

NARRATIVE

Bristol Central High School is developing a formal process based on the school-wide rubrics to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Bristol Central High School, in collaboration with the Office of Teaching and Learning and its sister institution Bristol Eastern High School, is currently in the process of resolving the technical issues of PowerSchool that limit the recording and reporting of whole-school and individual progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Movement forward has been delayed due to these technological issues which, when resolved, will permit teachers to assess and report student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. While 21st century learning expectations are currently posted in teachers' classrooms and are present in teachers' planning of instruction and assessment, there is no systematic process to employ or assess students based on the school-wide rubrics. Rather than rush to implement a formal process, Bristol Central High School is in temporary abeyance, intending to implement only the most accurate and efficient means of establishing this reporting process. At the same time, teachers do have a formal process for evaluating student achievement in each of the academic content areas throughout the school year. For example, all departments administer standard course mid-term and final exams and send the subsequent data to the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) for analysis. In addition, regularly scheduled Common Formative Assessments (CFA) are created, administered and analyzed by instructional data teams. All of these assessments address the fundamental concepts of the school learning expectations. Thus, students do have regular though indirect opportunities to be assessed on the expectations. The Endicott Self Study Survey revealed that 62% of the responding faculty agrees or strongly agrees that they understand the formal process based on the use of school-wide rubrics. Although currently only 37.9% of teachers indicate that they directly use the rubrics when assessing student work, this is expected to increase as teachers begin to use the rubrics in their classrooms in a more systematic way. As technical issues with PowerSchool are resolved,

it is expected that teachers will be able to effectively and efficiently record and report school-wide individual progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations.

Bristol Central High School's professional staff has limited ability to communicate individual student progress in meeting school-wide academic expectations to students and their families and to the school community, but is actively working toward establishing a formal process. The educational community including parents, students and school community

members are informed of the school learning expectations through a variety of ways.

Student/parent handbooks are distributed annually to every student and this handbook is available online on the school website. Four conference days are built into the school calendar to give parents the opportunity to meet with teachers regarding student's individual progress in meeting the school's academic expectations. Also, the operation of a team system in 9th grade allows teachers to more effectively communicate student progress to parents as students make the transition to high school. Bristol Central mails formal grades and progress reports eight times throughout the year. The use of PowerSchool allows parents and students 24 hour access to their grades. A newsletter (BC Link) is distributed eight times per year by the Bristol Central administrative team to inform parents of current events, academic expectations, testing dates and the information needed to login to PowerSchool or contact individual teachers. The ability to specifically report or assess students using the school-wide analytical rubrics is in development at this time due to limitations of PowerSchool and district coordination issues. The Endicott Self Study Survey revealed that 77.5% of parents are in agreement that Bristol Central High School provides them with a formal report, in addition to course grades, which explains their child's progress in achieving the school-wide 21st century learning expectations. Advisory groups meet bi-monthly and many often discuss school-wide learning expectations and individual student progress. There is a plan in place for the second semester of the 2014-2015 school year to distribute individual progress reports directly to students.

Bristol Central High School professional staff consistently and in a formal, unified process collects, disaggregates and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. The district has a formal instructional data team process in place for all certified

staff. These instructional data teams meet bi-monthly for 100 minutes or 45 minutes; their tasks

include the disaggregation and analysis of data from both summative and formative assessments; identification of student weaknesses and strengths; unit and assessment planning to address student needs; and teacher reflection on practice and instructional strategies. Data teams are departmental and are further broken down by grade level or course content. Data teams follow the Instructional Data Team Model and report out findings of each meeting to the administration through the use of a Data Team Reporting Sheet. Recently, in the 2014-2015 school year, the use of Google forms has been initiated. Additionally, the Building Data Team (BDT) which consists of all department coordinators and the administrative team, meet monthly to discuss data collected during the instructional data team meetings as well as the state and national testing data as applicable. The transition from the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) to the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) in the 2013 – 2014 school year has decreased the amount of available state student achievement data for current use. The use of teacher created monthly CFAs based on the Depth of Knowledge charts in the 2013 2014 school year allowed teachers and the BDT to analyze individual and school wide student achievement. This year the BDT and instructional data teams are employing specific school-wide CFAs that focus on the Common Core State Standards and SBA. The district has specifically invested in the improvement of literacy skills by the addition of Common Core/SBA leaders to the building. These leaders are assisting the faculty in creating assessments to improve literacy modeled after the SBA. Literacy strategies are present in all content areas, with exception of math, in order to meet the rigor of the Common Core State Standards. The Math department is targeting critical thinking, problem solving skills and other essential math skills related to the Common Core State Standards.

Prior to each unit of study, most teachers communicate to students the specific learning goals to be assessed in the unit and some teachers additionally indicate the 21st century learning expectations to be addressed. Teachers often provide students with written or digital unit overviews that include objectives as well as topics to be presented in the units. According to the Endicott Survey, 70% of students and 91% of parents agree that teachers explain what the learning expectations are before each unit of study. Each core discipline at Bristol Central High School has a curriculum that details the progression of unit goals and connects those goals to Common Core State Standards. In addition, teachers post Essential Questions from the unit of

study, as required by the Office of Teaching and Learning. Teachers introduce the Essential Questions at the start of the lesson and then refer back to the Essential Questions during the lesson. Teachers also post student learning objectives for the day, and refer to these objectives during the lesson, as well as reviewing unit specific learning goals prior to class assessments. Additionally the use of “walkthroughs” and “look for” documents are performed and used as evidence of teachers addressing the specific learning goals within their units on a regular basis.

Prior to summative assessments, some teachers are providing students with corresponding rubrics. The evidence collected demonstrates that some teachers are currently providing students with corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments. Bristol Central teachers formally and informally present rubrics prior to midterm and final assessments. Additionally, some teachers distribute rubrics prior to content specific summative assessments such as Science labs, Language Arts persuasive arguments and video/multimedia projects. The results of the school wide self study indicate that students and parents understand teacher expectations prior to completing work. Of the students responding to the Endicott survey, 74% indicated that they understand the rubrics used by teachers. The survey also states that 64% of parents responded that they are familiar with and understand rubrics used to assess student learning.

In each unit of study, teachers consistently employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Based on the review of the samples provided, Bristol Central teachers do employ a wide range of assessment strategies. Some of the formative assessment strategies include: daily warm-up exercises; routine written quizzes; exit slips; researching real-life case studies; essays; and creating dialogues in world languages. Some of the summative assessments include: Mid-Term exams; Final Exams; practice AP Exams; Essays; Unit Tests; PowerPoint Presentations; and written research activities. The Endicott Survey indicates that 94.3% of teachers agree or strongly agree that in each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments, and that none of the teachers disagree. The frequencies and evidence of daily warm-ups and exit slips indicate that teachers understand and use formative assessments productively. These daily activities offer an opportunity for teachers to converse with students about their progress. There is direct evidence of student improvement based on encouragement from teachers. Specifically, students had opportunity to re-take tests after corrections were made. For

instance, in the World Language department, some of the teachers employ the NUTS (Not Up To Standard) protocol for students who do not display proficiency in foundational skills necessary for success in the World Language classroom. The NUTS protocol requires students to report for tutoring and additional practice in the identified weak areas and allows students who do use the NUTS program to retake assessments in the area of weakness. Additionally, Bristol Central teachers regularly use exemplars to clarify expectations for assignments and assessments. The teachers regularly and purposefully employ a range and variety of formative and summative assessments in each unit of study as a means to develop student learning in particular content areas. There is evidence that throughout the year, with each unit, and during each day, a wide variety of assessments are effectively employed. Teachers do employ these strategies to enable students to identify how far each student has progressed and what each student has left to achieve.

Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments. Bristol Central has a formal instructional data team process that allows staff to meet regularly (approximately bi-weekly) to create, analyze, and revise assessments including unit plans, common formative assessments (CFAs), unit assessments, midterms and finals. Unit plans include formative, summative, and common assessments. Data teams create four major Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) given to students throughout the year. The data teams use the assessment data to address student strengths and weaknesses, revise future assessments and drive instruction. Teachers also collaborate with teachers at Bristol Eastern High School multiple times during the school year to create or revise common summative assessments including the midterm and final which incorporate the CCSS and the content area standards as appropriate. Additionally, freshman teams are an integral part of the collaboration at Bristol Central and they are comprised of one teacher from each core subject. Freshman team teachers are able to collaborate across curricular areas on the creation, analysis, and revision of summative, formative, and common assessments. Team discussions focus on student achievement trends, addressing student needs both holistically and individually and building cross curricular assessments as appropriate. For example, “Writing across the Disciplines” has been a district focus for several years. By its very nature, this focus brings together teachers who collaborate on lessons and their appropriate assessments. Based on the data from the Endicott Survey, 87% of the teachers agree or strongly

agree that we meet formally to discuss and improve both formative and summative assessment strategies.

Teachers generally provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. Based on results from the Endicott Survey, approximately 70% of parents and students agreed that the teachers provide specific, timely and corrective feedback. Most teachers use corrective feedback in order to improve student understanding. For example, in Social Studies, effective feedback is provided via a blog/discussion group, providing peers and instructor the opportunity to respond to the postings. Also, Social Studies provide feedback for every test and quiz with model answers on open ended questions. Math teachers use corrective feedback in order for students to assess the reasons why their answers were incorrect. Students are also asked to explain and elaborate on the correct way to proceed. Students received feedback to guide future improvement. English teachers frequently use feedback throughout the drafting process to help students sculpt the final product. Teachers make comments on drafts and revisions and provide further feedback on final assessments building towards the next assignment. The World Language department uses both peer to peer and teacher feedback as a vehicle for improving student written work. Students are encouraged to revise based on written and verbal feedback from peers as well as from teachers. Timely feedback is an important part of the writing process at Bristol Central High School.

Teachers at Bristol Central High School regularly use a variety of formative assessments that allow for monitoring of student learning and for making appropriate adjustments in instruction. Teachers employ a wide variety of formative assessments on a daily basis in order to drive instruction. For example, teachers give daily assessments in the form of interactive SMART Board activities, exit slips, practice problems and similar succinct measures of student mastery of the curriculum. On a weekly basis, teachers employ formative tools such as quizzes, short writing assignments, lab reports and the like. Long range assessments dictated by department curricula include unit tests, more extensive essay assignments and research and media projects. In addition, the literacy initiative for school year 2014-15, which is now a formal part of collaborative lesson planning, has impacted the creation, evaluation, and discussion of formative assessments based on CCSS and SBA literacy skills. Teachers meet in regularly scheduled after school data teams to plan and implement CFAs and unit assessments, to

evaluate results, and to modify instruction to include re-teaching skills, revisiting information, and revising pedagogical approaches. Teachers' formative assessments address higher Depth of Knowledge levels as indicated on CFAs, unit tests and mid semester exams. In the 2013-2014 school year, assessing DOK levels was included in many teachers' Student Learning Objectives and Professional Practice Objectives; data collected from these assessments were discussed with administration as part of the teacher evaluation process. In the current school year, formative assessments have been formally scheduled within the building by the Building Data Team in order for teachers to be able to administer and analyze student performance data within the instructional data teams. The main focus of these scheduled CFAs is to identify student learning needs in order to adjust instruction and collaboratively plan backwards to improve outcomes. These formative assessments are directly related to the current School Improvement Plan and will be used to drive instruction based on student achievement data. These formative assessments and the subsequent data are a part of each teacher's evaluation process.

The professional staff of Bristol Central High School consistently examines a range of evidence of student learning both individually and collaboratively for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. Bristol Central uses bi-monthly instructional data teams for the purpose of examining student work and adjusting instruction (teacher practice) based on student achievement data to improve outcomes. The data team process of collaborative unit planning, implementation of appropriate instructional strategies and reflection includes the analysis of various forms of student work including but not limited to CFAs, unit tests and common summative assessments (midterm and final). Midterms and finals are disaggregated and examined by instructional data teams to identify student needs and focus teacher practices. Additionally, the district teacher evaluation plan weighs heavily on teacher practice and the change of practice to increase student achievement. Data team findings are also used to identify curricular gaps and drive future revisions. Curriculum in multiple content areas is in the revision process to address the current content standards and the Common Core State Standards. Curriculum is created and/or revised collaboratively by teachers from both Bristol Central and Bristol Eastern. Bristol Central uses a variety of standardized test results including, SAT, PSAT, CAPT, AP, CMT and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (9th grade) to gauge student skills and drive school

improvement initiatives. This data is also used to focus teacher practices on identified student learning needs. The current state assessment, the SBA is still in the pilot stage and test results are not available at this time. The teacher creation and implementation of school-wide CFAs based on the SBA literacy targets and claims are currently being used as a means of assessing student skills in those areas. The Math department is currently creating CFAs based on the SBA math targets and claims for the purpose of identifying student weaknesses in problem solving.

Bristol Central also examines student data from sending schools as necessary, including but not limited to the CMT scores, middle school standardized testing data, and 8th grade transcripts for placement into academic and accelerated courses. The Endicott Survey indicates 91.3% of students and 89.6% of faculty agree or strongly agree that Bristol Central examines a variety and range of student work to revise and improve curriculum and instruction. In particular, the collaborative efforts of data teams have had a positive impact on moving us forward into 21st century skill assessment.

Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. All grading and reporting practices must be in conjunction with Bristol Eastern High School. These practices are reviewed by both Bristol Central and Bristol Eastern annually. The numerical rating system for grades and eligibility guidelines are explicitly stated in the Student/Parent Handbook. Many teacher course descriptions reflect the school grading policy as well as the school's core values and beliefs. The Student/Parent handbook reinforces the importance of the school's core values and beliefs about learning by providing clear expectations for students who participate in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. These expectations include regular and punctual attendance to school, living up to obligations for school and community, and achieving a standard of passing grades in all courses for full eligibility; these expectations reflect Bristol Central's core values of "becoming creative thinkers, conscientious problem solvers, collaborative learners, and committed citizens in a global society." Grades for students involved in activities are reviewed at the end of each quarter, as well as at progress reporting periods when required for full eligibility. At this time, we are not able to report on how students are meeting the school's 21st Century Learning Expectations on formal grading reports due to technological issues with both PowerSchool and district level protocols. However, there is ongoing discussion and trouble-

shooting with the technology supervisor at the Office of Teaching and Learning on how to report the 21st century learning expectations in a more formal manner. Currently, there are two committees in place that regularly discuss the grading policies and practices for the two high schools. The High School Council discusses the grading policies and is regularly reviewed. The PowerSchool Committee is also in place to discuss and implement a plan to report the 21st Century learning expectations for both Bristol high schools. There are plans in the second semester of 2014-2015 to report on student progress toward meeting the school wide learning expectations if the technological issues can be resolved in time. The Endicott Survey stated that approximately 80% of parents and students agreed or strongly agreed that the teachers' grading practices are aligned with the school's beliefs about learning. Additionally, the Bristol Summer School policy was amended in Spring 2013 to read as follows: *"Admission to a remedial summer school course for credit will be permitted to students previously enrolled in the same course, but who (1) have not received credit for that course or (2) have passed with a grade of 65 or higher either semester 1 or semester 2 of the full year course during the school year. If a student fails one semester of the full year course in summer school, the student must take the full year course again during the school year or the full course again in summer school."* With the amendment of this policy, more students now have an opportunity to participate in remedial instruction and the school's core values about learning, ensuring that "all members" of the Bristol Central community are provided with the necessary knowledge and skills to become committed citizens in a global society.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bristol Central High School is actively working towards implementing a formal process to assess both whole school and individual student progress in achieving its 21st century learning expectations through the use of school-wide analytical rubrics. Teachers at Bristol Central recognize the importance of rubrics; they are regularly communicating individual student progress effectively on content standards. Teachers also inform students of specific learning goals prior to the units of study. The use of corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments is evident in teacher practice.

The instructional data team model is used effectively and consistently for several purposes including the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments. Also, student achievement data is regularly collected, disaggregated and analyzed by the faculty and administration to inform and adapt teacher practices to improve student outcomes. Curricular revisions as well as Common Formative Assessments and summative assessments are driven by student performance data collected and analyzed during instructional data team time.

Teachers are regularly employing a wide range of formative and summative assessment strategies in order to assess student learning and drive instruction. Teachers are able to collaborate and create content specific formative assessments within instructional data teams to discover additional student weaknesses in both content and Common Core State Standard skills. Teachers provide specific and timely feedback on student work and allow students the opportunity to revise and improve their work.

Based on the Rating Guide for this standard, Bristol Central High School judges its adherence to this standard as **ACCEPTABLE**.

STRENGTHS:

- Use of a formal process to collect, disaggregate and analyze data for student achievement inequities through instructional data teams
- Teacher practice of informing students of specific learning goals prior to units of study
- Corresponding rubrics provided by teachers prior to summative assessments
- Wide range of assessment strategies used by the professional staff including formative and summative
- Ample time allowed for instructional data teams to collaborate on creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments
- Specific and timely feedback provided by teachers to ensure students revise and improve their work
- Regular use of formative assessments to inform teachers and drive instruction.
- Consistent evaluation of student evidence to revise curriculum and improve instructional practice

NEEDS:

- Design and implement consistent whole-school use of school-wide rubrics to assess individual student progress on school's 21st century learning expectations
- Effectively communicate the school's 21st century learning expectations to educational stakeholders (students, parents and community members)
- Encourage and support the teacher practice of informing students of the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations prior to units of study
- Review and revise school's grading policies that align with the school's core values and beliefs
- Ameliorate the PowerSchool and district issues to facilitate the formal reporting of individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.