Mark T. Sheehan High School

NEASC Self-Study Report for Accreditation Visit

November 15 – 18, 2015

School and Community Summary

Mark T. Sheehan High School, in Wallingford, Connecticut, is conveniently located in New Haven county between the cities of Hartford and New Haven, with easy access to Interstate 91 and the Wilbur Cross Parkway. In 2012, the population of Wallingford's was 45,074 people. The town's population growth has been approximately 0.5 percent per year over the last ten years, and this growth mirrors the population growth rate of the state of Connecticut for the same period. The per capita income for 2011 was $32,896 for 17,506 households. The racial/ethnic breakdown of the town's total population is as follows: White: 41,109; African American: 636; Asian Pacific: 1,255; Native American: 142; Hispanic: 4,596. The Hispanic population has doubled in the past fifteen years. The 2012 poverty rate in Wallingford was six percent, which has nearly doubled since 2000 but is lower the statewide poverty rate of ten percent. During the 2014-2015 school year, 10.7 percent of Sheehan students were eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch.

Over the past ten years, Wallingford has diversified its commercial and industrial base, attracting high technology industries as compared to traditional heavy manufacturing. Major businesses and industries in Wallingford include Quest Laboratories, Masonicare, Gaylord Specialty Hospital, the Toyota Oakdale Theater, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Cytec Industries, and Ulbrich Steel and Speciality Metals. The community offers a wide range of shopping, from Wal-Mart to personal service-oriented and family-owned stores. The town-wide unemployment rate for 2013 was 7.2 percent, slightly lower than the state average of 7.8 percent.

The Wallingford school district is comprised of twelve schools: four schools serving kindergarten through second grade, four schools serving grades of third through fifth, two middle schools (grades 6-8), and two high schools (grades 9-12). Two alternative education programs

are available for students: ARTS (Alternative Route to Success) and EEP (Educational Enhancement Program). The Educational Center for the Arts (ECA), a regional magnet school located in New Haven run by Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES), provides a fine arts program for Wallingford high school students who are accepted. Choate Rosemary Hall, a prestigious independent boarding school, also is located in Wallingford.

The October 1, 2014 enrollment at Sheehan High School was 854 students divided between 416 males and 438 females. For students, the attendance rate on October 1, 2013 was 97.3 percent and on October 1, 2012 was 95.0 percent. The average number of days teachers were absent during the 2011-2012 school year was 7.5 days, which is below average of 8.6 days for Connecticut high schools.

The per pupil expenditure in 2013 was $13,226, compared to the state per pupil expenditure of $14,031. In the 2009-10 school year, 68.3 percent of the school's funding came from local sources, 23.4 percent from state funds, 6.7 percent federal grants, and 1.7 percent from tuition fees. The school budget in 2013-2014 was $96,736,331. The school board budget was 65.6 percent of the town budget in 2013-2014. In addition, during the 2013-2104 school year the district obtained $779,272 in grant money and received $170,325 in charitable donations.

At Mark T. Sheehan High School, the cohort four-year graduation rate for the class of 2014 was 96 percent and the annual dropout rate for grades 9-12 was 0.04 percent. This dropout rate is considerably lower than the state average of 2.1 percent. For the class of 2014, 71 percent went to four-year colleges, 17 percent went to two-year colleges, four percent entered the military, and three percent went directly to employment.

The Superintendent of Schools actively pursues local business partnerships. Businesses and organizations participate in panel presentations for students. During the 2013-2014 school year, the Wallingford Public Schools hired a career center specialist to focus on many initiatives regarding community connections, including job fairs, panel presentations, and coordination of the school system with HUBCAP. HUBCAP, a hybrid-business incubator, provides a unique opportunity for collaboration between businesses and the local school district. HUBCAP strives to provide collaboration between schools and businesses to increase college and career readiness while expanding downtown Wallingford business alternatives. Mark T. Sheehan High School currently offers several opportunities for its students to be immersed in higher education learning experiences while still enrolled in high school. In addition, students may enroll in 18 advanced placement (AP) offerings and/or six early college experience (ECE) courses offered in cooperation with the University of Connecticut.

Students are recognized for their accomplishments through the monthly spotlight on student award, the honor roll, which is published each marking period, and school-wide academic awards given each spring. In addition, AP Scholars and National Merit Scholar distinction are recognized internally and in the local paper. Following each sport season the athletic department hosts a sports awards night. Each spring there is a school-wide assembly, known as the Celebration of Excellence, where various school groups showcase their performances from throughout the year, including world language classes, scenes from the fall drama and the spring musical. Sheehan has a chapter of the National Honor Society and the Tri-M Music Honor Society, both recognize student academic achievement and school involvement. Student creative work is showcased in *Visions,* Sheehan's literary magazine, winter and spring concerts, the Poetry Slam, One Act Plays, the Variety Show, and art shows at regional

adjudicated events and at HUBCAP. The local newspapers sponsor academic and athletic achievement awards. Academic excellence is celebrated with the distinction of Varsity Scholar for graduating seniors who have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or higher.

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

**Mark T. Sheehan High School's Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations
Self-Study Report and Executive Summary Completed by:**

2013 – 2104

Carrie Hawkins	Teacher, Science
Co-Chairperson	
Rachel Mane	Teacher, Mathematics
Co-Chairperson	
Rosemary Duthie	Principal
Steering Committee Liaison	
Matthew Altieri	Teacher, Social Studies
Christopher Calbo	Teacher, Special Education
Susan Gage	School Counselor
Christina Krasniqi	Teacher, Art
Raffaelina Lonetti	Teacher, World Language
Laura Maiocco	Teacher, English
Tricia Perrone	Teacher, Mathematics
Michael Tyrrell	Teacher, Physical Education
Linda Ventura-Clements	Teacher, English

2014 – 2105

Carrie Hawkins	Teacher, Science
Co-Chairperson	
Rachel Mane	Teacher, Mathematics
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Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

The Mark T. Sheehan community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. The school began work on transitioning its mission statement to a narrative focused on its core values and beliefs in March 2011. Various members of the school community, including the Sheehan Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC), the Moran Parent Teacher Advisory Council (parents from the sending school), the Wallingford Project Graduation Committee (community members), the Sheehan faculty, and members of the student body, provided insight into the qualities people want in a Sheehan High School graduate by participating in the activity, "Picture the Graduate" (Wiggins and McTighe).

This work continued at the April 2011 faculty meeting with teachers working both independently and in small groups to determine the attributes and learning needs of an ideal high school graduate. Teachers identified ten attributes and then listed the attributes in priority order. Teachers then met in six-member groups to discuss their choices. Each group selected their top five attributes and identified the learning needed to develop the attributes. Teachers shared their results with their colleagues before the conclusion of the meeting. The members of PTAC completed the same activity at their meeting on March 3, 2011. They also reviewed previously collected student responses.

The Core Values and Beliefs Committee examined a list of the faculty's core beliefs and fundamental values developed at the April 2011 faculty meeting. In addition, committee members discussed educational philosophy, the previous mission statement, sample statements from neighboring schools, and the Wallingford Public Schools' district mission statement. In

May 2011, the committee conducted several brainstorming sessions to craft the school's core values and beliefs statement.

At the May 2011 faculty meeting, the faculty discussed the top proposed attributes of Sheehan graduates as identified by parents, students, and teachers. The list of forty-two items was pared down using a method similar to the one employed during the April 2011 faculty meeting. Teachers first worked individually and then collaboratively on this task. They were also asked to compare the list of selected attributes to Sheehan's current mission statement, determine if any attributes were missing from the list, and decide if these attributes should be included in the core values and beliefs statement or in the 21st century learning expectations.

In June 2011, the faculty worked with members of their departments to develop proposed academic, social, and civic expectations for student learning. Teachers utilized current articles on 21st century skills, information from the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE Brochure: *Connecticut Secondary School Redesign, CSDE: Secondary School Reform - The Connecticut Plan),* The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, the P-20 Council, and professional organizations (e.g., ASCD). This work resulted in a list of 49 proposed 21st century learning expectations. Each department's list revealed similar themes (i.e., communication skills, critical thinking, collaboration, global awareness).

In September 2011, the Sheehan Cabinet, comprised of department chairpersons and building administrators, reviewed and discussed the proposed expectations. The list was pared down to 25 expectations, ensuring fidelity to the original themes that were then grouped into one of the following categories: communication, problem solving, application, health and wellness, work habits, and civic responsibility. Each category contained two or three statements that were readily understood by all constituents, applied to multiple subject areas, and emphasized high

expectations. Students, parents, and staff voted on a statement in each category through an online survey. Results were tabulated on October 24, 2011 and accepted by a majority vote. In October 2011, committee representatives also attended the New England Association of Secondary Schools (NEASC) Showcase of Model School Programs to gain a deeper understanding of the process.

The faculty reviewed the new 21st century learning expectations at the November 2011 department meetings and assigned appropriate expectations to each course within their subject area. These new expectations were first listed in the 2012-2013 Program of Studies. A wide range of courses across multiple subject areas provides numerous avenues for students to demonstrate proficiency in meeting the expectations.

The committee agreed upon common language and fundamental ideas and wrote multiple drafts of the core values and beliefs statement. The committee reviewed, revised and established two statements in December 2011. Students, parents, and staff voted on their choice through an online survey. Results were tabulated on January 3, 2012 and the faculty accepted it by a majority vote. The core values and beliefs and 21st century student learning expectations were approved by the Board of Education in February 2012.

The school's core values and beliefs continue to evolve. During the 2012-2013 school year, the school community, comprised of faculty, students, and community members, participated in a group read and reflection of *Mindset* by Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D. This led to the creation of district core values in March 2013. A comparison of Sheehan's core values and those of the district demonstrate a strong alignment. In October 2014, the faculty worked collaboratively in small groups to adapt the district belief statements to represent Sheehan's point of view more clearly. The adapted belief statements were compiled in survey format and

distributed to the faculty for a vote. The selected statements were then added to the core values

document.   As a member of the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC),

Wallingford is focusing on closing persistent achievement gaps and promoting greater

educational equity and opportunity for all students by moving towards mastery-based grading.

By July 2015, the school hopes to have in place cross-curricular graduation standards. Once

these graduation standards are established, the school anticipates the need to revise and update

the 21st century learning expectations.

Mark T. Sheehan has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations

for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies and are defined by

school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. Beginning in

February 2012, the faculty employed a dynamic and inclusive process to develop analytic

rubrics. Teachers worked in small groups to develop one school-wide analytic rubric from an

assigned 21st century learning expectation. Teachers received copies of analytic rubrics that

addressed the same themes as those identified in their assigned expectation. Theses rubrics, not

considered exemplars, were the basis of discussion as the groups began to talk important

attributes to include in the school-wide rubric. The groups exchanged rubrics for review and

critique. The originating group considered the feedback and revised rubrics as needed.

Teachers piloted the rubrics in their classes and reported feedback to the faculty. The

faculty finalized the rubrics for all academic, civic, and social expectations by March 2013. In a

monthly department meeting, the faculty discussed and identified the appropriate expectations

for each course. This feedback was compiled and reviewed to ensure that students have

sufficient opportunities across multiple subject areas to practice and achieve each learning

expectation.   The list was distributed in November 2013 along with suggestions for

implementation. In April 2014, the approved rubrics were made available in both electronic and print form to all staff members. A survey conducted in October 2014 by the Core Values and Beliefs Standard Committee revealed that both teachers and students utilize the rubrics for feedback.

Most teachers are utilizing part of one or more of the school-wide rubrics once a marking period or more. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, the school administration developed a new method for reporting individual achievement of the school-wide expectations to students and parents. A group of teachers made up of the Assessment Standard Committee members and the Standards-Based Grading Committee piloted this method during the first semester of the 2014-2015 school year.

All teachers will implement this process at the end of marking period two of the 2014-2015 school year. The faculty will record student scores in PowerSchool for the corresponding rubrics in each course. Beginning at midyear, the achievement scores will be merged from all courses into a form letter that will be sent home to parents along with the report card for their student.

Mark T. Sheehan High School's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations. The culture of Sheehan High School reflects the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in a number of ways. The school presents various awards to both students and staff members who best embody the cultural values of our school. Student awards include the Titan Pride Award, academic awards, and Spotlight on Students Award. Teachers recognize each other with the Impact Award and Sheehan Teacher of

the Year Award. Events such as the Celebration of Excellence assembly, blood drive, Student Council's food drive and leaf raking efforts, the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) and community service groups such as Interact Club and Community Revitalization Efforts of Wallingford (CREW) also demonstrate Sheehan's core values and beliefs.

A number of new Sheehan initiatives in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment reflect core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. The credit recovery program provides freshmen students who failed their first semester math or English course an opportunity to recover unearned credit. It is an after school program that offers students the chance to master the skills and knowledge that they previously did not demonstrate in class. The Capstone Experience, piloted in 2014-2015, is a culminating activity that allows students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have gained through a personalized project focused on an interest, career plan, or academic pursuit. As part of the experience, students are asked to demonstrate research and communication skills through a formal presentation. Capstone projects could include an investigative composition, a physical product, improving a system, or planning an event or activity. The Bridge Academy is a four-day institute that was piloted in August 2014 for students who are transitioning from the middle school and who have been identified as needing social/emotional focus with additional study skill supports to make a successful entry to high school. The program includes team building, familiarization activities with the high school building and schedule, and a trip to a local college to show students what their post-secondary experience may be like. Clubs and activities that reflect core values include the Human Relations Club, Mock Trial Club, Sheehan Dramatic Arts Society performances, and the Sikorsky STEM Challenge. In addition, all courses, especially Contemporary Global Issues, Algebra I, Dramatic Arts, Health, and many others, strive to reflect

Sheehan's desire to inspire students to be critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible, contributing members of a dynamic global society.

Sheehan High School's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations have guided school policies, procedures, and decisions. In October 2013, Sheehan collaborated with its sister school, Lyman Hall High School, in an effort to improve school climate. Sheehan joined the state initiative for Positive Behavior Intervention Services (PBIS), a framework for adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions to enhance academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. At the first PBIS meeting on November 20, 2013, the team branded the PBIS initiative through the acronym Titan PRIDE (Personal responsibility, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, Engagement) to reflect the District and school's core values. In accordance with Sheehan's academic core values, the district also will be implementing mastery-based learning in the future. This effort will move away from a traditional grading system and instead measure students' progress based on identified benchmarks or sustained achievement of locally developed standards. Additionally, the transition to mastery-based learning will include separating behaviors and effort from academic achievement when evaluating student success by employing a "habits of work" rating. In keeping with the civic and social expectations, this rating would address attitudes and ways of behaving that contribute to success in life.

Allocations have been made in the budget to support the school's core values, beliefs, and its 21st century learning expectations. For example, funding has been used to implement changes in curriculum and to hire a college and career center coordinator.

Mark T. Sheehan regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as on district and school community priorities. Annually, Mark T. Sheehan High School reviews

and revises its core values and beliefs as well as its student expectations for learning. This is to assure that each is still aligned with the school's mission, and addresses the skills and values students need to be successful in today's global society. Previously, this work took place at the March faculty meeting, but this practice is set to change. Beginning in October 2015, the faculty will work collaboratively in small groups each October to review data collected during the previous school year. This data will include individual student and school-wide achievement data in meeting the 21st century learning expectations, discipline information, and community service hours earned by each student. By the end of the meeting, all groups will share their conclusions and give others a chance to voice comments and concerns. Based on the faculty's findings, changes and suggestions from that meeting will be considered and implemented as needed.

MARK T. SHEEHAN HIGH SCHOOL
Core Values and Beliefs Statement

Mark T. Sheehan High School provides a challenging and supportive environment that inspires students to be critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible, contributing members of a dynamic global society.

21st Century Expectations for Student Learning

Academic Expectations
Communicate effectively orally, in writing, and using media tools.
Solve problems using critical, creative, and innovative thinking.
Apply content knowledge and skills to new situations.
Access, analyze, and evaluate information using print, non-print, and digital sources.

Social Expectations
Work collaboratively while respecting divergent viewpoints.
Demonstrate respect for oneself and others.
Act responsibly while demonstrating integrity and ethical behavior.
Recognize and value the importance of wellness and physical fitness.
Demonstrate attitudes and habits that are valued in the classroom and the workplace.

Civic Expectation
Understand that each individual plays an important role in maintaining and improving the quality of life for all members of the community.

We believe that . . .
- Student learning and well-being is at the center of every decision considered by our school.
- Learning is a shared responsibility among students, faculty, families, and community.
- In order to succeed in a globally competitive society, students need to master academic, social, and civic skills through the curriculum and instruction they receive.
- When implementing curriculum, classroom teachers take into consideration the individual needs of learners.
- Teachers strive to create a classroom environment where students feel safe and supported, both academically and emotionally.

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Executive Summary

Sheehan High School has engaged in a dynamic process informed by current research to identify core values and beliefs about learning to which all members of the school community are committed. Sheehan High School has developed challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students, which address academic, social, and civic expectations. These expectations are defined in observable and measurable terms by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted levels of achievement.

Sheehan High School's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations drive school culture and initiatives, policies, and procedures, as well as impact decisions about curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and resource allocations.

Sheehan High School is invested and engaged in an on-going, annual process of revision of its core values and beliefs, as well as its expectations for student learning. This process of revision is collaborative and data-driven.

Based on the Rating Guide for the Standard, Mark T. Sheehan High School judges its adherence to the Standard as ACCEPTABLE.

Strengths:

- An inclusive, dynamic process was used to develop the core values and beliefs as well as the 21st century expectations for student learning.

- Faculty members developed school-wide analytic rubrics in cross-disciplinary groups using an inclusive and research-based method that enables the school community to measure student progress toward meeting the 21st century learning expectations.

- Sheehan High School culture and new initiatives in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment reflect core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

- The school is committed to ensuring that the core values, beliefs, and expectations reflect current best practice and address skills students need to be successful in a global society.

Needs:

- Articulate core values and student learning expectations more consistently in classroom activities and daily instruction.

- Continue to implement the school-wide rubrics in every classroom.

- Evaluate the success of the new plan to review and revise the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations and make adjustments as needed.

Curriculum

Mark T. Sheehan High School's Curriculum
Self-Study Report and Executive Summary Completed by:

2013 – 2014

Sandra Hudson *Co-Chairperson*	Teacher, Science
Louis Petrucci *Co-Chairperson*	Teacher, Mathematics
Patrick Hubeny *Steering Committee Liaison*	Department Chairperson, Mathematics
Keri Biron	Teacher, World Language
Denise Cannata	Department Chairperson, English
Jennifer Churma	Teacher, World Language
Grace McCarthy	Teacher, Science
Jean Mellor	Teacher, Social Studies
David Palmer	Teacher, Health
Denise Payton	Teacher, Family Consumer Science
Keith Petrosky	Teacher, Special Education
David Tristine	Teacher, Social Studies
Peter Wiesen	Teacher, English

2014 – 2015

Sandra Hudson *Co-Chairperson*	Teacher, Science
Louis Petrucci *Co-Chairperson*	Teacher, Mathematics
Patrick Hubeny *Steering Committee Liaison*	Department Chairperson, Mathematics
Keri Biron	Teacher, World Language
Jennifer Churma	Teacher, World Language
Gregory Dirkson	Assistant Principal
Grace McCarthy	Teacher, Science
Jean Mellor	Teacher, Social Studies
David Palmer	Teacher, Health
Denise Payton	Teacher, Family Consumer Science
Keith Petrosky	Teacher, Special Education
David Tristine	Teacher, Social Studies
Peter Wiesen	Department Chairperson, English

Curriculum

The curriculum at Mark T. Sheehan High School is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Each subject area is responsible for reporting student progress on the learning expectations in order to ensure that all expectations are taught, assessed, and reported. The Program of Studies lists each course and identifies the 21st century learning expectations taught and monitored in each course. As new courses are added to the Program of Studies, the courses will be assigned 21st century learning expectations. The school Core Values and Beliefs Statement and the online gradebook suggest that the spirit of the 21st century learning expectations is present in many areas of the school. Teachers provide students multiple opportunities to demonstrate the academic expectations for writing. Examples of this include, the Poetry Slam where students write and perform their original work. Students write argumentative and explanatory essays in social studies and English classes. In science, students perform laboratory activities and follow up with formal lab reports, while in mathematics, students use writing to explain their work on performance tasks, and in music, students critique their ensemble performances in writing during each of the concerts. Teachers also allow students to demonstrate their ability to "speak and present effectively." For instance, in Honors Biology classes, students participate in a science fair where they present their experiments and results, while in mathematics, students present statistical analysis. In English classes, students present their evidence via a mock trial. The social studies curriculum for World History provides an opportunity for students to present their interpretations of culture and social expectations. In

Contemporary Global Issues, students participate in debates and present oral reports on their research.

Sheehan teachers utilize school-wide rubrics in a variety of manners to assess civic and social expectations as well as academic expectations. Generally, teachers are able to assess students on how well they collaborate during classroom activities and projects as well as the level of respect that students demonstrate in their classes. Similarly, a common goal of the performance tasks require students to apply their learning and skills in an organic setting that is not limited to the classroom or the unit of study. This practice allows teachers to present opportunities for students to understand their role in the larger context of society and the world around them. The faculty members clearly understand the role of the 21st century learning expectations in the content areas and they are formally integrating these expectations into the curriculum through their instruction and evaluation of students.

The curriculum is written in a common format that includes a frame of study with essential questions, enduring understandings, content, skills, instructional strategies, and assessment practices that include the use of analytic rubrics. Wallingford Public Schools is currently in the process of updating the curriculum so that it reflects the Understanding by Design (UbD) 2.0 template. The updates include additional information as well as reformatting the overall appearance of current and developing curriculum to ensure that everything is clearly connected. In 2004, the district used the UbD 1.0 template that includes common language such as essential questions, enduring understandings, concepts, content skills and instructional strategies. The most recent changes include the Connecticut Common Core Standards, shared performance tasks, College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Standards and common rubrics.

Wallingford Public Schools bases the development of new unit plans on providing students with opportunities to achieve the 21st century learning expectations and the Connecticut Common Core Standards through the essential questions and common assessments. The performance tasks in English, social studies, and mathematics are created through a collaborative effort among subject teachers, and the results are used to drive further curriculum development and instruction. The scores of the performance tasks allow instructors, in data teams, to make informative decisions that drive instruction. The district designs curriculum thematically, generating essential questions and enduring understandings with which students engage in order to develop their understanding of the concepts within the content and their mastery of those skills. Currently, course outlines waiting to be updated are available on the district curriculum website while the new Connecticut Common Core Standards aligned unit plans are created and shared on the district Google Drive platform. Sharing curriculum documents online, through Google Drive, allows for each unit to be a living document with the most up-to-date version available at all times. Consequentially, teachers can comment on strengths, weaknesses, reflections, etc., while implementing the unit to collect consistent feedback.

The curriculum incorporates a variety of instructional strategies and assessments, which utilize best practices, real-world application of skills and content learned, and common school-wide and district-wide rubrics for a variety of purposes. The district is in the process of developing curriculum with common performance tasks through which students will demonstrate real-world application of skills. Rather than focus on the way in which a skill has to be taught, the unit plans allow teachers to choose from an outlined number of strategies and create their own lessons to meet the learning needs of students. The common elements in the unit plans are the skills and the means through which a student should demonstrate mastery of these skills.

Teachers use district-wide rubrics to assess language, writing, reading, and speaking and listening standards, which once reported, allow for the calibration of scores, a means to evaluate the progress of students and create new strategies to meet the needs of students. To meet further the needs of our students, teachers use school-wide analytic rubrics for the 21st century learning expectations to foster the growth of the well-rounded student in academic, social, and civic expectations. The collection of this comprehensive data allows teachers to plan for instruction that enriches the skills of students while also improving the overall learning environment within the class.

Sheehan has incorporated the 21st century learning expectations into routine class activities, assessments, and grade reporting. Teachers worked collaboratively to create the school-wide rubrics that assess the 21st century learning expectations. Each of these expectations was then assigned to a multitude of courses so that students will be assessed through various activities in different classes. In order to monitor student progress, teachers report the average scores for each student at the end of the marking period. Each report is a cumulative score showing the progress a student has made since the beginning of the year toward the standard; however, the online gradebook will display the individual course scores by marking period and the course.

The use of a common format and collaborative process creates a shared, transparent curriculum that allows for reflection, recommendations, and revisions to meet the needs of the students. The Wallingford district continues to re-create and update the curriculum and will continue to consider the most recent and appropriate research, newly designed and approved standards, and the opinions of the teachers who are creating and implementing the content and skills that are placed within each document.

The Wallingford district curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking. The curriculum is designed to foster inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills. According to the Endicott survey results, 87.3 percent of the staff agrees that the formal curriculum, in their subject area, does emphasize the aforementioned skills compared to 83.4 percent of the aggregate. The mathematics curriculum uses an investigative model for learning and reviews structured problems to provide higher order thinking opportunities through the completion of performance tasks. For example, geometry teachers ask students to use geometric reasoning to design a bridge. The social studies curriculum requires students in the tenth grade to complete three district-wide performance tasks. The performance tasks are document-based questions, which require students to use higher level thinking skills, as well as content knowledge, to solve a problem. The fourth unit of the World Literature curriculum requires students in tenth grade English classes to develop rules governing the implementation of technological advancements in society. After the rules are created, students present their research and conclusions to their classmates via a mock press conference before fielding questions and challenges from classmates.

In addition, students in eleventh grade English classes examine diction and syntax to determine the author's purpose as part of rhetorical analysis. Similarly, students in science classes perform inquiry laboratory investigations in which students have to create a hypothesis based on a problem, test the hypothesis, and then analyze the data to determine if their hypothesis was correct. In Spanish 3 classes, teachers expect students to create authentic writing pieces such as letters, journal entries, poems, and short stories to interact with the content and skills. In addition, Sheehan offers many courses at different levels, which provide students an

opportunity to explore course content in greater depth and breadth because of the demanding and complex nature of the work. Finally, Sheehan High School offers Advanced Placement (AP) classes and Early College Experience (ECE) courses in art, English, mathematics, music, science, social studies, and world language.

Sheehan is in the process of providing students with more opportunities to use inquiry, problem solving, and higher-order thinking skills in all courses by including more authentic assessments. These opportunities can be seen in the continuous updating to the curriculum as teachers and administrators identify and incorporate priority standards to increase rigor and skill development for all students. Even in content areas that do not have Connecticut Core Standards, such as science which is awaiting the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Sheehan teachers collaborate to create new performance and inquiry tasks for students with real life application.

Cross-disciplinary learning occurs in multiple subject areas. The Humanities curriculum provides multiple opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning. For example, the first unit focuses on the history and development of art and music, while the second unit examines the historical period of the Holocaust via an investigation of Victor Frankl's novel, *Man's Search for Meaning*. Students then apply the lessons identified in the book to their own lives. Sophomores at Sheehan are simultaneously enrolled in World History as well as World Literature to promote cross-disciplinary learning among history and English classes. To monitor progress, teachers assess students on performance tasks and writing assignments in both classes through the same argumentative and explanatory writing rubrics. The social studies courses also integrate scientific and mathematical components such as the study of changing climates and environments, industrial and other technological practices, population change, use of statistics

and economic standing to expand topics and offer true applications and a complete view of the content that is being covered.

World language and English classes teach the components of writing and mechanics such as sentence structure and grammar to promote writing across the disciplines. In addition, world language classes explore the history, culture, and geography of various countries to increase student interaction and understanding of the languages. Science classes reinforce cross-curricular skills when students write laboratory reports, which rely on the incorporation of evidence similar to essays in English and social studies. In addition, science students complete statistical analyses of genetic crossovers through Punnett Squares, which incorporates math skills. The technology education department, specifically in the Robotics course, provides the opportunity for students to write reflections in a journal about their projects at the end of each unit.

The Mahan Planetarium and Learning Dome at Sheehan High School provides a unique experience for all students across the district. All schools across Wallingford can and do schedule times to visit the planetarium during school hours, and the planetarium offers an extension of the learning that is taught in many classrooms as well as opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning. For example, social studies classes visit the planetarium to expand the students' understanding of the scientific revolution, navigation, astronomy and mythology. English classes also visit to learn more about mythology and gain a better understanding of allusions found in the literature they are reading. A newly added planetarium program on fractals incorporates concepts in mathematics and science, which will greatly benefit the Geometry, Algebra 2, and Biology classes. The new program will augment the discussion of

naturally occurring patterns such as snowflakes, ferns, conch shells, etc. These shapes can be demonstrated in both art and technology education classes, such as Computer Programming.

The curriculum emphasizes authentic application of knowledge and skills. The curriculum was designed for teachers to promote the demonstration of real world application of knowledge and skills in their classrooms. The curriculum is also aligned with the College and Career Readiness anchor standards of the Common Core Standards. For instance, 88.6 percent of staff members agree that "The curriculum in my department/content area emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge" which is higher than the aggregate at only 81.7 percent. The family and consumer science department offers several courses that allow students to put into practice authentic real-life learning experiences based on content knowledge and skills learned over several semesters. The Child Development Preschool to School Age class operates a school-based preschool program that is open to the school community and the general public. Additionally, the culinary classes prepare food throughout the year, which they serve at school events such as the blood drives.

English classes incorporate real-world applications into many classroom activities and larger assignments. For example, students participate in a mock trial after reading *Beowulf*, which provides students an opportunity to practice reasoning and argument. Seniors in the general level English classes engage in a career exploration unit designed to expose students to careers that may not follow the traditional four-year college route to promote their interests and possible future career goals.

The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program prepares juniors and seniors for employment in hospitals and long-term care settings. At the end of the course students take their certification exam and qualify for immediate employment as a CNA. Students enrolled in the

CNA program demonstrate clinical competencies at Masonic Healthcare Center and Gaylord Hospital from November through June. These competencies include, but are not limited to, bathing patients, vital sign assessments, nutritional support, transferring residents, as well as intake and outtake measurements.

There are many opportunities for students to take part in co-curricular activities that emphasize the application of knowledge and skills such as: Debate Club, Mock Trial Club, and the Media Club. These students participate in authentic learning opportunities that reinforce communication and logical thinking. Some examples are musical performances, art shows, debate competitions, and mathematics, robotics, and engineering teams.

Sheehan High School also offers a Peers Supporting Peers Internship for juniors and seniors who are interested in pursuing a career in education. This opportunity allows students to learn about teaching as they assist special education and English language learner students in classroom settings. Additionally, there is a Physical Education Internship program that enables students to learn the basics of being a physical education teacher while interacting with students in a leadership role. Students with special needs are enrolled in the Life Skills program. They participate in activities designed to increase their ability to function independently at home, in school, and the community.

In addition, students are involved in Sikorsky STEM Challenge, which consists of a group of eleven students working through an engineering project sponsored by Sikorsky and Connecticut Innovations. The four-module project involves communication, project planning, research, collaboration, physics, and presentation techniques with a focus on real-life connections throughout each module. After the completion of the four modules, the students have a final project that incorporates the skills and information developed in the previous four

modules. A Sikorsky engineer mentors this group and a technology education teacher serves as a facilitator to make sure that the students complete each of their modules and final project on time.

In addition to the aforementioned programs, Sheehan is piloting the Capstone Experience during the 2014-2015 school year which is a culminating course that provides a way for students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have obtained during their secondary school years in an authentic and personally designed assessment. Students engage in a project that focuses on an interest, career path, or academic pursuit that synthesizes classroom study and real world perspective. The students are responsible for completing their projects within a self-generated timeline over the course of a year following the semester-long instructional class. The Capstone Experience will include one of the following as a final assessment for students to exhibit their gained skills: an in-depth project, reflective portfolio, community service and/or internship. The students present their projects to an audience that includes students, parents, school faculty, and community members. Currently, the plan is for the Capstone Experience to become a graduation requirement.

Sheehan students practice informed and ethical use of technology. The district provides several structures to support the appropriate use of Chromebooks and laptops in its District Technology Use Policy. Upon entering the new school year, the freshman class is educated on the ethical use of technology by the library media specialist. In addition, many teachers include a statement about the ethical use of computers in their course expectations. The Endicott survey indicates that 82.6 percent of students are knowledgeable about the ethical use of technology that is higher than the aggregate of 80.9 percent. Sheehan uses a variety of methods to educate students on the ethical use of technology. The advisory program periodically

addresses the topics of Internet safety, sexual harassment, bullying, and plagiarism. Additionally the school provides assemblies that address the proper and ethical use of technology.

The school has adopted several strategies to ensure clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum, which has resulted in a growing level of alignment. The school department chairpersons and TEAM mentors assist teachers in implementing the written curriculum. The school is currently updating various parts of the curriculum. The concentration, currently, is in the core subjects, mathematics, English and social studies. The creative process for the Common Core aligned curriculum ensures the alignment of the written and taught curriculum. Teams of teachers in the core subjects work together to generate the units, which include common performance tasks, essential questions, suggested instructional strategies, etc. Science teachers use common laboratory experiments in the same subject. The resulting curriculum reflects best practices, which enable collaborative conversations to occur amongst teachers about instruction and student evaluation. The curriculum identifies areas of focus for the standards, or priority standards, and mathematics, English, and social studies teachers use these standards to guide data collection for student learning objectives and indicators of academic growth and development to improve student performance and guide instruction.

The alignment of the written and taught curriculum is monitored through common assessments. While this practice is especially followed in the mathematics, social studies, and English departments, common performance tasks, midterms, and final exams for courses in other subject areas also ensure that common skills and content are covered. This ensures that all teachers of the same course are presenting lessons aligned with the curriculum. As mentioned earlier, teams of core subject teachers created common assessments and performance tasks that are administered at specific times during the semester or year to guide instruction and monitor

student progress. During data team meetings and/or department prep time, teachers can discuss the results from each common assessment and develop collective interventions and strategies to improve scores moving forward. Each content area has a curriculum management team, which includes the curriculum coordinators and resource teachers who help to guide the implementation of common curriculum and assessments. These district-level teams, which any teacher can join, help to ensure that the written and taught curriculum are aligned. Upon the completion of a unit and after the common assessments are given, teachers engage in data teams to review the data and reflect on teaching and learning. Teachers are also encouraged to share feedback on unit implementation with curriculum coordinators and members of the writing team to promote that the curriculum mirrors the needs of the students. The new Common Core curricula are being written on Google Docs, which allows for more immediate and fluid feedback and changes. This protocol serves to support teachers in making necessary instructional changes to increase student achievement and to ensure the written curriculum is valid, current, and reflective of what is taught. The current evaluation procedures also help to ensure the alignment between the written and taught curriculum. Pre-observation forms, pre- and post-conferences, classroom observations, and reviews of practice all offer opportunities for teachers and administrators to discuss and evaluate instruction.

According to the Endicott survey, 72.2 percent of the staff report that the written and taught curricula are aligned and this is marginally above the aggregate at 71.9 percent. For the last two years Sheehan has instituted department planning time to encourage conversations amongst department members on best practices to implement the curriculum. These meetings provide time for teachers to problem solve and discuss issues relating to instruction and student assessment.

Curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among all academic areas within the school; however, coordination with sending schools in the district continues to be a work in progress. The curriculum templates aligned with course standards serve to support the curricular coordination at Sheehan High School. As a district, curriculum management teams, comprised of teachers and administrators from all levels and from each school, meet on a regular basis to maintain district communication between buildings and align the K-12 curriculum among the schools and support vertical articulation of the curriculum. The strategic planning process emphasizes the implementation of the Common Core State Standards among the English Language Arts, mathematics, social studies, and world language curriculum. The district does have a curriculum review cycle in place; however, specific areas, such as science, music, and art, have been put on hold due to the emphasis of implementation of the Common Core State Standards. The other departments' curricula eventually need to be developed and aligned vertically once the new curriculum is written. The content areas use different content specific standards to evaluate their curriculum. For example, art and music have new national Art Core Standards, and the science curriculum is developed from the Connecticut Core Science Curriculum Framework and is awaiting the passing of the Next Generation Science Standards before writing a new curriculum. Social studies is in the process of revising the curriculum using the C3 model, the K-12 Scope and Sequence, and the UbD 2.0 model. Both science and social studies participated in the Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) Summer 2014 Consortium Workgroups, which is currently an ongoing process that develops common performance tasks and teacher resources. The library media center also supports the curriculum.

Curricular coordination and vertical articulation are works in progress between several academic areas within all the schools of the district to ensure that a repeat of the curriculum does not exist. The district utilizes curriculum management teams to oversee the implementation of specific content-area curricula kindergarten through twelfth grade. The management teams are responsible for the oversight of district-wide rubrics as well as the district-wide scope and sequence.

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. On October 1, 2012, there was 891:68.4 students:teachers. This gave a student:teacher ratio of 13:1 for the 2012-2013 school year. On October 1, 2013, there was a 895:68.7 students:teachers. This gave a student:teacher ratio of 13:1 for the 2013-2014 school year. On October 1, 2014, there was a 854:65.6 students:teachers. This gave a student:teacher ratio of 13:1. Wallingford Public Schools staffs high schools by measuring teachers in full-time equivalents (FTE). A full-time teacher is equal to 1.0 FTE (each full year class is equal to 0.2 FTE). The teacher to student ratios show a level trend for the past three school years. Class sizes vary depending on the subject and the physical space available. For example, the Introduction to Foods classes are limited to sixteen students because there are only four work stations.

The budget for Sheehan over the past three years has been adequate to implement curriculum and to introduce new instructional materials. Examples of instructional materials include, but are not limited to, DVDs, supplemental materials, primary source materials as well as curriculum resource materials. The Endicott survey showed a discrepancy between the students' and staff's view on the sufficiency of instructional materials. Seventy-seven percent of

the students surveyed indicated that Sheehan has enough materials for each of their courses while only 45 percent of staff perceived the materials to be adequate. However, the staff survey included the "co-curricular programs and other learning activities," which may have affected the results. In addition, many teachers provide supplemental material found on their own time, which could be interpreted as not provided by the district. Regardless of the reasoning, the district has begun addressing the need for more materials through textbook and technology purchases designated by department. Each department chairperson is required to submit all budget requests by November for instructional materials for the upcoming school year. All purchase orders (POs) must be written by March 17 and closed by May 1. Special permission is needed to keep POs open to the end of the school year.

Technology at Sheehan is becoming increasingly available and sufficient to implement the curriculum. The purchase of technology is supplemented using the school's Open Choice funds. Through a district initiative in the 2013-2014 school year, all freshmen Social Studies teachers received class sets of Chromebooks to be used with a new heterogeneously grouped Contemporary Global Issues course. The library media center also received a class set to loan out to students. As the year progressed, the English and mathematics departments received single class sets as well. During the 2014-2015 school year, the special education department received a class set. As of March 2015, Sheehan High School has 290 Chromebooks. In addition during the fall of 2014, new projection technology was installed in the classrooms that did not already have projection capability.

The library media center supplies are adequate to sustain the curriculum. In the 2013-2014 school year, both Wallingford high schools received a shared district allocation of $150,000 to update computers in their respective libraries. For the school years 2012-2013,

2013-2014, and 2014-2015 Sheehan budgeted $19,366.00, $17,300.00 and $11,700 respectively for the library media center for replacement and maintenance of library books and periodicals along with audio-visual materials, that is an average 18.8 percent allocation of Sheehan's funds. The library also receives finances from the Open Choice fund and in 2012-2013, it received $9,644.42, in 2013-2014, $4,058, and in 2014-2015, $2,682.55 for items such as iMac computers, headphones, microphones, a sound system, TV and BlueRay players, and other audio supplies and cables. In addition to technology and resources, Sheehan's library media specialist offers teacher training in the use of Google applications to aid in instruction. Furthermore, all classes are encouraged to visit the library to learn about and explore the multiple databases available through the Sheehan account, such as iCONN, Connecticut's search engine administered by the Connecticut State Library (www.iconn.org), and Proquest.

Sheehan has a wide variety of co-curricular and extracurricular activities offered to students, yet the funding is not adequate for each activity and students seek supplemental funding from various sources. In the 2012-2013 school year, Sheehan implemented a sports activity fee for students of $100 per sport with a $200 maximum for one school year. There is a fee waiver or fee reduction available to families with demonstrated financial need. Families with multiple children playing sports can only be charged a maximum of $300. Students who participate in co-curricular or extracurricular activities raise funds to help implement the programs to help supplement decreasing budget issues. Sheehan provides funds for the Math Team. Transportation costs are paid for the Marching Band, Mock Trial, and the Debate Club. Although a sports activity fee is in place, the athletic allocation is greater than the school's instructional allocation. In addition, Sheehan has added boys and girls lacrosse teams for the 2014 season, and the school has upgraded the pool as well as several fields.

When surveyed, most department chairpersons noted that the facility has sufficient resources to implement the curriculum. The mathematics and physical education departments noted enough supplies are present with previous purchases of equipment. The music and science departments expressed a desire for more supplies for a better implementation of the curriculum, but they acknowledged that the current resources are adequate to meet the needs of the teachers. The English and social studies departments noted a lack of technology created an insufficiency for some classrooms. However, both deficient areas are currently being addressed with ongoing projects. The English department chairperson requested computer access through Chromebooks and another set of Chromebooks was assigned to the department in December 2014. The social studies department chairperson discussed the lack of projection capabilities, but this issue was addressed through an initiative in November 2014 by equipping all classrooms with mounted projectors.

Teachers who advise co-curricular activities are paid a stipend. In the Endicott survey, 36.7 percent of staff members agree about the statement "co-curricular programs are adequately funded" which is significantly higher than the 28.2 percent of the aggregate. When asked the same questions, 42.3 percent of parents agree and this is above the 40.5 percent of the aggregate. However, a few new positions may not be included in the budget for a stipend, for example if a club is started mid-year because students want to start up a new club a teacher may take the advisory position without pay.

Sheehan has a variety of co-curricular and extracurricular offerings including, but not limited to Yearbook, Interact Club, Spanish Club, Italian Club, Environmental Action Club, Students Against Destructive Decisions, and National Honor Society. Students do not pay to participate in clubs; however, some club activities are funded by the students. According to the

Endicott survey, 62.0 percent of staff agrees that "the facilities fully support the implementation of the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities." This number is significantly higher than the aggregate at 52.6 percent. The Music Parents Association (MPA) does a large amount of fundraising to help with band supplies and trips to competitions, In addition, parents help fundraise for co-curricular activities. Each sports team has their own booster club, and depending on the sport, they fundraise to purchase things such as: team apparel (sweats, sport bags, etc.) above and beyond the standard uniform provided, summer league/out of season camp fees, video equipment, team jamborees or pre-season scrimmage entrance fees, among others.

The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research. The curriculum is developed, evaluated, and revised collaboratively with Lyman Hall, Sheehan's sister school, and with the support and guidance of the district curriculum office. The building level leadership team, comprised of the building administrators and the department chairpersons, supports curriculum implementation, development, evaluation and revision. At the district level, the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction heads the curriculum office and oversees curriculum coordinators and curriculum resource teachers. Three curriculum coordinators, who are district administrators, exist for the following departments: one in mathematics and two for the humanities (Social Studies/ELA). In addition, the following departments have district-level curriculum resource teachers: science, world language and career and technical education (CTE). Department chairpersons head the social studies, mathematics, art and music, physical education and health, school counseling, science, and English departments at Sheehan. World

language and CTE do not have department chairpersons; however, the assistant principals act as department liaisons. The assistant principals are not necessarily overseeing a department with which they are familiar and cannot adequately give their time to the responsibilities as a dedicated department chairperson, and although there are district resource teachers for these two departments, they are not building-based and are shared throughout all schools in the district. A chairperson's responsibilities are to oversee scheduling, data collection, create budgets, support department members, facilitate curriculum implementation, run department meetings, promote parent contact, represent the department for orientation night, attend cabinet meetings (where department chairpersons meet with administrators) and share information with the department. The collection of data and sharing of information all help in the development of the curriculum. A resource teacher and or curriculum coordinator rely on the department chairperson as the contact person and for that reason it is more effective to have that person in the content area that they oversee.

As a district initiative in 2012-2013, the faculty and staff read *Mindset* (Carol Dweck, 2007). The book focused on the psychology of success for students and included a talk by Carol Dweck at opening convocation in 2013. In 2011-2012, the district provided the book *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* (Marzano, 2001) and Professional Development workshops focusing on Marzano's strategies. Both Dweck and Marzano give the educators in the district information and guidance for developing and evaluating the written curriculum and help teachers implement instruction so that students achieve success in the classroom and in the community.

Teachers engage in curriculum writing during school hours through release time, on professional development days, and during the summer months, in which they are paid for their

time. In addition, teachers attend out of district workshops. These opportunities for curriculum development, revision and evaluation include participation in curriculum consortiums with ACES, and the local state Regional Education Service Center (RESC) where Sheehan teachers collaborate with teachers from other districts.   In addition, teachers attend College Board workshops and UConn Early College Experience (ECE) Workshops to remain up-to-date on curriculum.   Between 2011 and 2014, the district expenditures for curriculum project development, revision, and evaluation related to Sheehan were $34,326.00. The workshops included science, mathematics, English, social studies, world language, and art. In the summer of 2014, the ninth grade social studies course, Contemporary Global Issues, was revised based on assessment results. One unit was dropped in order to spend more time on the teaching of economics, which was a deficit in the Social Studies 9-12 Scope and Sequence. The ninth grade U. S. Government and Politics unit plans were revised based on teacher feedback and assessment results. At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, World History teachers will meet to revise the unit plans that were initially implemented this year. The school counseling department attended a guidance program review workshop in 2013 that was run by Capitol Region Education Center (CREC), which focused on the district curriculum and a study on the interactive time counselors had with students.   The workshop helped to further develop the counseling program's curriculum. The school counseling department also works collaboratively with Lyman Hall to ensure consistency in lessons for students throughout the various grades. An example would be the career lesson conducted through Naviance, where students are taught to enter information into this online platform about their future interest and post-high school plans. The counselors also collect data; for example, data from a senior survey that helps to structure and adjust future lessons.

The mathematics curriculum is revised on a regular basis through the data team analysis of common assessment results. Data team members collaborate to determine student's strengths and weaknesses with the content, and based on their conclusions, necessary changes are made to instruction, pacing and assessment. Mathematics teachers have been provided release time to collaborate with their counterparts at Lyman Hall and central office math curriculum staff in order to develop appropriate activities, instructional strategies, and assessment. A focus has been on incorporating GeoGebra into mathematics unit plans. In addition, teachers have been paid an hourly rate outside of the school day to continue these efforts.

The Wallingford School District joined the League of Innovative Schools and has partnered with the Great Schools Partnership in order to assist in the district's move towards mastery-based learning. As part of this strategic, multi-year process, Sheehan, in conjunction with its sister school Lyman Hall, is writing cross-curricular and content standards for all students to demonstrate mastery for graduation. The district's Innovation Team is facilitating the implementation of various curricular initiatives to provide a personalized education for all students. Some of these initiatives are working with credit recovery teachers to provide an option for students to recover credit in freshman English and Algebra I. The credit recovery teachers, in conjunction with the Central Office, Innovation Team, and building administration, have deliberately created an opportunity based on mastery-based learning. The Capstone Committee and Innovation Team created the Capstone Experience, currently being piloted, to be a rigorous and comprehensive program for students to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have gained through their studies at Sheehan High School. The Creativity Course, introduced during the 2015 Spring semester, is a freshman course aimed at providing students a solid foundation in problem solving and critical thinking skills. The course allows for collaboration

between the two high schools as well as Choate Rosemary Hall (a private school located in Wallingford). The course will be evaluated and revised based on student and teacher feedback for the next school year.

Curriculum

Executive Summary

At Sheehan, the curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve the 21st century learning expectations in all aspects of the school. Teachers are formally integrating the expectations into their instruction and evaluation of students. Teachers use school-wide rubrics to monitor student achievement of the learning expectations. In the future when new classes are added to the Program of Studies, they will be written to reflect the 21st century learning expectations. During the 2014-2015 school year, teachers received training from the administration on how to use the online gradebook, PowerSchool, to record the student's abilities for the 21st century learning expectations.

The new curriculum unit plans for English, mathematics, and social studies are written using the UbD 2.0 template and include the use of essential questions, concepts, content, skills and instructional strategies. Social studies courses use the C3 Standards and, along with science, include shared performance tasks and align with the Connecticut State Standards. English and mathematics have been updated and written to align with the new Common Core Standards, include essential questions, and allow for teachers to comment on and make suggestions to adjust the curriculum. All departments use common writing rubrics.

The Sheehan curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge by use of investigation and performance tasks. For example, mathematics uses an investigative model of learning through the completion of performance tasks. Geometry teachers ask students to use geometric reasoning to design bridges. While the social studies teachers use document-based questions that require students to use higher order thinking skills and content

knowledge to solve problems. Students in science use laboratory investigations to analyze data to formulate conclusions. The world language department expects students to create authentic writing pieces to interact with content and skills. Sheehan offers many honors, AP, and ECE courses in art and music, English, social studies, world language, science, and mathematics. The Humanities curriculum explores a variety of themes throughout history supplemented by the development of art and music. World History includes art and world literature, and social studies integrates science and mathematics when studying climate change, population change, and scientific advances. The Mahan Planetarium and Learning Dome is used to teach not only science, but social studies, English, and mathematics. The Capstone Experience allows students to draw on prior knowledge and expand their depth of understanding through project-based learning. Sheehan also includes a CNA program and a Peers Supporting Peers Internship program. Each classroom is equipped with a projection system, such as SmartBoards or liquid-crystal display projectors. English, mathematics, and social studies have classroom Chromebooks along with several class sets available through the library. Teachers utilize Turnitin.com to ensure academic integrity for students submitting written work.

Alignment between written and taught curriculum is monitored through the use of common assessments, and data is collected and analyzed through the use of a Scantron system in the mathematics and English departments. Common assessments are used in other departments such as science performance tasks, and data teams meet during common planning time to review the results. Curriculum Management Teams, which include curriculum coordinators and resource teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators, assess student work for each department to ensure the written curriculum is taught and adjustments are made.

Within Sheehan, common planning time, content area data teams, and common performance tasks promote the alignment of the written curriculum to the taught curriculum. At the district level, curriculum coordinators and subject management teams work to align and coordinate instruction and assessment K-12. Curricular and vertical articulation exist in all academic areas through subject area curriculum management teams K-12 in the district. These teams meet on a regular basis to establish a vertical structure from the sending school and all sending schools in the district so that the learning is built upon the grade before.

The instructional materials, technology equipment, supplies, facilities, and resources have all been deemed sufficient. The budget for the preservation of current materials and the occasional introduction of new instructional materials has been adequate for the past three years. However, according to the Endicott survey, 45 percent of the staff disagree with this assessment. The discrepancy may be due to the fact that co-curricular activities were included in the survey and that may have skewed the results. It seems that the funds allocated for the co-curricular activities are not sufficient and therefore those teachers and coaches make up for the lack of funds through other initiatives. The school recently upgraded projection capability in most classrooms as well as providing Chromebooks for many subject areas, in particular the social studies department. The library media center's budget has been adequate to replace and update computer equipment as well as to take care of printed materials.

The district does provide the staff with sufficient time and resources for ongoing development, evaluations, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results as well as current research. The mathematics department in particular utilizes assessment results to revise curriculum by using common assessments and data teams to analyze results. There are opportunities for teachers to engage in curriculum writing both during the school year as well as

over the summer months.   In addition, the district has allocated funds for professional development for new district initiatives such as mastery-based learning.   The district also participates in the League of Innovative Schools in an effort to be up to date in current practices and strategies.

Based on the Rating Guide for the Standard, Mark T. Sheehan High School judges its adherence to the Standard as ACCEPTABLE.

Strengths:

- There are multiple pathways for students to demonstrate achievement of the 21st century learning expectations.

- Curriculum writing is a collaborative process that allows for reflection and revision.

- Sheehan has incorporated higher-order thinking through the use of performance tasks.

- Sheehan offers a wide variety of advanced placement and early college experience courses.

- The Wallingford Board of Education curriculum utilizes management teams that include teachers from all levels.

- Sheehan is increasingly using a wide range of technology in the curriculum.

- Sheehan's curriculum incorporates a variety of instructional strategies and assessments, which utilize best practices, real-world application of skills and content learned, and common school-wide and district-wide rubrics for a variety of purposes.

- Teachers share feedback on unit implementation with administrators, curriculum coordinators, and members of the writing team to adjust the curriculum as needed.

- Common planning time, content data teams, and common performance tasks allow teachers to discuss best strategies for implementing the curriculum.

- The curriculum templates aligned with course standards serve to support the curricular coordination at Sheehan ensuring that taught curriculum consistently mirrors the written curriculum.

Needs:

- Develop and implement a plan to update curricula in other areas beyond English, mathematics, and social studies.

- Reinstate world language and CTE department chairpersons.

- Strengthen coordination with sending schools in the district.

Instruction

**Mark T. Sheehan High School's Instruction
Self-Study Report and Executive Summary Completed by:**

2013 – 2014

Christopher Dailey *Chairperson*	Teacher, Mathematics
Kelly Watrous *Steering Committee Liaison*	Teacher, Science
Gretchen Buys	Teacher, Art
John Conte	Teacher, Social Studies
Vincenta Coppola	Teacher, World Language
Kimberly Luxeder	Teacher, Science
Kristi Maler	Teacher, English
Johann Rene	Teacher, Family and Consumer Science
Kate Seichter	Teacher, Social Studies
Heather Smolley	Teacher, Social Studies
Jason Sorenson	Teacher, English
Erica Ward	Teacher, Special Education
Deborah Young	Department Chairperson, Science

2014 – 2015

Kate Seichter *Co-Chairperson*	Teacher, Social Studies
Johann Rene *Co-Chairperson*	Teacher, Family and Consumer Science
Kelly Watrous *Steering Committee Liaison*	Teacher, Science
Gretchen Buys	Teacher, Art
John Conte	Teacher, Social Studies
Vincenta Coppola	Teacher, World Language
Christopher Dailey	Athletic Director
Kimberly Luxeder	Teacher, Science
Kristi Maler	Teacher, English
Johann Rene	Teacher, Family and Consumer Science
Kate Seichter	Teacher, Social Studies
Heather Smolley	Teacher, Social Studies
Jason Sorenson	Teacher, English
Erica Ward	Teacher, Special Education
Deborah Young	Department Chairperson, Science

Instruction

Teachers at Mark T. Sheehan High School frequently examine their instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. Each course taught at Sheehan High School has its own academic, social and civic expectations, which promote 21st century skills. These expectations are listed in the Program of Studies. Teachers utilize school-wide rubrics to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. These school-wide rubrics state criteria that support positive attitudes, habits, behaviors, and life skills that encourage and nurture healthy, fulfilling lifestyles. In addition, these rubrics provide evidence to support and monitor the implementation of these values, beliefs, and expectations.

Much of the instructional practices utilized at Sheehan High School include authentic application as seen in various science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities, Common Core criteria, art and music classes, and individual teacher designed student learning objectives (SLOs). The Capstone Experience, piloted in 2014-2015, is a way for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills that they have acquired throughout their high school career. This culminating experience involves a research and writing component, as well as a formal presentation to faculty, students, and community members, in which students demonstrate their communication skills. Instruction through the Bridge Academy, which is a summer program implemented in 2014, helps students who are in need of extra support to transition from middle to high school. Clubs, such as the Mock Trial Club, Debate Club, Interact Club, and Human Relations Club, inspire students to be critical thinkers and contributing members of society.

Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction. Many teachers provide students with homework or project choices. In history, teachers give a PowerPoint assignment that meets the needs of each student by giving them the option to present the project orally, play a pre-recorded voice over, or complete a reading of their essay that coincides with the visuals. In English, teachers assign a performance task where students are given the ability to write a narrative in a variety of forms, some of which include: a children's book, fairy tale, epic poem, creative essay, memoir, etc. Additionally, in Anatomy and Physiology, students are able to choose a muscle and demonstrate how it works with the use of modeling, illustrations, or through other visual means. In World History, students may choose different media sources (television shows, movies, books, etc.) to illustrate what modern American values are after studying a unit on social expectations. In Marine Biology, students choose a marine habitat, as well as how they want to build the habitat, and then instruct the class on abiotic and biotic factors within the zone.

In addition, some teachers assign a student interest inventory for each student to complete on the first day of school to determine students' interests, as well as their learning strengths and weaknesses. This assists teachers in preparing lessons to maximize student learning. For an example, based on the survey results during the 2014-2015 school year in English, many students enjoy group work, as well as visual learning. Therefore, the teacher created a group assignment where students worked together to prove which character was more heroic, and one component of the assignment asked them to create a visual that was significant to his heroism. Based on students' interest in the arts and theatre, world language teachers created an activity in which students create an infomercial and sell their product in Spanish.

Another way in which teachers personalize instruction is through the use of advisory. Advisory lessons are often adapted to meet the needs of students based upon grade level. For example, in November 2014, juniors attended a different advisory class to hear a professional speak about his or her career. The career center coordinator recruited the speakers and helped facilitate the program. In addition, the school counseling department implemented individualized student-centered success plans through Naviance, which engages every student based on his or her unique interests and strengths by providing the student support and assistance in setting goals for academic, career, social, emotional, and physical development. Furthermore, teachers contact parents and families in order to enlist their support.

To personalize learning experiences, students may choose from a variety of electives. Students can apply to the Certified Nursing Assistant program (CNA), or the Medical Careers: Fundamentals class, designed for students to explore career opportunities in the allied health fields. Students can also attend the Educational Center for the Arts (ECA), located in New Haven and run by the Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES). This is a high school for students interested in the visual, literary, or performing arts. The Capstone Experience provides students with the opportunity to choose a project based on their individual interests. Peer intern experiences are available for students in the library media center and in the physical education department. In addition, the Peer Supporting Peer Internship provides an opportunity for students interested in a career in education or a related field to assist special education students in their classes. A major goal of the program is to increase the positive interaction between students and support the needs of special education students. The Peer Supporting Peer Internship will be expanded to include support for English language learners during the 2015-2016 school year. Finally, Mathematics and Reading Intervention classes are available to

students who are identified as needing additional help. Extra help sessions are available after school to students in all classes as well.

In most areas, teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning. For example, Humanities, an interdisciplinary course, provides students with an opportunity to reflect upon their beliefs, thoughts, values, and traditions as reflected in the arts, literature, history, philosophy, science, and technology. The class promotes an understanding of the connections between the arts and their historical and cultural contexts, as well as fostering an examination of universal questions. During their sophomore year, students enroll in World Literature and World History, which provide opportunities for the English and social studies teachers to work together. In addition, the art and English department teachers work together with students in the creation of the literary magazine, "Visions," which is published every spring. This year, the Contemporary Issues class, along with the Computer Aided Drafting class, visited Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation in order to understand the development and use of aircraft that has an impact on humanitarian efforts. Students ultimately learned about the global influence the United States has in world affairs. Additionally, students in Physics classes use the basic ideas of algebra, trigonometry, and calculus in connection with physical concepts, such as acceleration and work. Finally, at the end of the year, students from different disciplines display their talents in the Celebration of Excellence.

The Mahan Planetarium and Learning Dome at Sheehan High School also provides opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning. Besides science classes such as Earth Science, Astronomy, Physics, and Chemistry, social studies classes visit the planetarium and study topics

such as scientific revolution, navigation, astronomy, and mythology. English classes also visit the planetarium to learn more about mythology.

Teachers' instructional practices collectively support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by engaging students as active and self-directed learners. Students regularly engage in independent research projects. For example, in Biology Honors, students choose a topic of interest, conduct experiments outside of school hours, and create independent research papers and project displays. The new Capstone Experience class requires students to plan and engage themselves in a project of their choice. In social studies classes, students utilize Chromebooks to research topics, write essays, or create electronic presentations using websites such as PowToon or Glogster. Additionally, students create and conduct surveys on human rights issues in order to determine how aware people in the building are about the chosen topic. Through individual or group problem solving activities, students in Computer Aided Drafting and Design read, interpret, and draw technical plans that fit a variety of applications. In addition, students enrolled in the visual arts work independently to create, plan, evaluate, rework, present, and exhibit works of art. In world language classes, students change the ending to stories before acting them out. In mathematics, students actively participate in their learning through hands-on project-based activities. Art Studio Advanced Placement students are required to produce a body of work based on a theme they select. All students must be self-driven in their research and execute this work by the end of May. Students in Art Studio Advanced Placement may choose to submit their portfolios to the College Board.

Teachers' instructional practices extensively support the achievement of the school's 21st Century Learning Expectations by emphasizing inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking. According to the Endicott survey, 91 percent of staff said that teachers

emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking to support the achievement of the school's learning expectations compared to the aggregate results of 82.6 percent. Eighty-one percent of parents agree that teachers emphasize inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking compared to the aggregate results of 74.7 percent. This is evident in all departments. For example, in English, teachers employ Socratic seminars and literature circles to discuss books that students have read. In Art Foundations classes, students describe, analyze, evaluate and defend various works of art using the Feldman method and/or department rubrics. In music, students critique and evaluate their own performance as well as the group's performance, both orally and in writing. Music students also need to make suggestions for improving their performance by applying skills that they have learned. In science, students participate in inquiry-based laboratories and engineering activities. In social studies, students participate in debates, mock trials, historical simulations, and reenactments. In technology education, students repair home items and utilize technology to create a variety of products. In mathematics, students complete performance tasks to illustrate their ability to apply concepts to real-world applications. For example, students apply the concept of polynomial functions to calculate the volume of a box and find the maximum volume a particular box may have. In family and consumer science classes, specifically in Introductory Foods, students learn about kitchen safety, sanitation, and accident prevention in the kitchen. Students apply their knowledge of these concepts by demonstrating how to wash hands properly, practicing personal hygiene as it applies to working in the kitchen, and using correct tools, equipment, and materials to successfully complete tasks.

Collectively, teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. by applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. Again, this is evident in all departments. In the Dramatic Arts class, the students write

and perform their own skits in front of the whole school during the One Act Play assembly. In the spring, Creative Writing students perform their own poetry during the Poetry Slam. In Journalism class, students research and write articles to be published online in the school paper, *The Titan*. Students utilize various technology and media resources throughout the year in order to create the yearbook in Yearbook class. In music, students have two culminating live performances where they are required to apply all of the skills they have learned during the school year. In social studies, students act as journalists and reporters in the Candidates' Forum activity where they interview candidates running for Town Council and Board of Education offices. In special education, students go on field trips, such as a holiday shopping trip, in order to use their knowledge of money exchange. In Medical Careers, students explore topics including medical ethics, terminology, measurement of vital signs, and infection control. Students also demonstrate their learning during patient care simulations by analyzing a variety of ethical dilemmas and by working with models of human body systems. The Certified Nursing Assistant program prepares high school students for employment in hospitals and long-term care settings.

There is some evidence that teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by engaging students in self-assessment and reflection. According to the Endicott survey, 66.4 percent of students state that teachers provide them with opportunities to assess their own work compared to 64.8 percent in the aggregate data. In science classes, teachers utilize the self-reflection section of the district-wide Laboratory Report Rubric in order to allow students to reflect on their laboratory report writing skills and scientific knowledge. In art, students give feedback on peers' work through group critiques. In addition, in Life Skills, students are required to complete a rubric assessing

their social communication skills. The music department uses self-reflection rubrics for rehearsals and recorded assignments. Many students in English classes have opportunities to review peer work in order to correct writing errors. In addition, some English and social studies teachers have implemented writing conferences during the 2014-2015 school year with their students. In this practice, the teachers ask students to reflect on their own work and to write about how they would make improvements or changes.

Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st Century Learning Expectations by integrating technology. By the end of the 2014-2015 school year, all Sheehan High School classrooms, except the woodshop, will be equipped with projection capabilities. In all classrooms that are not equipped with SMART Boards, LightRaise Interactive Projectors, or LCD TVs, a LCD projector will be mounted on the ceiling. Two hundred and sixty Chromebooks are available for classroom use. Twenty percent of the teachers (14 teachers) utilize Google Classroom in order to deliver assignments, grade assignments, give feedback to students, and monitor work in progress. The educational technology resource teacher offers a professional development course to become a certified Google Educator. The purpose of this course is to teach faculty members the benefits of Google Apps, such as Google Classroom, in order to facilitate student competency in computer literacy. Many teachers also utilize Twitter or classroom websites to remind and communicate with students regarding class assignments. Some teachers in the building use a third party texting application known as *Remind* to communicate with students and parents. This is a safe way for teachers to send text messages about homework, assignments, or class announcements. In addition, students are able to collaborate with their classmates via school email and by sharing Google documents and resources. According to the Endicott survey, 74 percent of students state that teachers ask them

to use technology in their assignments compared to the aggregate score of 68.3 percent. Teachers and students alike present information through a variety of formats, including, PowerPoint, Prezi, Animoto, and MovieMaker. Other technology utilized in the classroom to enhance instruction includes, graphing calculators, clickers/online polling, document cameras, and video clips accessed through Youtube. Some members of the social studies department use interactive computer simulations and online interactive games to involve students in their own learning. The *Decisions, Decisions* interactive simulations, created by Tom Snyder productions, engage students in problem solving and debate. The iCivics.org interactive games and simulations provide students with an opportunity to learn important concepts and ideas and have fun at the same time. The English department uses www.turnitin.com for students to submit papers. The site checks the web for plagiarism and allows teachers to comment directly on papers and provide feedback for students. The music department uses Charms Music Office for students to submit recordings of themselves for assessment as well as the Sight Reading Factory for students to practice.

Finally, the mathematics teachers utilize technology to support 21st century learning in a variety of ways. First, Geometer's Sketchpad and GeoGebra technology allows students a quick method of constructing figures and manipulating them to discover properties of those figures. Using either program, students can construct objects and explore properties by dragging the vertices of the object with the mouse. Students make conjectures about the objects before attempting a proof. The mathematics department has also developed many algebra and geometry activities that encourage students to form conjectures and shape their own learning. For instance, in Algebra, conjectures include topics about parallel and perpendicular lines, direct variation, quadratic functions, absolute value functions, and equations of circles. The geometry lessons

include activities that encourage students to form conjectures about vertical angles, triangle inequality, reflections, isosceles triangles, and the measure of exterior angles. Additionally, mathematics classes use graphing calculators (both TI-83 and TI-Nspire). Both programs allow students to explore functions/variables in multiple representations, but the TI-Nspire graphing calculator builds upon features present on the TI-83 graphing calculator and has features that allow students to explore multiple representations of mathematics concepts that can increase a learner's conceptual understanding of mathematics. The use of the "documents option" allows students to store classwork/lessons and access the work remotely through a Wi-Fi connection. The mathematics department also utilizes a calculator-based ranger (CBL/CBR) which is a data collection device for gathering real-world data that can be connected to a graphing calculator. Teachers implement lessons where students use the device to measure motion, temperature, light, sound, pH, force and much more. The data is then retrieved and analyzed by using TI graphing calculators. Using these tools, students are able to make conjectures and draw conclusions about the trends they observe. Finally, mathematics teachers use a program called Ten Marks which provides online resources to guide effective instruction for each of the Common Core Math Standards. The program can be used before or during class. Students take pre- and post-assessments to provide teachers with a means of formative assessment to gauge growth towards the Common Core Math Standard. Based upon their results, students are provided recommendations for extra practice, scaffolding hints, and even enrichment opportunities. Most of the hints are tied to a video that provides examples and instructional support.

Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessment, especially during instructional time. The 84-minute block schedule allows teachers to use a variety of methods to assess students' learning during

instructional time. Teachers use many formative assessments such as, "Do Now" prompts, KWL charts (What do you **K**now? **W**ant to know?, What did you **L**earn?), exit cards, pair and share, small group activities, and whole class discussions. The family and consumer science teachers also assess student learning by purposefully including essential questions on PowerPoint slides within the presentation to check for understanding and allow students to discuss key points with their neighbor. The social studies department uses two forms of polling technology. The first, called the Classroom Performance System (CPS) Response Clickers from eInstruction, as a form of review and check for understanding. This system gives instant feedback to the teacher so that he or she knows if the students have mastered the content or not. The second program is called www.polleverywhere.com, which allows students to use their cellphones to take a survey. With this program, the teacher creates a question to help students study, or the program can be used to facilitate a class discussion with subjective questions. Students then receive a code to text in that corresponds to a choice. The teacher can hide the results until either he or she closes the voting, or the students can watch the results live on the screen.

Teachers routinely adjust instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by strategically differentiating. According to the Endicott survey, 82.1 percent of teachers state that they use differentiated instructional practices to meet the learning needs of all students compared to the aggregate result of 79.6 percent. Some teachers differentiate by using whole class and small group activities. This helps those quiet students who do not like to speak in front of their peers in a whole class setting. As an example, in English classes, literature circles are used in small groups of four. Each student is assigned a role: discussion director, quote finder, bridge builder, and insight identifier. Instruction is also differentiated based upon student ability level. For lower level students, material is broken up into smaller parts and presented at a slower

pace. In addition, teachers utilize different types and forms of instruction in order to access the different types of learners. For example, PowerPoint presentations and diagrams are utilized in order to provide visuals for students. In English, students are required to reenact scenes from novels and read paragraphs aloud to the class as a way to facilitate discussion and critique for those who are auditory learners.

Teachers also differentiate for special education students as well as 504 students. All teachers receive and follow Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504s to accommodate the needs of these students. As an example, for one student who is legally blind, teachers enlarge the text of every document, give him a copy of the notes so that he does not have to write them, and give him fewer words for vocabulary quizzes. In addition, enlarged textbooks are provided for him. To accommodate a student who has a hearing impairment, teachers email the class notes to him or give him a copy of the notes prior to class. English teachers give modified vocabulary quizzes to those students who have modifications in their IEPs. During the Cells Unit in Biology class, the science teacher has the special education students identify the different body parts and complete human body puzzles, match body parts with the vocabulary words, and play the matching game with body parts and vocabulary. Funds were allocated in science in order to buy science materials on an elementary level for intellectually disabled students. Teachers routinely modify assignments in different classes for the special education students.

Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by purposefully organizing group-learning activities. According to the Endicott survey, 85.8 percent of students state that their teachers use group activities (compared to 81.4 percent in the aggregate data) and 77.2 percent of staff state that they organize group learning (compared to 77.1 percent in the aggregate data). Mathematics teachers use cooperative learning groups and

purposefully organize group learning activities to fit the needs of each student. The teachers create groups of four and assign specific roles, which include leader, director, timekeeper, and calculator. The teachers assign key roles to students who exhibit leadership qualities. In other instances, mathematics teachers pair students who perform well with those who struggle to promote reciprocal teaching. In addition, one science teacher purposefully organized a group learning activity to accommodate three students who are reading on a first grade level (one with Down's syndrome, one with autism, and one of whom is intellectually disabled). While the regular education students work on the Biochemistry unit, the teacher does a Nutritional unit with the three special education students. There is a food-testing lab like the other students, but the teacher modifies the length and amount of writing required. In Contemporary Issues, the class as a whole develops a concept in order to create a class mural using Post-It Notes. Each group comes up with a picture, slogan, title, etc. and then puts it all together in order to create the mural. In addition, English and social studies teachers strategically set up their classrooms to accommodate small group and large group discussions (pods of three desks or the "U" shape) to help prevent or minimize off-task behavior during transition time. Some teachers use rotating stations as an instructional strategy. Students are organized in small mixed ability groups, and then the groups proceed to each station where they review material, provide input, solve a problem, or brainstorm new ideas.

Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Teachers provide alternative strategies within the classroom to provide support such as audio books for students who need extra audio support, Khan Academy for online instructional support in mathematics and science, Teacher YouTube Channels, such as *Hip Hughes History,* for online

instructional lessons, and Chromebooks provided by the library media specialist for students who prefer technology and typing. In addition, all teachers are required to have two extra help days after school where they can provide extra help to any student who wants to attend. After school, tutoring is offered in mathematics twice a week, English once a week, and social studies once a week. The school also has ten paraprofessionals that are assigned to classrooms in various subject areas based on student need. Sometimes they are in classrooms supporting students, but occasionally they are in regular study halls giving students support and allowing them time with peers. The school also provides structured study halls for students that have an individualized education plan, which are monitored by special education teachers. These structured study halls have between three to seven students so that the teachers can provide support, and students can stay more focused. The school also has a Peers Supporting Peers Internship, which is a program where regular education students are chosen from an interview process and partnered with special education students to help assist them in a class. In the 2014-2015 school year, Sheehan had twenty-six peer interns. In addition to the aforementioned strategies, the school has a credit recovery program to help freshmen who have a failing grade in English or Algebra I. However, additional instructional support for English Language Learners (ELL) is needed. The school has one English as a Second Language Interventionist (ESL) Teacher; however, there has been high enrollment of ELL students. The ESL Interventionist Teacher spends one period at Sheehan High School each day (periods 1A and 1B). She sees thirteen students during this time, and three additional students are also identified as English Learners but are not in her class for various reasons. Between the sixteen students who all need to take the annual language proficiency test administered in February, four different languages are spoken: Arabic, Gujarati, Spanish, and Thai. When the program started at Sheehan in 2012-2013, there were two students.

In the 2013-2014 school year, she began the year with one student and ended the school year with four students. In the 2014-2015 school year, she started with nine students but now has thirteen students in her class with another three identified. A special proposal has been submitted with the school's budget to extend the ESL position to full-time.

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, examining student work, using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents, examining current research, and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Teachers use data team meetings and collaboration to compose and compare assessments to guide instruction. This data is derived from common assessments that many departments use to ensure alignment in instruction. In social studies, teachers use document-based essays that align with department and school-wide rubrics. All Sheehan departments use some common assessments and most of these are midterm and final exams. Most departments use performance tasks based on units of instruction designed in collaboration with curriculum coordinators. These units of instruction align with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and student work is graded with rubrics that address specific strands from CCSS. The English and social studies departments collaborate on units of instruction for World Literature and World History by using common terms to reinforce student learning. The mathematics department also uses performance tasks and rubrics to assess a variety of strands such as Concepts & Procedures, Problem Solving, and Communication & Reasoning. The science department implements a common assessment through the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), embedded tasks, and Science, Technology, and Society (STS) activities. The art department uses a common rubric to assess skills and standards as well.

In addition to content area rubrics, many teachers use strands from school-wide rubrics to examine student work and improve their instructional practices. As part of the new teacher evaluation system, Sheehan teachers develop a student learning objective (SLO) designed to prompt instruction that is more specific. In creating an SLO, teachers use a baseline assessment to help identify areas of concern and develop an action plan of instructional practices to be used to enhance student growth in the identified SLO. These SLOs hold teachers accountable to the goals set in the beginning of the year with their evaluator.

Another way teachers improve their instructional practice is through the use of feedback from a variety of sources including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents. As indicated in the Endicott survey results, 86.1 percent of teachers report that they improve their instructional practice by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments compared to 73.3 percent reported in the aggregate data. In a self-administered school-wide survey developed by members of the Instruction Standard Committee, 95 percent of fifty-four teachers who completed the survey indicated that they receive feedback directly from students; seventy-two percent indicated they receive feedback from teachers, and thirty-nine percent indicated they receive feedback from parents. Teachers use the information garnered from this feedback to adjust assignments and to help students improve their performance in the classroom. In addition, teachers distribute surveys to parents during Open House asking them to provide information on student interest and specific learning styles. Some teachers provide students with surveys at the beginning and/or at the end of their courses to obtain information in order to improve their instructional practices as well. Teachers receive formal feedback from administrators through the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system. Teachers also use PowerSchool gradebook as a means for continuous, immediate

feedback on areas that need improvement and to guide adjustments to instruction. By identifying assignments and assessments that students may be struggling with, teachers determine what instructional strategies may improve student learning. Some teachers provide opportunities for students to critique content and instructional practices, but most do not solicit this feedback from students on a regular basis. Some teachers have developed writing conferences, which allow teachers to adjust and personalize writing instruction based on direct feedback received from students. Team teaching is a common practice at Sheehan where regular education teachers and special education teachers work collaboratively in designated classes. Efforts are made to schedule common prep time for these teachers, but this does not always occur due to scheduling conflicts. As a result, coordinating a time for team-teachers to meet is provided through monthly department and data team meetings giving teachers time to work collaboratively on examining student work.

Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by formal and informal professional discourse. Although the school has adopted a number of models for the use of available meeting time that provide opportunities for teachers to improve their instructional strategies, it is recognized that this is an area that needs to be revisited. Common prep time is available for 70 percent of teachers within each department to collaborate as needed; however, there are inconsistencies with common prep time for special education teachers who co-teach with regular education teachers. Teachers are given opportunities to examine current research and instructional strategies via email as well as during faculty meetings and professional development sessions. Teachers report that the principal regularly shares articles from education journals or reference websites. The district's curriculum coordinators and resource teachers also send teachers professional articles and website resources for teacher

review. Department leaders also share articles on content-based instructional strategies with teachers. Administrators and department chairpersons work in conjunction with the Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES), a regional education foundation, to coordinate professional development workshop opportunities for faculty at Sheehan. In 2012, as part of an initiative to improve instructional practices by implementing positive reinforcement in the classroom through a common language, Sheehan teachers were given Carol Dweck's *Mindset*. A workshop was also conducted in March 2013. Sheehan teachers were also given a copy of Robert Marzano's *Classroom Instruction that Works* and provided with professional development on instructional strategies. Finally, the library contains a dedicated professional library available to staff and the library media specialist maintains a subscription to EdDigest.

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain their expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices by using a variety of resources. In a survey conducted by the Instruction Standard Committee, 86 percent of staff reported that they have collaborated with colleagues and 74 percent reported that they have attended some type of professional development specific to their content area. However, 100 percent of the faculty attends district professional development. In addition, over a span of three years, 73 percent attended workshops related to their discipline outside of the district's offerings, 60 percent invested time reading and integrating information acquired from literature into their discipline, and over half reported using and/or implementing new technology into teaching practices. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, each department subscribes to a professional journal related to their discipline. For example, the social studies department purchased a membership in the National Council for Social Studies and the physical education department is a new member to SHAPE America (Society of Health and Physical Educators), which was

formerly known as AAHPERD (American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance). In addition, the music department subscribes to *Teaching Music* and *Music Educators Journal*.

Teachers at Sheehan High School find a number of ways to become experts in their disciplines in and outside of the classroom. For example, educators in the social studies department read non-fiction novels and stories based on historical events, as well as *Time* magazine. The art department has reviewed films such as *Pollock* and subscribes to the *Artist's* magazine. Staff members in the mathematics department attended the TI-NSPIRE calculator training, an art teacher attended a weeklong fellowship: "Feed Your Soul" at Maine College of Art, and three teachers attended a weeklong advanced placement training at Taft during the summer. The world language department subscribes to *Foreign Language Annals* by The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The school counselors subscribe to *ASCA School Counselor* from the American School Counselor Association. The physical education department participates in physical education and health conferences on an annual basis. Numerous staff members have attended Common Core curriculum writing at ACES in order to develop curriculum and assessments. Science teachers subscribe to content specific periodicals such as *Popular Science* and *Discover* magazine.

To help teachers stay current with technology, teachers are provided opportunities for professional development both in and out of the building. The business department offered web design and software training, and in-house experts provided training on the use and implementation of Chromebooks. A science teacher attended the Connecticut Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Conference in Hartford. Additionally, four science teachers participated in the Online Resource Through Integrated STEM (ORTIS) project which is a

collaboration between Quinnipiac University and Connecticut K-12 school districts to develop online science curricula based on an engineering design process for use in the middle and high schools.

As the evidence collected suggests, the majority of faculty are proactive when engaging in continuing education to increase content knowledge in subject areas. This has been accomplished by several means including taking classes, participating in workshops and professional development, reading journals, books and the like, and collaborating with other educators. Teachers frequently incorporate their newly acquired knowledge into their classroom instruction. Teachers are committed to collaboration with colleagues (at professional development, faculty/data meetings, etc.) in order to share their expertise. There is consistent communication between educators and administrators through evaluations, meetings, and activities that promote a positive climate to foster effective teaching practices. Through the dedication and commitment among the faculty, teachers and administrators, Mark T. Sheehan High School remains a positive learning community.

Instruction

Executive Summary

The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations guide instructional practices at Mark T. Sheehan High School. Each course taught at Sheehan has its own academic, social, and civic expectations, which promote 21st century skills. Through the use of school-wide rubrics, as well as the newly piloted Capstone Experience, students are able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that they have acquired throughout their high school career.

Evidence indicates that the instructional practices utilized by teachers support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning, engaging students as active and self-directed learners, emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking, applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks, engaging students in self-assessment and reflection, and by integrating technology. A variety of courses and electives are offered in order to personalize learning experiences, such as the Certified Nursing Assistant program and Educational Center for the Arts. Students also meet in advisory on a weekly basis. Lessons are often adjusted based on students' personal needs. Cross-disciplinary learning, such as evidenced in Humanities, provides students with an opportunity to reflect upon their beliefs, thoughts, values, and traditions as reflected in the arts, literature, history, philosophy, science, and technology. The planetarium is another avenue for cross-disciplinary learning. Students regularly engage in independent research projects in which they must self-direct their work as well. For example, Biology Honors students choose a topic of interest, conduct experiments outside of school hours,

create independent research papers, and project displays. According to the Endicott survey, 91 percent of staff and 81 percent of parents state that teachers emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking to support the achievement of the school's learning expectations. Evidence of this is seen in all departments. For example, in English, teachers employ Socratic seminars and literature circles to discuss books that students have read. In addition, students are expected to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. For example, in social studies, students act as journalists and reporters in a Candidates' Forum activity, interviewing candidates running for Town Council and Board of Education offices. Exit slips are commonly utilized in classes at Sheehan in order for students to self-assess and engage in reflection as well. According to the Endicott survey, 74 percent of students state that teachers ask them to use technology in their assignments. Teachers and students alike present information with a variety of formats - PowerPoint, Prezi, Animoto, and MovieMaker.

Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessments during instructional time. Some examples include do now prompts, KWL charts, exit slips, pair and share, small group activities, performance tasks, and whole class discussions. CPS Response Clickers and polleverywhere.com are also ways in which teachers can instantly identify if students have mastered content or not. Teachers also adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by strategically differentiating. According to the Endicott survey, 82.1 percent of teachers state that they use differentiated instructional practices to meet the learning needs of all students. All teachers receive and follow IEPs and 504s regularly to accommodate the needs of students.

Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by purposefully organizing group learning activities. According to the Endicott survey, 85.8

percent of students state that their teachers use group activities and 77.2 percent of staff state that they organize group learning. Additionally, 82.1 percent of parents state that staff at Sheehan High School engage their sons/daughters as active learners. Some English teachers have strategically set up their classrooms to accommodate small group and large group discussions and science teachers organize students into groups for laboratory experiences.

Instructional practices are adjusted to meet the needs of each student by providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. Sheehan High School has a Peers Supporting Peers Internship, which is a program where regular education students are chosen from an interview process and partnered with special education students to help assist them in a class. This year, Sheehan has fifteen senior peer interns and eleven junior peer interns. Teachers also have extra help/tutoring sessions after school.

Teachers individually and collaboratively improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments, examining student work, using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents, examining current research, and engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice. Teachers use data team meetings and collaboration to compose and compare assessments to guide instruction. This data is derived from common assessments that many departments use to ensure alignment in instruction. Common midterm and final exams are administered in many departments as well. As part of the new evaluation system, Sheehan teachers develop a student learning objective (SLO) designed to prompt instruction that is more specific. In creating an SLO, teachers use a baseline assessment to help identify areas of concern and develop an action plan of instructional practices to be used to enhance student growth. Feedback is provided to teachers from a variety of sources. Some teachers provide

students with surveys at the end of their courses to obtain information in order to improve their instructional practices. Through the new evaluation system, teachers receive formal feedback from administrators as well.

Teachers individually and collaboratively improve their instructional practices by formal and informal professional discourse. The school has adopted a number of models for the use of available meeting time that provide the opportunities for teachers, individually, and collaboratively to improve their instructional strategies. The principal regularly shares articles from education journals or reference websites and most departments have a common preparatory time.

Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain their expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices by using a variety of resources. For example, educators in the social studies department read non-fiction novels or stories based on historical events and a variety of news magazines. The art department has reviewed films such as *Pollock* and subscribes to the *Artist's* magazine. Staff members in the mathematics department attended the TI-INSPIRE calculator training and three teachers attended a weeklong AP training at Taft during the summer. The business department offered web design and software training in order for faculty members to stay current with technology. In-house experts provided training on the use and implementation of Chromebooks. As the evidence collected suggests, the majority of our faculty are proactive and engage in continuing to increase their knowledge in their content area.

Based on the Rating Guide for the standard, Mark T. Sheehan High School judges its adherence to the Standard as ACCEPTABLE.

Strengths:

- The embedded academic, social, and civic expectations that each course has which promotes 21st century skills.

- The use of school-wide rubrics to demonstrate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

- The variety of opportunities that are provided for students to succeed based on their interests and/or strengths.

- The integration of technology as a tool for teaching and learning.

- The use of organized group learning activities by the majority of Sheehan teachers.

- The emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, and critical thinking skills.

- The continuing engagement and proactive nature of the majority of the faculty in continuing to increase their knowledge and expertise in their content area through a variety of means.

Needs:
- Provide extra instructional support for English Language Learners in the classroom.

Assessment of and for Student Learning

**Mark T. Sheehan High School's Assessment of and for Student Learning
Self-Study Report and Executive Summary Completed by:**

2013 – 2014

Michelle DelGrego	Speech Pathologist
Co-Chairperson	
Suzanne Whitehead	Teacher, Science
Co-Chairperson	
Nancy Houston	Teacher, Business
Steering Committee Liaison	
Melissa Boyce	Teacher, Reading Intervention
Michael Brezicki	Teacher, Social Studies
Peter Fleischmann.	Teacher, World Language
Steven Goodrich	Teacher, Art
Jillian Jordan	Student, Class of 2016
Susanne Jordan	Parent
Donna Laich	School Psychologist
Joshua Lambert	Teacher, Technology Education
Dominick Lombardozzi	Teacher, Mathematics
Kathryn Oswald	Student, Class of 2016
Amanda Prescott	Teacher, Mathematics
Christine Ritchie	Teacher, Mathematics

2014 – 2015

Michelle DelGrego	Speech Pathologist
Co-Chairperson	
Suzanne Whitehead	Teacher, Science
Co-Chairperson	
Nancy Houston	Teacher, Business
Steering Committee Liaison	
Melissa Boyce	Teacher, Reading Intervention
Michael Brezicki	Teacher, Social Studies
Peter Fleischmann.	Teacher, World Language
Steven Goodrich	Teacher, Art
Jillian Jordan	Student, Class of 2016
Susanne Jordan	Parent
Donna Laich	School Psychologist
Joshua Lambert	Teacher, Technology Education
Dominick Lombardozzi	Teacher, Mathematics
Lisa Miller	Teacher, English
Kathryn Oswald	Student, Class of 2016
Amanda Prescott	Teacher, Mathematics
Christine Ritchie	Teacher, Mathematics

Assessment of and for Student Learning

The teachers at Mark T. Sheehan High School continuously employ a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Each teacher is responsible for assessing student progress through the use of school-wide rubrics, which the teachers utilize in conjunction with aligned, teacher-created, and/or district rubrics. The use of the school-wide rubrics allows the school to assess school-wide progress towards achieving our 21st century learning expectations and measures how students are progressing toward meeting these expectations. In April 2014 to facilitate the use of the school-wide rubrics, the NEASC Steering Committee created a rubric handbook and distributed it to the staff. The handbook includes a chart indicating the expectations and corresponding rubric assigned for each course. Additionally, the school-wide rubrics are available electronically to the staff.

Throughout the school year, teachers use rubrics to assess student progress through individual assignments, performance tasks, and monitoring student work, and students use rubrics for both peer and self-assessment. In addition, teachers at Sheehan High School set yearly student learning objectives (SLOs) to monitor and assess student improvement relative to the school-wide rubrics. The use of rubrics is a component of the district's formal teacher evaluation process.

All Sheehan teachers communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families at the end of each marking period. Beginning in the 2014 - 2015 school year, the Sheehan staff implemented a method for reporting student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. Originally

piloted by the members of the Assessment Standard Committee, the method was successful in producing data that could be exported and shared. This method requires all teachers to rate their students, based on students' individual progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. Individual student progress in achieving the academic, social, and civic expectations was initially reported to families in February 2015 via letter and through the PowerSchool student/parent portal. Year-to-date summary information on each student's progress in achieving the school-wide 21st century learning expectations will be reported each marking period in a letter mailed to each student, and course specific information for each student is available through the student/parent portal in PowerSchool. These scores are not included in the student's final grade and are not a graduation requirement.

Communicating the whole school's progress in the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community is planned for implementation in 2015-2106. Beginning in October 2015, the faculty will work collaboratively in small groups in order to review data collected during the previous school year. This data will include individual student and school-wide achievement data in meeting the 21st century learning expectations. These small will then share their findings with the larger group, and give others a chance to voice comments and concerns. Any required changes will be implemented as necessary. This process will be completed on an annual basis.

The Sheehan High School staff frequently collects, disaggregates, and analyzes, a range and variety of data, including both formative and summative assessments, to identify inequities in student achievement. The Sheehan staff uses data to inform modifications in curriculum design and instructional practices on a regular basis. These modifications to resolve identified inequities occur after analysis of the following: final assessments at the conclusion of a

unit of study, common assessments, mid-year exams, student portfolios, and end-of-the-semester or yearly performance projects. According to the Endicott survey results, 67.1 percent of the Sheehan staff are in agreement that data is used to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement, which is significantly higher than the aggregate response of 50.2 percent.

Data gathered from performance tasks and classroom performance inform class placement recommendations for incoming ninth grade students. Teachers analyze and disaggregate data to determine if a student requires more rigor or additional support for class placement in the upcoming year. Teachers examine the results of the PSAT and Summary of Answers and Skills (SOAS) Report to inform instruction. The AP potential, a database generated by the College Board based on student PSAT results, helps teacher determine a student's potential for success in advanced placement (AP) classes.

In the 2013-2014 school year, Sheehan students transitioned from the tenth grade Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) to the eleventh grade Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) tests. Data from the SBAC is not available for analysis yet. Sophomore students are still required to take the science portion of the CAPT, which allows science teachers to analyze the CAPT data for individual strand weaknesses on a per student basis. Science teachers create an action plan for students who do not meet the standards on the CAPT test and additional tutoring is available to these students. All students must either score proficient on the science CAPT or satisfactorily complete the district's performance task in science to be eligible to graduate. Sheehan has many systems in place to address identified inequities in student achievement. A Wallingford Public Schools credit recovery program was instituted in the 2013-2014 school year. Students who have been identified as being at-risk for failing Algebra 1 or ninth grade English, based on failing first semester grades, are invited to

enroll in the six-week program. Parents are invited to an information session regarding the credit recovery program prior to enrolling the student. Students who participate in the program remain in their current classes and work with certified teachers after school. Teachers work with students to meet their needs by targeting specific content areas and skills with which students struggle. Students that demonstrate competency of the content and skills will successfully complete the program and have their previous marking period grade raised to a 60.

In addition to the credit recovery program, Sheehan has a Teacher Student Assistance Team (TSA) to help students who are referred to the team due to some type of academic struggle. The team, facilitated by the school psychologist, includes the principal, school counselors, teachers from different departments, and the referred student. This Tier 1 intervention provides classroom assistance for the student and a case manager is assigned to monitor student progress.

Sheehan has a mathematics intervention program for students identified as not having reached grade-level benchmarks. Students qualify for the program in a variety of ways. Students who have participated in the mathematics intervention program at the middle school level, and have not met grade level benchmarks, continue the program at Sheehan. Some students are recommended for screening based on data gathered by their classroom teachers, and others are recommended through the Planning and Placement Team (PPT). The program is open to students in grades 9-12. Students are screened using Renaissance Learning's STAR Math assessment. Upon completion of the assessment, students are placed into one of three categories: Urgent Intervention, At-Risk Intervention, and At-Watch Intervention. If a student falls into either the "urgent" or "at-risk" categories, then he or she will qualify for intervention. The Star Math program aligns with the Common Core State Standards, provides students with focus

skills, and tracks progress. Currently, there are seven students in the program. Students remain in the mathematics intervention program until they have met grade-level benchmarks.

Sheehan also has a reading intervention program that provides additional reading instruction for students who have not met grade-level benchmarks. Students are identified for program participation in the same manner that they are identified for mathematics intervention. The reading interventionist uses Renaissance Learning's STAR Reading assessment, Academic Improvement Measurement System (AIMSWEB), and the Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) to identify students in need of intervention. Student progress is monitored bi-weekly, and the student tests out of the program when he or she meets grade-level proficiency.

In addition to the programs mentioned above, Sheehan has an English Language Learner (ELL) program. State guidelines for initial identification include a home language survey (three questions located on the registration form), oral interview (informal assessment), and LAS (Language Assessment Scales) Links, which is an English Language Proficiency (ELP) test. These assessments are used to determine which students qualify for ELL services. The English as a second language (ESL) teacher sees thirteen students during the period (periods 1A and 1B) that she spends at Sheehan daily. Sheehan has a growing number of students who qualify for this program. There were two students in the program when it started at Sheehan in the 2012-2013 school year. At the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, there were nine students, but by March of 2015, the program had grown to sixteen identified students.

Students, who consistently perform below grade-level and do not respond to a tiered level of intervention, are referred for formal evaluations. The school staff uses standardized assessments to help determinate if a student qualifies for special education services based on Connecticut state guidelines. Sheehan's special education teachers gather ongoing data on their

student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives in order to monitor progress and growth. They also work collaboratively with the regular education teachers to individualize and modify curriculum to accommodate student needs. For students with intellectual disabilities, Sheehan has Core Math and Core English classes, and based on data the program is individualized to meet the students' specific needs. Co-teaching, structured study halls, Learning Strategies Lab, Core classes, Life Skills and vocational education classes, paraprofessional support, peers supporting peers internship, and differentiated instruction by the regular education teachers are all ways inequities for special education students' achievement are addressed at Sheehan.

Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. According to the Endicott survey, 63.2 percent of Sheehan students agree that their teachers explain what the learning expectations are before each unit of study. This percentage is comparable to the aggregate response of 66.5 percent. Teachers at Mark T. Sheehan High School introduce students to unit and content specific objectives, which often relate to the 21st century learning expectations. Members of the Assessment Standard Committee polled teachers regarding how often they make connections to the applicable 21st century learning expectations when beginning a new unit of study. Thirty-eight faculty members (54 percent of all classroom teachers) responded with the following information: six teachers make the connection all of the time, fifteen teachers make the connection most of the time; fourteen teachers make the connection some of the time; and three teachers do not make the connection at all. However, evidence shows that the vast majority of student work samples address the 21st century learning expectations. For example, student work from many departments focuses on writing and

communicating effectively. The physical education department is committed to lifetime fitness and wellness. Students are introduced to activities that they can continue for the rest of their lives like yoga or weightlifting. These examples relate directly to the 21st century learning expectations embedded in daily objectives for many departments. The faculty is working on making specific connections to the 21st century learning expectations as part of regular practice.

In addition, advisory lessons have focused on the school's 21st century expectations for student learning. For example, during the month of March 2015, student advisory sessions addressed wellness, which related to *Recognize and value the importance of wellness and physical fitness*.

Prior to summative assessments, teachers regularly provide students with the corresponding rubrics. According to the Endicott survey results, 75.5 percent of Sheehan High School teachers distribute rubrics prior to each unit of study. This is higher than the aggregate response of 74.9 percent. These rubrics communicate to students the school's learning expectations. Most departments use criteria from the district and school-wide rubrics and adapt them to departmental rubrics and teacher-generated rubrics.

Teachers in the art and music departments regularly distribute rubrics for individualized assignments at the beginning of each project. Art and music classes include project-based assignments, and strands from the rubrics are commonly re-used for various assignments. The art department collaboratively uses parts of their creativity rubric in each assignment. For example, in Art Photography class, students received the rubric for guidance, prior to starting their projects. Students occasionally have the opportunity to self-assess.

In the career and technical education (CTE) department, students in business classes are given an initial rubric to correspond with several summative assessments. For example, students

in Business 101 are given a ten-week assignment that coincides with the stock market game simulation. An assignment-specific rubric is given to the students at the beginning of trading to indicate expectations of a final portfolio collected at the end of the trading session. An additional rubric is distributed at the end of the ten-week trading session for students to assess themselves, all group members, and their contributions over the ten-week period. In an architecture class, students are provided with rubrics for use on long-term, multi-part projects. Likewise, in the physical education (PE) department, teachers utilize rubrics for skill assessment in every unit they teach. Some are common rubrics, and certain units include peer assessments and self-assessments. When students complete peer and self-assessments, they use the same rubrics that PE teachers use to assess student skills.

In the English department, teachers distribute rubrics prior to each writing assignment to familiarize students with the assessment criteria. During the writing process, many teachers employ a "peer revision" day, where students use the rubric to assess their peers' work. When the assignment is submitted, students assess their own work in a specific column on the rubric marked "student," prior to handing in their papers. Students pre-assess their work using school-wide and departmental rubrics for virtually every assignment and project. In addition, in Reading Intervention class, students are given a "hot topic" rubric provided at the beginning of the assignment, where students read a current events article and present it to the class. This is connected to the school-wide communication rubric.

The mathematics department uses the school-wide problem-solving rubric, as well as the district math rubric. Teachers distribute rubrics at the onset of each math project. For example, Algebra 1 General has a project with a rubric provided ahead of time to students so they can self-assess their project prior to submitting it. In addition, after grading the math performance task

that deals with the concept of arithmetic sequences, one teacher found that students needed more conceptual support. At the start of unit two, students were provided with scaffolding hints that included some of the problems in first performance task (table, graph, etc.). Some of the students who received these "hints" on the performance task lost points on the "independence" strand of the rubric, but it supported their progress on other strands and their overall performance. The hints ensure differentiation and appropriate challenge.

The social studies department uses district, school-wide, and teacher-generated rubrics when assessing student work. Students receive the district writing rubrics and school-wide rubrics for the expectations related to social studies courses. Teachers generate rubrics for projects and performance assessments, which align with the school-wide rubrics. Students receive rubrics prior to assessments. Likewise, the science department uses a district laboratory rubric, especially in the ninth and tenth grades. This was generated to support achievement on the science CAPT, which is still administered to students. Many science teachers use their own teacher-generated rubrics for various assignments, including labs. These teacher-generated rubrics are adapted from the school-wide rubrics and given to students prior to assessments.

The world language department uses the same rubrics to measure the various skills students need to master in a world language class. For example, a speaking rubric measures proficiency level on pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary usage. A reading rubric measures comprehension of the main idea, inferred meaning, and vocabulary acquisition. A writing rubric measures knowledge of grammar structures, complexity of sentence structure, and correct vocabulary usage. More specifically, teachers use rubrics to assess students on their "free writes," which inform teachers how well students can communicate in the target language. World language students are also monitored through the social expectations rubric, specifically

the strands of "demonstrating respect" and "demonstrating attitudes and habits that are valued in the classroom." These expectations are important to assess in language classes where students are developing new skills through the collaborative practice in the target language as an entire class.

In each unit of study, teachers always employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Teachers at Mark T. Sheehan High School design and implement a large variety of both formative and summative assessments. Assessments are designed with respect to the multiple intelligences of the student population and with a desire to foster student engagement. Both common assessments and individual teacher assessments use a range of assessment strategies that include the traditional objective and written assessment, but also performance, technology, and project-based tasks. Assessments are designed with respect to discipline-specific standards, Common Core standards, and 21st century learning expectations.

On a daily basis at Sheehan High School, teachers use a multitude of small formative and larger summative assessments to monitor student performance and drive instruction. The Endicott survey indicated that 93.7 percent of staff employed a large variety and range of assessment strategies. This represents a number higher than the aggregate response of 89.6 percent. The evidence and responses from teachers concerning formative and summative assessments bare truth to this fact. A full summary of assessment samplings would not be possible, but some representative examples include:

- Advanced placement junior English students designed and presented a unit about American education through various formats, such as debates and Socratic seminars.
- Math students use technology-based labs, Geometer's Sketchpad and GeoGebra.
- Business 101 students complete a ten-week portfolio that coincides with ten weeks of stock trading. The portfolio is checked weekly to ensure student understanding.

- Physical education students have a common assessment that requires them to perform a country line dancing routine.
- Honors biology students complete benchmark checks that allow teachers to provide formative feedback while students prepare projects for the annual school Science Fair.
- Psychology students make a model human brain during their unit on neuroscience.
- U.S. History students regularly utilize clickers (individual student response systems) to indicate formative understandings of topics.
- English classrooms perform a mock trial prior to writing a literary analysis on character motivation in the epic poem *Beowulf*.
- Family and consumer science students regularly cook and are assessed using a rubric that considers collaboration and processes leading up to production.
- World History students research, design, and present an art museum project that reflects their understanding about world religions.
- Chorus students are assessed on the process leading up to a performance and during their performance.
- Art students are assessed on pictures, paintings, and drawings that are later displayed at the school, included in the district art show, and submitted for adjudication in art competitions.
- Spanish 3 students use their language and creative skills to make captions and pictures for a graphic novel concerning a common fairy tale.

During the 2014-2015 school year, teachers in Sheehan High School piloted two innovative initiatives concerning assessments. One class of juniors is completing Capstone Experience this year. Capstone projects can be research-based, hands-on, or community-centered. The goal is to add an additional class of students for the 2015-2016 school year, and the intention is to have the Capstone Experience become a graduation requirement for all students. Additionally, during the 2014-2015 school year, students in the Humanities class are being graded with a standards-based grading system. It is the goal of the whole district to move in this direction in the coming years. Furthermore, this year's junior class will be the second Sheehan cohort to complete the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium computer-based assessments.

The teachers of Mark T. Sheehan High School collaborate regularly with each other, building administrators, and district curriculum administrators to create and analyze data from common formative and summative assessments. Both the Wallingford School District and

Sheehan High School, in particular, are committed to the effective use of common assessments. Sheehan teachers meet regularly in data teams and during common department planning time. Additionally, most staff members participate in the widespread rewriting of curriculum in order to ensure Common Core alignment.

Sheehan teachers effectively utilize technology to collaborate and record data concerning assessments. Humanities curriculum administrators use Google Docs to provide staff members with suggested and required formative and summative assessments. Additionally, teachers provide curriculum administrators with common assessment results. Teachers use Google Docs to share ideas and materials for formative assessments.

Department specific evidence about the frequency of assessments validates the Endicott survey results. The revised freshman and sophomore English and social studies courses aligned with Common Core standards; include four to six annual common summative assessments. The junior and senior curriculum is currently undergoing revision and will be designed to include common summative assessments. All courses with multiple instructors have common midterms and finals. Each Common Core aligned mathematics course has common performance tasks that are designed as open-ended real-world problems. The common performance tasks are assessed using the district-wide rubric. In the art department, teachers regularly assess student artwork using a common rubric. Physical education classes are split into ninth-tenth grade and eleventh-twelfth grade groupings. Each cohort is tested with common procedures in a variety of fitness and athletic tasks. Students in Spanish 2, 3, and 4 complete a common midterm and final. Some elective course, in all subject areas, maybe taught by only one teacher, therefore the course assessments are common for all students but may not be common with another teacher.

The school is working to make the design of assessments more collaborative between disciplines and between the district curriculum office. Teachers assess and record student performance with school-wide rubrics. Teachers from different subject disciplines are responsible for assessing if students meet the 21st century expectations for student learning throughout their high school careers. Information currently is being recorded at the end of each marking term. The social studies and English departments have been using professional development time to collaborate and design common standards for assessing argumentative writing. Members of both the social studies and science departments have participated in summer and school-year collaboratives with other school districts in the Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) consortium to design collaborative student-centered assessments in their respective subject areas.

Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. Mark T. Sheehan High School has designated formal time for teachers, department leaders, and building administrators to collaborate regularly regarding assessment practices. Endicott survey indicates that 77.2 percent of the staff feel that the above statement accurately reflects the efforts of the school to accommodate these collaborations. These survey results are markedly higher than the aggregate response of 58.3 percent. The school provides this formal meeting time in a variety of formats. Data team meetings have been scheduled at a rate of six (6) per year over the last three school years. To date in the 2014-2015 school year, there have not been specific days scheduled for the purposes of meeting in data teams. The typical result of the data team analysis of information was the revision or generation of common assessment material to be utilized by the entire team.

During the 2014 -2015, common department prep periods were created for a majority of the departments. These prep periods allow for departmental communication and reflection on instructional practice. In addition, these common prep periods have taken the place of the scheduled data team meetings with the intent that the teachers will utilize this time for data teamwork. An inquiry to the department chairpersons indicated that a majority of teachers utilize these periods to discuss the development and results of common assessments. Specifically, the science, mathematics, and world language departments make the review of assessments the primary focus of these common periods. Most other departments utilize the common prep time to achieve a variety of goals, including the development and review of assessment materials and calibration when using common rubrics. In addition, the social studies and English departments have used professional development time to collaborate on the instruction and assessment of argumentative writing.

The district currently employs a combination of curriculum resource teachers and curriculum coordinators who work with faculty members to review the current curricular design and evaluation practices. These district curriculum leaders also facilitate Curriculum Management Teams that meet periodically to discuss curriculum and instructional changes and align with current best practices.

Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work. Teachers use formative assessment practices to monitor and assess student work in the short-term and provide students with immediate opportunities to revise and/or resubmit their work before the work is formally assessed. Teachers in English, science, and social studies use Google Docs for students to submit work. This enables the teacher to make digital comments on a student's work, while it is in progress. With the use of Google

Docs, students have multiple opportunities to revise and resubmit their work before it is finally assessed.

Teachers in all learning areas provide immediate feedback to the students via "warm-ups," and additional feedback is provided during the subsequent class after evaluating "exit slips." The feedback can be either verbal, through discussions during class, or written. During a recent professional development opportunity, Sheehan teachers determined that effective feedback given to students should include evaluation of the student work, foster reflection, and guide new learning. For example, some members of the science, English, and social studies departments have implemented writing conferences during the 2014 - 2015 school year. Through these conferences, a student receives feedback on the work, instruction on improving his or her writing, and they have the opportunity to rewrite the assignment. Teachers review the results of tests and midterms with students; provide feedback on areas of excellence and areas of concern, prior to moving on to the next unit. Teachers also provide students with opportunities to meet to receive individual feedback.

The school-wide rubrics, department rubrics, district rubrics, and teacher-generated rubrics are used frequently to provide feedback for formative assessments. This feedback encourages students to increase their level of performance as they progress throughout the year. Sixty-eight percent of students indicated on the Endicott survey that teachers provide specific suggestions that enable students to revise and improve their work. This is slightly better than the aggregate response of 63.8 percent.

Finally, in all content areas, students have the opportunity to make test corrections or submit revised versions for written assignments. Based on a recent survey completed by the

school, 71 percent of the respondents indicated that students are allowed to revise and resubmit their work on a regular basis.

Teachers at Mark T. Sheehan High School use formative assessments on a daily basis in order to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Formative assessments include "warm-ups," "exit slips," the use of individual whiteboards, strategic questioning, and various student response systems such as PollEverywhere, "clickers," and Kahoot. Assessments such as "do nows" and "exit slips" allow teachers to collect data on the level of understanding either before or after a lesson. This data is used to inform instruction and help teachers determine how to adapt their instruction to meet the needs of their students. Student response systems are used to provide teachers with immediate feedback so they can address any misconceptions. Teachers also incorporate student-signaling strategies into their lessons as a way to obtain immediate feedback. Some of these strategies include having students raise their hands in agreement, students showing either a "thumbs up or down," the use of colored cards, or physically moving to a designated area of the room in order to express their solution. The results of these various forms of assessment allow teachers to check for understanding and adapt their instruction according to the students' needs.

Evidence of teachers using formative assessments and adapting their instruction can be seen in teachers' post-observation reflections. In the 2013-2014 school year, every teacher had two formal observations where he or she had to reflect on the effectiveness of their instructional strategies and discuss any adjustments he or she made during the lesson. This year, all teachers are still required to reflect on their lessons and assessment strategies to some degree, either through the same post-observation conferences or through a review of practice.

On a regular basis, Teachers collaborate to review formative assessment results to determine appropriate and necessary changes that need to be made to instructional practices. Data teams meet during a common prep period to discuss the data collected from various forms of formative assessments.

Sheehan High School teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a broad range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. According to the Endicott survey, 72.2 percent of staff agree that teachers and administrators examine a variety and range of student work, common course assessment, common grade-level assessment, and standardized assessments to revise and improve curriculum and instructional practices. This is significantly higher than the aggregate response of 56.5 percent.

All departments are required to create and administer common summative assessments. Each teacher conducts two to three common assessments per course. It is expected that student work from the common assessments be gathered and examined by teachers according to a standardized protocol. In the past, teachers met monthly in their respective data teams to analyze the results and discuss potential changes to the assessment or the corresponding instruction. Currently, common planning time is used for this purpose in every department, as needed.

The art and music department uses common planning time to discuss department business. For example, when teachers instruct a common course, like Art Foundations, they will discuss results on common assessments and exams. They also discuss work in terms of submitting student work for shows and the Literary and Art Magazine. In addition, class assignments or lesson plans are modified in some cases, based on collaborative findings like changing medium or subject matter. For example, value drawings were originally to be done in

pencil. However, teachers found that students understood the concept/skill with charcoal better. With the changes in the Arts National Standards, the art department may request a curriculum re-write soon.

The career technical education (CTE) department uses common planning time as needed to discuss the use of common assessments for assessing student learning objectives. The members of the department teach different courses, and therefore, do not use common assessments. Common assessments are administered to each section of the same course that a teacher instructs. The CTE teachers use common planning time. The State CTE Assessment (formerly called National Occupational Competency Testing Institute) influences CTE department members in different ways. For example, in Design and Production of Wood Products, Home Repair and Maintenance, and Residential Construction, the teacher uses the CTE assessment results to try to address state competencies and to ensure that the program meets acceptable standards. In family and consumer science classes, the teachers use the results from the previous year's State CTE Assessment to formulate their student learning objectives for the current school year.

In the English department, English teachers use common planning time as needed to discuss common assessments and instructional strategies. Currently, the English curriculum is in the process of being aligned with the Common Core State Standards. In English, the Common Core aligned curriculum was implemented in grade nine beginning in the 2013- 2014 and in grade ten beginning in the 2014 - 2015. The junior curriculum will be implemented during the 2015-2016, as it is currently being written. The following year, 2016-2017, the grade twelve elective curriculum will be implemented. Currently, the new curriculum changes are based on

Common Core mandates. English teachers join curriculum committees and collaborate with administrators to rewrite the curriculum.

Grades nine and ten use Common Core-based common assessments, which are performance tasks (four per year). As these units have been implemented, English teachers have brought concerns regarding student learning to the curriculum writing committee in order to revise specific units. These concerns are being reviewed and potential revisions are being considered. Grades eleven and twelve take common midterm and final exams. In grade twelve, English teachers use common non-fiction units on current event topics and administer the same common argumentative essay. Three twelfth-grade teachers currently use the results from writing conferences on major essays in order to improve writing instruction.

In the physical education and health department, teachers do not have common planning time due to facility constraints. However, they collaborate frequently and have common assessments such as, the fitness test, the health assignment, and the Daily Expectation Grade (DEG). In addition, they do make changes to instruction based on student learning. For example, they adjust their warm up activities, student learning objectives (SLOs), indicators of academic growth and development (IAGD), and modifications of equipment, rules, and assessments based on data gathered from the common assessments.

In the mathematics department, there are six common summative assessments in the following courses: Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry. Common planning time is used as needed to discuss instructional practices considered necessary to meet the standards represented in the common assessments. In order to meet the needs of incoming ninth grade students, the Algebra 1 General course was created based on test score data from middle school.

The science teachers of Biology, Integrated Science, and Chemistry use common planning time to meet and discuss formative assessments and to revise common assessments. Common assessments are administered in the following courses: Integrated Science - all levels, and Biology - all levels except AP. These assessments are also common with Lyman Hall High School, Wallingford's sister high school. In addition, all levels of Chemistry, except AP have common assessments. The science department still uses data from the science CAPT to revise their content-based strategies, practices, and assessments.

The science curriculum is structured to allow embedded tasks, such as Science, Technology, and Society (STS) activities, which serve as CAPT prep, as well as student learning in science in the ninth and tenth grades. Assessment results identified a need for greater focus on literacy skills. Many of the science department's instructional practices now include article responses, authentic application, and reading for information, which are skills needed to support students in all subjects. As a result of the implementation of CAPT, the science department designed a course to support the test, which is based on the Connecticut Science Framework. Originally, the course was piloted as Principles of Science, but the course was renamed Integrated Science as a result of adjustments and restructuring. The foundation for the curriculum and specific instructional practices was based on the results from the CAPT and common assessments. The common assessments are flexible to meet students' needs and to help prepare students for the CAPT.

The social studies department uses common planning time as needed. They also make use of common assessments. For example, in the ninth grade U.S. Government and Politics course, there are four common units that culminate in four common assessments. These assessments address informational or argument writing. Initially, two assessments for the U.S.

Government and Politics class that were not appropriate for the age group. The results of 2013-2014 assessments showed that the students could not readily understand the material, which required more background content knowledge than most ninth graders would not possess. The assessments for these units were revised, and the revised assessments are based on primary source analysis for the second year of the course. In the World History course, there are three common assessments or performance tasks. There have been no curriculum changes, but there has been the implementation of periodic writing conferences. Teachers still use standard document-based question (DBQ) style assessments. The U.S. History course is currently being revised to align with the Common Core State Standards and the Career, College, and Civics Life Framework.

The social studies department is one of the departments that uses the College Board database, AP potential, as a guide for identifying students for enrollment in advanced placement courses. According to the College Board website, "AP Potential is a research-driven, free Web-based tool" that helps schools identify students likely to succeed on AP exams. AP Potential is used as one data point in the process for identifying students for advanced placement courses. In addition, the social studies department reviews AP exam results to improve instruction, but does not review additional standardized tests at this time.

The world language department uses common planning time to discuss department business and review test results. For example, those who teach the same language and level collaborate often on formative and summative assessments, frequently using the same ones. Language teachers also collaborate to create written assessments that can be used as data points for SLOs. During the past two years, the curricula in Spanish 1 and 2 have been modified to better suit the needs of all students. Both courses were revised to include more rigorous content,

since many students enter Sheehan with experience in the Spanish language from their middle school coursework. In addition, Spanish 3 teachers changed their curriculum from "telling legends" last year, to "traveling for Spanish" because they thought students had a greater need for the "traveling" vocabulary. All world language assessments are broken down into the following subcategories: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. This format allows teachers to identify the strengths and needs of the students, while still providing teachers the ability to use a variety of instructional methods.

The tracking of student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations was implemented during the second marking period of the 2014-2015 school year. Therefore, there have been no results to review at this time.

Data from sending schools is conveyed through a cumulative folder kept in the school counseling office for each student. The folder contains past grades, results of standardized testing, attendance and disciplinary records, and photo identification. Special Education and 504 information are included in separate folders for identified students. This information is used to create appropriate schedules and class placement (levels) for incoming students. Within the district, there are course-leveling guidelines for incoming ninth graders in English, mathematics, science, social studies, French, and Spanish. These guidelines can be found on the school counseling page of the Sheehan website. The guidelines are reviewed annually and updated as needed. The guidelines for 2015 - 2016 were updated to reflect that Connecticut Mastery Test data is no longer available. Sheehan High School schedules transition PPTs and transition 504 meetings in the spring to assure students a smooth transition to high school from their sending schools. These collaborative meetings ensure that Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 accommodations for freshmen will be appropriate when the student arrives in September.

When a student transfers from Sheehan to another school, the same information is sent to the receiving school. Post-secondary schools do not send information to Sheehan High School regarding student performance. In addition, the district discontinued an alumni survey, which at one time LifeTrack administered to graduates, but this was discontinued in 2010 due to the limited number of responses. The LifeTrack survey followed members of each graduating class for a five-year period of time. The results of these surveys are available in the school counseling and main offices.

Sheehan regularly reviews grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The Endicott survey indicates that 63 percent of the parents surveyed feel that grading practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning, as compared with 68 percent in the aggregate study. The principal's newsletter clearly explains how the grading and reporting reflects core values and beliefs about learning.

After examining the grading practices of the departments, it is clear that these practices are not consistent across all subject areas. Some teachers use a total points method for calculating final grades, while others use a weighted system. In addition, grading practices are not consistent among all members of the same department. For example, some teachers count homework as ten percent of the marking period average, while others count homework as 25 percent or higher. At the start of each school year or semester, teachers enter their course grading policies into PowerSchool to explain how their grades are calculated. While each individual teacher may have a clear grading policy, there are no requirements for uniformity across departments.

In 2013, the district Innovation Team and the Superintendent began investigating mastery-based learning. The team formed a committee comprised of teachers from both Mark T. Sheehan High

School and Lyman Hall High School. The committee focused on understanding the philosophical shift behind moving towards mastery-based learning. The Innovation Team facilitated several professional development opportunities for all high school staff to learn more about the concepts within a mastery-based learning system. Moving towards mastery-based learning will be implemented throughout the district in a purposeful way over the next few years. Expected implementation of mastery-based learning is projected to begin formally in the 2017-2018 school year. Although the current grading platform, PowerSchool, is not able to support a dual grading system, some teachers have started employing strategies to simulate a mastery-based learning system, such as separating "academic achievement" and "habits of work" as two distinct measures within their classes, allowing students to retake assessments after further preparation, rewriting essays after conferencing with teachers, and not giving a grading penalty for late work.

Assessment of and for Student Learning

Executive Summary

The faculty at Mark T. Sheehan High School employs a formal process for assessing school-wide and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations through the use of school-wide rubrics. These rubrics are used in their original forms, and in many cases, adapted forms, for assignment-specific purposes. Samples of student work indicate a familiarity with school-wide rubrics by all departments. In addition, a formal process has been implemented to report the individual student achievement of these 21st century learning expectations to students and their families at the end of each marking period.

Sheehan staff uses data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. This data is gathered from the following sources: common assessments, performance tasks, overall class performance, and standardized tests (e.g., CAPT, PSAT, and SBAC). Sheehan High School has many systems in place to address identified inequities in student achievement like credit recovery program, teacher student assistance program (TSA), Math and Reading Intervention, and English language learners program. In addition, inequities in special education students' achievement are addressed through co-teaching, Structured Study Halls, Learning Strategies Lab, core classes, Life Skills, and vocational education classes, paraprofessional support, peers supporting peers internship, and differentiated instruction by the regular education teachers.

Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate the unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. These learning goals are connected to the school's 21st century learning expectations. Teachers also provide students with the corresponding rubrics prior to summative assessments.

During each unit of study, teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments. Assessments are designed with respect to discipline-specific standards, Common Core standards, and 21st century learning expectations. In addition, Sheehan teachers have piloted new assessment initiatives: the Capstone Experience, and a modified standards-based grading system in one Humanities class, as well as the mandatory SBAC assessment.

The staff of Mark T. Sheehan High School collaborate regularly with each other, building data from common, formative, and summative assessments. The majority of departments in the building have common prep time during which they can examine student work in order to inform instruction. The district currently employs a combination of curriculum resource teachers and curriculum coordinators to provide opportunities for faculty members to meet and review current curricular design and evaluation practices.

The teachers of Mark T. Sheehan High School use formative assessments on a daily basis in order to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. The use of Google Docs and writing conferences allows teachers to give feedback in real time, while other formative assessments like "do nows," "exit slips," the use of individual whiteboards, strategic questioning, and various student response systems such as PollEverywhere, clickers, and Kahoot allow teachers to provide feedback and adjust instruction in real time.

Sheehan High School teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a broad range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice. Teachers use common planning time to examine student work, results of common assessment results, and to share and improve their instructional practices. In addition, these collaborations often lead to teachers changing or making suggestions for changes

to the curriculum. Teachers also serve on curriculum committees with administrators in order to revise curriculum.

Sheehan regularly reviews grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The use of district rubrics, school-wide rubrics, and course/assignment-specific rubrics helps to ensure these practices align with the school's 21st century learning expectations. In addition, after extensive research into mastery-based learning, district-wide implementation of the initiative is projected to begin formally in the 2017-2018 school year.

Based on the Rating Guide for the Standard, Mark T. Sheehan High School judges its adherence to the Standard as ACCEPTABLE.

Strengths:

- All teachers at Mark T. Sheehan High School use the school-wide rubrics to assess achievement of 21st century learning expectations to assess their students on a continual basis.

- Sheehan staff uses data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.

- Sheehan High School has many systems in place to address identified inequities in student achievement.

- Formal collaborative time is provided to a majority of departments.

- Many departments utilize their common prep periods to focus on review and revision of common assessments.

- Teachers use a variety of assessments and strategies to provide immediate feedback to their students.

- The social studies and English departments use professional development time to collaborate and design common standards of assessing argumentative writing.

- Teachers and administrators examine a variety and range of student work, common course assessments, common grade-level assessments, and standardized assessments to revise and improve curriculum and instructional practices.

- Implementation of mastery-based learning in the 2017-2018 school year will ensure further alignment of grading and reporting practices with core values and beliefs.

- Teachers use a multitude of formative and summative assessments to monitor student performance and drive instruction.

Needs:

- Ensure that there is an evaluation plan for reviewing mandatory performance tasks in the curriculum.

- Streamline the number of rubrics to increase common utilization by staff members in assessing 21st century learning expectations.

- Align grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

- Make connections on a consistent basis to the 21st century learning expectations at the beginning of new units of study.

School Culture and Leadership

Mark T. Sheehan High School's School Culture and Leadership
Self-Study Report and Executive Summary Completed by:

2013 – 2014

Cheryl Colwick   Teacher, Physical Education
    Co-Chairperson
Carrie Palange   Teacher, Science
    Co-Chairperson
Paige Sperry   Department Chairperson, Art & Music
    Steering Committee Liaison
Kevin Ainsworth   Teacher, Mathematics
Jason Bouffard   Teacher, Mathematics
Christina Brozyna   Teacher, World Language
Louise Chapman   Teacher, Science
Susan Hudson   Teacher, World Language
David Kimball   Assistant Principal
Pamela Krombel   School Social Worker

2014 – 2015

Cheryl Colwick   Teacher, Physical Education
    Co-Chairperson
Carrie Palange   Teacher, Science
    Co-Chairperson
Paige Sperry   Department Chairperson, Art & Music
    Steering Committee Liaison
Kevin Ainsworth   Teacher, Mathematics
Jason Bouffard   Teacher, Mathematics
Christina Brozyna   Teacher, World Language
Louise Chapman   Teacher, Science
Susan Hudson   Teacher, World Language
Pamela Krombel   School Social Worker
Justin Marciano   Assistant Principal

School Culture and Leadership

The Mark T. Sheehan School community has devoted much time and effort in building a safe, positive, respectful and supportive environment in order for students to foster their own responsibility for learning which results in shared ownership, pride and high expectations for all students and staff. Student and teacher handbooks reflect high expectations for all. At the beginning of each school year, students receive a handbook, which parents can access via the school website. The student handbook is a tool that students are encouraged to carry since it contains a daily planner and outlines the school's behavioral and academic expectations and policies. In addition, students who participate on the school's athletic teams receive an athletic Code of Ethics, which must be signed and returned in order to participate in any sport. Teachers and staff have access to an electronic faculty handbook, which describes expectations, procedures, and policies. The faculty reviews these procedures at faculty meetings throughout the school year in order to develop consistent practices.

The student handbook and the district website clearly explain discipline and attendance policies. In addition, the building administrators visit all English classes at the beginning of the school year to review the rules with students. Attendance letters are sent home during the school year and parents can access an Attendance Frequently Asked Question sheet on the school's website. Data on disciplinary issues and vandalism is consistently collected. Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a program which has been introduced to help promote overall positive behaviors in the school. Members of the PBIS committee have been working regularly to make the program a success. In addition to PBIS, the school has developed a number of ways to acknowledge positive student behaviors that have been observed by faculty

members. For the past 15 years, the Spotlight on Students Award honors the student who adds to the positive climate in the classroom, attends class regularly and on time, contributes, and is caring and supportive of his or her classmates. In addition to press releases to the local paper, P.A. announcements, and email blasts to the staff, the Spotlight Award recipients are recognized, formally, at the Academic Awards Program in May. In addition, members of the faculty and staff can show their appreciation to students for upstanding behavior and/or act of kindness by awarding the Titan Pride Award. These recipients are publicly acknowledged within the school. In addition to student recognition, the teachers recognize one another through the Impact Award at the monthly faculty meetings. The Impact Award recognizes the members of the faculty for a good deed or other noteworthy contribution to the school community. The recipient of this award selects the next person to be recognized and then passes the award plaque onto the next recipient. In addition to the plaque, the recipients are entitled to a preferred parking spot in the front of the school. In addition, the Annual Teacher of the Year and Paraprofessional of the Year awards are presented to members of the faculty who were nominated by his or her colleagues. A building-based selection committee reviews all nominations.

The Sheehan faculty works hard to maintain a positive and accepting school climate. Many activities are designed to showcase Sheehan pride and culture. Examples of activities include: diversity panel, GoRed drug awareness campaign, Day of Silence, anti-bullying day, spirit week activities, Thanksgiving pep rally, the Carini and Samaha Bowls, Internet safety and Veteran's Day assemblies, freshman orientation, open house night, and the eighth grade visitation day. Beginning in 2011, Sheehan's School Climate Committee has met monthly to discuss additional ways to improve school climate. The School Climate Committee discusses the results of surveys given throughout the year to faculty and staff, parents, and students. Through

these results, an updated School Climate Plan was developed and implemented in September 2014.

Sheehan provides students with multiple opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, students can take an independent study with a teacher. To take an independent study, the student needs to approach a teacher, get his or her approval, and obtain a form from the school counseling office. The principal must approve all independent studies. Throughout the school year, the student and teacher collaborate on meeting times and the student is given assignments that they must complete. At the end of the school year, the student is given a final grade.

Beginning in the fall of 2011, students were given access to the student portal of PowerSchool, which allows them to monitor their grades on a regular basis. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, select students were chosen to participate in the Capstone Experience pilot program, which gives them the opportunity to develop creative solutions to community-based concerns. Students have to design a proposal for the concern they are highlighting and present it to a committee for feedback. Once their proposal is accepted, the next step is to implement their plan. Additionally, many students take responsibility for their learning by setting up before and after school extra help and tutoring sessions with their teachers. It is common to see students working individually or in small groups with various teachers outside of the school day. The school also offers after school study halls staffed by teachers in English, mathematics and social studies.

Sheehan students need 25 credits to graduate. Beginning with the class of 2017, students will be required to complete 26 credits in order to graduate, which exceeds the state requirements by five credits. All students are required to complete three credits in science laboratory courses

and two credits of physical education (PE) compared to the state requirements of two science credits and one PE credit. Sheehan students are also required to complete 30 hours of community service by May of their senior year. The school counseling department works with students on developing post-high school plans all four years. The counseling department conducts classroom lessons with students regarding the use of Naviance for goal setting and future planning. Additional advisory lessons focus on PBIS-related topics. For example, students discuss various types of appropriate behaviors in different parts of the building in regards to the characteristics associated with pride, integrity, responsibility, respect, and engagement.

The Mark T. Sheehan school motto, "We Seek to Serve Humanity," aptly applies to the multiple opportunities Sheehan students have to demonstrate their pride in the school community. Students may become involved in Student Council and its popular leaf raking event, drama and musical productions, the annual talent show, the world language International Night, the marching band competitions, the Science Fair, the Celebration of Excellence, and the Poetry Slam. Many of these events are popularized by including them in the daily announcements and by using social networking websites, e.g., Twitter. School clubs and activities are in place to improve the building climate, for example Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), Human Relations, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and Community Revitalization Efforts of Wallingford (CREW).

The students and staff at Sheehan have regular opportunities to participate in charitable events throughout the year. Student volunteers organize three blood drives over the course of the school year. The rate of participation among the eligible student donors has reached 80 percent. Teachers donate funds to a variety of charitable foundations through dress-down days and

Sunshine Committee collections, which include the Multiple Sclerosis Society, the Hydrocephalus Society, the Alzheimer's Association, and Read-to-Grow. These activities all foster a sense of pride in the school.

Sheehan High School is a community that continually builds a safe, positive, respectful and supportive climate that fosters student responsibility for learning. In the 2014 Climate Survey, 90.2 percent of parents responded, "I feel that this school is physically safe." According to the Endicott survey, 73 percent of Sheehan students feel safe at their school. The Sheehan community devotes much time and effort in creating a safe, positive, respectful and supportive environment that allows students the opportunity to generate their own responsibility for learning in a shared ownership by all students and staff.

Mark T. Sheehan High School is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course. Beginning in 2012-2013, all ninth grade students enrolled in Contemporary Global Issues. In addition, the social studies department offers heterogeneously grouped electives; these include Africa, China and Japan, and the Middle East. Additionally, all world language 1 through 4 offerings are grouped heterogeneously. During their tenure at Sheehan, the majority of the students study one of the four world languages offered. In fact, during the 2014-2015 school year, 80 percent of freshmen and 88 percent of sophomores are enrolled in World Language classes. In science, heterogeneity is promoted in electives, such as Marine Biology and Forensics. Students may take Forensics and Marine Biology under a pass/fail option, if they choose. Furthermore, students are heterogeneously grouped in physical education, health, family and consumer science, business, and technology education. Two new courses, introduced in the 2014-2015 school year that will continue to

promote equity are the Capstone Experience and the Crash Course in Creativity. Once capstone is fully implemented, it will be a graduation requirement for all students. For the initial offering of capstone, the class is comprised of students from a variety of academic experiences to foster heterogeneous grouping.

The faculty and staff endeavor to provide equitable access to courses and to create an inclusive learning environment. Special needs students and English language learners (ELL) are provided support in all disciplines. Sheehan has four special education teachers who co-teach with content area specialists and ten paraprofessionals who support students within the classroom. To further support special education students, Sheehan has a Peer Supporting Peer Internship. During the 2014-2015 school year, there were 23 peer interns. Peers supporting peers is a group of students who are paired with a special education student for support in the regular education classroom. This program assists in making more classes accessible to a greater number of students. In addition, Sheehan has a part-time ELL teacher to support the ELL students.

In order to foster an equitable and inclusive environment, since 2006, each academic department has eliminated a level from within their course offerings. For example, the social studies department has not offered a general-level course since the 2006-2007 school year. The majority of would-be general-level students are included in the academic level classes with success. Furthermore, to promote equity the school has a course level change process. Teachers make level recommendations for their students annually and if a student disagrees with a teacher's recommendation, he/she may request a change. The override process requires that a student's parent consult with the department chairperson to discuss both the benefits and potential repercussions of overriding the teacher's recommendation. This process helps promote

equitable access to Sheehan's course offerings. Students may use this process to enter advanced placement (AP) courses across the various disciplines for which a teacher may not have recommended a student.

To promote equity and heterogeneous grouping, the principal proposed unleveling the ninth grade in all classes; however, Central Office and Lyman Hall (Wallingford's sister high school) did not support the proposal. The district requires that the two high schools offer a similar program in the core areas. Additional progress in the area of heterogeneous grouping will require support at the district level. The principal has requested that the district reconvene a district committee to discuss high school levels, which has not met since 2013. Finally, it is expected that leveling will be addressed as the district moves the high schools toward the mastery-based learning model under the oversight of the Great Schools Partnership.

There is a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. An advisory program was implemented on a monthly basis in September 2007. The frequency of these formal meetings has increased over the years. Each student is assigned to an advisor (in addition to his or her school counselor) alphabetically by grade level that allows heterogeneous groupings to occur. Advisors develop rapport with students so they feel comfortable seeking assistance in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. A regularly scheduled thirty-minute advisory has been implemented to connect all students for all four years of the student's high school experience with an average student-to-teacher ratio of 12:1. The school principal designs detailed plans and also utilizes district developed lessons on topics including confidence-building, academic success, goal setting, choices, anti-bullying, responsibility, school spirit,

study skills, organization, conflict resolution, community service, and college selection, which are provided for discussion and completion during advisory meetings. Advisory endeavors to encourage students to engage in meaningful and relevant conversations concerning educational and life skills. Advisory creates an opportunity for students to develop a relationship with an adult member of the school community and acquire skills in 21st century learning expectations.

The school provides additional opportunities for adult members of the school community to get to know students well through the teacher student assistant program, mentors for capstone projects, independent studies, internships, and collaboration with students on school related extracurricular activities.

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, analysis of teaching and learning; use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices; dedicate formal time to implement professional development; apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction and assessment. Staff members routinely engage in reflection and ongoing conversations about student learning, best practices, teaching strategies, and curriculum development formally through department and faculty meetings, data teams, professional development (PD) workshops, and common planning time, and in other areas of the building informally throughout the day. School leaders promote discussion of student learning and well-being by sharing literature on best practices. There are regular opportunities for professional development and common meeting time for teachers. District-wide curriculum management teams provide an opportunity for teachers to collaborate with district curriculum staff members, counterparts from Lyman Hall and even those at the middle school and elementary level to discuss best practices,

develop common assessments, and work to vertically align curriculum. During these meetings, it is common for members to share best practices or information they learned through research or participation at PD workshops, conferences, graduate classes, etc. However according to the Endicott survey, only 35.5 percent of staff felt that the school's professional development enables teachers to acquire and use skills to improve instruction and assessment. This percentage is relatively low according to the aggregate score of 59 percent.

Sheehan staff members attend professional development outside the school system. Some recent examples include, participating in NEASC visits, PBIS, the League of Innovative Schools, and curriculum writing workshops through ACES (Area Cooperative Educational Services). In the last couple of years, money has been allocated directly to the school for the purpose of professional development. Many staff members have received full reimbursement for registration fees. When staff members attend PD, coverage is found for their classes through substitutes from central office and/or teachers in the building are asked to cover classes during their duty periods. The district limits the number of teachers who can attend workshops on a specific day due to availability of qualified substitutes. Throughout the year, staff members are provided with the opportunity to self-direct their own professional growth during department meetings, scheduled PD after school sessions, and faculty meetings. In addition, staff members are pursuing higher degrees that help maintain their knowledge of current best practices. Staff is encouraged to participate in becoming cooperating teachers and mentors to support new teachers (the district provides training). We currently have 20 Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM) trained teachers.

During faculty and department meetings, the principal and staff engage in professional discourse about 21st century learning expectations, including implementing NEASC

requirements, standards-based grading, PBIS, differentiated instruction, and other important educational practices. Furthermore, cabinet meetings are held monthly and address departmental concerns and ideas that influence curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Full day, half-day, and after school PD sessions provide opportunities for staff to collaborate and improve teaching practices. During the 2014-2015 school year, the staff participated in five full days, six half-days, and five 2-hour after school sessions for professional development. Examples include staff participation in team-building activities, self-directed PD, and goal setting. Teachers' schedules are created so that the majority of department members have common departmental planning time to help facilitate collaboration. During this common planning time, teachers discuss lesson planning, common assessments, and classroom management techniques.

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. Wallingford Public Schools has adopted the Connecticut System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) model. The SEED model includes research-based evaluation and supervision processes, in which school leaders evaluate teaching and learning, both formally and informally, using the state-generated SEED rubrics. The SEED model uses the Connecticut Common Core of Effective Teaching (CCT) Rubric and the Connecticut Common Core of Effective Service Delivery (CCSD) Rubric to evaluate staff members. The CCT and CCSD Rubrics are tools that ensure the evidence and evaluative decisions are done consistently and reliably. The standards within the rubrics identify the foundational skills and competencies that pertain to all faculty, regardless of the subject matter, field or age group they teach. The standards articulate the knowledge, skills, and qualities that Connecticut teachers and service delivery staff need to prepare students to meet 21st century challenges to succeed in college, career, and life.

All three Sheehan administrators were required to attend a multi-day training provided by ACES before they could implement the Wallingford SEED Model. This occurred in both the 2013-2014 and the 2014-2015 school years. Although the effectiveness of the SEED evaluation program cannot be rated due to its recent implementation at the state and district levels, the majority of the Sheehan faculty feel that they receive valuable and useful input from their evaluator.

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. The 84-minute alternate day block schedule allows for longer instructional time to promote student engagement, in-depth exploration of topics, and project-based learning. The schedule supports implementation of effective instructional practices and allows for flexible use of time for collaboration, data analysis, formal presentations, and self-reflection. In addition, the schedule supports implementation of effective instructional practices and alternative assessments. Some school initiatives that foster diverse student learning are Reading and Math Intervention courses, a daily Algebra 1G course, Bridge Academy, credit recovery programs, and various internship programs. Common department planning time allows most teachers the opportunity to collaborate regularly. There is weekly common planning time allowed for PBIS, TSA, NEASC, and department collaboration. The benefits of this planning time allow teachers to emphasize depth rather than breadth, and a greater variety of instructional strategies can be implemented into daily lesson plans. The different bell schedules allow for greater flexibility within the schedule. Thoughtful review of the master schedule occurs every year to ensure that it bests supports the school's core values and beliefs about learning and is based on student and departmental requests. Alternative schedules are provided to students for whom a full school

day is especially challenging due to special needs and/or circumstances. Special bell schedules exist for implementation of assembly programs, advisory period, and the fall pep rally. To address the learning needs of all students, courses such as structured study, additional AP lab time, every day algebra, Reading and Math Intervention, and peers supporting peers were created and added to the master schedule. In addition, the schedule allows students to attend the Educational Center for the Arts (ECA) in New Haven, run by ACES, and programs housed at Lyman Hall, including Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Medical Careers, Independent and Community Employment Training (ICE-T), and Alternative Route to Success (ARTS). The A/B schedule also provides the opportunity to share teachers with Lyman Hall High School.

Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. In the 2013-2014 school year, the majority of class sizes at Sheehan High School were at reasonable levels, under 25 students, to allow teachers to meet the learning needs of all students. Fifteen classes were above 25 students in 2013-2014. One Chemistry H, two PE, two Pre-Calculus A, three U.S. History H, two Civics A, and three Health G were all at 26 students. One China and Japan and one Health G were both at 27 students. A significant number of classes fall below 20 students. There are even a handful of class sizes that are below ten students: Advanced Drafting, AP Calculus, Applied Chemistry G, Civics B, Economics A, and Geometry G, Art Studio, Advanced Topics in Math, AP French 5, Music Theory, U.S. Government and Politics B, U.S. History B and many intervention classes. Some classes have size limits due to safety issues and equipment availability. Science, culinary, technology, and computer classes generally have maximum limits placed on them. Physical education, band, music and study halls are at the upper end of the class sizes. Due to the nature of these classes, they may reach sizes above 25 students.

In the 2014-2015 school year, there were 16 classes that are over 25 students. Most significantly, nine English classes are between 26 and 29 students. In addition, one Band, three Chorus, one Pre-Calculus H and two PE fall above 25. As in previous years, the majority of class enrollment falls below 25. A handful fall below ten, including Advanced Drafting and Design, AP Art Studio, AP French 5, AP Spanish 5, Biology G, German 1A, World History B, and World Literature G are among these (second semester data not included for 2014-2015). The majority of class sizes provide for sufficient personalization and to ensure student achievement of school expectations.

Most Sheehan students feel that their class sizes are appropriate. According to the Endicott survey, 81.9 percent of students feel that class sizes are reasonable. This is well above the aggregate for students, which was 72.7 percent. Seventy-two and seven-tenths percent of Sheehan parents felt that their son or daughter's class sizes allow the teachers to meet his or her individual needs compared to the aggregate at 62.0 percent. Fifty-nine and five-tenths percent of teachers felt their class sizes enabled them to meet the learning needs of individual students. The aggregate was 51.1 percent, and the average falls slightly above this level. In summary, the school results align fairly well with the aggregate. Parents and students reported higher satisfaction with class sizes, which was true of the aggregate, too. Although teachers expressed a lower satisfaction than both parents and students, the numbers still align slightly above the aggregate. Taking into account the clear results from the Endicott survey, students, parents and teachers all felt class sizes were reasonable. Although a few classes fall above 25 students, using the Endicott survey, Sheehan High School's class numbers range in a reasonable level to allow teachers to meet the needs of individual students.

PowerSchool is used to design the master schedule each year. After the initial schedule is produced, multiple manual checkpoints are put in place to ensure equitable and reasonable class sizes. Department chairpersons, the assistant principal in charge of scheduling, and a data clerk all play a role in developing fair, balanced, and smaller class sizes. In rare instances, when class sizes get too large or a class is in danger of being cancelled due to limited teacher coverage, a teacher in the department may be asked to teach an extra class with pay to alleviate the discrepancy. A few math, science, world language, and family and consumer science teachers have taken this route in the past. In some instances, smaller elective classes have to be cancelled to balance the size of larger required classes. In addition, school counselors are aware of class size limits and notify teachers of unique circumstances when more students need to be added during the school year (e.g., transfer students, graduation requirement).

The principal is an instructional leader in the building living and modeling the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The principal is visible in the building during the school day and after school activities. The principal and assistant principals are present at the main entrances when students are entering and exiting the building, and monitoring the cafeteria and senior court during both lunch waves. The principal attends many school events that emphasize the school's core values and beliefs, including: athletic competitions, music performances, art shows, International Night, dances, musical and drama productions, awards nights, National Honor Society Induction, Oktoberfest Celebration, and orientations for eighth graders. The principal has stated that every decision made is based on what is best for our students socially and academically.

The principal plays an active and supportive role working with others at Sheehan and in the district. The monthly cabinet meetings provide an opportunity for the principal, department

chairpersons, and assistant principals to assist in decision-making. During Cabinet Meetings, the principal asks for input from department chairperson s in developing the school budget, master schedule, parent engagement goals, and suggesting new courses. All of these suggestions must have justification to align with the school's core values and beliefs. Other key cabinet meeting topics include high school reform, teacher evaluation plan, school funding, and global best practices. At cabinet meetings, the principal also leads discussions on Great Schools Partnership's Global Best Practices. The monthly liaison committee meetings are an open dialogue to address faculty concerns and to ensure that communication is direct and consistent between teachers and administration. One teacher volunteers to organize the liaison committee meetings. All teachers are given the opportunity to suggest concerns. Various other teachers volunteer to attend meetings. Administrators are present at the liaison meetings to help address staff concerns. Monthly faculty meetings are used for school-wide initiatives to be developed with input from teachers of all disciplines and support staff. TSA, NEASC, school-wide rubrics, school climate, differentiation, and personalization of learning are a few topics covered at faculty meetings. The principal takes an active role on the science curriculum management team and offers strategies that will strengthen the district's science curriculum. For example, she engaged in discussions that addressed the number of hours of experimentation required per year and the percentage of labs that are to be inquiry-based, which resulted in minimum requirements for middle school and high school laboratory experiences. The principal is also a member of groups that work with various staff including TSA and the School Climate Committee.

The principal has initiated or promoted many beneficial programs that reflect Sheehan's core values. The principal organized data team coaching sessions with a data team consultant in order for teachers to better interpret classroom data that was being collected. The principal

pushed to have a string consultant hired to work with students and teachers at the high school level. This has just expanded beyond the high schools to the elementary and middle school. The principal created and implemented the Peers Supporting Peers Internship. This program connects a special needs student with a peer model. The principal sets high standards for the faculty. When hiring staff, the principal strives to find teachers with strong content background and best practice skills. The principal recommended "transition" workshops be offered to staff who were laid off to help them find jobs, which was implemented and appreciated by those who needed to take advantage of this service. Additionally, the principal began the Spotlight on Student award. This award highlights a different student each month in a different department.

The principal demonstrates Sheehan's core values while guiding and mentoring others at Sheehan, in the district, and beyond. The principal serves as a mentor to numerous Sheehan faculty who are working towards their educational leadership degree. The principal has presented at various district PD sessions. The most recent was the Models of Excellence professional development in 2014. In addition, the principal organizes and implements numerous professional development opportunities for Sheehan faculty during designated PD days and after-school PD sessions. Some of the topics that were covered include team-building at Bertini Park, NEASC preparation, school-wide rubric creation and revision, and the new evaluation program (SEED). The principal frequently shares instructional information with staff, whole school, departments or individuals in the form of email, hard copy, Twitter, and discussions at faculty meetings. Colleagues seek out the principal's advice and guidance, not only from within the district, but from neighboring districts as well (e.g., NEASC, Southern Connecticut Conference, new district principals).

In conjunction with other district and building leaders, the principal strives to enhance safety and security measures as it relates to Sheehan High School. Examples of these security measures include, determining the location of cameras, staff ID's, and parking lot procedures. The principal also meets weekly with an officer from the Community Policing Department to discuss school and community occurrences. Through numerous examples, it is evident that the principal has a varied role in working with other assistant principals, teachers and other staff to provide instructional leadership that is aligned with school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.

Teachers, students and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles by serving on committees that advise the principal and make decisions that improve teaching and learning. Teachers contribute to decision-making within in the school and district, and administration hears teacher voices through the liaison committee, cabinet meetings, TSA, PBIS, technology committee, school-based professional development committee, School Climate Committee, and hiring committees. Teachers raise concerns to the liaison committee, and as a result, the administration has addressed several issues at the building level. The liaison committee also helps to clarify many school policies and routines for the faculty at large, for example, the assignment of duties and issues with the cleaning and heating of the building. This past year, the technology committee convened and began working to train staff on existing technology and help integrate current technology into every teacher's classroom.

When new faculty is hired within the school, many people play a role in the process. When new administrative candidates interview for positions within the district, teachers, parents, and students serve on the hiring committees in a collaborative capacity. When new teachers or long-terms subs are hired, department chairpersons are involved in the process. During the

selection of head coaches, the athletic director, parents, other coaches, and student-athletes are all involved. The School Climate Committee provides decision-making roles for students, teachers, and parents. A student representative, usually the Student Council president, reports at monthly Board of Education (BOE) meetings on student events such as fundraisers, blood drives, sports, plays, and presentations. According to the Endicott survey, 60.8 percent of parents agree that they have opportunities to be involved in important school related decisions. This is higher than the NEASC Academic Year Aggregate, which was 53.2 percent for parents.   The administration invites all parents to participate in PTAC, which meets every month.   This schedule of meetings is twice the amount required by PTAC bylaws. In addition, the principal keeps parents informed through email blasts, the Mark T. Sheehan Twitter account, a monthly newsletter, and the school's website.   The administration regularly distributes surveys and questionnaires to constituents in order to collect data and feedback, which contribute to the principal's decision-making process. There are many opportunities for teachers, students, and parents to have their voices heard in the decision-making process. Once group decisions are made, the faculty as a whole supports the decision.

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. Teachers at Mark T. Sheehan High School continue to show leadership focused on school improvement and student learning. Teachers serve on, and are actively engaged in, leading committees that review and revise curriculum, assessment strategies, instructional practices, and school organization practices. Teachers take on leadership roles in various clubs, organizations, sports teams, and committees to recommend, implement, and lead ways to improve school climate and student engagement. Some examples are School Climate Committee, TSA case managers, School Technology

Committee, Superintendent's Faculty Council, Capstone Committee, Curriculum Management Teams, Standards-Based Grading Committee, Unified Sports, the Variety Show, spirit week, Titan Pride recognition program, PBIS team, and numerous blood drives. Teachers demonstrate leadership by defining, updating, and developing curriculum throughout the school year and over the summer. The mathematics, social studies, physical education, health education, English, and world language departments have all had curriculum writing sessions in the past two years. In English, math, science, and social studies, the department chairpersons have reduced teaching loads in order to work on continuous improvement of their content areas, including collaboration with central office and the department chairpersons at Lyman Hall. In the 2013-2014 school year, central office also reinstated department chairperson positions in art and music and physical education; however, these teachers have full teaching loads. Currently, the career and technical education (CTE) and world language departments have an assistant principal assigned to them as department liaisons. At monthly cabinet meetings, there are opportunities for department chairpersons to discuss concerns with administration. In the 2013-2014 school year, 18 teachers took on leadership roles with curriculum management teams in district and in 2014-2015, 16 teachers continue to serve on these management teams. Many teachers have engaged in curriculum writing at various points through the 2013-2014 school year. In 2013-2014, 128 days of professional development were devoted to curriculum writing. In addition, the School Climate Committee and Sheehan Sunshine Committee are both teacher run groups that improve the overall climate and life of the school. Teachers, school counseling personnel, and administrators collaborate frequently with students and families to solve problems and engage students in learning. Based on the number of opportunities teachers have, and the number of staff involved in leadership positions, a variety of teachers exercise initiative and take on

leadership roles in the school community, though these roles are often taken on by the same core group of staff members.

In keeping in line with the district's core values and beliefs, the school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The district holds monthly high school principals meetings, in which the superintendent and assistant superintendents meet with all of the administrators from both high schools. These meetings address the progress of district initiatives and implementation, develop new ideas, and revise old ones in order to meet the needs of students and continue the focus on moving the district toward meeting all of the items in the strategic plan. The central office administrators also meet monthly with all of the building administrators in the district to collaborate and address all of the schools' progress toward the district's core values and beliefs, reflect on and revise antiquated systems that may still be in place, and continue the constructive discussion about student learning in each of the respective buildings. The building principal, in conjunction with the superintendent, also meets with business owners in town for Business Think Tank meetings where local business owners can share their ideas about what skills students will need in order to succeed in the workplace, collaborate on curriculum ideas and shifts, and reflect upon what skills students are currently graduating with and ways to improve or enhance those skills during and after high school. Additionally, the assistant superintendent organizes the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee meetings, which addressed the development, delivery, revision, and relevance of the current curriculum in the schools. Administrators and teachers are encouraged to attend. In the 2014-2015 school year, the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee has yet to meet, in the past it met quarterly. The board of education is also very active, with many of the members

volunteering multiple nights a week to attend various activities and meetings throughout the district. They hold multiple monthly meetings, collaborate with the superintendent, and produce a monthly calendar that lists of all the events they are involved in within the district. The board of education has all of their meetings videotaped, which can be found online at: http://www.wpaa.tv/#. The board of education has an active role in decision-making, and members are reflective in their decisions that impact student learning at various levels. Furthermore, the district has a Parent-Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) that meets at the school levels and the district level. The building administrators meet with the Sheehan PTAC school on a monthly basis and discuss school and district information the parents find important. The school-based PTAC provides parent insight into programs, initiatives, and other related ideas that impact the school community, and that information is then used by the administration to reflect upon and adjust the aforementioned to meet the needs of the students, teachers, and parents. Lastly, the superintendent has an open communication with the school's principal, and they collaborate on decisions that will impact the functioning of the school and further push the district toward its achievement of the 21st century learning expectations.

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school and have communicated through the job description and district policies the principal's decision-making authority to lead the school. The principal does collaborate with various groups and councils and works with staff, parents, and community members to develop programs and instructional strategies that represent the diverse perspectives of all stakeholders. The principal does engage the school community to establish goals that support the school's vision and beliefs and monitor the progress of those goals. Additionally, the principal is given the authority to shape the school culture in a way that fosters collaboration

among the staff, parents, students, and the community while working to establish rigorous academic, social, and civic standards for all students. However, according to the Endicott survey and with an aggregate of 59 percent, 26.6 percent of the staff believes the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school, and 35.4 percent of the staff was undecided. Included in the same survey, with an aggregate of 64.6 percent, 83.8 percent of parents felt the principal has sufficient decision-making authority. There seems to be a clear discrepancy between the defined role and ability the principal has in decision-making and authority and the staff's perception of the role and authority the principal holds. Conversely, almost 84 percent of the parents disagree with the staff's perception. This number suggests that the staff at Sheehan High School believes the superintendent and school board lead from the top down and limit the principal's ability to make decisions but the parents do not. However, after a meeting and discussion with both the principal and the superintendent, both said the principal has all the autonomy and decision-making authority to lead the school, though the superintendent did say he sometimes has to get involved for various reasons. He said his job was to foster leadership and learning, and the only way to do that was for him to allow his principals to lead their buildings. The sentiment was echoed by the principal, as she felt she has complete authority to lead Sheehan and make all decisions related to the educational process at the school.

The school board understands Sheehan's Core Values and Beliefs and fully supports comprehensive course offerings at the high school. The implementation of course and program offerings like the University of Connecticut Early College Experience, Middlesex Community College and Career Pathways program, and the Regional Agriculture Education Center option for Sheehan students are just a few examples of how the school board and superintendent support

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the principal's desire to have multiple avenues of achievement for Sheehan's students. The principal also works with staff to plan, create, and implement various programs that involve parents and community members throughout the school year. The school board, the superintendent, and the principal collaborate on school-based policies for staff selection, evaluation, professional development, and school improvement. Additionally, when working with the budget, the school board and superintendent allow the principal to develop and present an annual budget; however, the superintendent and school board have the final decisions when it comes to allocating money to the school and district. The principal has the autonomy to decide where money and resources go once the district approves the budget and allocates funds to Sheehan. Lastly, in a two high school district it is sometimes difficult for the principal of Sheehan to move ideas forward because there must be shared similarities between both high schools. Overall, the school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school in achieving its 21st century learning expectations and provide a well-rounded education to all students.

School Culture and Leadership

Executive Summary

The Mark T. Sheehan community is rich in school culture and Titan pride. This fosters a positive environment that is safe, reflective and supportive. While encouraging individuality and independent thinking, teachers hold students to high expectations. Sheehan High School has an active advisory program in which all students have the opportunity to build personal connections with an adult in the building. The block schedule and reasonable class sizes allow for greater flexibility and the ability to meet the learning needs of a variety of students.

Mark T. Sheehan High School has adopted the majority of the components of the Connecticut System for Educator Evaluation and Development. Although this process is relatively new, it is designed to be a more formal, research-based process to improve student learning. All Sheehan administrators have attended formal training in this process. Sixty-eight percent of the staff at Sheehan felt the SEED process played an important role in their instructional practices.

Professional development and collaboration involves many unique areas. Full day professional development (PD), half-day PD, after school PD, summer paid PD, and personal attendance at conferences provide a variety of opportunities for self-improvement and reflection. In addition, discourse on professional development is encouraged at faculty and department meetings. It is unfortunate that a few conference requests have been denied by central office due to substitute coverage.

Many teachers are involved in a variety of aspects of school culture and community. Teachers serve on and are actively engaged in leading committees that review and revise

curriculum, assessment strategies, and instructional practices. Teachers contribute to decision-making, and administration hears their voices through the liaison, technology, School Climate, school safety, and hiring committees. Most recently, effective communication between administrators and teachers has improved the overall maintenance of the building.

Through faculty meetings, professional development, and the evaluation process, the principal clearly sets high expectations for teachers. Her presence at numerous school functions reflects a pride and appreciation for Sheehan culture. The principal makes effective use of email, Twitter, monthly newsletters, and morning announcements to keep students, teachers, and parents aware of Sheehan events and other announcements. An active involvement in the Parent teacher Advisory Council (PTAC), Science Curriculum Management Team, cabinet meetings, and administrative meetings demonstrates the principal's desire and ability to work with and guide others in upholding the school's core values. There is a perception among teachers that the principal is not given full decision-making authority at Sheehan, but parents do not hold the same perception.

The school board understands Sheehan's Core Values and Beliefs and fully supports comprehensive course offerings at the high school. The school board, the superintendent, and the principal collaborate on school-based policies for staff selection, evaluation, professional development, and school improvement. At times, due to having two high schools in the district, the principal has difficulty moving ideas forward because in most cases there must be shared similarities between both high schools. However, the principal does believe that she has complete authority to lead Sheehan make all decisions related to the educational process at the school.

Based on the Rating Guide for the School Culture and Leadership Standard, Mark T. Sheehan High School judges their adherence to the Standard as ACCEPTABLE.

Strengths:

- The Sheehan community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture.

- Sheehan High School is committed to limiting tracking to foster heterogeneity and to challenge each student with higher expectations.

- The Sheehan community is rich in school culture and Titan pride.

- The advisory program allows students to build personal connections with adults in the building.

- The block schedule allows flexibility for instruction and collaboration.

- The majority of classes are at an adequate size.

- The principal sets high expectations for the teachers and students in the building.

- Teachers are involved in a variety of aspects of school culture and community.

- The principal is an instructional leader, respected in the building whose advice is sought by peers in and out of the district.

Needs:

- Reinstate the career and technical education and world language department chairpersons.

- Define the collaboration that occurs between the superintendent, school board, and the principal in order to achieve 21st century learning expectations.

- Design and implement building-based professional development that addresses instructional strategies and assessment.

- Encourage/create more opportunities for teachers to attend non-mandated professional workshops to foster new growth in their content area.

- Maintain current staffing to keep teacher-student ratios at adequate levels in all areas, specifically core areas.

Standard on School Resources for Student Learning

**Mark T. Sheehan High School's School Resources for Student Learning
Self-Study Report and Executive Summary Completed by:**

2013 – 2014

Cynthia Frank	Teacher, English
Co-Chairperson	
Nicholas Ives	Library Media Specialist
Co-Chairperson	
Alan Oblon	Teacher, Technology Education
Steering Committee Liaison	
William Davis	Teacher, Special Education
Michele Dwyer	Teacher, Mathematics
Wendy Eaton-Soto	School Counselor
Diane Gibson	School Nurse
Beth Murphy	Parent
Heather O'Connell	Teacher, Social Studies
Zenon Popko	Director of Guidance
Amy Rogers	Teacher, Art
Mark Smolley	Teacher, Science
Christine Takores	Department Chairperson, Special Education

2014 – 2015

Cynthia Frank	Teacher, English
Co-Chairperson	
Nicholas Ives	Library Media Specialist
Co-Chairperson	
Alan Oblon	Teacher, Technology Education
Steering Committee Liaison	
Jamie Canny	Teacher, Social Studies
William Davis	Teacher, Special Education
Michele Dwyer	Teacher, Mathematics
Wendy Eaton-Soto	School Counselor
Erica Forselius	School Counselor
Diane Gibson	School Nurse
Beth Murphy	Parent
Zenon Popko	Director of Guidance
Amy Rogers	Teacher, Art
Mark Smolley	Teacher, Science
Christine Takores	Department Chairperson, Special Education

School Resources for Learning

Mark T. Sheehan High School has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Classroom teachers view support services personnel as integral to the success of students achieving their goals in conjunction with the 21st century learning expectations. While reflection has always been integral to the program review process, since the Capital Region Education Council (CREC) review there is an additional emphasis. Faculty and administration have spent a great deal of time and resources evaluating the support structure of the school and ensuring that it adequately meets the needs of students. The Endicott survey indicated Sheehan excelled in staff perception of the direct intervention strategies (86 percent in agreement) relative to the aggregate results (76 percent) as well as parental perception in which Sheehan exceeded the aggregate survey data by five percentage points. These results are due to the emphasis placed on improving intervention services faculty wide. The Teacher Student Assistance Team (TSA) is a long-standing program. The TSA has been a fixture at Sheehan High School for more than twenty years, which is long before mandated Student Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) initiatives across the nation and our state. The TSA meets to discuss and assist students who are not identified as special education or who do not have a 504 plan to find ways to assist the student. The team includes the principal, along with a core group of teachers, the school psychologist, the school social worker, the student's school counselor, and the student themselves. The team discusses the current issues, both academic and social, that the student faces, and coordinates a plan to help them achieve success. Academic issues are addressed by reviewing teacher reports at the

meeting, and mentors and/or case managers are sought out to create a personal relationship with the student and encourage them back to successful practices. The TSA team also follows up on the progress of the students in order to ensure that objectives are being met, and if there are additional obstacles detected, to revise the plan.

To assist in identifying the students that are at the most risk, all incoming freshmen are tested to see if they qualify for intervention services in the math and reading areas. Two staff members, one part-time reading interventionist who teaches three classes and one math interventionist who teaches two intervention classes in addition to regular courses offered by the math department, supply intervention services. Students who do not initially qualify for intervention services, yet find themselves struggling in their classes, will be identified by their counselor and a meeting will be scheduled to identify areas of concern. For example, school counselors meet with students individually to come up with an academic plan and to reinforce the academic goal that is part of the Student Success Plan. They often contact parents and recommend strategies such as monitoring grades in PowerSchool and open communication with teachers. In September, the school counseling department conducts a freshman classroom lesson related to school success and creating a vision for high school. School counselors collaborate with case managers, teachers, and administrators to support students' needs. These efforts are designed to enhance school climate and support student engagement. Supports for students include an after school study hall where students can go for support two days a week. There is also a late bus three days a week so that all students can stay for extra help. Furthermore, the athletic department gives additional support. The requirements for student-athletes have been significantly increased. Prior to these changes, a student had to meet the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) requirement of passing four classes to be eligible to participate in a sport. The current policy stipulates that student-athletes have to maintain a passing grade in all classes and an overall average of 70. If a student is in danger of becoming ineligible, the athletic director and coaching staff will leverage their relationship with the student to seek out ways to help them return to student success.

When students meet with difficulties that the aforementioned strategies cannot ameliorate, there are further levels that provide more intensive assistance for Sheehan to offer its students. The school nurse provides health services, specifically with evaluations that may lead to an emergency action (EAP) plan for that student or further referral to more expert personnel in the community. Students whose primary issues lie in language difficulties may be evaluated and if determined to be an English language learner (ELL), will get supplemental assistance. Previously, ELL students were sent to our sister high school, Lyman Hall High School. However, the last three years have seen all of Sheehan's ELL population return to their home school, and staffing has been provided to assist these students in the acquisition of the English language. A professional development in-service related to English language learners was also provided to staff as these students prepared to return to their home school. An ELL teacher is on the premises for one class period each day to instruct ELL students. Depending on the needs of the student, he or she will have one or two classes scheduled with the ELL teacher. When the primary challenge to a student lies in his or her private life out of school, our school psychologist is the first to evaluate the need. Working with the school social worker and counselors, there are a number of groups that exist for the purpose of allowing students to find commonality and support from others who have similar experiences. Some of these groups have dealt with the loss of a parent, substance abuse in the family, anger management, anxiety, and social skills for students who do not possess those skills. The school social worker also holds two groups with the youth officers, one for boys on anger management and one for girls on self-esteem and at risk issues. Both the school psychologist and school social worker meet with students individually to address individual needs.

Outside of Sheehan, additional programs supplement the school's efforts to ensure that students with needs beyond that of the high school will have equal opportunities. Collaboration within the district and the larger community enhance student success. One example is the Bridge Academy, held in August, which is a Wallingford district based program that works with incoming freshmen who might have difficulty with the transition to high school. It was a four-day summer program that met with students who are identified as at-risk and teaches them strategies to be successful prior to the start of the school year to encourage a successful transition to high school. They also traveled to Central Connecticut State University to motivate them about thinking what awaits them beyond high school if they are able to have a successful four years at Sheehan. If along the way students find they are have trouble passing a course, but can achieve at least a grade average of 50 in their class, they may participate in summer school. Grade 9 students with a failing average in English or Algebra 1 at the mid-year are eligible to participate in a newly implemented credit recovery program. Last year the program utilized Odysseyware, but the program is under review for implementation this school year. This program supplements the student's class, allowing them to solidify concepts at their own pace, so that a lapse in one year does not occur, leading to a derailment of their high school success plan. If students continue to have difficulty in school, the Educational Enhancement Program (EEP) is designed as an alternative to the traditional high school classroom. Up to thirty students attend in an alternative setting with an emphasis on personalized learning in small group settings. There are also twenty-two seats, fifteen for high school students and seven for middle school students, available in the Alternative Route to Success (ARTS) program, which is located at Lyman Hall. Admission to this district-wide program is determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with a student's social and emotional needs.

From a school-wide perspective, there has been an effort to expand an advisory program that was initiated in 2005. Many of the programs provided through the advisory program are designed to provide social and civic lessons in ethical and moral behavior. When students do find that they have issues that cannot be met, and although it is not the purpose of the program, many advisors help steer students into many of the intervention services that are available throughout the school. The focus has been on reaching out to students and getting to know them, and assisting them if they request help, but the greater mission is to implant within them the ethical skills that are needed to become mature and active members of the community in which they live today. The objectives for the advisory lessons are accomplished through specific lessons developed by the district-wide advisory committee, as well as other sources generated by the principal of the school. While there is no hard data to confirm it, the program has been growing in success, and there is a connection that many teachers form within their student groups.

Mark T. Sheehan High School provides a great deal of information to families, essentially those in need, about student support services. The students are first introduced to the school in October as eighth graders when they are brought over from their school. The first formal introduction to the school for parents is through an evening parent and student orientation held in January prior to the start of a student's freshman year. This program introduces the high school with a focus on course selection and high school opportunities. Department chairpersons and school counselors are available to give advice and to discuss concerns with parents and students. This is followed by a freshman orientation program for students that takes place over the summer after eighth grade, in addition to a Ninth Grade Parents Program that is designed to introduce parents to the school in September. During the freshman developmental lessons

conducted by the counseling department, students are introduced to a number of programs available for extra help, and students are informed of people they can contact if they need support. This also prepares students in the eventuality that they are identified as needing intervention. They are aware that there is a desire to help them succeed, not penalize poor performance. During the Freshman/New Student Orientation Program in August, students are given a building tour, are taught how to read their schedules, and they practice opening their lockers. Athletic information night is an evening when families come as a group to meet the coaching staff and learn about the different sports that their children might become involved in. This is also a time where academic expectations for athletes are expressed and the Athletic Director talks about the relationship between the coach and the player and how coaches can serve as resources to help in case they have trouble in the classroom. All of these support services are echoed in the Principal's Newsletter, which is mailed and/or emailed to students, families, and staff. At Sheehan High School, the athletic department reaches out to parents in our district in many ways. The school's athletic director sends out numerous updates regarding results, cancellations, accomplishments, and general news via Twitter. The athletic director also requires each team to conduct a preseason players and parents meeting to go over team rules, academic expectations, sportsmanship as well as parental expectations. Our athletic department also hosts an eighth grade sports informational night in the spring for those parents who have student athletes entering our high school in the fall. Additionally, our athletic department hosts three seasonal awards nights that acknowledge team and individual athletic and academic accomplishments throughout the year. At the end of each sports season, our athletic department administered a survey created by the CIAC to parents to gather data on parent perceptions and feedback. This survey will be administered each year, with the data being viewed by the athletic

director and the principal. Additionally the school's athletic director sends emails to student-athlete parents monthly for all students at risk of becoming academically ineligible as determined by the student-athlete eligibility policy. The school counseling department has an array of services at their disposal. They share information through evening programs such as the post-high school planning night and financial aid night. In addition, counselors hold individual meetings with students and parents, such as the junior post-high school meeting. Classroom developmental guidance lessons are another method of delivery.

An Open House and four parent/teacher conferences are held each year, yet the greatest improvement to communication with parents has been through electronic means. The embrace of the cloud in PowerSchool has allowed us to communicate grade information to students and parents in a timely and relevant fashion. Teachers are expected to update their gradebooks weekly to provide accurate grade information to parents. Students also have access, and anecdotal feedback is that most of them check on their grades regularly. There are also a number of Twitter accounts available for parents to follow different groups throughout the school. The most followed accounts are @mtsathletics, (athletic department), @sheehanlive (morning announcements), and @mtsheehanhs (school information). Organizations such as the music department, Student Council, as well as other groups, have individual accounts. All are listed together by a Twitter list that was shared with parents at Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) to increase their viewership and efficacy. The library has a dedicated corps of interns that keep an updated blog of some of the new materials and services that are available to the student body and faculty (titancast.blogspot.com). The Sheehan website advertises a number of public events and information posted through video services. The school counseling department commissioned a video that highlights the services they offer and informs students on how they

can access these services. This is included as part of the school counseling page on Sheehan's website. The school counseling department has also developed a "How To Guide" for Naviance, a college and career readiness platform, that is a Power Point voice over. This is on the website and on the homepage of Naviance for students and parent to access. A video on matching Naviance to the Common Application also serves as a reference. Naviance is a web database used by students and parents as a future planning tool. It allows students to investigate careers, post-secondary options, and is used in the post-high school application process. It is basically an electronic portfolio that houses the Student Success Plan and follows the student from grades 6 through 12. Parents can access a student's account as well and this provides a springboard for family discussion. Sheehan delivers an effective range of coordinated services through a technological medium. The core student information service is PowerSchool, which has been fully implemented throughout the entire school district. Over the last few years, administrators and school counselors have worked to enhance their use of the tool to better integrate student services. A number of database customizations has allowed a robust information store that fits the needs of our students and teachers. For example, student network information is located in the database, and any teacher or staff member with access can get them on a computer quickly, without the need for red tape. Students who have frequent disciplinary actions have them recorded in PowerSchool, in order to ensure that all of the support staff will have access to it when assisting the student. The school counselor and the psychologist, for example, will review recent actions taken to correct a student's behavior by the assistant principal to counsel them toward more proactive behaviors. This information is also entered into the School Wide Information Service (SWIS) to provide proper Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) have their file managed by IEP Direct,

which ensures continuity of language and format across all special education managers. The career coordinator, who is shared between the two high schools, was added to the services available to the counseling department during the 2013-2014 school year. She is tasked with reaching out to community members who can provide real employment experience. There are job fairs, college representative visits, and other events that parents are notified through electronic and printed means. While school counseling began these programs, the career coordinator has been able to enhance the services offered. The career coordinator, in conjunction with the school counseling department, also holds a post-secondary fair with a wide representation of post-high school options including colleges, military agencies, technical schools, public service careers, etc. This year she will be holding a Post-High School Kick Off for juniors with a motivational speaker. All of these initiatives are advertised to families through print and electronic outreach including Twitter. Health services sends out an annual "health precaution list" through email to teachers. It lists all of the challenges to student health that teachers need to know about.

Library personnel use technology to coordinate their services by using the Follet Destiny library management software. Faculty keeps an accurate record by annual inventories, as well as sectional audits to ensure that materials are where they should be. Circulation of books and technology is through this system, and students all have access to this information by being able to log in to examine their student record. For those who do not, overdue notices are generated and passed out in advisory monthly. Students approaching graduation receive multiple reminders, as well as mailings at home in the hope of avoiding loss. Destiny software also allows students and teachers to create lists of materials that they would like by logging into the

system and creating a bookshelf. Furthermore, library personnel can curate teacher specific resources by request, and prepare lists for their students use.

School counseling services has an adequate number of certified and licensed personnel to support the school mission and core values. There are currently three full-time counselors and a full-time counseling director alongside a social worker and a school psychologist. There is also part-time assistance provided for the social worker and psychologist. While needs are being met, there is an imbalance among the allocations of students from year to year amongst the counselors. During the 2013-2014 school year, the three full-time counselors maintained a caseload of 254, 245, 268, and the counseling director maintained a caseload of 146 students. In the 2012-2013 school year, counselors maintained 247, 255, 267, and 163 respectively. In the 2011-2012 school year, counselors carried a caseload of 247, 243, 262, and 174 students respectively. While the number of enrolled students has decreased, the caseload of each full-time counselor has increased. Across the three full-time counselors there is a disparity upwards of ten students, while the disparity between the counseling director and the full-time counselors ranges from 99 students up to 122 students. The Endicott survey indicated that while student responses were statistically close to the aggregate data, staff and parents believed that counseling staff did an excellent job of meeting with students and communicating with students, often by ten percentage points or more. This is indicative of the hard work and dedication of school counseling to provide top-notch services throughout the service continuum.

There is a clear developmental program that the counseling department follows to ensure student success. There are clear, board-approved curriculum documents that identify the expectations of the counseling departments throughout the district, and Sheehan has expanded upon that framework in order to provide the most robust program that is possible. In total, this

plan is termed the "Student Success Plan" with the goal of making sure that every student finds success at the high school level. To deliver this program, every grade is instructed by school counselors in age-appropriate topics. PSAT review and instruction is introduced as a precursor to testing for college success. The use of Naviance is prominent throughout the counseling experience. Students continually set academic, career, and personal/social goals in Naviance during classroom developmental guidance lessons. Students track interests, which lead them to college and career selection in a collaborative setting with their parents and counselor. Students take a career inventory in Naviance as a sophomore, which is then linked to course selection. Students select courses based on future career interests for preparation purposes and to explore options. As juniors, students conduct a post-secondary search in Naviance to generate a list of schools for further exploration. Teachers submit their recommendations for students to college through Naviance as well, making for a seamless digital environment to organize student's lives. Naviance also forms the foundation for the coordination of the counseling session, as it hosts and aggregates the data in one place so that they can discuss the results of student work together. Counselors meet frequently with students in a variety of venues that are timed during the year to meet the needs of the students at their given grade level. There are developmental lessons that the counselors deliver in classrooms, and all counseling staff coordinate to make sure that all students have an equal education on all of the different topics in the plan. In fact, by the middle of October, the school counseling department has delivered developmental guidance lessons at each grade level, therefore having seen every student in the school. While the developmental guidance lessons are being conducted, counselors are meeting with seniors individually regarding the application process and are meeting freshman to get to know them as a follow up to a classroom lesson related to academic success and making the most of high school.

Counseling staff meets with every student individually each year. Each student has an individual course selection appointment to discuss course programming and future goals. Parents are invited to attend these meetings, too. Juniors, as well as the parents of juniors, are met with to discuss post-high school plans. Individually, the counselors support the Student Success Plan's of their students and adapt to student needs on a regular basis. For example, students who experience academic difficulty or who are having personal problems are met with multiple times each marking period so that appropriate supports can be provided.

When needs exceed the available program, there is outreach facilitated by the counseling department in conjunction with outside agencies to address the social needs of the student. Students with more serious issues are first referred to the school social worker or school psychologist for support in school. In addition, outside agencies may also be recommended to support the student. Parents often seek referrals to outside agencies as well. A release can be signed allowing school support staff to communicate with the outside agency in order to best meet the needs of the student. The school social worker is also a liaison with the following community organizations: Department of Children and Families (DCF) Voluntary Services, DCF Probationary Services, mental health practitioners, Medicaid, BRS (Bureau of Rehabilitation Services), and the Quinnipiac Chamber Summer Youth Employment Program. As a liaison to these organizations, the social worker can connect students to appropriate support services. For example through the Quinnipiac Chamber Summer Youth Employment Program, she is able to help special education students, and students in financial need find summer employment. In addition, the school social worker serves on the Adult Education Advisory Board, which oversees the Educational Enhancement Program. She also meets with students at EEP on a weekly basis. As a member of the "Wallingford Forum," which meets bimonthly, she

is able to connect with resource agencies that have a focus on outreach to underserved population in Wallingford including the homeless, economically disadvantaged, and substance users.

There is a great deal of assessment data which goes into the administration of the counseling program. Recently, at the recommendation of the CREC Program Review, the School Counseling Advisory Committee, a group consisting of parents, students, faculty, and members of the business community, developed a needs assessment and review of current practices to secure information from all stakeholders in order to evaluate the curriculum of the school counseling department. This will help the department assess and revise their services to meet the needs of their stakeholders. For example, school counselors will use e-mail blasts to disseminate information to parents because based on the survey results 87 percent of parents said this would be the most effective means of communication. The department worked in concert with the management team to develop a plan, which objectivized the recommendations for action in each school, as the CREC recommendations were district-wide. Counselors conduct an exit survey for seniors in order to generate the Strategic School Profile. That information is part of the calculus for future programming. When evening programs are conducted, feedback is also solicited through exit surveys. The counseling staff reviews these surveys in order to revamp programs to best meet the needs of the families. We now have one college presenter who covers key topics at our evening program for juniors and their parents because based on parent feedback the program was too long and there was overlap among the presenters. PTAC also provides a great deal of information on how the parents perceive the counseling department's communications to the town.

The school health services have an adequate number of certified and licensed personnel to meet the health needs of Sheehan students. There is one full-time registered

nurse, and a part-time certified nursing assistant that provide the health services. There is also part-time assistance in the form of an additional RN during times of screening and reviewing. They work closely with a number of agencies to ensure that all student needs are met. For example, the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), the community services health youth officer, the Wallingford Health Department, the State Nutritional Assistance Program, Master's Manna, and emergency care doctors at Mid-State Medical Hospital. There are a number of health assessments that nursing staff conducts. There is an initial health questionnaire that is administered to all incoming students that the nurse collects. This information is reviewed by the nurse and added to her files for further follow up. There is also visual and postural screening for all ninth graders.

There are several ways that a student can be referred to the nurse. A teacher may give a nurses pass, a teacher may refer a student, and also a parent may speak with the nurse for additional services. Health services works in conjunction with several agencies to provide support to students, including Birth to Three Child Development Services, which provides free in home assessment and services for children ages birth to 3 years old. Health services also works with the Community Health Center of Meriden, which provides full medical care with no age restrictions or proof of residency required. Additionally, health services works with Women Infants and Children (WIC), a nutrition assistance program that also provides a variety of vaccinations including Pertussis, TDAP, and Whooping Cough for adults and college students. Furthermore, health services is able to connect those in need of individual family counseling or other mental health services with the Wallingford Department of Youth and Social Services. Currently, there is not a data aggregation tool that allows for health data analysis. The School

Nurse Assistant Program (SNAP) software has been on the long-term capital budget for purchase, but has not been implemented due to lack of district-wide funding.

Library media services are highly integrated into the curriculum and have an adequate number of support staff. The library program is highly integrated through many different collaborative programs. For example, all freshmen receive an orientation identifying what plagiarism is and how they can avoid it. Turnitin.com is also a part of the instructional process, and how to use it as a tool to avoid plagiarism and revise their work. The librarian also holds writing workshops, where MLA and APA style are demonstrated, and proper word processing techniques are modeled for student use. The library curriculum is also implemented through a variety of professional development activities the librarian provides throughout the year in small groups and on an individual basis, such as Google Apps for education training and video production lessons given to individual departments. Technology demands have increased, and it has been the special mission of the library program to include common-sense methods of using technology to inform teachers as to the value of technology in their lessons. It provides an opportunity to discuss the alignment of the library curriculum on a one-to-one consultation basis. At the end of the year, many classes use the library for culminatory projects based on the research framework devised by the librarian to simplify the process for their assignments. These capstone activities have begun to inform the capstone project that is being developed for all students of the high school.

There are a wide range of materials and technologies that are provided by the library program. Many technologies of late have been secured by grants, such as the Vidyo video conferencing system, video journalism equipment, and Discover Video servers. Alongside the digital overdrive library (sofia.lib.overdrive.com), turnitin.com, and eLibrary (provided by

district-wide monies) as well as iconn.org (provided by state monies) there are a wide range of options for students visiting the library. The librarian is also available for consultation with students and teachers on all manner of personal electronic devices consistent with the school's general migration toward a bring your own device (BYOD) model. Daily, there are over sixty Chromebook personal laptops circulated to students for use in class or study hall. These compliment the many computers that exist either in labs or on Chromebook carts distributed to teachers throughout the building. There are over thirty-two portable cameras that are loaned out regularly, and a collection of high-quality GoPro and Canon Vixia camcorders that are used for projects and personal learning. Furthermore, there is a wide range of professional audio recording equipment for students to use by themselves or with the assistance of the librarian.

The library facilities are open at seven in the morning, and close at three o'clock in the afternoon. As the librarian is involved in a number of clubs, he often extends the afternoon time to meet the needs of the students who visit. There are also a number of after school programs, speakers, and community events hosted by the library media center. There are other events, such as the Open House, where technology and reading materials are on display to show teachers and students the newest acquisitions of the library.

The Sheehan Library is first and foremost a place of independent learning. All students have access to computers and Chromebook laptops that they may use to complete their classroom assignments. Many choose to do so during their study halls. The teacher proctoring the study halls may release up to ten students to visit the library if they elect to do so. Students also have access to the video and photo equipment that is used widely by teachers in their assignments. These circulate for up to one week, depending on the nature of the project. There are also a number of information databases available that students are able to use at home.

Iconn.org is a statewide database that provides relevant information for free. While on campus login is automatic, it can equally be used on other home networks if the students have a library card. The library solicits feedback in a variety of ways. Annually, there is a survey that asks which materials teachers would like to have added to the library collection. Most of these materials are purchased if available. Students may also request reading material through the library book suggestion box, which is available through the first half of the year (all monies must be expended by February). Student interns are also an important way the librarian seeks out student feedback. They collect readership information using Destiny, and propose purchase lists for fictional novels. They are active participants in the purchasing process, and often will collaborate with the librarian by going to Barnes and Noble with him to select purchases for the fiction section. Many interns come back after their term to become advanced level interns, where they assume many of the roles that library staff inhabits. The feedback that the staff gives the librarian is used to alter purchasing decisions. Non fiction collection development takes place in consultation with teachers and curriculum personnel. They describe their future needs and anticipated changes within their classes, and the librarian seeks out appropriate items to satisfy those needs. Before any major technology purchase decision is made, the librarian seeks out the advice of the department that will be most impacted by that choice. When the funding decision is finally made, there is a collaborative effort to streamline the materials to the end-user point for quick implementation. Furthermore, the librarian tracks user statistics, and these are used to evaluate the amount of horizontal outreach the librarian needs to do to see that all constituencies are being serviced. This list is reviewed annually, and departments that are not well represented in library visits receive additional outreach to bring the library to them in their desired setting.

There is sufficient staff to support the students at Sheehan High School who are identified as special education or are English language learners (ELL). There is one ELL teacher who works with twelve students of various native languages. This is a marked increase from last year when there was an initial caseload of one student before it increased to four ELL students. The ELL teacher meets with students for a minimum of one class period with a potential for two class periods if needed. ELL students are assessed using the Language Assessment System (LAS Links), formal observations, and English language interviews to determine progress in the program. The ELL teacher also serves as a resource for the academic teachers, but because she is only in the building one period a day most of the consulting occurs via email. There are four special education teachers who are tasked with case management and individualized instruction of students. Caseload for special education teachers is 15 to 20 on average. Case managers meet with students to review transition services, school progress, and need for additional support. There are nine paraprofessionals who spend intensive time with the students throughout the day, helping them socialize and maximize their academic potentials. There is also one behaviorist, one speech pathologist, one full and one part-time social worker, and one psychologist. The special education department meets each month for an hour to review practices to ensure appropriate delivery of services. School counselors are case managers for 504 students. Over the past several years, the number of students requiring a 504 plan has grown significantly. Currently one counselor has a caseload of 18 students with 504 plans, and a second counselor has a caseload of 17 students with 504 plans. In the 2009 -2011 school years the total number of 504 students for the department was 17, 10 and 9 students respectively. In 2012-14, the total number of students was 51, 53 and 52 respectively. For 504 students, the counselors conduct an annual review in addition to a triennial evaluation. Informing teachers of

the plan and follow up are key components of ensuring student success. Counselors could use greater support in managing the clerical aspects of 504 plans. Special education staff who have caseloads of 15 to 20 now have a paraprofessional assigned to set up meetings and invites. Something comparable for 504 would provide increased student contact time for counselors due to less clerical responsibilities. Additional clerical staffing support has been inconsistent in past years. In addition, further supports that can be offered to 504 students would increase student success. For example, currently structured study halls can only be made available to 504 students on a case-by-case basis if room is available.

There is a co-teaching model that exists between the classroom and special education teacher, making it seamless for both to work together in the classroom as a team. Common planning time is assigned to give the greatest opportunities for them to share their work together. Special Education teachers collaborate with all teachers, counselors, related service providers, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's learning expectation. Student meetings also take place to plan out the success strategies that can be used for students in a collaborative fashion. Progress reports are updated quarterly on IEP direct and sent home to parents.

According to the 2012-2013 Strategic School Profile, Sheehan observes a seventy-nine percent inclusion rate of special education students in mainstream classrooms. In comparison, the average inclusion rate in Sheehan's District Reference Group (DRG) is seventy-four and eight-tenths percent, while the state average is seventy-two and five-tenths percent. Learning strategies classrooms exist to deliver the skills the special education students need in order to function well in the mainstream classroom. IEP teams meet yearly to conduct annual program reviews and gauge student progress. Special education case managers monitor progress and provide support to staff members. Special education students are reevaluated every three years

to see if they continue to qualify for special education services. Data collected by special education teachers and classroom teachers, including PowerSchool grades, work samples, progress reports, and observations are used to develop and update IEPs and 504 plans, determine accommodation for standardized testing such as SATs, and inform ongoing programming and interventions on an individual basis. Teachers use formative assessments such as data based questions and performance tasks to collect data using rubrics that help drive instruction and gauge student progress. Students who are not making progress can find support through individual teachers, tutoring, Mathematics Intervention, and Reading Intervention.

School Resources for Learning

Executive Summary

The school resources for learning at Mark T. Sheehan High School provide an abundance of support to students, teachers, and families in pursuing the mission of the school. Intervention service providers are highly motivated to identify and support students who need additional help in achieving success. Families receive information about how to secure further support for their children when they do run into difficulty, due to the many efforts to increase parental engagement. While school counselors have had an increase in their workload, a result of the increasing number of 504 plans, they have responded to the challenge and continue to deliver a rich and complete developmental counseling program that reaches out to all students at Sheehan High School. While school health services lack the ability to collect and analyze large amounts of health data, they provide a complete health program that addresses the needs of Sheehan's students on an individual basis. The library media center is the intellectual hub of the school, where cutting edge programs keep the school as a leader in innovative educational technologies and approaches to information gathering. There is also adequate staffing to assist students with special education or English language learner needs, even though all staff could benefit from further development of inclusion of the new ELL program into the fabric of Sheehan's pedagogical practice. The school prides itself on the support that is provided and is continuously seeking to improve these practices for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Based on the Rating Guide for the School Resources for Learning Standard, Mark T. Sheehan High School judges their adherence to the Standard as ACCEPTABLE.

Strengths:

- TSA and intervention efforts are deep and complete, providing strong support for students who need additional assistance in finding success.

- The library media specialist provides support for all faculty in information and technology services in a relevant and up to date fashion.

- The school is networked with many outside agencies in order to provide support and intervention for students who need assistance beyond the capabilities of school staff.

- The school counseling department has a developmental counseling program that allows them to be in touch with every student in the school by the second week of October.

- The variety of social media avenues that are used to provide information to parents and families, including the use of social media

- The quantity of technology that is available for loan to students.

Needs:

- Implement a health data management program to improve the efficiency of the nursing department in aggregating and analyzing student health information.

- Educate teachers more fully, through professional development, on the ELL program and how best to differentiate instruction for those students.

- Evaluate the use of Odysseyware credit recovery software for its efficacy in evaluating student mastery of subject.

- Review the staffing of the school counseling office relative to the balancing of counselor caseloads and increased 504 plans.

Community Resources for Student Learning

**Mark T. Sheehan High School's Community Resources
Self-Study Report and Executive Summary Completed by:**

2013 – 2014

Nicholas Brown	Teacher, Technology Education
Chairperson	
Vincent Sarullo	Athletic Director
Steering Committee Liaison	
John Ferrazzi	Department Chairperson, Physical Education & Health
James Francese	Assistant Principal
David Giardina	Teacher, Music
Melissa Harkins	Teacher, English
Frank Mohr	Teacher, Physical Education
Melanie Montagnon	Teacher, Social Studies
Laurie Saia	Teacher, English
Daniel Wostbrock	Teacher, Science

2014 – 2015

Nicholas Brown	Teacher, Technology Education
Chairperson	
John Ferrazzi	Department Chairperson, Physical Education & Health
David Giardina	Teacher, Music
Melissa Harkins	Teacher, English
Frank Mohr	Teacher, Physical Education
Melanie Montagnon	Teacher, Social Studies
Laurie Saia	Teacher, English
Jeffrey Schlick	Parent
Daniel Wostbrock	Teacher, Science

Community Resources for Student Learning

The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for: a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. The examination of trend data from 2011-2014 shows that Wallingford Public Schools works cooperatively with all major town stakeholders to ensure that monies are allocated fairly, equitably, and prudently for its students. The Wallingford Board of Education, superintendent, administration, staff, town council, mayor, and parents have all engaged in meaningful, continuous public conversations about the appropriation of funds in order to solidify a budget. On a school level, administration solicits feedback from each department and parents with regard to resources and needs. In challenging economic times with increasing federal and state mandates, Wallingford Public Schools maintains a working, inclusive commitment for making educational decisions with consideration to cost. For 2014, the superintendent's proposed education budget reflected a 4.36 percent increase, including 1.04 percent of the strategic plan, and 3.32 percent for sustained services. However, the mayor sent the town council a budget that reflected only a 2.23 percent increase overall. The Town of Wallingford approved the Board of Education budget after a reduction of approximately one million dollars below the sustained services request. Conversations with all stakeholders took place in public forums such as at town council meetings, on social media boards, at System-Wide Parent Teacher Advisory Council (SWPTAC) meetings, and at school board meetings; the community was engaged and involved in how the district handled this setback. As the superintendent referenced in his presentation to

the town council, federal and state mandates plus capital improvement needs from 2011-2014 show an increase, yet funding levels have barely increased to maintain services. Even though the district has encountered challenges with funding new initiatives, it has been able to move forward with the implementation of new programs like the HUBCAP, a food truck for the culinary program, and career centers in both high schools. The district has also been able to expand certified staff in the curriculum office as well as purchase a new projector for the planetarium with the assistance of donations from the community. Further, during this time period, businesses have provided funding for the district to implement three innovation teams.

With consideration to these challenges, the superintendent, parents, and school board demonstrate the district's core ethical values by maintaining vigorous communication to make informed decisions that will help meet 21st century learning expectations. Despite the issues with the budget, the district has found innovative ways to build assets and opportunities for students. The district has also supported a variety of professional development opportunities for teachers in areas such as mastery-based learning, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS), and models of excellence. As referenced in the superintendent's presentation, the district has been awarded grants over the past five years ranging in areas from technology, to security, to innovation. In the 2013-2014 year, these awards totalled $776,272.00 for district initiatives. These grants help drive the district's mission while it struggles to find an equitable, feasible budget.

A particular place of innovation in the district has been technology. According to the strategic plan for 2011-2016, the approved budget for technology emphasizes updating school computers, teacher laptops, network connectivity, software applications, and media spaces. The strategic plan budget has allocated 2.18 million dollars over a period of four years for technology

needs for both high schools in the district. Each year focuses on different technology upgrades so that by 2015-2016, the monies will have been used to address a variety of technology needs. For example, classrooms in each of the core areas, with the exception of science, have Chromebook carts. By the end of the 2014-2015 school year, all classroom spaces, with the exception of the wood shop, will have projection capabilities, and the library desktops will have been updated.

The school develops, plans, and funds programs; to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. Working in conjunction with district personnel, Mark T. Sheehan High School effectively plans and funds needed maintenance and repair of school facilities and equipment. An assistant principal manages building issues. A combination of district employees, three full-time custodians, and a contracted cleaning service, divide the building and responsibilities for day-to-day cleaning and reporting of maintenance issues. Additionally, a system is in place that allows teachers and other staff to report concerns. This system also provides tracking of progress when needed via the email system. The requests are sent to the head custodian, the assistant principal, and the assistant principal's secretary. The head custodian acts upon the information when appropriate or assigns the task to the contracted cleaning service or district maintenance department as needed. Log books are kept of each report and available for review. In addition, the custodians, the assistant principal, his secretary, and the athletic director all have access to SchoolDude, an online work order tracking and reporting system that facilitates repairs or maintenance requests beyond custodial intervention. Unfortunately, there is no communication to the general staff that

the work order has been completed, although the assistant principal does provide updates to the staff regarding major concerns.

Along with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training, building and district-wide custodial and maintenance staff receives training in the safe operation of a public pool, and a Certified Pool Operator (CPO) must be on duty whenever the pool is in use. The CPO is responsible for records that are kept in a daily log for routine pool chemical testing.

Each year in the fall, the principal, assistant principal, athletic director, and director of building and grounds meet to review and prioritize school maintenance needs and formulate a budget allowing the district to address ongoing, long-term, or larger scope needs. For example, over the last several years, a combination of district and school planning allowed for a completely new roof to be installed in 2012. Also in 2012, money was allocated to replace the bleachers in the gymnasium, which relieved safety concerns. Items are kept on the capital list, added, deleted when completed, and shuffled in order each year, based on the nature of the need and current physical and financial circumstances. In addition, the district provides a full complement of maintenance services for all trades using a combination of district employees and contracted service providers. The district has a carpenter, two heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) technicians, a plumber, and an electrician on staff. The district also has arrangements with a variety of local businesses to complete work that cannot be performed when in-house staff is too busy.

Annually, Sheehan participates in the Environmental Protection Agency's *Tools for Schools Program* to identify and address indoor air quality issues. An administrator, the school nurse, a staff member, a parent, and a volunteer student visually inspect the entire building. A

work order is created for any conditions that are reported, and in some cases, the issues are sent to the maintenance department for review and action.

Department chairpersons, along with the athletic department personnel, keep a yearly inventory of equipment and maintenance requirements. Additionally, an outside firm completes a fixed asset survey annually. Funds to repair discipline specific equipment, such as microscopes, musical instruments, and kiln come from school's allocation. Technology is supported by the district's in-house information technology (IT) department, and teachers can report problems using a program called SchoolDude that tracks all IT work orders.

The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses; programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements. The district employs a detailed and consistent set of practices that guide educational, curricular development, staffing, facilities, and maintenance planning. There is a five-year strategic plan, which addresses beliefs, mission, vision and goals, community outreach, curriculum and instruction, district climate, facilities, and technology. Steering committees meet several times during the school year to review, revise, and update each section of the strategic plan. In addition, a committee comprised of all major stakeholders overhauls the plan every five years. The strategic plan for each of these areas becomes the overarching conceptual guide for building-level activities and departmental activities within those specific areas. All budgeting processes and activities are governed by the detailed goals and objectives of the specific strategic plan. In most cases, the plan will involve further subcommittees to provide input and information. For example, the Technology Steering Committee, comprised of students, parents, administration, teachers, and information technology (IT) professionals,

produces the "technology strategic plan." The building plans can be independent of the district plan and/or can influence the district plan.

Long-range goals are identified by the appropriate steering committee and delegated to the appropriate responsible parties to address planning, implementation, and budget needs. For example, in September 2007, the need to replace the Sheehan roof was identified by the principal at the school-based facilities budget meeting. Because of the scope of the project, this became a district and town-wide initiative in 2012 that was facilitated through the facilities and maintenance department. There was also a roofing committee that included members of the community that provided oversight for this project. Building-level administrative and facilities staff worked with district staff to identify the needs and ensure that the project successfully addressed them. In addition, when a need to align mathematics curriculum with the Common Core was identified as part of the curriculum and instruction strategic plan, district and building-level professional staff selected and developed a new curricula approach for implementation at both high schools. Again, this included long-range planning, training, budgetary implications, and student scheduling.

With the recent economic recession, budget increases in Wallingford have been consistently scaled back even while the cost of providing an education has increased. The school budget allocation for the 2015-2016 school year is $87,514.00 ($98 per student). Salary, medical, energy, and technology costs as well as the expense of basic supplies have all increased. At the conclusion of the 2009-2010 school year, financial constraints forced the school district to eliminate a number of certified positions. Sheehan High School lost 6.8 percent of its certified staff (6/88) in budget cuts. Despite these difficulties, the district has been able to move forward on a number of initiatives. Since 2011, Sheehan High School has been able to purchase

approximately 260 Chromebooks that are actively used in classes, and in the library every single day. Even with budgetary concerns, basic maintenance is completed on an ongoing basis and some positions have been added, such as a career coordinator who provides services at both high schools.

In January, the scheduling process begins with an Eighth Grade Orientation program attended by eighth grade students and their parents/guardians. Student enrollment and course requests determine which courses will be offered in the upcoming academic year, which impacts staffing. Courses with low enrollment rates are dropped from the schedule. Teachers are allowed input for their preferred teaching assignments, and department chairpersons make recommendations for the number of sections per course based on student request. There are no district guidelines for high school class size, although room constraints (i.e., technology education and family consumer science) and resources (number of computers in the room) may influence class size. For example, science and certain technology courses, such as Wood Production, that require close supervision to avoid physical risk are kept smaller than other classes that do not present these concerns. The scheduling software is part of the PowerSchool package. To meet the school goals, there are school-wide learning objectives for which administrative staff is held accountable. In 2013 - 2014, teacher goals were aligned with school goals, which were aligned with district goals. This year, 2014 - 2015, teacher goals dictated school goals, except for the parent engagement goal, which was based on the results of the 2014 "Sheehan Climate Survey." All staff review data to inform instruction. Ongoing training, curriculum development, discipline-based curriculum management teams, and the implementation of a steadily increasing set of technological tools support the school's efforts to move forward.

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. The budget process is a fluid, ongoing process that occurs over the course of all twelve calendar months. Beginning at the end of June, purchase orders are generated for the upcoming academic year. This process continues through mid-March after which no new purchase orders can be submitted for the current fiscal year. Purchase orders are signed by the building principal, business manager, and superintendent to ensure that the process is transparent. In mid-October, the superintendent provides the principal with the budget allocation for the next school year. Once the budget allocations are received, the information is shared with the staff. Specific faculty members; department chairpersons, assistant principals, directors, library media specialist, and planetarium teacher, submit budget proposals for their respective departments. The principal develops the school's budget based on the submitted proposals and presents the budget along with special proposals to the superintendent in November. The superintendent then reviews all budget requests from all schools and compiles all information into both a sustained services and strategic plan budget. The superintendent, along with the business manager, presents both budgets to the board of education at an annual meeting in mid-January. At the board of education level, there are several public meetings held in which line-item discussions occur regarding both the sustained services and strategic plan budgets. Once the budget is finalized by a vote by the board in February, it is sent to the office of the mayor for his review. The mayor is then tasked with developing the overall town budget and then makes his recommendation and presentation to the town council on April 1st. Throughout April and May, various presentations and hearings are held in which administrators and citizens can speak on budgetary issues and concerns during public comment. In May, the town council finalizes its budget and sends the official number to each town department,

including the board of education. In the years where adjustments need to be made, the adjustments occur at the building level in May and early June to ensure that the budget is officially set to be implemented on July 1st. Parents attending the Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) meeting are kept informed of budgetary dates, and the principal includes these dates in the monthly newsletter, email blasts, and tweets.

The school site and plant supports the delivery of high quality school programs and services. The building and campus at Mark T. Sheehan High School supports many quality programs and services. The school was established in 1971 and resides on 44 acres. The total square footage of the building is 227,450 and general classroom space is sufficient for the current enrollment. The school offers support service areas and adequate special education classrooms and administrative office space. The nurse's office is equipped with three beds, two private bathrooms, and sufficient storage. Technology in the building has increased tremendously since 2010. The school has a library media center that is equipped with 42 desktop computers and 62 Chromebooks. The building also has a total of four computer labs and two of them are available for use by all classroom teachers. There are many classrooms that have liquid-crystal display (LCD) projectors, and there are eleven classrooms equipped with SMART Boards (interactive whiteboards). By the end of the 2014 - 2015 school year, all classrooms (except the wood shop) will have projection capability through ceiling mounted LCD projectors, LCD TVs, SMARTBoards, or LightRaise interactive projectors. In addition, there is a fully functional planetarium that was updated in September 2014. There are three art rooms, one of which is designed for a photography class and equipped with a dark room. The school has two cafeterias, an adequate gymnasium with attached locker rooms, and an auditorium, all which continue to support various programs. The school also has the benefit of a natatorium with attached locker

rooms, a weight room, and a fitness room. However, instrument lockers are in very poor condition, and some of the lockers are unusable. The request to update the lockers has been on the strategic plan for four years. These are the original lockers. The campus offers a turf field, which supports the physical education department, athletics, and marching band. Along with the turf field, the campus has a baseball field, softball field, field hockey field, and two grass practice fields. In addition, there is an athletic trainer's office, which is available after school hours.

The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations. The school's director of building and grounds is responsible for meeting all the local, state, and federal guidelines in regards to the maintenance, budget development, work orders, and repairs at Mark T. Sheehan High School. Documents such as material safety data sheets (MSDS) are kept in the nurse's office and updated by any department authorized to purchase chemicals by the board of education. Communication of specific needs is an ongoing process with the building administration, including a review of the strategic budget items once they have been submitted. The director of building and grounds uses a variety of sources, including student feedback and Federal Government guidelines, to create budget line items. Whenever possible, the budget line items are created proactively; however, reactive situations do arise and are handled in a prioritized manner. Tools for Schools is an Environmental Protection Agency program that is used to collect data to further assess the environmental needs of the building. The Tools for Schools report is generated by a walk through observation of the entire building and its facilities by a teacher, an administrator, a parent, a student, and a school nurse and includes a survey of staff and occupant feedback. This report helps the occupants of the facilities better understand the operating system and environment of their work spaces. Issues

that are identified by this document are entered into SchoolDude. In the event that a work order cannot be completed, it is then considered for placement in the strategic plan. All items that are regulated by state and federal law are entered into the strategic plan with priority. Completion of the plan items are subject to the town council and board of education approval. During the 2012 school year, the district has completed an eleven school roofing project. The district is currently in the process of adding an American Disability Act (ADA) lavatory and accessible parking at the Mark T. Sheehan Riccitelli Field, as well as adding dugouts at the girl's softball field. All ADA upgrades are planned to be completed during the 2014- 2015 school year.

Sheehan complies with all local fire, health, and safety regulations. Annually, all staff complete bloodborne pathogen training. A crisis emergency response plan is in place that addresses all possible circumstances, such as fire, adverse weather conditions, bus accidents, and intruders. Safety drills are conducted twice a month. At times, these drills are observed by local police or fire personnel to provide feedback to the school. In addition, the school has a safety and security committee that meets throughout the year. Beginning in December 2012, procedures were implemented to enhance building security. All visitors are required to show photo identification to gain entrance to the building, and visitors must sign in upon entering the building. Cameras and card access control systems are in place at the main entrances to the school.

All professional staff at Mark T. Sheehan High School engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. The school has a number of established programs to engage parents and families as partners in their child's education. This includes an open house in the fall where parents can meet their child's teachers and review the curriculum expectations

for the school year. Additionally, there are four parent/teacher conference dates held throughout the year where parents can meet with teachers to discuss academic progress and any concerns. Both parents/guardians and students are encouraged to attend these meetings. The open house, the first two conference dates, and the last conference date are scheduled in the evening hours, and the third parent/teacher conference date is scheduled during regular school hours, students have an early dismissal that day, in order to accommodate as many parents as possible. In addition, parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with individual or small groups of teachers throughout the school year. Additional meetings may occur in a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) conference set up by a special education case manager, or during a teacher-student assistance (TSA) meeting where a group of teachers, and staff meet with an at-risk student. Oftentimes, parents/guardians are involved in the TSA meetings. The school also has an eighth grade orientation program where incoming ninth grade parents receive a presentation and Q & A session with school counselors, department chairpersons, and administrators. This event has been highly successful and well attended by parents and prospective students. Likewise, parents are invited to attend a ninth grade orientation meeting in September to familiarize them with the school building and school policies.

The school deliberately chose PowerSchool as a grade reporting service because of the included parent portal. All parents are given a username and password that allows them to access their child's course grade and attendance information at any time. The school has also recently added an email feature to PowerSchool that allows the teacher to communicate with one or multiple parents right from the gradebook. This has helped expedite and encourage regular email between staff and families.

Teachers have individual websites on which they post upcoming assignments, projects, and any resources available. Many teachers also use Twitter, Remind, and Google Classroom to communicate with students and parents. Teachers and members of the school counseling department work with families that tend to be less engaged with the technological resources to keep the communication lines open. The principal also sends out a monthly newsletter in order to keep parents informed of upcoming events and changes to the school's policies. The newsletter is sent to parents via email and postal mail as well as posted on the school website. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, the newsletter is also emailed to students. Also, event information is posted on the daily bulletin section of PowerSchool and placed on the website's school calendar. Every year, the student handbook is published and distributed to students to provide them with information about the school schedule, school calendar, rules, and available club and sport activities for students. Parents are able to participate in monthly board meetings where policies and educational standards are discussed, and an LCD screen in senior court notifies students about upcoming events or changes in schedule.

The school has also enjoyed success at engaging a significant number of parents whose children are involved in the school's co-curricular activities, including the drama club, band, and athletics. Individual coaches and the athletic director communicate with parents on a weekly basis to inform them about academic progress and to ensure that student grades remain high enough to meet the new eligibility requirements. An athletic open house night is also scheduled for the families of incoming ninth grade students, so that all parties are familiar with the guidelines and expectations, as well as the various activities offered by the school.

Overall, the school is successful at engaging a significant number of parents in their child's education. The 2012-2013 Endicott survey indicates that 71.7 percent of parents agree

that there is a partnership between the school and the community. This is markedly higher than the aggregate response, which was 59.0 percent. To continue developing this partnership, all teachers have adopted a parent focus area that specifically targets communication with parents starting with the 2013-2014 school year. A variety of communication methods have been selected ranging from personalized parent emails to monthly classroom newsletters. This new policy reflects the school's commitment to engage all parents and families as partners at Sheehan High School.

Mark T. Sheehan High School has maintained productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning and is in the process of expanding those partnerships. Mark T. Sheehan High School currently offers several opportunities for students to be immersed in a higher education learning experience while still enrolled in high school. One opportunity is the College Career Pathways Program through Gateway Community College. This program is an articulated, credit-bearing program that students may take advantage of to earn college credit at no cost. Students also have the choice to earn college credit from Middlesex Community College for certain courses through their High School Partnership Program. On a more individualized basis, students can apply to take courses through the University of New Haven. The superintendent formed a Business Think Tank with business leaders from local businesses. These leaders meet with the high school principals, superintendent, and other school staff on a regular basis to discuss ways that the business community can help to support student learning.

In addition, Sheehan participates in the Sikorsky STEM Challenge, which is funded by Sikorsky and Connecticut Innovations. It is a four-module project that involves communication, project planning, research, collaboration, physics, and presentation techniques. Students have

access to a mentor from Sikorsky while they complete their challenge. Last year, students from the Advanced Placement Physics class formed a team. This year, a broader range of students has formed a team and has a technology education teacher as their facilitator. This has allowed for an authentic learning opportunity for students. The school also provides numerous UConn Early College Experience (ECE) courses. Faculty members that have been endorsed by UConn teach these courses at the school. At the successful culmination of the course, students can earn college credits.

The Wallingford Capstone Experience, a brand new initiative that is a graduation requirement for students beginning with the class of 2017, will provide an opportunity for every student to cultivate a community connection through job shadowing, a mentoring experience, an internship, or community service.

During the 2013-2014 school year, the Wallingford School System hired a career center coordinator. This individual focuses on many initiatives in regards to community connections. The career center coordinator brings post-secondary representatives from colleges, proprietary schools, and businesses, something that was previously handled by the counseling department, in the schools to meet with students and provide information about choices after high school. Local businesses and organizations participate in panel presentations for students. The career center coordinator is also responsible for maintaining a partnership with the Quinnipiac/North Haven Chamber of Commerce, parents, and alumni in a career connection program so that students benefit from mentoring, job shadowing, and internships. A job fair was held for students to gain access to summer employment opportunities in April 2014. Lastly, the career center coordinator is partially responsible for the coordination of the school system with HUBCAP, a hybrid-business incubator providing a unique opportunity for collaboration between businesses and the

local school district to provide an authentic learning experience while strengthening their

business foundation and expanding downtown Wallingford business.

Community Resources for Learning

Executive Summary

All major stakeholders in the Town of Wallingford work diligently and tirelessly to make decisions about the budget that are in the best interest of students while maintaining fiscal responsibility in a challenging economy. Open lines of communication between the mayor, board of education, superintendent, community members, and town council allow for discussion, questioning, and new ideas. The school system has been able to work cooperatively with all major stakeholders to move the district forward with consideration to 21st century learning expectations by scaffolding projects, applying for grants, and prioritizing needs.

Working in conjunction with district personnel, Sheehan High School effectively plans and funds needed maintenance and repair of school facilities and equipment. An assistant principal is assigned the management of building issues. A combination of district employees and contracted custodial workers divide the building and responsibilities for day-to-day cleaning and reporting of maintenance issues. Additionally, a system is in place that allows teachers and staff to report concerns, and the system provides tracking of progress when needed via email. Efforts in improving communication along horizontal and vertical lines have been implemented, but there is still some concern in regard to follow-up.

The school district develops strategic plans to address future programs, enrollment changes, staffing, facility, and technology needs. Each specific area identified in the strategic plan is given to a sub-committee, via the steering committee, who is responsible for planning and reviewing progress annually. Teachers are allowed input for their preferred teaching

assignments, and department chairpersons make recommendations for the number of sections per course based on the course requests.

Purchase orders are signed by the building principal, business manager, and superintendent to ensure that this is a transparent process. Specifically, the school leadership team will seek input regarding needs for purchases from teachers, coaches, and other staff members to ensure that all stakeholders have input in the budgeting process. Once the principal develops the school's plan, it is submitted to the central office administrators for their review. The superintendent then reviews all budget requests from all schools and compiles the information into both a sustained services and strategic plan budget. Once the budget is finalized by a vote by the board in February, it is sent to the Office of the Mayor for his review. The mayor is then tasked with developing the overall town budget. Throughout April and May, various presentations and hearings are held in which administrators and citizens can speak on budgetary issues and concerns during public comment. The town council finalizes its budget in May and sends the official number to each town department, including the board of education.

The school offers support service areas and adequate special education classrooms and adequate administrative office space. The nurse's office is equipped with three beds, a private bathroom, and there is sufficient storage. Technology in the building has increased tremendously since 2010, as desktop computers have been updated, and Chromebook computers have been allocated in the social studies, English, and mathematics departments. Also, the installation of LCD projectors and SMARTboards have increased throughout the core content areas. The school has two cafeterias, a gymnasium with attached locker rooms, and an auditorium, all which continue to support the need for various programs. The outdoor campus has a turf field, a baseball field, softball field, field hockey field, and two grass practice fields. In

addition, there is an athletic training room, which is available after school hours, a natatorium with attached lockers, a weight room, and a fitness room.

The school's director of building and grounds is responsible for meeting all the local, state, and federal guidelines in regards to the maintenance, budget development, work orders, and repairs at Mark T. Sheehan High School. Documents such as material safety data sheets are kept in the nurse's office and updated by any department authorized to purchase chemicals by the board of education. The director of building and grounds utilizes SchoolDude to electronically save work orders and documentation for large ticket items.

The school has a number of established programs to engage parents and families as partners in their child's education. This includes an open house in the fall where parents can meet their child's teachers and review the curriculum expectations for the school year. Additionally, there are four parent/teacher conference dates held in the middle of each marking period where parents can meet with teachers to discuss individual academic progress. Parents are always encouraged to schedule conferences with individual or small groups of teachers throughout the school year. With the PowerSchool grading system, parents are able to check their child's progress in any given class whenever they so choose. Many teachers also have individual websites on which they post upcoming assignments, projects, and resources. Teachers and members of the school counseling department work with families that tend to be less engaged with technological resources to keep the communication lines open. Overall the school is successful at engaging a significant number of parents in their child's education. The 2012-2013 Endicott survey indicates that 71.7 percent of parents agree that there is a partnership between the school and the community. This is markedly higher than the aggregate response,

which was 59.0 percent. Teachers use a variety of communication methods ranging from personalized parent emails to monthly classroom newsletters to communicate with parents.

Mark T. Sheehan High School has worked purposefully to develop and expand productive parent, business, community, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. The school has fostered several relationships with institutions to provide all students with educational opportunities that extend outside the boundaries of the school walls. The school's commitment to a comprehensive Capstone Experience demonstrates its understanding and willingness to provide a personalized learning opportunity for each student. Additionally, the newly created position of career center coordinator speaks to the commitment of the school to strengthen student learning experiences.

Based on the Rating Guide the Community Resources for Learning Committee judges its adherence to the Standard as ACCEPTABLE.

Strengths:

- The input of staff and department chairpersons regarding the teacher's course loads.

- The funding of capital improvements as well as strategic plan items such as Chromebooks and LCD projectors.

- The use of PowerSchool to report grades and keep parents updated via email.

- The eighth grade orientation night, club orientation day, and athletic orientation night to involve both students and parents in school activities.

- The transparency and consistency of the budget development.

- The building includes unique features such as a fully functional planetarium and a darkroom for photography classes that enhances the educational experiences for students.

- The campus offers a turf field, which supports many school athletics and extracurricular programs.

- Monies are allocated equitably.

- The district has found innovative ways to build assets and opportunities for students.

- The use of SchoolDude to report and track work orders.

- The district provides a full complement of maintenance services for all trades through a combination of district employees and outside contractors.

- Annual implementation of Tools for Schools.

- Well-articulated strategic plan, which is developed with input from all stakeholders.

- Addition of career coordinator.

Needs:

- Maintain/Increase funding to support all proposed innovations, renovations, and programs.

- Complete work orders on small items in a timely fashion and develop and implement a procedure for communicating the status of these orders to the staff.

- Design and build/install additional storage space in the auditorium.

School-wide Critical Strengths and Needs

Strengths:

- The use of school-wide rubrics to demonstrate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

- Teachers use a multitude of formative and summative assessments to monitor student performance and drive instruction.

- The integration of technology as a tool for teaching and learning.

- Common planning time, content data teams, and common performance tasks allow teachers to discuss best strategies for implementing the curriculum.

- An inclusive, dynamic process was used to develop the core values and beliefs as well as the 21st century expectations for student learning.

- The Sheehan community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture.

- TSA and intervention efforts are deep and complete, providing strong support for students who need additional assistance in finding success.

- The use of PowerSchool to report grades and keep students and parents updated via email.

- Teachers are involved in a variety of aspects of school culture and community.

- The input of staff and department chairpersons regarding the teacher's course loads.

- The variety of opportunities that are provided for students to succeed based on their interests and/or strengths.

- The emphasis on inquiry, problem solving, and critical thinking skills.

- The Sheehan community is rich in school culture and Titan pride.

Needs:

- Maintain current staffing to keep teacher-student ratios at adequate levels in all areas, specifically core areas.

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- Review the staffing of the school counseling office relative to the balancing of counselor caseloads and increased 504 plans.

- Streamline the number of rubrics to increase common utilization by staff members in assessing 21st century learning expectations.

- Unify grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

- Develop and implement a plan to update curricula in other areas beyond English, mathematics, and social studies.

- Design and implement building-based professional development that addresses instructional strategies and assessment.

Two-Year and Five-Year Targeted Plans

Two-Year Targeted Plan:

- Articulate core values and student learning expectations more consistently in classroom activities and daily instruction.

- Recreate position of World Language and CTE department chairpersons.

- Provide extra instructional support for English Language Learners in the classroom.

- Streamline the number of rubrics to increase common utilization by staff members in assessing 21st century learning expectations.

- Design and implement building-based professional development that addresses instructional strategies and assessment.

- Maintain current staffing to keep teacher-student ratios at adequate levels in all areas, specifically core areas.

- Review the staffing of the school counseling office relative to the balancing of counselor caseloads and increased 504 plans.

Five-Year Targeted Plan:

- Develop and implement a plan to update curricula in other areas beyond English, Mathematics, and Social Studies.

- Unify grading and reporting practices to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

- Maintain/Increase funding to support all proposed innovations, renovations, and programs.

- Design and build/install additional storage space in the auditorium.

Core Values and Beliefs Statement

Mark T. Sheehan High School provides a challenging and supportive environment that inspires students to be critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible, contributing members of a dynamic global society.

We value Titan PRIDE

Personal Responsibility ❖ Respect ❖ Integrity ❖ Dedication ❖ Engagement

21st Century Expectations for Student Learning

Academic Expectations

Communicate effectively orally, in writing, and using media tools.
Solve problems using critical, creative, and innovative thinking.
Apply content knowledge and skills to new situations.
Access, analyze, and evaluate information using print, non-print, and digital sources.

Social Expectations

Work collaboratively while respecting divergent viewpoints.
Demonstrate respect for oneself and others.
Act responsibly while demonstrating integrity and ethical behavior.
Recognize and value the importance of wellness and physical fitness.
Demonstrate attitudes and habits that are valued in the classroom and workplace.

Civic Expectation

Understand that each individual plays an important role in maintaining and improving the quality of life for all members of the community.

We believe that . . .

- Student learning is at the center of every decision considered by the WPS.
- Student learning is a shared responsibility among the school system, families, and the community.
- In order to take their place in society, learners need to master both academic and social skills through the instruction and curriculum they receive.
- Knowing how individuals learn—developmentally, socially, and culturally—drives instruction and curriculum.
- Learning is nurtured in safe, healthy, environmentally sensitive facilities.
- Financial accountability and transparency are essential in utilizing the educational resources entrusted to WPS by the community.