacher advisory council members, cafeteria monitors, and other less formal roles. Teachers have proposed and helped establish two academic courses in honors chemistry and astronomy. Additionally, staff members have initiated programs in peer leadership, ECHO, and Students Against Destructive Decisions. Consequently, the faculty feels empowered in the leadership of the school and fully invested in the students' overall educational experience and development. (leadership and organization self-study team, self-study, teachers)

The organization and structure of TMHS and its educational programs promote its mission and expectations for student learning. The objective to have every student achieve proficiency in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System has served as a driving force in the design of educational programs and the allocation of personnel. In 2005, 79% and 77% of grade 10 students scored proficient or advanced in English and math, respectively. Since 1997 graduation requirements have increased with the implementation of block scheduling and the elimination of study halls. The high school leadership team, comprised of the principal and two assistants, leads a departmental structure with chairs in guidance, math, science, humanities, and applied arts. However, the current structure of the department head positions limits effective departmental supervision and collaboration among the district schools. Budget constraints have resulted in the elimination of some department chairs, teaching positions, and courses. As a result, there is no longer a full-time music teacher or librarian. Due to insufficient staffing and a growth in student population, approximately 100 students are enrolled in the internship program, but its scope is limited as most students must remain on site at the school. Budget cuts have curtailed plans to expand course offerings and have limited student choices. (panel presentation, self-study, school leadership team)

Since the school population is not racially diverse, grouping patterns reflect the limited heterogeneity of the student body. TMHS offers courses primarily at three levels—honors, level one, and level two—and students are enrolled in courses through a teacher referral process with the possibility of parental override. Again, budget constraints restrict course offerings and student choice. Within these confined opportunities, students are encouraged to take the highest level of courses that will provide the most challenge for them. (self-study, teachers, panel presentation)

The schedule of TMHS is driven by the school's mission and expectations for student learning and supports the effective implementation of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The current block schedule follows a four-by-four

format with semester courses. Students are required to take eight courses per year, while faculty members teach three courses per semester with one preparation period. The 84-minute classes provide opportunities for in-depth exploration, differentiation, and varied assessment. However, these opportunities and the personalization of instruction are limited by the size of the majority of classes in excess of 30 students. Some teachers, for example, limit the number of writing assignments and sometimes provide feedback that does not give the students direct comments and corrections. Consequently, many staff members express a desire to reexamine and/or modify the current schedule. Despite this, students and staff recognize the advantages of the current schedule and work collaboratively and beneficially. (teachers, self-study, observations)

The principal attempts to provide meaningful roles in the decision-making process to students, parents, and all members of the school staff to promote an atmosphere of participation, responsibility, and ownership. The faculty, parent advisory council (PAC), the education school council (ESC), the humanities department, parents and students have worked with the principal to develop a policy to deal with plagiarism and a plan to address student-related alcohol issues. Parents also participate in booster clubs involved with academics, clubs, and athletics. There is student representation on the school committee and ESC. Students, parents, and teachers have also been in updating the student handbook. Teachers, guidance counselors, and the assistant principals serve on the attendance review board. Also, the principal has established a faculty-driven agenda for monthly staff meetings. As a result, the stakeholders feel invested in the decision-making process, but their empowerment is hampered by financial limitations. (self-study, teachers, school leadership team)

The teachers at TMHS have a high student load that limits their ability to meet the learning needs of individual students. In order to meet the needs of individual students and a growing student body, the administration has requested additional teachers. However, while the student population has increased approximately 33% since the 2000-2001 school year, the teaching staff has increased only six percent. Projections indicate that the student population will continue to grow during the next three to five years. Currently, the majority of the classes contain more than 30 students, hampering the teachers' abilities to meet the learning needs of all students. (self-study, observations, school leadership team)

At the present time, there is no formal program that personalizes each student's educational experience. In order to know the students well and to meet the students' needs for achieving school-wide expectations for student learning, teachers have scheduled extra help days and times. There is also an informal system utilizing class advisors, coaches, and others who take on mentoring roles. The block schedule does provide opportunities for teachers to engage in relationship-building with students to personalize their educational experience. Teachers express a genuine interest and desire to get to know and understand their students. The majority of the students are involved in sports or other co-

curricular activities with expanded opportunities for personalization. Without a formal program in place, however, there is no guarantee that each student receives the personal attention that supports the successful achievement of the school-wide expectations for student learning. (self-study, parents, teachers)

The teachers at TMHS do not have scheduled opportunities to collaborate within and across departments in support of learning for all students. Despite attempts to provide common planning time for the teachers of the Integrated World Studies (IWS) course, those opportunities are rare because of scheduling and budgetary constraints. Without a scheduled time to meet, teachers of different disciplines are unable to collaborate on a formal basis, although discourse and interaction between and among teachers takes place. Consequently, the opportunities to develop and implement integrated studies are limited. (teachers, self-study, school leadership team)

All school staff members are involved in promoting the well-being and learning of students. Beginning with their arrival in the morning, the staff welcomes students and continues personal interactions throughout the school day. Support staff members, including secretaries, custodians, and cafeteria workers, often know students personally, demonstrate their concern through a caring approach, and offer support and encouragement. These attitudes and actions promote an atmosphere predicated on respect, trust, and collaboration. This atmosphere promotes a culture and feeling of belonging to an educational community that supports the betterment of students and other stakeholders. (observations, self-study, student shadowing)

Student success is regularly acknowledged, celebrated, and displayed. Student work is posted throughout the school and classrooms. Student achievements are publicized through press releases, daily announcements, the principal's newsletter, guidance newsletters, and the local television station. Academic and athletic awards nights celebrate and recognize students' academic achievements, efforts, and accomplishments. The principal's newsletter, web site, and literary magazine also showcase and reflect student dedication and accomplishments. There is additional student recognition through the Renaissance Program, Hats Off, and scholarships. Recognition of student achievements clearly instills a sense of pride and self-confidence in students with a wide range of abilities. (observations, self-study, parents)

The school's safe, positive, respectful, and supportive climate creates a sense of pride and ownership. Interactions between and among students, administrators, faculty, and staff members are generally positive, respectful, and supportive. The safety of the school community is addressed through the presence of hall monitors, security cameras, and a variety of safety-related drills. Respect and support among the student body are enhanced through the freshman orientation program that includes a barbeque run by upper class members of the leadership academy. Freshmen interact with older peer leaders who establish connections

with students of different grade levels. The staff demonstrates support of students through their involvement in numerous co-curricular programs and activities. There is a sense of ownership among the students that reflects pride in the school. (observations, self-study, observations)

The school committee supports the implementation of the school's mission and expectations for student learning, but it has been unsuccessful in procuring necessary funding and resources. The town meeting did not approve the school committee's requests for fiscal years 2003 through 2006, resulting in level funding during this period. A recent override attempt failed by eight votes despite the school committee's support and efforts. This has prompted the committee to institute user fees for all co-curricular and athletic activities. Committee members state that they have been unanimous in their support for an expanded school budget and that they are currently planning to consolidate support for another override. (school board, central office, parents)

Commendations:

1. The principal maintains and promotes open communication with stakeholders that focuses the educational community on student learning
2. The principal and teachers have demonstrated effective leadership
3. The block schedule provides opportunities for in-depth exploration, differentiation, and varied assessment
4. The administration, faculty, and staff that takes a genuine interest in personalizing each student's educational experience
5. The school staff members are involved in promoting the well-being and learning of students
6. The success of students is regularly acknowledged, celebrated, and displayed instilling a sense of pride and self-confidence in students with a wide range of abilities
7. The school's safe, positive, respectful, and supportive climate creates a sense of pride and ownership
8. The positive role that students take in school decision making

Recommendations:

1. Provide sufficient financial support and resources for the principal to fulfill the school's mission and expectations
2. Examine the effectiveness of the current department head structure and allocation of personnel
3. Increase course offerings
4. Increase teaching positions to ensure a more favorable student-teacher ratio
5. Develop and implement personalization opportunities for the student body
6. Provide opportunities for staff members to collaborate within and across disciplines

Support Standard

6. School Resources for Learning

Student learning and well-being are dependent upon adequate and appropriate support programs and services. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of integrated resources to enhance and improve student learning and well-being and to support the school's mission and expectations.

All Student Support Services

1. The school's student support services shall be consistent with the school's mission and expectations for student learning.
2. The school shall allocate resources, programs, and services so that all students have an equal opportunity to achieve the school's expectations for student learning.
3. Student support personnel shall enhance student learning by interacting and working cooperatively with professional and other staff and by utilizing community resources to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students.
4. All student support services shall be regularly evaluated and revised to support improved student learning.
5. There shall be a system for effective and ongoing communication with students, parents/guardians, and school personnel, designed to keep them informed about the types of available student support services and identified student needs.
6. Student records, including health and immunization records, shall be maintained in a confidential and secure manner consistent with federal and state law.
7. There shall be sufficient certified/licensed personnel and support staff to provide effective counseling, health, special education, and library media services.

Guidance Services

8. The school shall provide a full range of comprehensive guidance services, including:

- individual and group meetings with counseling personnel;
- personal, career, and college counseling;
- student course selection assistance;
- collaborative outreach to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers;
- appropriate support in the delivery of special education services for students.

Health Services

9. The school's health services shall provide:

- preventive health services and direct intervention services;
- appropriate referrals;
- mandated services;
- emergency response mechanisms;
- ongoing student health assessments.

Library Information Services

10. The library/information services program and materials shall be fully integrated into the school's curriculum and instructional program.

11. Library/information services personnel shall be knowledgeable about the curriculum and support its implementation.

12. A wide range of materials, technologies, and other library/information services that are responsive to the school's student population shall be available to students and faculty and utilized to improve teaching and learning.

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

14. The library/information services program shall foster independent inquiry by enabling students and faculty to use various school and community information resources and technologies.

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

Special Education Services

15. The school shall provide special education services related to the identification, monitoring, and referral of students in accordance with local, state, and federal laws.

CONCLUSIONS

Student support services at Tewksbury Memorial High School have been developed and refined in response to students' needs and goals as expressed in the school's mission and expectations for student learning. The school offers a variety of programs and support services to achieve the school's stated academic expectations for academic excellence and intellectual curiosity as well as creating an environment that fosters these goals. Students choose from a variety of courses at different levels to ensure that they have the opportunity to become successful, contributing members of society. Graduation requirements are reviewed in an attempt to ensure that students graduate with their class. A high percentage of students continue their education after graduation. Each support group has contributed to the development of the mission statement and has processes to assess how well services are supporting students in their progress toward meeting school and individual goals. This ensures that student services meet the educational, social, and civic expectations of the academically diverse student community. (counselors, teachers, health service personnel).

The needs of the students at Tewksbury Memorial High School vary, and recognizing these needs, the school allocates programs and services tailored to enable students to achieve the academic expectations of student learning delineated in the mission statement. Although it has been given inadequate resources, the school makes efforts to engage every student in the educational programs and services. With the advice of guidance counselors, teachers, and parents, students select courses through an open enrollment process that encourages intellectual curiosity and develops problem-solving skills that will allow them to become contributing members of society. The New Start program allows students to regain course credit lost while maintaining an emphasis on the importance of academic excellence and school attendance. Individual student needs are met through tutoring and support services as necessary. Students on individual educational plans are able to access the general education curriculum through placement in regular education classes or in small group classes. The Renaissance Program rewards students for personal growth and achievement. The school's 4 x 4 block schedule allows students to enroll in 32 courses over their four years of school. The school involves some students in real time, real world experiences through their internship program for juniors and seniors. The National Honor Society provides tutoring. Other groups such as DECA have raised funds and received national recognition for their efforts to donate to charities. The wide range of programs available to students ensures that students at all levels are able to achieve the academic, social, and civic goals of the mission statement. (self-study report, teachers, teachers)

Guidance counselors, the school nurse, and special education teachers work cooperatively with other faculty members in addressing academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students, thereby enhancing student learning. Counselors, teachers, and the nurse refer students to appropriate resources within in the school community, as well as resources outside of the immediate school setting. Special education evaluations are contracted to services outside of the school, and the district school psychologist is available one day per week. The library media specialist is available to assist students and staff with research projects and gathering information. Her availability, however, is limited by her current part-time status in the building. As a result, insufficient staffing interferes with service delivery. (self-study, teachers, support staff)

The Tewksbury Memorial High School Support Services departments employ various methods of evaluating the effectiveness of their services. Evaluations are done every other year for special education, guidance, and health services programs by the director of student services. Each department reviews its curricula based on new requirements, student achievement, and individual student needs. (teachers, self-study, support staff)

Effective and ongoing communication between parents and student support personnel occurs in a variety of ways. Currently, these include the principal's newsletter, student planners, weekly progress reports, parent conferences, report cards, open houses, and midterm progress reports. Local access television updates what is happening at the school as well as daily announcements and the Tewksbury Memorial High School web pages. These all serve to keep students, parents, and the community informed about available student support services. Improvement in the current phone system and the increased use of e-mail by staff members would enhance the effectiveness of these services. Based on discussions with parents, the overall level of satisfaction with support services is satisfactory. The level of satisfaction with accessibility to guidance counselors is high. (self-study survey, parents, self-study)

Tewksbury Memorial High School stores student records in various locations throughout the school. Cumulative records are stored in locking cabinets in the guidance office. Old records are stored in a locked storage room. Special education records are stored in locking files in the special education office. The building principal is responsible for the content and accessibility of cumulative record folders while the case manager is responsible for the content and accessibility of the special education records. Access logs are maintained and supervised by the secretaries of individual departments. Old IEP files are sent to the district special education office. These procedures ensure that the confidential nature of these files is not compromised. The school nurse maintains student health and immunization records in locking files in her office and is responsible for the contents of these records and the access to them. These efforts ensure the confidentiality of student records. (self-study report, observation of locked cabinets, staff members)

Tewksbury Memorial High School has a staff of certified, licensed personnel and a support staff that provides effective counseling, health, special education, and library media services. However, in guidance, the ratio of student to counselor exceeds the New England Association of Schools and Colleges guidelines. Currently, each of the three counselors has a caseload of 338 students while the guidance department chairperson has a caseload of 230 students. As a result, while seniors are adequately advised regarding postgraduate plans, underclassmen may not receive the same level of service. Due to recent changes in duty assignments, the librarian is not on site full-time. This results in a lack of continuity of services to both staff and students. (self-study, staff, teachers)

The Tewksbury Memorial High School Guidance Department provides a full range of comprehensive services to assist students in meeting the expectations expressed in the mission statement. These include individual and group meetings for personal, career, and college counseling. Counselors assist with course selection as well as outreach to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers. They also provide support in the delivery of special education services for students. However, due to increased enrollment, counselors cannot provide adequate services to meet all of the expectations. (self-study, staff, teachers)

Although students and faculty members indicated that they believe they are well-served by the school health office, there is a concern that due to the increase in student population and the additional monitoring of individual student health plans, the demands on the nurse limit her ability to deliver adequate and timely services. The nurse makes referrals to appropriate school departments as well as to community services. She serves as a team member at IEP meetings in addition to serving as a member of the school crisis committee. Consequently, the nurse has difficulty providing adequate health services at all times to students due to her mounting obligations. (self-study, health personnel, teachers)

The library/information services program and materials are fully integrated into the school's curriculum and the instructional program. The library/media center services are accessed daily by classroom teachers with their classes, instructional aides with small groups, and individual students. However, due to recent changes in duty assignments for the librarian, she is no longer stationed at the high school on a full-time basis. This results in an inconsistent delivery of services to the high school by the librarian and leaves the library/media center without the services of a certified professional two days per week. Media center technology is not evaluated to ensure dependable and consistent performance and availability. Other current technology such as scanners, color printers, digital cameras, DVD burners, etc. were notably absent from the library/media center.

As a result, the lack of technology impedes the goals of the mission statement of intellectual curiosity and academic excellence. (self-study, librarian, teachers)

The librarian at Tewksbury Memorial High School is knowledgeable about the curriculum and supports its implementation. The librarian served on the district-wide curriculum committees that evaluate curriculum with respect to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. She has created a library curriculum map that documents the collaboration of the library/media specialist with individual classroom teachers. She also updates members on library/media resources at department head meetings and participates in professional development courses offered by the school district. She meets with teachers to discuss current and future curriculum plans. This allows her to suggest resources for teacher and student reports. (self-study, librarian, teachers)

The library/media center has a range of materials but is lacking in up-to-date technology and other library/information services that are responsive to the school's student population and faculty and are utilized to improve teaching and learning. Due to increased student enrollment, there is an inadequate number of hard copy resources available to teachers so that existing resources need to be shared among teachers of the same discipline and grade level. Classes are often turned away for lack of resources. The library/media specialist brings resources to individual classrooms, but this denies access to these materials to other classes at similar levels due to a shortage of hard copy resources. These limitations directly impact the school's mission to promote intellectual curiosity and academic excellence. (self-study, librarian, teachers)

Students, faculty, and support staff have access to the library/media center during the school day. However, as a result of the lack of an after school transportation program and the librarian's duty assignments, some students are unable to access the services, facilities, and programs as an integral part of their education after the school day. The library/media center is made available on an "as needed" basis both before and after school. However, there is no formal schedule for access to the library/media center for times beyond the school day. This impacts students, faculty members and support staff in their ability to achieve the mission statement objective of promoting academic excellence and intellectual curiosity. (teachers, support staff, library/media specialist)

The library/information services program fosters independent inquiry by enabling students and faculty members to use various school and community information resources and technologies that are currently available. However, there is an apparent lack of services and resources immediately available in the high school library/media center that is reflective of current technology. The high school library maintains a home page that links users to the Tewksbury Public Library as well as the Merrimack Valley's library resources. Video, CD, VCR and DVD players as well as LCD projectors are available for student use but must be accessed through faculty members. The impact of this discrepancy impedes the

goal in the mission statement to promote academic excellence and intellectual curiosity. (teachers, support staff, library/media specialist)

The Tewksbury School District has policies for the selection and removal of information resources and the use of technologies and the Internet. The library/information services personnel are involved in the implementation of these policies as set forth in the acceptable use policy. This policy is found in the Tewksbury Memorial High School student planner as well as on the Tewksbury School District web page. Students must sign an agreement to abide by the AUP, and they understand that failure to comply will lead to loss of Internet privileges. (self-study, librarian, teachers)

The school provides special education services related to the identification, monitoring, and referral of students in accordance with local, state, and federal laws. Although there is a pre-referral process in place, it is not fully utilized. Tewksbury Memorial High School provides many different types of special education programs. These include inclusion support within the regular education class, small class instruction, and life skills instruction for students who are significantly delayed cognitively. The case manager is an on-site staff member who oversees the identification, monitoring, and referral of students to special education. He is responsible for complying with state laws for the timely addressing of these issues. He is also responsible for the timely production of IEPs. The progress of students is monitored by annual IEP meetings, progress reports, and teacher observation. Students are referred for a special education evaluation in accordance with local, state, and federal laws. While the numbers of special education students have increased, the number of staff members providing service has remained the same. This results in some non-compliance issues in terms of the ratio of the number of staff members to student. The district is required by law to acquire waivers in order to continue to deliver mandated services to students. This impacts space for students as the numbers of students in each class increase. (interviews, teachers, observations)

Commendations:

1. The knowledgeable and caring student services staff
2. The respect for confidentiality regarding student records
3. The high percentage of students who continue their education after graduation
4. The New Start program that allows students to regain course credit
5. The policies in place dealing with the selection and removal of information resources

Recommendations:

1. Investigate ways to meet NEASC standards for guidance counselor/counselee ratio
2. Provide a full-time, certified, on-site library/media specialist
3. Increase the availability of psychological services to students
4. Provide additional health services staff
5. Provide technical support and regular maintenance and upgrade library media technologies
6. Increase library/media resources
7. Extend library services beyond the school day
8. Provide additional staff and space to serve the special education population
9. Utilize the pre-referral process to identify potential special needs students

7. Community Resources for Learning

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

1. The school shall engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and shall encourage their participation in school programs and parent support groups.
2. The school shall foster productive business/community/higher education partnerships that support student learning.
3. The school site and plant shall support and enhance all aspects of the educational program and the support services for student learning.
4. The physical plant and facilities shall meet all applicable federal and state laws and shall be in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.
5. Equipment shall be adequate, properly maintained, catalogued, and replaced when appropriate.
6. A planned and adequately funded program of building and site management shall ensure the appropriate maintenance, repair, and cleanliness of the school plant.
7. There shall be ongoing planning to address future programs, enrollment changes, staffing, facility, and technology needs as well as capital improvements.
8. The community and the district's governing body shall ensure an adequate and dependable source of revenue to provide and maintain appropriate school programs, personnel, services, facilities, equipment, technological support, materials, and supplies for student learning.
9. Faculty and building administrators shall have active involvement in the budgetary process, including its development and implementation.

CONCLUSIONS

Tewksbury Memorial High School does an adequate job of engaging parents and families in the educational programs of the school. A ninth grade orientation before the start of school, organized by teachers and student members of the

peer leadership academy, helps students become familiar with the school building and the faculty. Through the initiative of the students and the advisor, the community's donations provide a cookout and prizes for a drawing. Ninth graders start school with a very positive experience, thanks to the support of the high school faculty. The participation of student leaders in this program reveals the outgoing and friendly spirit of the students at TMHS. Open houses, parent conferences, and guidance department initiatives such as the senior parent breakfast provide other avenues to engage parents and families. (panel presentation, teachers, parents)

Parents play an important role in supporting several school programs. Parents run "Applefest Fair," a crafts fair that raises money for the school's scholarship fund. As well, parents have formed many groups, such as the cultural council to which teachers can apply for one-time grants of \$100-\$500 for small projects. The "All Night Long Graduation Party," a strong annual tradition, is funded by parents. Additionally, parents may join the Renaissance Program, the parent advisory council, educational council, or sports and music boosters. Parents in volunteer panel presentations appeared to be highly supportive of the school's administration, faculty, and policies. Parents feel welcome in the school and appear eager to support school programs through partnerships, volunteerism, and donations. (Panel presentation, teachers, parents)

Tewksbury Memorial High School is continuing to develop business, community, and higher education partnerships as an integrated part of the school curriculum. The school has developed partnerships with local businesses like Raytheon, which provides resources for the school's Titans Robotics Club and supports local robotic competitions. The school's internship program currently provides approximately 100 juniors and seniors with the opportunity to gain experience in a career field of their choosing. The program's growth has been a response to the lack of electives currently offered and the overcrowding of current elective classrooms. Two-thirds of the students are mentored within the school by teachers and administrators, with the remaining third of the students interning outside the school with varied mentors. Out-of-school internships are compromised by the regular rotation of the block schedule, preventing a daily schedule. The program has the potential to greatly enhance business and community partnerships if additional staffing is made available for oversight of this community outreach program. (teachers, parents, students)

The original high school was built in 1959, with an addition built in 1983. The recent growth in student population has greatly overtaken meager increases in staffing, leading to overcrowded classrooms without adequate furniture and equipment to support large classes. Some of the classrooms are too small to accommodate the number of students. The lack of available classrooms forces teachers to share limited resources and prevents them from adequately preparing the classroom during their prep time. In the science department there are classrooms that do not have an appropriate space to conduct experiments or

laboratory activities for the number of students in the classroom. The special education program is also suffering under the pressures of increased class size. Additionally, the physical education program is limited with regard to adequate staffing and facilities to provide instruction. Juniors and seniors have the opportunity to sign up for an Independent Study in Physical Education, Health, or Wellness, but otherwise do not have any opportunities to study these subjects during the school day. Some physical education activities have to be conducted in the hallway on a day-to-day basis and the overall condition of the gymnasium floor and locker rooms is considerably worn. Although it is only sporadically staffed, the library appears to be well-maintained with appropriate resources for two classes to visit at a time. Teachers are able to reserve computer stations for their classes in the library. The overall effect of overcrowded classrooms and insufficient staffing has put a strain on the school's available resources and a reduction in the attention to individual students' needs. (parents, teachers, facility tour)

The physical plant and facilities are in compliance with federal and state laws, and local fire, health, and safety regulations. During the school day, there are two full-time custodians and five maintenance workers who take care of any problems as they arise with an admirable response time. The night crews are responsible for the primary cleaning of the classrooms and laboratories each night. There have been ongoing issues with inconsistent heating and ventilation systems that make some rooms uncomfortable, affecting student performance, although at the time of the site visit the issues had been addressed. Also, there have been ongoing issues with leaks in the roof, although at the time of the site visit the roof leaks were under control. Approximately 80% of the total roofing structure is rubber membrane, installed in 1991 and currently covered under a twenty-year warrantee. The remaining 20% of roof structure is tar and gravel, installed more recently. Reported roof leaks appear to center on the tar and gravel areas. Teachers have been flexible, patient, and understanding in the face of facility issues endemic to an aging building and an increasing student population. (teachers, school support staff, facility tour)

The school's equipment has not been replaced when needed, primarily with regard to the aging, slow, and inadequate computers and the aging furniture that in part dates to the opening of the school in 1959. Some classroom chairs are disfigured and some classroom desks are broken apart or held together with strong tape. The school appears to provide adequate music, art, and sports equipment and supplies to support current curricular and co-curricular needs. Consequently, current funding is not adequate to support the programs. (teachers, parents, building visit)

The maintenance foreman is in charge of both maintenance and custodial issues at the high school. Work orders are submitted by teachers to the administration, which prioritizes the orders for the custodial and maintenance staff. The work orders are listed on a spread sheet, and tracked to see how long the orders

remain open. The turn-around time on work orders has improved significantly over the past two years. Teaching and administrative staff members have recognized this and are generally satisfied with the current system. Despite the challenges that an older building poses, repairs are completed in a timely and satisfactory fashion. (teachers, support staff, facility tour)

The superintendent's office provides a strategic plan, mid-year report, and end-of-year report that address planning for all of Tewksbury's public schools. School improvement plans are made annually by the education council, reviewed and passed by the school committee, and then sent to the state. A facilities committee has been established to address concerns within the building. This committee has conducted a targeted needs assessment throughout the facility. The result is a plan authored by the committee which was presented to the Tewksbury Town Meeting in 2005 in the form of a \$2.1 million tax override. However, the plan was not accepted by the voters. The facilities committee intends to submit the plan again at the next town meeting. The school committee, administration, and faculty are trying to address this need directly by organizing and supporting a tax override. Every year this problem is not addressed increases the magnitude of the eventual negative impact on teaching and learning. (parents, staff members)

The school does not currently have the budget necessary to provide and maintain a comprehensive program of studies and the necessary staffing. The current school appropriation in Fiscal Year 2006 has not been enough to make up for the lack of funding in the previous two years. The inability to hire staff has created ballooning class sizes. Additional demand is placed on the budget by an aging facility and rapidly outdated technology. At present staffing levels, over half of the classes offered have sizes of 30 and more students. There is an apparent pattern of moving from electives toward a core curriculum based on the MCAS test, gradually eliminating over time the business, family, and consumer science. These factors have led to a reduction in the quality of learning opportunities available to the students. Despite this deleterious situation, the staff has responded with a positive attitude and a willingness to make do with the available resources. (teachers, students, building visit)

Teachers have input into the budgeting process by putting individual budget requests in to the department heads. The department heads consider the departmental priorities and objectives, and prepare a departmental budget for the principal to review. The principal in turn submits the departmental budgets to the central administration, where the superintendent reviews the school's budget. In April the superintendent submits to the town meeting a budget for the entire public school system, where it is discussed and voted on. Consequently, many proposals and requests made by teachers and department heads must be cut well after they were originally submitted, after the town meeting approves the overall school budget. As a result, teachers have a direct involvement in the beginning of the budgetary process but sometimes don't receive the requests

initially made and approved by the department heads. (teachers, department heads, self-study)

COMMENDATIONS

1. The maintenance and custodial workers who respond with appropriate speed to requests for repair and heat and cooling issues
2. The staff who work well in a challenging building
3. The school that is kept in exceptionally clean condition
4. The plan for the “proposed renovations to the high school”
5. The continuing effort to pursue a tax override
6. The increase in the number of business, community, and higher education partnerships
7. The support of a number of community agencies and businesses of the internship program

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Balance the demands of a changing enrollment and an aging building, until the facilities committee’s recommendation for a new building can be fulfilled
2. Provide better supervision of students in the internship program
3. Replace the gymnasium floor and upgrade science labs
4. Provide adequate resources for science laboratory activities
5. Either continue an aggressive maintenance program or pursue wide-spread refurbishment of the facility until a recommendation for a new building can be fulfilled
6. Continue an effective program to regulate heat and cooling issues and contain any future leaks
7. Develop a plan to replace classroom furniture
8. Upgrade technology to meet the educational demands of the administration, teachers, and students
9. Maintain and continue the support of the tax override in the next town meeting
10. Provide an adequate budget to support program development

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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

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

Annual Report form to ensure that the Commission office has current statistical data on the school.

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

In closing, the members of the Tewksbury Memorial High School Visiting Team wish to express their appreciation to the entire school staff, students, and community of Tewksbury Memorial High School for the hospitality that was extended to the team during its visit to the school. The team found all members of the school community welcoming and eager to participate in the work of the visiting team and unified by their common goal to improve Tewksbury Memorial High School.

Appendix A

ROSTER OF TEAM MEMBERS

Steven Berbeco
Charlestown High School
Charlestown, MA

Hollie Blaustein
Stoughton High School
Stoughton, MA

Justine Croteau
Stoneham High School
Stoneham, MA

Paul Daigle (Chair)
Mendon-Upton Regional School Dist.
Mendon, MA

Denise Dalton-Martell
Quincy High School
Quincy, MA

June Donegan
Monadnock Regional High School
E. Swanzey, NH

John Drottar
Milton High School
Milton, MA

Kara Dupre
Pittsfield High School
Pittsfield, MA

John Eckstrom
Scituate High School
Scituate, MA

Sharon Flesher
Nashua High School
Nashua, NH

Ken Franson
Kingswood Regional High School
Wolfeboro, NH

Robert Gillis (Co-Chair)
NEASC
Burlington, MA

Christine O'Connor
Hingham High School
Hingham, MA

Jaye Ellen Warry
Lynn Public Schools
Lynn, MA

Alan Winrow
Dedham High School
Dedham, MA

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Commission on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

Principals of member schools must report to the Commission within sixty (60) days of occurrence any substantive change in the school which has a *negative impact* on the school's ability to meet any of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of a substantive change must describe the change itself as well as detail the impact on the school's ability to meet the Standards. The following are potential areas where there might be negative substantive changes which must be reported:

- elimination of fine arts, practical arts, and student activities
- diminished upkeep and maintenance of facilities
- significantly decreased funding
- cuts in the level of administrative and supervisory staffing
- cuts in the number of teachers and/or guidance counselors
- 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
- 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
- identification by the state as an underperforming school
- takeover by the state
- inordinate user fees