

## School and Community Summary

RSU 40 is made up of the towns of Friendship, Union, Waldoboro, Warren, and Washington; of these five towns, only Waldoboro is located in Lincoln County, and the other four are located in Knox County. The total population of the five communities is approximately 14,764 people. The majority of the population in all five communities is employed in the fishing industry, tourism, medical services, and self-employed business people, such as lobstermen, and building trade contractors.

The communities are economically, racially, culturally, and ethnically similar. In the town of Friendship the population is 1,152; the racial and ethnic makeup is 99.1% Caucasian and 0.08% other; the unemployment rate is 4.2%; those living below the poverty line is 11%; and the median income is \$49,738. The racial and ethnic makeup of Union, population 2,259, is 98.3% Caucasian and 1.7% other; the unemployment rate is 9.6%; households living below the poverty line is 13%; and the median income is \$47,629. Racially and ethnically, Waldoboro, population 5,075, is 95.1% Caucasian, 1.9% Hispanic, 0.6% Asian, 0.3% American Indian, and 0.08% African American; households below the poverty line is 12.9%; the unemployment rate is 4.9%; and the median income is \$45,079. In Warren, population 4,751 which includes 900 inmates at the Maine State Prison, the racial and ethnic makeup is 95.3% Caucasian, 1.7% African American, and 3% other; the unemployment rate is 4.1%; households living below the poverty line are 6.7%; and the median income is \$45,079. Lastly, the town of Washington is made up of 96.6% Caucasians, 1.7% African American, and 3.4% listed as other; the unemployment rate is 7.6%; those living below the poverty level is 13.4%; and the median income is \$46,555.

Medomak Valley High School in the year 2015-2016 included 563 students in grades 9-12 with a projected population of approximately 580 students for the 2016-2017 school year. Medomak Middle School includes 275 students and the five elementary schools include 1,025 students for a total of 1,863 students in the RSU 40 District. Of the 2015-2016 population of Medomak Valley High School, 46% were female and 54% were male. The lack of cultural diversity of the school is reflected in the 25 total students of color (4.5%). This includes 8 Hispanic/Latino students (1.4%), 4 American Indian students (0.7%), 5 Asian students (0.9%), and 8 African American students (1.4%). The population has remained fairly constant with Medomak Valley High School having less than a 1% decrease over the last five years and a projected increase of 1.8% for 2016-2017. The average dropout rate for the past three years is 2.52%; the average graduation rate is 85.01%. On average the attendance rate among teachers is 91.5%.

The state average for public secondary expenditure per pupil in 2013-14 was \$11,932. Medomak Valley High School spent \$11,259 in the 2013-14 school year, which is \$673, or 5.6%, less than the state average. The state average for the district, however was \$10,545 per student. RSU 40 spent \$10,711 per student, about 1.6% higher than the state average. In 2013-14, \$135,196 was received through tuition and other fees by the high school. In fiscal year 2016 56.81% of revenues came from taxes and 3.03% from local resources.

There are 43 teachers at Medomak Valley High School including seven of special education or alternative education teachers. This creates a ratio of 15:1 for mainstreamed classes and 4:1 for

special education classes. Individual teachers carry an average load of 90 students with an average class size of 15. Students attend school for 175 days. Teachers attend school for 180 days.

Medomak Valley High School offers college prep technical, college prep, honors, dual enrollment, and Advanced Placement classes. Students are required to take 4 credits of English and math, 3 credits of science (4 credits for the class of 2018 and beyond), 3 credits of social studies, 2 credits of foreign language (for the class of 2018 and beyond), 1 credit of physical education and fine and applied arts, and ½ credit of health, with the remainder of students' schedule being from an array of elective courses. Medomak Valley High School offers many co-curricular and extracurricular activities for its students; 45.6% of students participate in at least one of these activities.

Medomak Valley High School is a recipient of a MELMAC Education Foundation grant called *Connect Aspirations to a Plan*; part of the grant requirement is to track recent graduates who had a post-secondary plan at graduation and report the data as part of our annual report submitted to MELMAC. Telephone interviews were conducted of the graduating classes of 2014 and 2015. For the class of 2014, the goal of the interviews was to determine college persistence; to see who among those enrolled in college/post-secondary training were still enrolled. The goal for the class of 2015 interviews was to determine how many of those who intended to enroll in a post-secondary program actually did. Using telephone contact, e-mails, Facebook, family and friend word-of-mouth options, we were able to determine the following: of the class of 2014, 46% of the graduating class was still enrolled in a post-secondary program or the military. One student completed a year-long program and was working in the field as a photographer. Of the 100 students in the graduating class of 2015, 57% were confirmed to be enrolled in either a two-year or four-year college/university, certificate program, or military. No one reported participating in an apprenticeship opportunity. The remaining students are believed to have entered the workforce.

Medomak Valley High School has established partnerships with local businesses, primarily organized through the School-to-Career program, the coordinator of which is a member of the Waldoboro Business Association (WBA). The partnerships and connections, however, are arranged on an individual basis, and student progress is monitored by the business and the MVHS School-to-Career Coordinator. Additionally, because MVHS is a sending school to Mid-Coast School of Technology, MVHS students are exposed to business opportunities through the WBA program advisory committees' relationship with MCST. During MVHS' Aspire Higher Week seniors are encouraged to job shadow, and must submit documentation of the experience to the Guidance Department. Many Medomak students are also involved in biannual Red Cross Blood Drives organized by the student council. Many Medomak students raise money for local charities and food banks, and MVHS' National Honor Society regularly raises money for charitable causes. Throughout the year any number of MVHS students take on community service projects, though it is not a graduation requirement.

Medomak Valley High School has established partnerships with individual local colleges and the University of Maine System. As of the spring of 2016, juniors and seniors have access to nine

Thomas College classes through a dual-enrollment agreement. Medomak Valley also offers one dual-enrollment class through Kennebec Valley Community College. Medomak Valley was also a member of the Bridge Year Program during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years through the University of Maine. Medomak Valley students also have access to courses through the University of Maine System's Aspirations Program. This program allows juniors and seniors in good academic standing the opportunity to take up to six credits of college courses per semester tuition free to the student. There are also two MVHS faculty who are adjunct faculty members at the University College at Rockland/University of Maine at Augusta. In total, in the last two school years ten Medomak Valley teachers have been adjunct faculty at Thomas College, the University of Maine System, or the Maine Community College System.

## **Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations**

### **Vision**

Learning, Growing, Achieving, Together

### **Core Values**

Freedom, Curiosity, Respect, Honesty, Responsibility, Compassion, Integrity, Tolerance

### **Beliefs**

We believe that notable achievements are accomplished as a result of genuine challenge.

Acknowledging student differences in capacities and interests, we believe that our school should:

- Stimulate interest and curiosity in students to the end that they will find satisfaction in learning;
- Offer levels of academic experience ranging from basic skills to vocational training and college preparatory work, while striving for mastery and excellence at all levels, encouraging a wide range of learning activities and nurturing an interest in learning as a lifelong activity;
- Develop skills of students in clear and evaluative thinking;
- Develop good work habits and pride in work;
- Implant a knowledge and understanding of our cultural heritage;
- Provide opportunities for students with special needs, aptitudes, or talents;
- Provide opportunities for students to inquire into the basic problems of our society and our world, to assist students in understanding the democratic process and their role as citizens, accepting responsibility for their behavior and its effects on others;
- Provide activities that will promote physical development, emotional maturity, leadership, fellowship, and responsible social behaviors;
- Inculcate in students a deep respect for themselves and for the rights of others, helping each to identify his/her unique interests and abilities;

- Encourage each student to pursue his/her formal studies through the completion of high school, and encourage students to continue their formal studies through postgraduate education.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Medomak Valley High School is to provide a safe and academically engaging environment that prepares students with skills necessary for lifelong learning, meaningful employment, civic responsibility, and global awareness in the 21st century.

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

At Medomak Valley High School students will become:

1. Clear and effective communicators in a variety of ways
2. Prepared and engaged self-directed learners
3. Creative, practical, and collaborative problem solvers
4. Responsible, respectful, and involved citizens
5. Integrative and informed thinkers

### **Learning Habits**

**Respect:** Appropriate language, Positive attitude, Appropriate use of technology, General civility

**Effort:** Engagement, Perseverance,

**Preparedness:** Attendance, Punctuality, Time management

### **Introduction**

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

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees which supervises the work of four Commissions: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE), the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS), the Commission on Public Schools which is comprised of the Committee on Public Secondary Schools (CPSS), the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), and the Commission on Public Elementary and Middle Schools (CPEMS), and the Commission on International Education (CIE).

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public secondary school member institutions, CPSS requires visiting teams to assess the degree to which the

evaluated schools meet the qualitative Standards for Accreditation of the Committee. Those Standards are:

#### Teaching and Learning Standards

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment of and for Student Learning

#### Support of Teaching and Learning Standards

School Culture and Leadership

School Resources for Learning

Community Resources for Learning

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

#### **Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study**

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Medomak Valley High School, a committee of 12 members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities, and facilities available for young people. The self-study of Medomak Valley High School extended over a period of 24 months, from October, 2014 to October, 2016.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their alignment with the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Committee, Medomak Valley High School also used questionnaires developed by The Research Center at Endicott College to reflect the concepts contained in the Standards for Accreditation.

These materials provided discussion items for a comprehensive assessment of the school by the professional staff during the self-study.

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

### **The Process Used by the Visiting team**

A visiting team of 12 members was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate the Medomak Valley High School. The visiting team members spent four days in Waldoboro, Maine; reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination; met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents; shadowed students; visited classes; and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school aligns with the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the members of the visiting team represented classroom teachers, guidance counselors, library/media specialists, building administrators, and central office administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Medomak Valley High School.

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

- review of the school's self-study materials
- 36 total hours of shadowing 12 students for a half day
- a total of 200 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)
- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility
- individual meetings with teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

### **Standard 1 Indicator 1**

#### **Conclusions**

The school community engages in an extensive, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. Beginning in 2014, a team of eight staff members formed a leadership team to re-evaluate the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (CVBLEs). The leadership team engaged with student leaders through the 16-member student council to develop and revise the CVBLEs. After reviewing relevant research from Dr. Robert Marzano, Kim

Marshall, and John Hattie, visiting other schools undergoing their accreditation process, and gathering student review and approval, the revised core values document was brought to the staff for approval. In May 2015, the school conducted an online survey and responses were gathered from 165 parents and community members to provide feedback about the developing core values. The leadership team compiled the results and reviewed and modified the document as needed. Upon completion, a follow-up paper survey completed by 92 parents, 491 students, and 51 staff affirmed the new core values. The core values were approved by the administration and school board.

The school's 21st century learning expectations (21st CLEs) were developed during the 2014-2015 school year. The process included specific educational research including the Maine Department of Education's 21st CLEs and Guiding Principles, and was guided by a school coach from the Great Schools Partnership. At the end of the process, a new logo was adopted and is now extensively exhibited across school common areas, every classroom, and on the MVHS Program of Studies. The school adopted its 21st CLEs in June 2015 after a survey of parents, students, and community members responded with approximately 98 percent acceptance of the expectations. As a result of the dynamic and collaborative process led by the leadership team and the student council and supported by many stakeholders, the vast majority of students and teachers have accepted the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations as a path to future success.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- students
- school board
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- school website

### **Standard 1 Indicator 2**

#### **Conclusions**

The school has identified challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, civic, and social competencies and are defined by rubrics that do not yet target high levels of achievement. There are five school-wide binary rubrics designed to measure the 21st century learning expectations: "clear and effective communicator; prepared and engaged self-directed learner; creative, practical, and collaborative problem solver; responsible, respectful and involved citizen; and integrative and informed thinker." These expectations are aligned with Maine's Guiding Principles Standards. The rubrics define "Meets" and "Does Not Meet" for each expectation. Because of the binary nature of the rubrics, students and parents are not able to identify targeted levels of achievement. Because the school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning

expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, the school has made a meaningful commitment to 21st century learning, when each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement, parents and students will clearly understand the expectations and teachers will be able to effectively measure and report student achievement of the school's expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school board
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 1 Indicator 3**

#### **Conclusions**

MVHS's CVBLEs are actively and extensively reflected in the culture of the school, generally drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions and resource allocation to a degree; however, the continued use of the "vision and mission statement" terminology, as well as the existence of the Maine Learning Habits, confuse many stakeholders and impedes the school's progress in fully implementing the CVBLEs. The school has developed and implemented a myriad of programs that reflect the core values and beliefs including dual enrollment classes, Advanced Placement classes, the Aspire Higher week, Peers Assisting with Sincerity (PAWS), the Accipiter program, and the Recover and Excel (REP) period. REP is a full class period each day where students are able to get extra help in the classes where they need it the most. An intricate system has been developed to ensure all students are able to get assistance in all classes. Since the program's inception, the school has seen a dramatic drop in its failure rate. In addition, a second assistant principal has been added to the staff to deal with discipline to free up other administrators to develop curriculum and evaluate staff. Seventy-five minutes of paid time a week has been devoted to professional development which includes developing curriculum maps, peer-to-peer education, and the development and review of 21st CLEs. It is consistently clear that the students and staff cooperate in an environment that is respectful, tolerant, compassionate, and encourages freedom, personal responsibility, and curiosity. While the school's CVBLEs clearly embody what this school community values, there is some confusion among staff, students, and parents about the 21st CLEs due to much overarching terminology, including the mission and vision statement and the Learning Habits required by the state of Maine. Because the school's core

values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school students have a rich environment for learning. When the core values, beliefs and learning expectations also fully drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and consistently guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations, students will be assured that the school can meet their needs and support their achievement of the school's learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- students
- school board
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 1 Indicator 4**

#### **Conclusions**

The school deliberately and regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and learning expectations based on research, and on district and school priorities; however, it does not yet review regularly based on data. MVHS recently reviewed and revised its CVBLEs using relevant research from Dr. Robert Marzano, Kim Marshall, and John Hattie. The Medomak Valley annual program of studies provides an opportunity for review, and seventy-five minutes of professional development time weekly is built into the schedule for review and revision of CVBLE as needed. The school actively seeks input from students, staff, and community members through student council, the school leadership team, and the school board using both traditional paper and electronic surveys. Although the staff reviews data infrequently to discuss learning expectations, the resources for gathering the data are in place by using NWEA, EdYousched, MELMAC, and Advanced Placement, SAT, and PSAT results. As a result of the dynamic and collaborative process led by the administration, leadership team, student council, and the involvement of many stakeholders, the school is actively engaged in reviewing and revising the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, and once analyzing data becomes a part of this process, the resulting CVBLEs statement will more accurately reflect the core values, beliefs and learning expectations of the school.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- panel presentation
- teacher interview
- teachers

- school board
- school leadership
- Endicott survey
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 1 Commendations**

#### **Commendation**

The core values and beliefs that embody those of the school, students, and community

#### **Commendation**

The inclusive and dynamic process for review and revision of CVBLEs

#### **Commendation**

The commitment of seventy-five minutes a week to ongoing professional development

#### **Commendation**

The strong programs that reflect the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations including Peers Assisting with Sincerity, Recovery and Excel period, Aspire Higher week, and the Accipiter program

#### **Commendation**

### **Standard 1 Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation**

Develop and implement a plan to clarify the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations to avoid confusion with the school's vision and mission statement

#### **Recommendation**

Develop a plan to use data to inform review and revision of the school's CVBLEs

### **Standard 2 Indicator 1**

#### **Conclusions**

The school community has designed a curriculum in which students frequently practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Teachers spend professional development (PD) time discussing and planning how to implement the 21st CLEs. Each

department is responsible for one of the standards and has identified three to five specific assessments that will be used to determine whether or not students have met the assigned 21st century learning target. For example, students in English classes have common assessments, such as the Philbrook Speech and Pecha Kucha digital presentations, that measure students' ability to be "clear and effective communicators." In art, students complete an Empty Bowl project that is assessed using a rubric focusing on "responsible, involved citizenship." For a small school, there are many elective offerings that challenge students to grow as individuals and citizens. Examples of these offerings include AP and dual enrollment courses, the horticulture program, and distinctive offerings such as Criminal Justice, Marine Science, Quantitative Analysis, and Interpretive Language I and II. As a result of the curriculum design in which students engage in various activities that are connected to each of the school's 21st century learning expectations, students have many opportunities to develop these important 21st century skills.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student work
- teacher interview

### **Standard 2 Indicator 2**

#### **Conclusions**

MVHS content area departments have consciously written the curriculum in a common format that includes instructional maps with concepts, content, skills, and assessment practices with references to the 21st century learning expectations, but does not always include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics, instructional strategies, and essential questions. Administration committed early release time, PD days, and an extra full day of meeting time for this curriculum work. Instructional strategies have not been emphasized in the unit design, but were emphasized school-wide under a three-year CLCC Grant (2006-2009). This work will continue with a focus on *Understanding by Design*. The district is working with a consultant from Jay McTighe's organization to support the development of units of study written from a *UbD* framework. This work is in its initial stages this year. The school community is trying to build a general understanding of the process; eventually, departments will create the units collaboratively and build off the instructional maps that have already been written. While units have been written in the form of instructional maps, the common assessments for these units have been created in some courses. For example, English teachers use the school-wide writing and presentation rubric for certain assessments, and the math department has begun writing common exams to assess and standardize learning outcomes. Also, there is a school-wide system in place for assessing students' learning habits, which are aligned with the 21st century learning expectations. Teachers describe assessment as the next work on the horizon. Due to the solid foundation established by the development of curriculum maps, and the district's commitment to developing units of study using the *Understanding By*

*Design* model, MVHS will be able to continue to build a unified written curriculum across all subject areas.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- central office personnel

### **Standard 2 Indicator 3**

#### **Conclusions**

The MVHS curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding through inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills in all departments, provides many authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, provides some opportunities for cross-disciplinary study, and supports informed and ethical use of technology. An example of problem-solving was evident in student work from a math class in which students were asked to solve the same problem four different ways. The focus of the assignment was on the problem-solving process itself, not simply on finding “one right answer.” Additionally, in English classes students write and deliver persuasive speeches during which they take a stand on an issue of importance to them and develop a call to action. Seventy-two percent of students and 82 percent of staff believe that the curriculum challenges students to think critically and practice higher order thinking skills. In the 2015-2016 school year, 150 students were enrolled in AP courses and 113 students were enrolled in dual enrollment courses.

There are some examples of cross-disciplinary learning, although teachers implement this without common planning time across disciplines. Two samples of writing-based assignments in music classes demonstrate a commitment to writing across the curriculum. These assignments allowed students to take on authentic roles as reviewers or critics, a real-world application of musical knowledge beyond performance or personal satisfaction. Students in Anatomy and Physiology classes research the Greek and Latin roots on the terms they are studying and use that research to create pamphlets. There are other examples of cross-curricular connections including students writing essays in math class that are assessed using the school-wide writing rubric, the final assessment in AP Calculus that ties in skills attained in pottery class, the vertical integration research project from U.S. History, among others.

MVHS provides many authentic learning opportunities for students. The horticulture program gives students the opportunity to engage in hands-on work that connects them to the community and the larger world. They learn how to grow vegetables that are used to prepare food in the cafeteria, as well as to collect and grow heirloom seeds as part of a national network of seed-savers. Recent student-run projects have included a booklet to inform the public of their arboretum, a value-added business venture making hand salve and wreaths to be sent to the Arlington National Cemetery. Music teachers shared that the arts department has taken on the respectful, responsible and involved citizen standard. Students have an

opportunity to demonstrate respect and responsibility through community concerts and Empty Bowl fundraisers. Students report that they learn about interest rates and taxes in quantitative analysis, and about insurance, mortgages and checkbook balancing in Consumer Economics.

All students are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate informed and ethical use of technology as all students are provided with an iPad. Students report that while the iPad is good for some things such as engaging in Internet research and creating presentations, they have difficulty writing essays without the keyboard that a laptop provides. There is a laptop sign-off form to show that both students and parents understand the district's policies regarding technology. Students are also educated via school assemblies on appropriate technology use.

As a result of the commitment to delivering a curriculum that emphasizes depth of understanding through inquiry, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills, provides many authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school, provides some opportunities for cross-disciplinary study, and supports informed and ethical use of technology, MVHS students attain the critical thinking, technological, and real-world skills they will need to succeed.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- Endicott survey

### **Standard 2 Indicator 4**

#### **Conclusions**

There is often an alignment between written and taught curriculum across the school. Departments have developed calendars that indicate what and when content is taught. A biology teacher reported that all teachers of biology adhere to the units of study and recently gave their classes common assessments within a week of each other. When a new biology teacher came in, she was able to see what was being taught and when, which guided her unit planning. Two English teachers stated that they follow the curriculum map with some adjustments as needed along the way. Special education teachers appreciate the ability to access the curriculum maps in order to align the work done in separate settings to the mainstream. Another teacher reported that the development of the instructional maps allows members of departments to have valuable conversations about what must be taught rather than what they like to teach. Some work remains to be done in aligning the written and taught curriculum. Sixty-four percent of staff agrees that the written and taught curricula are aligned. In interviews, teachers indicated that once common assessments have been implemented across all courses, teachers will have better tools for measuring the degree to which the written and taught curriculum are aligned. As a result of the generally strong alignment between the written and taught curriculum, administrators are able to refer to the instructional calendar to

gain context of the lesson, new teachers know what is supposed to be taught and when, and students have access to generally the same learning experiences, including students in special education. When there is full alignment between the written and taught curriculum, students will be assured of a well articulated and meaningful curriculum.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- teacher interview
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 2 Indicator 5**

#### **Conclusions**

Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist more strongly in some areas of the school and district than in others. The district has put some structures in place which are increasing the opportunities for more collaboration and coordination. District administration reported that it has been challenging to bring staff from separate schools together due to time constraints, but that the middle school and high school plan to have cross-school PLC meetings once per month for the remainder of this school year. Additionally, the district has a curriculum team that meets routinely to plan and prioritize the district's curriculum work. There are representatives from every PLC group on this team. So far this team has been focused on working with Great Schools Partnership to develop graduation standards. The committee is now shifting its work to focus on the common assessment component of the written curriculum. In addition to the curriculum team, a K-8 literacy collaborative works with a local university and meets monthly with a focus on research-based best practices in literacy instruction. This group includes the seven district literacy coaches and has recently expanded to include high school representatives. The middle school principal reported several events which facilitate smooth transitions between buildings for students, including step-up days and the ability of some eighth graders to take advanced math courses at the high school. The increased opportunities for cross-school collaboration focusing on curriculum and assessment, particularly between the middle school and high school, will result in a more seamless learning progression for students as they move from school to school.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- student work
- teacher interview
- central office personnel
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 2 Indicator 6**

## **Conclusions**

Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, library media resources, equipment and supplies are generally sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. Teachers and students report that they have the supplies and materials they need for teaching and learning and that the library has sufficient resources to meet their needs. The school has a one-to-one iPad program. All students are issued an iPad which they can take home. While there are some issues with specific software and applications that may not work well on the iPads, teachers and students have confidence that all learners have access to a high quality device. This access for all has led to teachers routinely integrating technology into their instruction. While the student:teacher ratio of 15:1 is generally reasonable, teachers report that recent reductions in staff have resulted in the loss of some positive initiatives at MVHS. Examples include the freshman academy and the opportunity for cross-curricular PLCs during the school day. Some classes are at the cap of 25, which in some content areas makes delivering the curriculum challenging and classrooms more crowded. The facilities are generally sufficient to support the curriculum; however, the school is old and somewhat overcrowded, and all stakeholders question how much longer the facility will be able to meet the community's needs in its current state. The district is undergoing a comprehensive facilities study this year to look at the feasibility of making some renovations to MVHS. There are 62 stipend positions available for staff to offer co-curricular activities to students. Additionally, if a teacher successfully offers a new club or activity to students for two consecutive years, the school board will consider adding a stipend for that position. Because staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient, teachers are able to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities. Once the building study is completed, the district will be able to determine what renovations will be necessary so that students will continue to have all of the resources and opportunities necessary to meet the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- school support staff

## **Standard 2 Indicator 7**

### **Conclusions**

The school has consciously worked to design a structure for professional collaboration that will provide professional staff with the personnel, time and resources necessary for ongoing collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of curriculum using assessment results and current research. As a result of a newly negotiated contract, teachers across the school have 75 minutes of collaborative planning time every Wednesday. This is the beginning of year two of this new structure. Last year much of this time was used to complete the self-study as part of

the accreditation process. This year departments have been given greater latitude in planning for this collaborative time, ensuring that it is focused on curriculum design and assessment, as well as for the analysis of student work and data. Department leaders meet regularly with building administration to plan the use of PD time, but at this point the department heads have received no formal PLC facilitation training. In addition to the Wednesday PD time, the district also has monthly early release days and two full-day teacher workshop days. While the results of the Endicott survey indicate that only 29 percent of staff feel that they had sufficient time for the necessary curriculum work, the survey was administered prior to the implementation of the new PD time structure. The school's commitment to building capacity for meaningful teacher collaboration will, with time and leadership, result in a more cohesive, aligned system of curriculum and common assessments which will provide students with greater opportunities to master the school's 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- central office personnel
- school leadership

### **Standard 2 Commendations**

#### **Commendation**

The purposeful design of the curriculum which provides all students with opportunities to practice the 21st century learning expectations, and the work the staff has done thus far to integrate these expectations into the curriculum

#### **Commendation**

The instructional maps written in a common format in all departments, and the accessibility of these maps to students and families via the program of studies

#### **Commendation**

The increased autonomy granted to department coordinators to facilitate curriculum development within their departments during the PLC time

#### **Commendation**

The many authentic higher order thinking and problem-solving opportunities that teachers incorporate in their classes

#### **Commendation**

The unit maps and calendars that have been created for all classes and that are accessible to the school community

**Commendation**

The increased collaborative time for teachers

**Commendation**

The existence of cross-building groups such as the curriculum team and the literacy collaborative, and the focus on research-based best practice, as evidenced by the district commitment to *Understanding by Design*, John Hattie's meta analyses, and literacy collaborative work with the district literacy coaches

**Commendation**

The variety of elective courses and co-curricular activities available to students

**Commendation**

The one-to-one iPad initiative provided to all students

**Commendation**

**Standard 2 Recommendations**

**Recommendation**

Develop a plan to build common understanding among teachers/departments on expectations for essential questions, unit objectives and assessment criteria as written in the instructional maps

**Recommendation**

Expand instructional maps to more comprehensive units that include instructional strategies and links to assessments and rubrics to show what students will do to meet unit objectives and standards

**Recommendation**

Develop and implement a plan to improve vertical articulation with sending schools

**Standard 3 Indicator 1**

## **Conclusions**

Teachers' instructional practices reflect the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. Teachers are clearly familiar with the school's identified beliefs about learning, and in all classrooms the CVBLEs are prominently displayed. The teaching practices in most classes consistently supports the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The math department regularly instructs and assesses problem-solving skills, ELA teachers instruct on clear and effective communication, and art students are required to write a statement explaining and analyzing every piece of art they create, thus working on their communication skills. Art students are also working on a stone project that will put positive messages around the school supporting the core values and beliefs. Each academic department is responsible for assessing one of the five 21st century learning expectations. Teachers regularly have time to examine their practices during the weekly department time. There are protocols in place at department meetings to improve instructional alignment to the core values and learning expectations. Additionally, as part of the Marshall evaluation system used by MVHS administrators, teachers are evaluated eight times per evaluation cyle, thereby ensuring that teaching practices continue to reflect the CVBLE. Because teachers regularly examine their practices to ensure consistency with the CVBLE, what students are learning is consistent with the CVBLE.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student work
- teachers
- students
- school board

## **Standard 3 Indicator 2**

### **Conclusions**

Teachers' instructional practices at MVHS frequently 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 integrating technology.

Most teachers' practices include differentiation strategies such as choice of topics based on ability, interest, and learning style. For example in the Day Treatment Program each student has a unique set of needs, and instruction is modified to achieve the goals set in each student's IEP. In fine arts courses, students receive instruction based on an assessment of current skills and teachers work to support individual student progress. In an ELA class, students choose debate topics based on their interests and personalities. Most teachers use activities that are reflective of students' personal experiences in the community. Parents report that teachers are

able to get their students excited about learning, by incorporating a high level of customization. Teachers meet regularly with individuals and small groups of students to address individual learning needs during the school's REP time. REP works especially well for students who can not concentrate due to attention problems in the larger group. Teachers and students agree that the small group or one-on-one time with a teacher in the REP period helps in breaking down larger concepts into smaller parts and in re-teaching concepts that students failed to grasp during regular class time.

Some teachers engage students in cross-disciplinary learning. One example of this is that students in Calculus class and students in an art class participate in a pottery project together. Also, in horticulture classes, students apply concepts from multiple content areas. Other examples of interdisciplinary learning include experiences or collaborations with math and science, art and chemistry and art and history. Science classes analyze Latin words and roots in order to better understand both science and English. In addition, English classes have analyzed science terms in order to get a holistic view of how language affects all classes.

Teachers at MVHS engage students as active and self-directed learners. For instance, when students "self-tag" for the REP period, they are using self-advocacy skills that they will need to be successful. They are learning that it is okay to ask for help, and they are in fact directing their own learning. Many students use REP period to check their grades to find out what is missing and to ask for help or information on the assignment. In Clay class, students operate in a busy and highly interactive setting. The projects begin with generalized topics and become more specialized as each student refines his/her vision for the project. In the Environmental Arts Program there is a deliberate collaboration between the arts program and the sciences in which students are making choices and actively applying them. Students sometimes have choices in lab variables in science, particularly in a photosynthesis lab, to test out their hypotheses. Teachers at MVHS also engage students as active learners by taking full advantage of opportunities that arise from living in a community surrounded by the Maine wilderness. When the school's chickens were being repeatedly harassed by a bobcat, a science teacher received the game warden's permission to shoot it, and then brought the game warden into school to talk to the class about bobcats and to show the class how he tagged it. Another teacher took advantage of having access to a large pregnant wild animal that had been hit by a car and brought the fetus in to be examined by Anatomy and Physiology students. Yet another teacher brought in a deer he had shot during hunting season and taught the class how to field strip the carcass.

Teachers at MVHS emphasize inquiry, problem-solving and higher order thinking. MVHS has eleven Advanced Placement courses to challenge students to think on a higher level, and the school has a Gifted and Talented program to make sure those students are consistently challenged. In an upper level math class the students use formulas and skills learned to calculate the slope of how much daylight we lose on a daily basis at various times of the year. In another upper level math class the students were trying to figure out a sample of numbers using inquiry and problem-solving skills. In English classes, students write and deliver a Philbrook Speech in which they adopt an issue that is of importance to them and write a persuasive speech outlining the issue and developing a call to action. The speeches are

delivered in the auditorium where the school community can observe. Overall, much of the student work provided assesses inquiry, problem-solving and higher order thinking.

Students at MVHS are able to apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. For example, students in a horticulture class learn how to plant and harvest vegetables, fertilize and maintain beds, and catalog and market the available seeds. As part of their heirloom seed program, they researched and found out that villages in Himalayas were having difficulty growing potatoes due to climate change and erosion, and so as a member of the Seed Savers Exchange (a compendium of seed saver organizations), they sent seeds native to the Andes that were more suitable to the Himalaya's changing climate. Another aspect of the horticulture program is that students go through the Seed Savers Exchange Yearbook, choose a seed that has a compelling history, and write a letter requesting those seeds to a group that has them. The seeds are then grown according to the Seed Savers' protocol. Additionally, students in Wilderness Survival class create camping stoves out of recycled paint cans, make survival forts and maple syrup. While studying force and acceleration relative to mass, students in a Physics class crash model cars and apply their findings to crumple zones in real automobiles. In a Practical Math class, students learn about area by figuring out the total amount of dirt that would need to be removed and the amount of concrete that would need to replace it if they were digging and building a foundation. Then they calculated the total cost. MVHS also partners with Mid-Coast School of Technology (MCST) to provide students with cross-disciplinary and hands-on learning opportunities in which they apply knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to authentic workplace training.

Teachers continuously engage students in self-assessment and reflection. They routinely ask students to reflect on their work and to self-critique. In Spanish classes the students combine self-assessment and formative feedback to make grammatical revisions on assignments and quizzes. During a math class students fix their own mistakes while going over homework in class, and in doing so, they take note of their mistakes and ask for REP tags if needed. In PE class students monitor their heart rates and set heart rate goals; if they do not meet their goals, they decide whether a run on the track will remedy this, and if so, for how long. Teachers regularly clarify for students that assessment is part of the learning process, not simply an evaluation at the end of an activity.

Most teachers across the school integrate technology appropriately to enhance instruction. Teachers use tools such as projectors, SMART Boards, one-to-one iPads (part of MLTI - Maine Learning Technology Initiative), graphing calculators in math, heart rate monitors in PE, Virtual High School, Quizlet, DESMOS graphing calculators, Kahoot, Google Classroom and Docs, PearDeck, Keynote, Pages, Prezi, eBackpack, EasyBib, iPhoto, iMovie, Photobooth, electronic assessments such as thatquiz.org and testmoz.com, and PSAT prep. Despite the somewhat limiting nature of iPads, teachers are able to use iPad apps in myriad ways, including as formative assessments in the form of entrance or exit tickets in order to inform their instruction. ELA uses a website called Read Theory on which students answer questions about a passage and the teachers and students can use the data to see what types of reading questions students struggle answering. This is an ongoing formative assessment tool. The edYOUshed program/app is the most prevalent piece of technology used to inform instruction. Teachers go

into the website, choose a day, search the student's name, and “tag” them. There is also a place for the teacher to communicate with the student as to why they are tagged via checkboxes and/or specific narrative discourse. Students can self-reflect and submit a tag request. The teacher gets an email with a link to go into the website and tag that particular student.

Because most teachers at MVHS personalize instruction; engage students in cross-disciplinary learning; engage students as active and self-directed learners; emphasize inquiry, problem solving and higher order thinking; apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; engage students in self-assessment and reflection; and successfully integrate technology students have enhanced opportunities to successfully achieve the 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- facility tour
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- parents
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 3 Indicator 3**

#### **Conclusions**

MVHS teachers regularly adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessments, strategically differentiating, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.

It is evident that MVHS teachers use formative assessments to enhance instruction on a regular basis. For example, a grade nine English class uses short reading quizzes to progressively assess student progress and adjust instruction accordingly. Likewise, in Spanish, the teacher provides formative feedback during the writing of rough draft essays. Math and science classes value the use of point-of-instruction online surveys and quizzes to formatively assess student understanding and then make appropriate adjustments to instruction. A conversation with a science teacher revealed that the combination of available technology and the ability to formatively assess progress "on the fly" has greatly improved instruction.

The prevalence of strategic differentiation is obvious and substantial throughout the school. For instance, in art classes, the teachers understand that students enter their class with a wide variety of skill levels. The instructional strategies focus on effectively meeting students at their ability level and working to move them as far as they can over the span of the school year.

Likewise, Spanish classes use popular music to teach a grammar/interpretive communication lesson by scaffolding lessons based on the ability level of the students. Another example, the Day Treatment Program, is entirely based on individualized differentiated instruction. In Day Treatment, the students may have the same assignments, but the teacher designs instruction on an individual basis to best address the particular challenges faced by each student. Elsewhere, the physical education department employs technology in the form of portable heart monitors, allowing students to self-monitor a custom-designed exercise program. Finally, in an art class, the teacher conducts an adaptive art program, specifically designed for students from the LEAD program.

Many teachers effectively use small group instruction in a purposeful manner to add variety and to provide more opportunities to differentiate their instruction and to meet the needs of their students. In a high level Spanish class, the students, while studying Spanish culture, debate the practice of bullfighting. Groups of students are arranged purposefully, based on the pro and con views of bullfighting. This practice provides students with an opportunity to practice the 21st century learning expectations. Also, in an English class, the teacher uses groups to differentiate vocabulary lessons; students are clustered based on performance on a formative assessment. That same English class effectively employs one-on-one, small group, and whole-group instruction in a single class period.

MVHS provides substantial support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom. For example, a World History class uses a graphic organizer for categorizing notes and promoting organizational and study skills. English and history classes give pre-assessments to gauge existing knowledge, allowing the teacher to devote time to new learning. Likewise, according to several Advanced Placement (AP) students, their teachers constantly assess and adjust instruction to make sure the students understand concepts before moving on. Teachers throughout the school also regularly use the REP time to supplement instruction. Several teachers indicate that the one-to-one technology has significantly increased student engagement in the learning process.

Because most teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by using formative assessments, strategically differentiating, purposefully organizing group learning activities, and providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom, instruction positively impacts student achievement.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- student work
- teachers
- students
- school board
- department leaders

- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 3 Indicator 4**

#### **Conclusions**

On a regular basis, 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.

The use of student achievement data is visible in the instructional practices of teachers at MVHS. For example, the Day Treatment Program uses PSAT, NWEA and Accuplacer test results to establish the best methods of instruction. Teachers throughout the regular education program also regularly use SAT test data to evaluate the overall effectiveness of instruction. Recently, as a result of the SAT data analysis, a cross-curricular emphasis has been placed on writing.

Teachers across the curriculum also regularly examine student-produced work to improve current or future instruction. In an English class, as well as in a World History class, the teachers returned previously completed work to the students so that they could make revisions and improvements. The teachers in these classes also adjusted their instruction based on student performance on their first attempt.

Additionally, teachers use feedback from a variety of sources to improve instruction. As was mentioned in Standard 3, Indicator 3, a variety of point-of-instruction online resources, such as [testmoz.com](http://testmoz.com) and [thatquiz.org](http://thatquiz.org), allow teachers to assess students at multiple steps in the learning process, and the teachers use this data to make adjustments to instruction as necessary. During the process of developing standards-based assessments, teachers collaborate and critique curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Examining current research also appears to be a common and valuable practice for improving instruction. One example, on a recommendation from the superintendent of schools, many teachers read John Hattie's *Visible Learning*, which analyzed 195 influences on learning and ranked them according to effectiveness. Several teachers use the findings from Hattie to establish and adjust instructional practices. Also, the REP program is a significant positive adjustment to the school that is a result of an examination of current research.

Lastly, teachers at MVHS regularly engage in formal and informal professional discourse. Many teachers use their common lunch times for professional collaboration and an exchange of ideas and input regarding instruction. All staff members participate in 75 minutes of weekly professional development time. The staff also continues to engage in periodic PLCs. Additionally, it is common for teachers to peer-evaluate instructional methods, both formally in

PLCs or informally during collegial discussions. Administration encourages teachers to use formal professional development time to work toward recertification. Several department leaders report that the professional development time benefits the academic continuum from grade 9 to grade 12 by enabling colleagues to calibrate instruction.

As a result of teachers' efforts, individually and collaboratively, to 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, instruction is custom designed to efficiently and effectively meet the immediate and long-term learning needs of all students.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 3 Indicator 5**

#### **Conclusions**

Teachers at MVHS, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices. Teachers at MVHS are constantly looking to improve their teaching through research of contemporary instructional strategies. They reflect and maintain expertise in their area by participating in school-wide in-service workshops in which teachers learn from other teachers in order to build capacity within their departments and school. The leadership team makes collaborative decisions about the best use of professional development time to achieve the instructional needs of the school as a whole. MVHS has consulted with Great Schools Partnership and received training on iWalkthroughs and Marzano's instructional practices. The ELA department also shares literacy strategies during PLC time. Teachers regularly reflect on their conversations with colleagues, whether during formal PLC time or during informal talks at lunch. Staff members read and forward relevant articles across disciplines for use in and outside of classes. In addition, many teachers attend professional development conferences in their content areas and conferences that focus on instructional practices that can be applied to multiple subject areas. The district is moving to the Marshall rubrics for teacher evaluations which is more formative in nature and will encourage instructional reflection and revision instead of just summative evaluation. With continuing focus on maintaining expertise in their content areas and in content-specific

instructional needs, teachers continue to be reflective practitioners, and students are therefore exposed to up-to-date teaching practices that result in increased learning.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 3 Commendations**

#### **Commendation**

The implementation of increased professional development time

#### **Commendation**

The Recover and Excel Program (REP) that emphasizes the specific needs of individual students

#### **Commendation**

The multiple authentic learning opportunities provided in all classes and in programs like the horticulture and Seed Saver programs, as well as the partnership with the Mid-Coast School of Technology

#### **Commendation**

The high degree of personalization of instruction within the classroom based on ability, interest, and learning styles

#### **Commendation**

The consistent use of formative assessments to drive and enhance instruction

#### **Commendation**

The use of data from a wide variety of sources, such as PSAT, SAT, and NWEA data, student-produced work, peer input, and current research to inform instruction

#### **Commendation**

The team approach to making collaborative decisions, with teacher input, regarding professional development that directly informs instruction

## **Standard 3 Recommendations**

### **Recommendation**

Increase purposeful cross-disciplinary opportunities for students

## **Standard 4 Indicator 1**

### **Conclusions**

The professional staff has not yet put into practice a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations, but has the foundation of a formal process based on school-wide analytic rubrics. Administrators stated they have yet to put into practice a formal process to assess their learning expectations, although they do have an idea of how it will work. Students are currently assessed on the school's Guiding Principles, and they are largely the same as their 21st CLE, so it will be a matter of re-aligning to the updated expectations. Also, teachers do not currently have access to the CLEs in Infinite Campus in the same way they are able to assess their graduation standards or learning habits. The program of studies states, "Beginning with the Class of 2018 in order to earn a proficiency-based diploma, MVHS requires that a student earns fourteen threes (3's) or fours (4's) by the end of their junior year in order to demonstrate proficiency with the Guiding Principles." 21st CLE rubrics do exist as a list of indicators which the student can meet "consistently" or "inconsistently." For example, in the expectation for "Students will be clear and effective communicators," one indicator says the student "uses evidence and logic appropriately in communication" and the two levels are either "consistently" or "inconsistently." The binary nature of these rubrics are not consistent with rigor of a true analytic rubric. Also, the existence of and purpose of these rubrics have not been clearly communicated to students. When the professional staff continuously employs a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, teachers and students will have important data for ensuring that every student is making progress towards achieving the school's 21st century learning objectives.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teachers

## **Standard 4 Indicator 2**

### **Conclusions**

The school's professional staff does not yet clearly communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families, nor has it communicated the school's progress in achieving the school's learning expectations to the school community. There currently exists the foundation for reporting student progress on the 21st CLEs to students and their families on the school's transcript. The Learning Habits, summarized in three main areas (Classroom Responsibility and Respect, Effort and Engagement, and Preparedness) are scored on a 1-4 rubric, based on how regularly a student practices these behaviors in each class. In the program of studies, the guiding principles, which are similar to the 21st CLEs, have been matched up with the school's learning habits. Student progress on meeting the 21st CLE also will be reported on formal report cards for parent and student access on Infinite Campus. Although the administration has informally communicated information about whole-school attainment of the 21st CLE to parents via the newsletter, they have not yet formally communicated the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st CLEs to the school community. Once individual student progress, based on specific and measurable criteria, and the school's progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations are reported to the school community, the level of student success will become clear to parents, students, staff and the community.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students
- department leaders
- school website

### **Standard 4 Indicator 3**

#### **Conclusions**

Professional staff at MVHS collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement in a variety of ways. Teachers have access to the results of PSAT, SAT, NWEA, and AP exam results. Staff spent time in professional development last year reviewing the results of the PSAT and SAT data and looking for trends in inequities in student achievement. Staff also analyzed NWEA, Virtual High School, PLATO, and AP exam data to inform the writing of new student achievement goals and a plan for meeting them. MVHS also implemented a daily Recover and Excel Period (REP) as a Response to Intervention (RTI). REP allows students to get extra help from a teacher by being “tagged” for the period. If tagged, students spend the period with that teacher. Students commonly spend the period receiving one-on-one help, getting feedback on work in progress or on necessary revisions, and spending time to get work done or to make up assessments. Teachers decide to tag a student after evaluating formative and summative assessments. The tagging system being used, called EdYouSched, also collects data on the reasons students are being tagged. MVHS staff have begun to examine REP data to try to draw correlations between categories like student

achievement, academic support, and attendance. Freshman ELA teachers have begun to use ReadTheory.org to identify individual student reading weaknesses to help inform instruction and to provide useful data to improve reading skills. NWEA data has been used by some teachers to help inform curriculum decisions. Additionally, special education teachers have been using data from individual achievement testing such as the Wechsler Individual Achievement Tests III (WIAT III) as well as the NWEA to inform instruction and to create IEP goals. Special education teachers have recently started to use the Transition Assessment and Goal Generator (TAGG), an online system for helping to determine student post-secondary needs. As a result of the thorough examination of data and concentrated effort to reach struggling learners, MVHS is able to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement and to assist all students in the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- panel presentation
- teachers

### **Standard 4 Indicator 4**

#### **Conclusions**

Prior to each unit of study, teachers generally communicate to students the related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed, but only informally communicate applicable 21st century learning expectations. Most of the time unit-specific goals, and applicable graduation standards, are conveyed to students at the beginning of each unit, through unit overviews, although the delivery is not consistent. Students are informed of the unit goals through slide-show presentations, verbal instructions, syllabi or detailed unit overview handouts that outline all important standards addressed in the unit. The school's 21st century learning expectations are stated in some cases, but are mostly added verbally. Unit-specific goals can be found online in a written, detailed, course-by-course curriculum and a corresponding instructional calendar. Administration expects teachers to provide unit overviews prior to each unit of study, although no specific format for these is required. The administration's goal is to be able to walk into a classroom and ask any student what graduation standard they are currently working on and receive an accurate response. Students generally agree their teachers provide a unit overview, and that they know what graduation standards are covered in each unit; however, students do not agree that the same clarity is present in regards to the 21st century learning expectations. The 21st CLEs are on the school's website, in the 2016-2017 program of studies, in the MVHS student handbook, and on posters throughout the school. As such, 21st CLE are being widely discussed at school, but they are new expectations, and students, in general, are not clear with regards to what attainment of these learning expectations will look like in every class. Because most teachers convey unit-specific learning goals to students prior to a new unit of study, student understand what they are learning; when

all teachers also communicate the school's 21st century learning expectations, students will more fully understand how to achieve success on these new expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- teacher interview
- department leaders
- school leadership

### **Standard 4 Indicator 5**

#### **Conclusions**

Prior to summative assessments, teachers often provide students with specific and measurable criteria for success, such as exemplars and/or rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement. The English and science departments often use rubrics prior to major projects and assignments. Rubrics are more commonly used before projects and writing assignments; there is limited evidence of rubrics or criteria for success being provided before other types of summative assessments. A majority of students agree with each of the statements, "My teachers regularly used rubrics to assess work," and "My teachers explain what the learning expectations are before each unit of study," and also "Prior to the unit of study, teachers communicate to students the school's learning expectations and corresponding rubrics to be used." Exemplars are commonly used across other departments as well, in some cases illustrating how a student can achieve a certain grade (A, B C, etc.) on the assignment, routinely providing students with examples of what high quality work looks like. Most teachers recognize the importance of providing rubrics to clearly communicate expectations to students, although rubrics have not been developed in all departments. When providing specific and measurable criteria for success to students prior to summative assessments is widely adopted and implemented across all content areas, students will more clearly understand what a high level of achievement looks like on all summative assessments.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- student work
- teacher interview
- students
- Endicott survey

### **Standard 4 Indicator 6**

#### **Conclusions**

In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies including formative and summative assessments. MVHS staff employ numerous and varied types of formative

assessments, including experiments, quizzes, games, whiteboard responses, Socratic questioning, and entrance and exit tickets. Summative assessment strategies are also varied. Some very innovative assessment techniques are employed, such as the physical education department's Friday Fitness assessment videos, the English department's cultural notebooks and speech contest, the science department's scale earth models, cellular respiration with yeast project, and the Paw Salve performance task. More examples include World History's exploration and trade project, the fine arts department's Empty Bowl project and jazz ensemble performances, the mathematics department's inclusion of writing, labs and collaborative and online problem solving using Desmos. The majority of faculty is supportive of students' revision of their work, although those reworks take numerous forms and are implemented to different degrees. The amount of feedback given to students and teachers' revision policies differs based on content, grade, course, and teacher. As a result of the wide range of formative and summative assessment strategies used at MVHS, students are able to demonstrate learning in many different ways.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers

### **Standard 4 Indicator 7**

#### **Conclusions**

Teachers sometimes collaborate both formally and informally on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. The largest block of time committed to curriculum collaboration, analysis and revision is the 75 minutes of weekly professional development time, although departments have not yet had much latitude in setting their own agendas for this time. There are additional allocations of time such as bi-weekly, after-school department meetings, one-half day of professional development a month, and several full in-service days throughout the year, although these are not reserved solely for assessment. The amount of time dedicated to assessment varies by department. Staff also report that due to close departmental proximity within the building, they are often able to take advantage of the time in-between student release and staff's contractual end of day to informally conference with colleagues. During this formal and informal common professional time, teachers create new common assessments and fine tune old ones, collaboratively score student work, create and refine common rubrics, and analyze school-wide data including attendance, grades, PSAT scores, SAT scores, and first quarter failures; however, staff's formal meeting time is often re-appropriated for other initiatives. A procedure for teachers to set their own agendas for the Wednesday PLC time has been put into place to provide the staff with a voice to accomplish their goals, while maintaining accountability by sending data to administration on how the time was used. When collaborative time is regularly available for

creating, analyzing, and revising common assessments, teachers will be able to improve the consistency across common courses and tailor instruction to best meet the needs of all students.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- teachers
- school board
- department leaders
- school leadership
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 4 Indicator 8**

#### **Conclusions**

Teachers often provide specific, timely, and corrective verbal feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work, but there is scattered evidence of formal written feedback. Teachers provide feedback in formal and informal ways, using a variety of ways including rubrics, written comments, conversations with students, and in Infinite Campus. Formative assessments are often structured to give immediate feedback to students, such as the use of online sites and apps like NearPod, Quizlet, ThatQuiz.org and Kahoot. Specific written constructive feedback was present in some areas including comments on rough drafts of assignments, corrections on math exams, and a few completed rubrics, but this practice was not observed consistently across the school. Assessments appear to be graded in a timely manner, with 78 percent of students feeling that their work is handed back in a reasonable amount of time, but the amount and form of constructive feedback varied widely. Verbal constructive feedback was widely observed across the school, especially during REP and during formative assessments by the teacher within class time. Written work examined contained less evidence of feedback to students, with the majority containing summative scores or checkmarks, and a few completed rubrics. More use of rubrics was evident in the English and social studies departments, with some evidence of use in fine arts and science, and by at least one math teacher. Students seem to be in agreement that they are receiving the feedback they need; only 16.1 percent of all students disagree they are receiving suggestions to improve their work, with only 3.7 percent of seniors disagreeing with that statement. Across content areas, students are encouraged to revise and resubmit work to more effectively meet learning objectives or graduation standards, but this does not seem to be pervasive. Estimations were given by administration that perhaps a little more than half of teachers allow revisions and the resubmission of student work. Even though formal written feedback is not commonplace, the amount of informal verbal feedback is such that students are able to successfully revise and improve their work when allowed. Consistently providing specific, timely, and corrective feedback to students affords students with a deeper understanding of material and improves overall academic success.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- student work
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students

## Standard 4 Indicator 9

### Conclusions

Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Teachers use a variety of techniques to check for student understanding, including practice problems, entrance or exit slips, short writing assignments, whiteboard responses, and question and answer discussions. In addition, pretests, practice labs, active reading margin activities, and online assessment activities (e.g., Quizlet, Kahoot, PearDeck, Testmoz.com, Google Classroom questions) are used often. The iPads in the classrooms were widely observed as useful in gathering information through formative assessments. Ninety-six percent of staff agrees that a variety and range of summative and formative assessment strategies are used. Teachers use the information gathered during formative assessments to decide what to re-teach, which students to “tag” for additional support in REP, and to decide which skills they might need to review or practice again. Ninety percent of staff agrees with the statement, “Teachers improve their instructional practices by using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments.” The use of formative assessment to inform and adapt instruction results in increased opportunities for student learning and the collaborative analysis of formative assessment results will increase and improve these opportunities.

## Sources of Evidence

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students

## Standard 4 Indicator 10

### Conclusions

Most teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice.

Most departments have adjusted their curricula in response to data from standardized assessments, data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institution, as well as survey data from alumni; however, there is less evidence that curricula has been revised in response to student work, common course or common grade-level assessments, and there is not yet a process for the revision of curriculum in response to individual student or school-wide progress in achieving the 21st century learning expectations.

Teachers have spent some of their PLC time collaboratively examining data from the SAT, NWEA and PSAT and use this data to adjust curriculum and instructional practices. More emphasis was placed on writing across the curriculum after an examination of the data in the fall of 2015. School-wide writing rubrics were created and piloted in the spring of 2016, with more regular use expected in the 2016-2017 school year. In response to feedback from the science and social studies departments, the freshman English teachers moved a unit on technical writing skills normally taught later in the year to the beginning of the year in order to support student success in other departments. In response to data collected from alumni through the MELMAC grant, a curriculum was implemented in the 10-minute daily Panther Advisory Team (PAT) time to encourage students to focus on post-secondary planning. Departments have not yet created a full range of common assessments. The English and math departments have many common course assessments already, and plans are evident in other departments for the common assessments they plan on creating, given more time. Achievement on 21st CLEs have not yet been used to revise curriculum, because they are still new to the school, and no data has yet been collected for teachers to study. Once all teachers use the full range of evidence available to them, including student progress toward mastery of 21st century learning expectations, then the school can be certain that appropriate curriculum revisions are resulting in improved instructional practice.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- department leaders
- school leadership

### **Standard 4 Indicator 11**

#### **Conclusions**

Grading and reporting practices are periodically reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning. The principal and the leadership team meet often to make decisions pertaining to policy implementation, including changes in grading and reporting practices to align with the school's belief about learning, and to adjust for Common Core Standards, Maine Learning Results, and Next Generation Science Standards. The grading system is reviewed each summer by administration, based on faculty and leadership team input. Grades have been reported online now for several years, using Infinite Campus (IC), and

all students and parents have access. Parents report great satisfaction with the level of access they have to their children's grades now, and feel it allows them to maintain a connection and presence in their children's education that was not possible when grades were only reported eight times a year. Learning habits grades were added to student report cards last year. Teachers enter a ranking of one to four each quarter for learning habits, and a mean is calculated for the four grades at the end of the year. Teachers report that students, especially freshmen, seem more aware of what kind of behaviors and attitudes will help them be successful, and often show continual improvement in "Respect, Effort and Preparedness" throughout the year. Graduation standards in each content area have been added to IC since the onset of proficiency-based diplomas, and these are reported at the end of each course. Student progress on achieving the 21st century learning expectations is not yet reported, although the foundation for doing so is present. The 21st CLEs stem from the school's previous guiding principles, and language and technology have not yet caught up to the change. Because the school periodically reviews and revises its grading and reporting practices, they are aligned with the school's CVBLE.

#### **Standard 4 Commendations**

##### **Commendation**

The use of school-wide data in creating the Recovery and Excel Period to increase student achievement and success

##### **Commendation**

The rich assortment of engaging formative assessment techniques used to inform instruction

##### **Commendation**

The school's regular review and revision of grading and reporting practices

##### **Commendation**

The wide variety of authentic and engaging assessments used to measure student achievement

##### **Commendation**

The personalized verbal feedback staff provide to students

#### **Standard 4 Recommendations**

##### **Recommendation**

Develop and implement a process to communicate individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families and whole-school progress to the school community

### **Recommendation**

Increase regular collaboration, both formally and informally, for creating, analyzing, and revising common assessments

### **Recommendation**

Develop and implement a formal process to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations based on specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics

### **Standard 5 Indicator 1**

#### **Conclusions**

The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all. Parents, students, and staff independently and collectively shared examples of how MVHS fosters a mutually supportive, respectful, and positive community that continues to build on higher expectations. The athletic director expects all students to conduct themselves in a respectful manner and thus, the school is repeatedly acknowledged by the athletic association for good sportsmanship. On several occasions, students shared that many football players are concurrently playing football and practicing for the upcoming production of *Cinderella*. Parents and students shared many of the same examples referring to homecoming, spirit week, pep rallies, and athletics as positive experiences and instances when MVHS exemplifies school pride. The REP block allows students a greater opportunity to demonstrate responsibility for their learning by tagging themselves into classrooms where they need additional support. Likewise, the teachers are able to tag the students that they identify as needing additional supports. Monthly recognition of students and annual academic recognition are celebrations for those meeting high expectations in the classroom and in the greater school community. The manner in which the school continues to remember, honor, and commemorate the two staff members and a student who died over the past several years highlights the caring nature of this tight knit community. Staff and students sharing ownership of deep connections and high expectations of each other and their school community fosters a supportive culture that is safe, positive, respectful, and proud.

#### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- panel presentation
- facility tour

- teachers
- students
- parents
- school leadership

## **Standard 5 Indicator 2**

### **Conclusions**

The school is equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students, making certain that courses throughout the curriculum are populated with students reflecting the diversity of the student body, fostering heterogeneity, and supporting the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Students must enroll in at least one heterogeneous class over the four years. The following are heterogeneous options for students: all visual and performing arts classes, health, physical education, outdoor education, horticulture, biology, and world languages. Also, there are some heterogeneous courses in the English, science, and math content areas. Students can enroll in any combination of college prep, honors, and Advanced Placement course levels depending on what best meets their academic needs. There are 100 enrollments in AP/honors dual courses and 125 enrollments in Advanced Placement courses. This supports the Endicott survey findings that 67 percent of students feel that they have opportunities to take rigorous courses. The Virtual High School (VHS) is an online option for students who want to take courses that are not available in the building or for courses that can not otherwise fit into their schedule, although the iPads students are given are insufficient technology for some of the VHS courses such as Computer Science, and sufficient technology is not always available during the day which presents a challenge. Likewise, PLATO is available for students who meet criteria for credit recovery. Students receiving special education services are scheduled into the classes that best meet their needs. Because the school offers many heterogeneous course offerings and a variety of instructional levels, students are adequately challenged, there is flexibility in moving among levels, and students are able to regularly take courses with students of varying ability levels.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- panel presentation
- teachers
- students
- Endicott survey
- school website

## **Standard 5 Indicator 3**

### **Conclusions**

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; however, it minimally assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. There is a built-in ten-minute block of time each day between third and fourth period called Panther Advisory Team (PAT). PAT is designed for all students to be able to connect with one adult on a daily basis for all four years. This same opportunity is extended to students who are participating in LEAD, Accipiter, Day Treatment, and Mid-Coast School of Technology at a time that is conducive to their program schedule. There is a written curriculum for PAT covering topics such as college planning and college application; however, there was little evidence during the visit that it is being followed. The time appears to be sometimes used for communicating information, signing up for activities such as Aspire Higher, voting, and planning for spirit week, but the time is minimally used for adults to help students achieve the school's learning expectations. The school does have a program that does an excellent job of helping students meet the 21st CLE: the REP period; however, due to the nature of the REP program, it does not provide for there to be a consistent adult in the school who assists the student. Although the PAT offers students a daily check-in with one adult for four years, it only minimally assists students in meeting 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students

### **Standard 5 Indicator 4**

#### **Conclusions**

In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning; use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices, dedicate formal time to implement professional development; and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Having a 75-minute weekly PLC meeting allows professional staff and administrators time for ongoing professional development, reflection, discussion, and analysis of common school goals and teaching and learning. Much of the time has been spent on self-study, but recently there has been a shift to focus on examining common assessments, rubrics/grading practices, and building consistency in the application of standards. This time is also used to have people share what they may have recently learned in a professional development experience outside of the school. In addition, there are faculty meetings, department and team meetings twice monthly

and monthly early release days. A schedule of meetings for the year and the ongoing agenda are available for the staff.

This past school year, twelve teachers attended professional development workshops, courses, and conferences outside of the building as budgeted professional development monies allowed. These included MLTI, NEASC, the National Social Studies Conference, the Maine Alliance of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Dance Conference, a world social policy conference, college courses and workshops in content areas. One science teacher shared that she was able to attend a free genetics training sponsored by Jackson Labs which allowed her access to course curriculum and equipment to bring back to MVHS.

Prior to implementing the scheduling software, edYOUshed, the administration supported staff members' requests to visit another school to gain first-hand knowledge about the program so they could come back and train colleagues. Because the principal and professional staff engage in professional discourse; maintain currency with best practices; have formal time to implement professional development; and apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment, student learning is continually improving.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

### **Standard 5 Indicator 5**

#### **Conclusions**

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. The supervision and evaluation system is in a state of transition. Previous to the 2016-2017 school year, the system included some components of the Charlotte Danielson model using the four-track system and an annual observation, in addition to two or three annual professional goals. A district stakeholder group recently decided to adopt the Kim Marshall evaluation system, one of the state-approved research-based tools. Administrators attended seminars, workshops, and conferences and worked together toward implementation of the system which will be introduced to all MVHS staff in mid-October 2016. The Marshall model will have an evaluator conducting up to ten walk-throughs annually. In addition, teachers will have two student learning objectives and two professional goals that are all written in SMART goal format. A new software system, Teach Point, will be implemented concurrently to manage all components of evaluation and professional development. This evaluation model will support frequent observations and a process to include a face-to-face feedback discussion with the educator, coaching, and a brief follow-up email within 24 hours of the observation. The

research-based supervision and evaluation model that MVHS is adopting will lead to improved outcomes for students.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- school leadership

### **Standard 5 Indicator 6**

#### **Conclusions**

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. MVHS has created a schedule designed to maximize learning time while simultaneously supporting professional collaboration among teachers, with weekly 75-minute PLC time, and supporting the learning needs of all students. The schedule consists of an alternating block format with four daily periods of 70 minutes each, which allows students to take up to eight classes per year. The schedule includes a daily time of 40 minutes for student assistance titled Recovery and Excel Period (REP). This period allows teachers and students to initiate contact and arrange for assistance, extensions of learning, or the completion of make-up work based on individual student learning needs. Because the organization of time allows opportunities for research-based instruction and professional collaboration, MVHS is able to meet the needs of all students.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- students

### **Standard 5 Indicator 7**

#### **Conclusions**

Student load and class size generally enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. There has been a slight reduction in staff which has increased the size of elective classes and English classes. The cap for most classes is 25, with teacher permission needed to add students. There is an overall average student:teacher ratio of 15:1 for mainstream classes. Special education classes have a 4:1 ratio. Most full-time teachers carry a six-credit class load obligation, with one study hall or other duty, in an eight-period 70-minute block schedule. A handful of mainstream classes have 25 and 26 students. Advanced Placement and higher level elective courses allow for smaller class sizes. For example, in 2015-2016, AP Calculus AB had 14

and Advanced Photography had 5; however, this year courses are cancelled without a minimum enrollment of at least 10 students. The REP block is designed to have smaller student numbers so that teachers can address targeted student needs. Because class size and student load are mostly manageable, teachers are able to meet the learning needs of most students.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- teachers
- school leadership

### **Standard 5 Indicator 8**

#### **Conclusions**

The principal of MVHS provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations. The current principal, who took over after the death of the previous principal, has provided consistency during a difficult time for the school and has provided leadership consistent with the school's core values, beliefs, and expectations. He meets every other day with the leadership team to discuss, create, and implement policies and procedures that support the vision of the school. Each summer, the leadership team meets to reflect on the prior academic year and establishes goals that will help focus efforts in the new year on the vision of MVHS. The principal initiated participation in the MELMAC (Maine Educational Loan Marketing Corporation) grant program; the goal of the grant is to have students increase post-secondary planning, attend informational sessions with representatives from colleges and apprentice programs, and visit at least two colleges. To ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, the administrators meet yearly with teachers to set and reflect on goals for the academic year. The principal encourages teacher-initiated programs, including the REP block, as well as student and staff-initiated clubs and organizations, including the recycling club, Outdoor Education class, PAWS (Panthers Assisting with Sincerity), chess club, and environmental arts club. Because MVHS's leadership is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, the principal will ensure that the quality of the educational experience for all students continues to improve.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teachers
- school leadership

### **Standard 5 Indicator 9**

#### **Conclusions**

Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership. The principal strives to meet regularly with all the stakeholders and invites their input. These meetings include one meeting each week with members of the senior class to give them a chance to reflect on their experiences and a method for them to provide feedback as to how the school can be improved for future students. He also hosts a luncheon with the student council and weekly lunches with four staff members to seek their input. Academic coordinators also serve as conduits for teachers to share input. The school board has two student representatives who bring their concerns to those meetings. Several initiatives have taken place as a direct result of student and staff input, including the REP block and the recycling club. Each year, the school gives a Panorama (company that assists schools in getting feedback from students, families, and the community) survey to parents to seek their input on how the school is operating and to make changes to the program based on their feedback. Also, when their athletic seasons come to an end, student athletes are given surveys about their experiences and the athletic director makes adjustments to the athletic program based on their feedback. Because the principal provides the stakeholders with opportunities for meaningful decision making, the values of the entire school community are reflected in school policy.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teacher interview
- teachers
- school leadership

### **Standard 5 Indicator 10**

#### **Conclusions**

MVHS teachers regularly create and facilitate programs and opportunities that help increase students' engagement in learning both directly and indirectly. One such program is the popular Empty Bowl Supper which provides students the opportunity to create ceramic bowls during clay class and then display and sell them during a community service event. The Big Brother/Big Sister program provides high school students an opportunity to work with younger members of the community as a role model and leader. REP time has also helped increase engagement in learning. The school has many after school activities and sports that also help increase engagement in school. These include a drama program that features participation with diverse student populations, a highly successful chess team, a debate club with over 30 members, intramural sports, and many varsity sports. MVHS also has class advisers, world languages trips, Poetry Out Loud, the annual Philbrook Speech competition, and homecoming. MVHS offers community art shows, and blood drives run by students and teachers. The Aspire Higher Week is a program that enables students to make links with post-high school partners such as employers, colleges, military, and Americorps. The health office also offers activities such as walking challenges. The wide variety of activities and programs offered by the school and

facilitated by teachers and staff enhances student engagement and contributes to student success.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school leadership
- school website

### **Standard 5 Indicator 11**

#### **Conclusions**

The school committee, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's learning expectations. The relationship among the school board, the superintendent, and the principal is a positive one. The school board works constructively to improve student learning and have created several standing committees: Policy, Transportation, Personnel, Negotiations, Finance, Buildings, and Curriculum. These committees have undertaken initiatives such as dropout prevention, adult education, and a school building study. The RSU 40 School Board meets two times per month, and the superintendent and principal attend regularly. Meetings are open to the public, and agendas and minutes are available on the district's website, as well as at the central office. In addition, the superintendent and high school principal also collaborate at bi-weekly administrative team meetings attended by leaders from each school in the district to discuss and implement strategies to improve student learning throughout the district. The superintendent also visits the high school on a weekly basis to meet with the building principal to discuss educational issues, including how students are achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. Because of the high degree of trust and collaboration between building and district leadership to develop and implement a consistent vision for the school, teachers and students are able to focus on instruction and achievement in a positive professional climate.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- central office personnel
- school leadership
- Endicott survey

## **Standard 5 Indicator 12**

### **Conclusions**

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. The superintendent and school board have clearly delineated the responsibilities and authorities of the principal in the district's policy manual. The principal meets every other day with the high school leadership team to discuss, create, and implement policies and procedures that support the achievement of MVHS students. He works alongside his leadership team to create school policy, develop the budget, and evaluate staff. All stakeholders report satisfaction with the level of decision-making authority granted the principal. For example, Andrew Cavanaugh took over as principal following the death of the prior principal, Harold Wilson, and the space given him by the superintendent and the school board to run the school according to his vision helped to smooth the transition during this very difficult time for the school. Because the principal has sufficient decision-making authority, the building-based leadership is able to carry out the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations of the school.

### **Standard 5 Commendations**

#### **Commendation**

The mutual respect, admiration, and caring demonstrated among students and staff

#### **Commendation**

The plethora of course offerings and levels of rigor designed to meet the needs of all students

#### **Commendation**

The dedicated weekly professional development time

#### **Commendation**

The research-based evaluation and supervision process that focuses on improved student learning

#### **Commendation**

The organization of time, including the REP block, that is leading to better student outcomes

#### **Commendation**

The building-based leadership that has provided stability to the school during a difficult time

### **Commendation**

The wide variety of programs, sports, and activities that keep students engaged with school

### **Commendation**

The positive and supportive relationship among the school board, superintendent, and principal

### **Commendation**

The decision-making authority given to the principal

### **Commendation**

The school's strong sense of community connection and MVHS students' purposeful contribution to the well being of the greater community

## **Standard 5 Recommendations**

### **Recommendation**

Integrate the PAT program and the REP class to ensure that 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

## **Standard 6 Indicator 1**

### **Conclusions**

MVHS has numerous 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. The most significant example of this is the 40-minute per day Recover and Excel Period (REP) time specifically focused on student intervention and achievement that was instituted in 2014. All stakeholders report, and the preliminary data confirm, that this time is well-spent and is boosting student achievement. Additionally, the student assistance team meets biweekly to identify, refer, and intervene with at-risk students. A variety of other programs support student achievement of the 21st CLEs. Some exist as services for IEP and 504 students. Programs such as Life Skills, Day Treatment, Accipiter, supported study halls, and resource rooms assist in meeting the needs of these students. The special education case managers coordinate all referral, annual, and programming meetings to ensure they are held within time frames determined by federal and

state regulations. Health services for students with an individualized health plan (IHP) are provided through the school nurse. Individualized health plans are created and updated annually through parental contact. Other intervention services available to all students, from both special education and regular education classes, include Virtual High School, PLATO, before and after school help, peer-to-peer tutors (PAWS), and gifted and talented services. For social-emotional assistance, MVHS offers services through the guidance department, social worker, and crisis team, which is prepared to take immediate action when called upon. Sweetser Counseling Services, an outside agency, is available for students who have been referred by the school counselors for additional counseling services with a counselor available at the school. The school guidance counselors meet regularly with all students throughout the year to assist and plan academic and career goals. Because MVHS has these timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies, students receive the support they need in order to meet the school's 21st century learning expectations.

## **Standard 6 Indicator 2**

### **Conclusions**

The school frequently provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services. MVHS frequently provides information to families and uses an array of methods to reach out and make the families aware of support services. The school posts current announcements on its website and has links to many school resources such as the student handbook, gifted and talented program, and library resources. The guidance department maintains its own webpage as well. Families are invited to attend informational events at the school. Letters, newsletters, and brochures are mailed to students' homes, and parents are kept informed of available student supports and progress by email and telephone. As a result of the school's efforts to provide information in a variety of formats to families about available student support services, students have timely access to supports to help them to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teachers
- parents
- school leadership
- school support staff
- school website

## **Standard 6 Indicator 3**

### **Conclusions**

Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student. Computers and Internet service are easily accessible to all teachers, administrators, and support service providers involved in coordinating services to students. Infinite Campus software is used to communicate a wealth of information about a student among those coordinating the services. Infinite Campus also allows communication and coordination with students and when possible, with parents. Parents report satisfaction with Infinite Campus as a way to stay informed about their children's education at MVHS. Email is also used to communicate among those coordinating student services. In addition, edYOUshed software is used to coordinate remedial work with students during the REP block during the school day, and use of this innovative technology improves service to students. Support staff, such as educational technicians and the librarian, also have laptops to help with communication and coordination. Secretaries, health services, and the educational technician in the library all have computers--either desktops or laptops--that allow communication and coordination with teachers, administrators, and educational technicians. Special education teachers communicate 504 and IEP plans and goals to teachers regarding students in their classes, as well as information regarding gifted and talented students. Health services uses Infinite Campus to communicate health alerts and individual health plans for students to teachers, administrators, and support staff. Secretaries provide information regarding a student's demographic and release information. Infinite Campus also provides staff members the opportunity to view testing data for students, including their NECAP, NWEA, PSAT, SAT, SAT 2, and AP scores, for all of a student's career, from middle school through current day. Attendance is tracked through Infinite Campus, allowing teachers and administrators to monitor for any possible truancy or patterns. Because support services staff make frequent use of technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student, all students are supported in achieving the 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- classroom observations
- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- students
- parents
- school support staff

### **Standard 6 Indicator 4**

#### **Conclusions**

MVHS counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental program; meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling; engage in individual and group meetings with all students; deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and use ongoing, relevant assessment

data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's learning expectations.

There are three state-certified school counselors who serve approximately 580 students at Medomak Valley High School. Each counselor is responsible for about 188 students in grades 9-12 within their identified alphabetical section. There is a full time registrar as well as a nearly full time administrative assistant. MVHS counseling services meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling. The guidance office has a written developmental plan in the form of a timeline that lists all the interactions with a student through four years at MVHS. Counselors spend a substantial amount of time planning curriculum such as for the 21st Century Living class, interventions, and programs such as the homeroom monthly curriculum that addresses goal development, career exploration, and tasks to increase student aspirations. Significant time is spent conducting groups with at-risk students as well as teaching a guidance course, which is an elective. Some of the groups that are conducted include a first generation college student group that has the goal of fostering successful transition to college, as well as a girls group. There are surveys distributed to students at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the group to track progress as well as discover ways that the intervention could be improved. Seventy percent of counselors' time is spent on direct services to students, meeting with individuals and with groups. The counseling services deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers by referring students in need to an outside counseling agency, such as Sweetser or other community resources.

Services that the counselors provide as well as decisions for interventions are based on quantitative as well as qualitative data, including NWEA scores, teacher feedback, SAT scores, parent feedback, counselor feedback as well as state data such as the National Clearing House. Counselors also distribute and review staff or student surveys in order to discover ways to improve their program and services. Better course placement, determination of services, and more are determined by data gathered. Informally, parents have reported satisfaction with outreach and counseling services for their children, and students report having ready access to the guidance office and feeling very comfortable seeking assistance from the counseling staff.

Because MVHS counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who deliver a written, developmental program; meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling; engage in individual and group meetings with all students; deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers; and use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, each student is supported in his or her achievement of the 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- facility tour

- students
- parents
- school support staff

## **Standard 6 Indicator 5**

### **Conclusions**

MVHS's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who provide preventative health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process; conduct ongoing student health assessments; use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's learning expectations.

MVHS's student health services are provided by a registered nurse and a health aide, both shared with the middle school, with coverage planned to ensure that there is always a health professional in each building. In addition, the high school has recently added a full-time athletic trainer. Medical record-keeping is partly assisted by central office personnel. Preventative care is provided by clinics for dental and vision needs and in the form of individual health plans that are developed and monitored by the nurse and aide. Direct intervention includes injury first aid, medication administration, follow-up on injury and illness, and crisis support. Referrals are routinely made in instances of student need, as determined by the registered nurse. Ongoing health assessments are carried out including vision and BMI screenings and those dictated by individual student health concerns such as diabetes, concussion, and post-surgical follow-up. Medical records are kept and Infinite Campus software facilitates this. Formal feedback from students and families is not routinely sought; however, informal feedback is welcomed. Parents and students informally report satisfaction with the current access to health services. When health services received informal, negative parent feedback about a program to address student obesity, the health services team was responsive to that feedback and made changes to the program.

Because the school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who provide preventative health services and direct intervention services; use an appropriate referral process, and conduct ongoing student health assessments, most students' health needs are met; when health services also use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services, all student will be assured of the support needed to achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teacher interview
- students
- parents

- school support staff
- school website

## **Standard 6 Indicator 6**

### **Conclusions**

Library/media services are limited in their integration into curriculum and instructional practices and do not have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff. Library staff are not actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum, but do provide a range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum. Library/media services ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school; are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning; and conduct minimal ongoing assessment using relevant data, including informal feedback from the school community.

Library services are provided by one professional library media specialist (LMS) who is responsible for library service to the entire district. That professional is in the building partial days. In addition, a library aide is in the library full time. The current library media specialist has only been at the district for a few weeks, and has plans to promote library services to staff members at MVHS. Currently, library integration into curriculum is limited to providing supporting materials to teachers upon request. Implementation of the school's curriculum is limited to taking teacher recommendations for obtaining materials. The library does provide a range of materials and technologies, in support of the school's curriculum, with a large portion of the budget dedicated to online databases, which helps keep the collection current. Chromebooks, MacAirs, and eReaders are available for student use, facilitating student access to multiple activities such as PLATO, Virtual High School, and coding projects. The library is open before, during, and after school. The library staff takes student suggestions for materials to purchase and also keeps current by using collection analysis software and by attendance at outside professional development workshops. There is currently no regular survey of student interests; however, the library does keep circulation and other usual library statistics to provide data to guide the planning of library services. The presence of the technology department within the library media center promotes the access of students and staff to technology assistance and support.

Because library/media services provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum, ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school, and are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning, some of students' needs are being met. When library/media services also have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum and conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, they will be able to integrate into curriculum and

instructional practices, improve services, and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- facility tour
- school support staff
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 6 Indicator 7**

#### **Conclusions**

Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's learning expectations; provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students; perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

At MVHS, support services for identified students have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff. To coordinate these services, special education personnel attend monthly district special education meetings and monthly department meetings at MVHS, and IEP meetings when appropriate. The student assistance team, which includes the school social worker, meets twice monthly. Meetings with the guidance department are held to create intervention plans. Teachers are included in many of these meetings. Inclusive learning opportunities are provided in multiple forms, including placing identified students into regular education classrooms with support from education technicians, offering classes co-taught by a special education teacher and a content area teacher, and placing special education students into intensive math and English classes. For gifted and talented students honors courses, AP courses, Virtual High School courses, and independent study options are made available. REP blocks are opportunities to provide additional, individualized support to all students. Peer tutoring, PAWS, and credit recovery are additional supports for students. Support services perform ongoing assessment using data including NWEA results, progress reports and grades, formative assessments in the classroom, failure rates and graduation rates. Formal feedback from families is sought via a MELMAC survey. Informal feedback is received via email and at meetings.

As a result of having adequate support services for identified students, who collaborate to provide these services, and offering inclusive learning opportunities for all students, the school works to ensure that every student is supported in achieving the learning expectations.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- student shadowing
- teachers
- parents
- school support staff
- school website

## **Standard 6 Commendations**

### **Commendation**

The presence of the technology department within the library media center so that students and staff have easy access to technology support

### **Commendation**

The support services staff's frequent use of technology in a variety of innovative ways that supports the delivery of an effective range of coordinated services for each student

### **Commendation**

The variety of mental health supports available to students in need

### **Commendation**

The school's numerous timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students

## **Standard 6 Recommendations**

### **Recommendation**

Develop and implement a plan to provide an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel, support staff, and funding for library/media services.

## **Standard 7 Indicator 1**

### **Conclusions**

The community and the district's governing body currently provides dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, ongoing professional development, a full range of technology support, and sufficient equipment, instructional materials, and supplies; however,

there are vacant positions, limited custodial staff, and inadequate staffing for library/media services.

MVHS offers many different programming options for students with special needs and students with special gifts and talents including resource room, LEAD classroom, Accipiter, High Aspirations program, school-to-career, AP courses, co-op, Virtual High School, and dual enrollment with Thomas College, Kennebec Valley Community College, and Midcoast School of Technology. MVHS offers a wide array of sports and clubs. The loss of the freshman academy team has had an impact on the ability of teachers to coordinate teaching freshmen and to communicate about their individual student needs. There has also been a loss of some elective courses with the elimination of the technology education and family consumer science teaching positions. Currently, there is one district librarian based at the high school who is also responsible for overseeing all other school libraries in the district.

When the most recent contract was negotiated, teachers agreed to work an extra 75 minutes of professional development time each week, and the district is committed to supporting this. The district reimburses faculty for up to nine credits at state universities or elsewhere at the state university rate. Teachers are encouraged to join professional organizations and attend seminars that will help with development of curriculum.

MVHS has a technology director for the district whose office is at the high school. There are two other technology personnel: one who works as a computer technician and the other who focuses on Infinite Campus. Another teacher's time is divided between teaching and working for the technology office. The math department has sets of 20 graphing calculators for each math classroom. Several classrooms are equipped with projectors and interactive whiteboards. MVHS is a one-to-one school providing each student with an iPad; however, there is concern that iPads cannot run all programs the curriculum requires.

Because the community and the district's governing body provides a generally dependable funding for a wide range of program and services, ongoing professional development, some technology support, sufficient equipment, instructional materials, and supplies, students have most of the resources they need to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations; when the district also provides adequate funding for professional and support staff, students will have all of the resources and support necessary to meet the school's 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- school board
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 7 Indicator 2**

## **Conclusions**

The school has developed, planned, and funded some programs to ensure some maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, and it is in the process of properly maintaining, cataloging and/or replacing equipment; however it has not provided adequate staffing to keep the building clean on a daily basis. Staff indicated in the Endicott Survey that needed repairs were not completed in a timely manner. In the same survey, students and staff indicated that the school was not clean and maintained.

A one million dollar bond was recently approved by the voters of the district for major repairs in several of the district's schools, including MVHS. This was used to re-roof the auditorium and for removal of the "glass" corridor. That project is still in the process of being completed. The school has hired an architectural firm to complete an evaluation of the current state of the building, as well as to design a possible building addition that would reconnect the corridors providing for better traffic flow of students. The Maine School Management Association completed an assessment of the building for code violations. All of these issues have been addressed. Currently, the school is in the process of cataloging when major systems of the school were installed and last maintained. This will be used to more effectively maintain the building systems going forward. Lack of sufficient custodial staff means that classrooms are not adequately maintained on a daily basis. Generally, trash is removed from the classrooms each day, but cleaning is not possible in every classroom every day.

Once the school completes the process of developing, planning, and funding to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, to properly maintain, catalog, replace equipment and complete needed repairs, and to fully staff the custodial department, the students will have the resources and learning environment necessary to achieve their goals.

## **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- facility tour
- school board
- Endicott survey

## **Standard 7 Indicator 3**

### **Conclusions**

The school is in the process of creating a long-range plan that addresses facility needs and capital improvements; however, a current long-range plan to address programs and services, technology, and adjustments for enrollment changes and staffing does not exist. A plan was developed under the previous superintendent; however, it did not have the input or general acceptance of the various stakeholders, and so it needs to be updated. The superintendent recently formed a planning committee made up of various stakeholders in the school community which is in the process of developing a new capital improvement plan to present to

the school board by February 2017. A few projects are now on hold as they wait to hear the results of the building study. The school board, administration, and staff are all hopeful that the communities will be supportive of the long-range plan. Once the school completes and implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, adjusts for enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology and capital improvements, the school will be able to ensure that it will have the resources necessary to carry out its core values, beliefs, and learning expectations in the years to come.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- school board
- central office personnel
- Standard sub-committee

### **Standard 7 Indicator 4**

#### **Conclusions**

The faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. Principals begin their budget planning with the completion of the October first enrollment numbers. In November, they receive the budget-compared-to-actuals for the past three years to refer to. Using a template they begin to formulate the budget for the following year. The budget process for teachers begins with planning out their needs in the areas of instructional supplies, books, periodicals, and any equipment, furniture, and fixtures for the following year. Their requests are then compiled as a department which are put together as a school building budget by the principal, who also prioritizes the needs. It is presented to the superintendent by December first. At the first regular business meeting in December, the school board votes on a targeted percent increase that administration should not exceed. In most recent years, the school board has approved a three and a half to four percent increase to the annual budget. Administrators review the budget and prioritize the needs of each school to meet the targeted increase. Teachers report that if cuts are necessary to their classroom budgets, they meet as a department to determine what to purchase. Because faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the school budget, students generally obtain the resources they need for learning.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teachers
- school board
- department leaders
- Standard sub-committee

## **Standard 7 Indicator 5**

### **Conclusions**

The school site and plant marginally support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. MVHS was built in 1968. To meet the increasing enrollment numbers, the school added nine portable classrooms; however, those needed to be removed in the 2015-2016 school year. This loss has resulted in some inconveniences such as teachers not being able to work in their rooms during their prep time because other teachers are using them. Most rooms are inadequately supplied with electrical outlets. Although repairs and updates have been made to the heating system, many students and teachers report that rooms vary greatly in temperature which they believe contributes to illness and absences; however, the system was recently reviewed and it was discovered that there is an easy fix to this problem in some classrooms. These repairs are ongoing. The natural flow of student movement through the building as originally designed has been disrupted due to the removal of the glass corridor for safety reasons. This can make it a long distance to cover between classes for some students, but the disruptions to learning due to students being late seem to be minor. The school has a large, well-equipped gymnasium and auditorium. The roofing has been replaced in recent years. An evaluation of the building is in the process of being completed. An architectural firm has also been hired to explore a possible renovation that would reconnect the backs of the corridors of the building thus improving student ability to get around the building. Science labs have had their propane systems upgraded within the past year. The library media center is a large enough space. They have creatively utilized a space in the center, where the old circulation desk previously existed, as a station for students using their laptops. The cafeteria is adequate with three scheduled lunch times each day. The style of food served is quite different from when the school was built and the cafeteria workers have many of their serving areas on casters, so that they can be moved in and out of the kitchen. Several classrooms have been created from space that was formerly used for technology education classes. There is concern around the main office and guidance office areas. Also, due to the design of the health center, confidential conversations can be overheard by those nearby, and so this problem needs to be remedied. Although the school plant is old, and the forthcoming building study will determine in what ways it needs updating, in its current state the school plant minimally meets the learning needs of the student population. When all of the school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services, students will have a learning environment which supports achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- facility tour
- teachers
- central office personnel
- Standard sub-committee

## **Standard 7 Indicator 6**

### **Conclusions**

The school has complete documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local, fire, health, and safety regulations. MSDS sheets are reviewed and cataloged by the building custodian. Another copy is kept in the main office. The school had the Maine School Management Association complete a review of the building in September 2015. Since the review was completed, the school has taken steps to rectify all violations. Fire extinguishers have been reviewed on an annual basis. Although the building is older, because the school meets applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local, fire, health, and safety regulations, students are assured of a safe physical environment for learning.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- facility tour
- school leadership

## **Standard 7 Indicator 7**

### **Conclusions**

All professional staff seek to actively engage parents and families as partners in students' education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. Each school year begins with an open house where parents are welcome to come to the school and meet their student's teachers. Parent-teacher conferences are held in November each year. A newsletter is produced that goes out to families. Teachers contact parents by phone calls and/or emails, particularly for those students who are in danger of receiving a failing grade. If teachers have a hard time reaching a parent, they will often check with other teachers to see if any of them are having success and if they will help to make the connection. Teachers offer to help parents challenged by technology set up Infinite Campus or their cell phone voice mail. Some have also made home visits. The school has a student assistance team (SAT) that often meets with parents of students who need help in getting back on track in school. Because professional staff actively work to engage parents as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected to the school, parents and families are better able to support their student's learning.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teachers
- Standard sub-committee

## **Standard 7 Indicator 8**

### **Conclusions**

The school has developed many productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning. Many parents are actively involved in volunteering through the sports boosters which maintains a food booth at sports events. The funds raised support college scholarships, equipment or supplies that are needed beyond the school budget, and financial aid for students when needed. Parents also volunteer their time to sponsor Project Graduation to provide a safe and appropriate graduation night celebration for all seniors. Parents and community members chaperone field trips, coach sports teams, mentor students for job shadowing, and hire students through the school-to-career program.

Some MVHS students can earn college credits through the Aspirations Program and Thomas College dual enrollment. Through Aspire Higher Week, students are able to access college admit-in-a-day and job opportunities. This week coincides with the FAFSA financial aid night. The 21st Century Living class provides access for students to meet with community members in specific employment interest areas.

The School Spirit Challenge involved area businesses, community members, and the school population in raising 21,769 pounds of food for the Auburn Good Shepherd Food Bank, who, in turn, supplied food to the MVHS community food banks. The Empty Bowl Supper brings parents, students and area businesses together to raise money for the five-town district food banks. Students presented wreaths to Wreaths Across America. As a result of the productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships, students are given many more opportunities to learn the value of being responsible, respectful, and involved citizens.

### **Sources of Evidence**

- self-study
- teachers
- school board
- Standard sub-committee

## **Standard 7 Commendations**

### **Commendation**

The many community partnerships the school has developed

### **Commendation**

The wide variety of programming options for students to earn their diploma

### **Commendation**

The budget process for textbooks and supplies that begins with teachers and returns to them if cuts are needed

### **Commendation**

The current cooperative attitude and effort of the school board, administration, and staff

### **Commendation**

The flexibility of the staff in dealing with the challenges of working in an older facility

### **Commendation**

The positive relationship between and among the teachers' association, support staff association, and the administration that produces creative solutions to budgetary challenges

### **Standard 7 Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation**

Develop and implement a long-range plan that addresses facility needs and capital improvements, programs and services, technology, and that adjusts for changing enrollment and staffing needs

#### **Recommendation**

Provide adequate custodial staffing to maintain proper cleanliness within the building on a daily basis

#### **Recommendation**

Develop a plan to address space limitations in the health center that have led to privacy and confidentiality issues

### **FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

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

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

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

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

The visiting committee would like to express thanks to the community for the hospitality and welcome. The school community completed an exemplary self-study that clearly identified the school's strengths and areas of need. The time and effort dedicated to the self-study and preparation for the visit ensured a successful accreditation visit.

## **SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY**

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

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

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

**Roster of Team Members**

**Chair(s)**

**Chair: Keith McCarthy** - Rockport Middle/High School

**Assistant Chair: Dwayne Conway** - Maranacook Community High School

**Visiting Team Members**

**Cynthia Blanchard** - Old Town High School

**Lindsay Corson** - Ellsworth High School

**Heidi Early-Hersey** - MSAD #60

**Trudy Hanson** - Winthrop High School

**Shannan Kruger** - Winnisquam Regional High School

**Adam Leach** - Bangor High School

**Michelle Leavitt** - Freeport High School

**David Perkins** - Noble High School

**Lawrence Peters** - Sacopee Valley High School

**Leslie Rosenblatt** - Hampden Academy