

## **Two-Year Progress Report of South Hadley High School October 1, 2006**

### **Section I: Detailed Responses to Highlighted Recommendations**

#### **1. Identify performance indicators for the civic and social expectations in the mission**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* In our defined Learning Expectations, there exists a Learning Expectation for student behavior. It reads: “*Demonstrate personal, social, and civic responsibility.*” As a school we’ve developed a rubric that supports this Learning Expectation. During the 2005-2006 school year, our Respect and Civility Collaborative Team collected data (through the use of staff and student surveys) that indicated additional behavior statements need to be included in the rubric. We plan to update and implement a revised rubric this year. To revise the rubric, we will be soliciting input from staff, students and parents. Once this input is solicited, we will revise the rubric and implement its use for the second semester of this year (January 2007). Our initial implementation will involve having teachers rate students on the rubric and enter their rating in one of the comment columns of our report card. Parents and students will be given a copy of the rubric with each report card and progress report in order to interpret the rating.

#### **2. Confirm the completion of the writing of curriculum documents for all courses**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* We have completed both syllabi and curriculum documents for all of our Science courses. We have completed approximately 90% of the curriculum documents for English, Mathematics, and Foreign Language. While we are working hard to develop other curriculum documents, we are still substantially behind in Social Studies and the Arts. Our Social Studies staff met this past summer to begin the process of writing their curriculum for World History (Grade 9). We have hired a Fine/Applied Arts Director who is working diligently to get the curriculum written in all areas of the Arts. As each document is completed, we are posting the documents to our school’s web site ([www.shschools.com](http://www.shschools.com)). We anticipate the completed development of all curriculum documents by September 2007.

#### **3. Develop a process for the regular review and revision of the mission statement, ensuring students and all other stakeholders are involved**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* We have developed a process for the regular review and revision of the mission statement, ensuring students and all other stakeholders are involved. Every three years, we will solicit parent input through our monthly newsletter and at our Open House. Students will provide input through their Social Studies classes. Staff will also provide input through a school-wide survey. Revisions to the Mission and Learning Expectations will then be

implemented in the next school year. We plan to implement this revision process in the fall of 2007 and the fall of 2011.

**4. Explain how the school is using school-wide rubrics for each of the academic expectations in the mission throughout the curriculum**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* The rubrics for each of our Learning Expectations are published in our Student Handbook. In addition, teachers have designed syllabi for their courses keeping in mind the primary learning expectations addressed in their courses. We use the indicators in the civic and social expectations rubric developed by our Civility and Respect Collaborative Team to guide discussions about school culture and student behavior. Teachers, individually and collaboratively, design units of study and individual lessons in light of the performance indicators for the relevant rubrics for their courses. During the years when our Advisory Program operated, we introduced and taught students about the rubrics. Also, students have assessed their own work according to the rubrics in the Advisory Program.

**5. Develop and implement a formal process, using the faculty-developed rubrics, to assess the achievement of every student of the academic expectations in the mission**

**Classification:** Planned for the future

*Response:* We have created rubrics to assess the progress of each student's achievement in relation to each Learning Expectation. However, we are struggling to find a way to implement this recommendation without overburdening our teachers with respect to grading and assessment. Currently, teachers are expected to calculate grades for each of their students eight times a year. With nine Learning Expectations, assessing each student using all of the rubrics would potentially add seventy-two ratings per student over the course of a year to a teacher's workload. Even considering that for most courses only three or four of the Learning Expectations are addressed within the course, that still leaves the teacher with thirty-six additional ratings per student per year. We've discussed how we could rate each student fewer times, but then the student is not getting sufficient feedback to improve his/her performance. As we review the Mission and Learning Expectations for revisions next year, we may consider combining the number of Learning Expectations so that fewer Learning Expectations need to be rated. Our anticipated date of implementation is for the 2008-2009 school year.

**6. Examine and make revisions if necessary to the school schedule to ensure that it supports the effective implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, we adopted a new schedule, known as the “7 Drop 1” schedule whereby each period meets six times out of a seven day rotation. This schedule allows for nearly one-hour class periods that support a multitude of teaching strategies. At the same time, this new schedule eliminates our double period long blocks that for the most part, were ineffective from all points of view. Since the implementation of this new schedule, most everyone feels it is a significantly positive change and is supporting our instructional practices and student learning much more effectively. Significant financial support came from Dr. Sayer, the School Committee and the town to fund the additional staffing positions needed for this new schedule. Students can now take more classes. We are finding that students are taking additional courses in the Arts and that a number of students are also doubling up their English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies courses.

**7. Expand the advisory program across all grades and develop a plan to assess its effectiveness**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* Our Advisory Program Study Committee has developed a proposal that has been submitted to our superintendent, Dr. Sayer for his review. This proposal would move the Advisory Program from an add-on to our normally scheduled day to one where the program would be incorporated into our schedule. While we were able to run a pilot advisory program that relied on volunteer staff advisors, as noted in the NEASC report it was a fragile structure for the program. Based on end-of-program feedback, the pilot was a significant success. Therefore we’ve gone back to the drawing board and are looking to create an advisory program structure that is fully integrated into our school structure. In order to accomplish this task, we’ll need the support and approval of Dr. Sayer, the School Committee, and the South Hadley Education Association. We are hoping that our proposal will be accepted and implemented this year.

**8. Develop a plan, including funding, for the long-range and short-term equipment, technology, maintenance, and repair needs of the school**

**Classification:** In Process

*Response:* This year, the School Committee and the town provided significant support for technology updates throughout the district (\$100,000). These funds were primarily used to bring the elementary and middle schools up to speed with regard to technology. We anticipate the High School benefiting from this program next year (2007-2008).

With regard to maintenance, we have a new head custodian who is making substantial progress in getting the building maintained and repaired. Additionally, this year the school district hired a district-wide Building Facilities Manager. This person is charged with the oversight of all the emerging repair needs of the schools in addition to developing a preventative maintenance plan in conjunction with the Head Custodians at each building.

**9. Report how the changes in the supervision and evaluation system will address how all of the courses at all levels: engage students in inquiry, problem-solving and higher-order thinking; emphasize depth over breadth; and provide opportunities for authentic application of knowledge and skills**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* We began our year in 2005-2006 by using our first faculty meeting to have staff renew their familiarity with our teacher evaluation system. We had teachers reflect upon the standards by which their performance is evaluated. Next, we divided the formal observation work among administrators, department chairs, and directors. By dispersing the workload, our high school administrative team was able to provide direct observation and feedback to individual teachers as outlined in the teacher evaluation system. Department chairs and directors played a significant role in observing staff members and providing constructive supervisory feedback to teachers.

In addition to the full implementation of our formal Teacher Evaluation System, we have implemented an administrative walk through process that has administrators in classrooms on a weekly basis. This process involves looking at student engagement, curriculum alignment, and instructional methodologies on a frequent basis. Feedback is provided to staff through brief discussions, notes, etc. Through this more frequent process of observing teaching and learning, we are able to validate successful instructional practices and address less effective ones.

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**Section II: Evaluation Report Recommendations**

***STANDARD FOR ACCREDITATION: Mission and Expectation for Student Learning***

- 1. Involve students in the refinement and development of the mission statement and its assessment to provide student ownership of the mission and expectations for learning.**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Our approved review process involves students in the refinement of the mission statement and our learning expectations in a significant way. All students review and provide input into the mission statement and learning expectations. When we develop our school-wide implementation of our rubrics and the assessment of such, students will be integrally involved through a periodic self assessment of their performance.

- 2. Implement school-wide rubrics across disciplines**

**Classification:** Planned for the future

*Response:* See Highlighted Recommendations #4 and #5.

- 3. Review the mission periodically and formally at all levels (student, faculty, parents), collect substantial data, and analyze it on an ongoing basis**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* See Highlighted Recommendation #3.

- 4. Develop and implement a more formal way of getting parental input when reviewing the mission and expectations document**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* In our defined process as discussed in Highlighted Recommendation #3, we have included methods to get significant parental input by involving them at our Open House, through our School's monthly newsletter, and through an online survey.

***STANDARD FOR ACCREDITATION: Curriculum***

- 1. Write curriculum documents that are aligned with the academic expectations in the mission and that guide content, instruction, and assessment practices for all courses**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* All completed syllabi and curriculum documents are aligned with the Learning Expectations from our Mission Statement. Each department has determined the Learning Expectations that are addressed by each course.

For some courses, only the syllabus is completed and aligned with the Learning Expectations. When the written curriculum is developed for each of these courses, the defined Learning Expectations will guide the development.

**2. Provide adequate leadership for the development, review, coordination, and articulation of curriculum**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Our District is working to develop a cohesive plan to address all curriculum needs. We have hired an Assistant Superintendent who has overall oversight of curriculum in the district. At the High School, primary responsibility for curriculum development and review rests with the department chairs/directors and the members of their departments. This allocation of responsibilities replaces the former system known as the District Curriculum Council (DCC).

**3. Provide professional development, resource sharing, and common time to ensure the implementation of the curriculum action plan and the coordination between and among department and grade levels**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* During the 2005-2006 school year, we used our available faculty meeting and workshop days to explore the issue of student effort and motivation. During our first meeting in October, we began by studying the “Motivational Framework” – a structure that looks at the four key components for motivating students. We had staff members bring an effective motivational strategy to our meeting so they could share effective techniques with each other and classify the techniques under the four key components. We then had each teacher develop a motivation plan, taking a motivational issue with which they were struggling and using the shared strategies as a way to address their issue. In partners, they monitored each other as they implemented the strategies and evaluated their successes. Meetings throughout the year provided some time for partners to monitor their growth. At a subsequent meeting, staff members read and discussed the article, “If Only They’d Do Their Work” by Linda Darling-Hammond and Olivia Ifill-Lynch (Feb 06 Vol 63 No. 5 p8-13). This article provided additional strategies for staff to use in increasing their skill at creating motivated learners.

Our plan for the 2006-2007 school year is to primarily use our faculty meeting time to collaboratively examine student work using the Tuning Protocol and the Collaborative Assessment Conference. These protocols will allow us to calibrate student work to our standards both within and among departments. In addition, we will use this work to examine

our assessment strategies to determine if they are effective in assessing the learning we want students to acquire.

Our school district has created a district-wide professional development committee that will be planning professional development around the following goals: (1) to develop and implement reading strategies across the grades; (2) to improve our ability to analyze and use data; and (3) to increase our ability to teach in an inclusive environment.

Additionally, our school developed an Inclusion Study Team during the 2005-2006 school year so that we could further improve our inclusion practices. In accepting the work of this Study Team, we will be providing professional development as follows:

1. Two periods of release time every two months so that the co-teaching teams can meet to discuss the effectiveness of the model.
  2. Time to observe other teams to provide feedback.
  3. Professional Development in Special Education and content areas for teams.
- 4. Collect and analyze school-based assessments of student achievement of expectations for student learning using school-wide rubrics to provide data for curriculum revision**

**Classification:** Planned for the future

*Response:* See Highlighted Recommendations #4 and #5.

**5. Review and coordinate curriculum district-wide**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* Given that we've had several years without a cohesive curriculum coordination plan, we are doing our best with our financial and time resources to coordinate our curriculum district-wide. During the summer of 2005, representative mathematics staff from the high school worked with representative staff from the middle school to coordinate our mathematics curriculum. During the summer of 2006, representative social studies staff from the high school worked with representative staff from the middle school to coordinate our social studies curriculum. Our newly appointed Fine Arts Director, a system-wide position, is working to coordinate our Arts curriculum district-wide. Coordination of other curriculum areas is planned for the future.

**6. Provide a leadership representative to coordinate curriculum design in the applied and fine arts, physical education, technology education, and library information services**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* A district-wide Fine/Applied Arts Director has been hired to be the leadership representative to coordinate curriculum design in the applied and fine arts, including technology education. A district-wide Health/Physical Education Director has been hired to

be the leadership representative to coordinate curriculum design in health and physical education district-wide. Curriculum design for library information services is overseen by the English Department Chair in coordination with the library media specialist.

**7. Implement a process to design and write curriculum in every discipline and review those on a regular basis**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* At this point in time, we are working as speedily as we can to get curriculum written for every course, starting with the academic subjects and then completing the elective courses. With regard to reviewing our curriculum, we are making changes on a regular basis based on assessment feedback, Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks changes, etc.

***STANDARD FOR ACCREDITATION: Instruction***

**1. Develop and implement a plan to provide faculty members with more formal opportunities to share instructional practices**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* As noted earlier, the majority of our 2006-2007 Faculty Meeting time will be spent collaborating on student work using the Tuning Protocol and the Collaborative Assessment Conference process. Our high school administrative team participated in training on September 21, 2006 and will provide the leadership necessary to carry out this work with our staff.

**2. Provide adequate funding for implementation of professional development**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Our district has provided sufficient funding for professional development this year. These funds will support the professional development activities for our two half-day and two full-day workshop days.

**3. Initiate and implement a plan for formal opportunities for staff members to facilitate connections between disciplines**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* During the 2005-2006 school year, we spent our available faculty time addressing the issues of student motivation and work effort (as discussed in detail in Curriculum Recommendation 3). Much of our work was done across disciplines.

During 2006-2007 as we collaboratively look at student work, some of our work will be completed within disciplines while other work will be across disciplines.

**4. Coordinate the staff evaluation process to ensure all members receive equitable evaluation**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* With the assistance of our department chairs/directors and assistant principals, we have developed and implemented a plan such that every staff member was formally observed and evaluated according to the Unit A Teacher Evaluation Plan during the 2005-2006 school year.

**5. Provide adequate resources to implement the existing mentoring program**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Our school district continues to fund a one-year mentoring program for all teachers new to the district. Mentoring beyond the first year is informally completed by the department chairs/directors and the senior members of the department and school.

***STANDARD FOR ACCREDITATION: Assessment***

**1. Provide more time in the school schedule for teachers to collaborate about student work and assessment strategies**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* During the 2006-2007 year, we will be providing time for teachers to collaborate about student work and assessment strategies in our after school faculty meetings. Under our new schedule model where teachers have an assigned administrative duty period, in some experimental cases, teachers are being given time to collaborate if they are involved in the inclusion model or if they are team-teaching a course.

**2. Create a universal rubric for civic and social expectations, regularly analyze and report the findings of this assessment tool**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* See Highlighted Recommendation #1.

**3. Develop performance indicators for the civic and social expectations in the mission**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Our staff has agreed that level 2 – Needs Improvement is the acceptable level of performance on the rubric describing our expectations with regard to civility and social expectations.

**4. Expand the advisory program to include an assessment component that evaluates student progress toward achieving the learning expectations over time**

**Classification:** In The Future

*Response:* While still working to establish an Advisory Program that is integrated in our school day, we still plan to have students complete periodic self-assessments of their performance over time using our school-wide rubrics.

**5. Expand the use of rubrics and other grading criteria throughout the curriculum**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* Our Science Department staff has developed a uniform rubric to rate the effectiveness of student lab reports. In addition, the Science Department has developed uniform grading criteria across the instructional levels of their courses. We expect that from the study of student work this year, further development of departmental or school-wide rubrics will be developed.

**6. Provide professional development on varying assessment techniques**

**Classification:** Planned for the future

*Response:* As we formally look at student work this year, we will gather information about what assessment techniques are frequently used at our high school and where we need additional training.

**7. Provide more opportunities for students to engage in self-assessment**

**Classification:** Planned for the future

*Response:* While student self-assessments are used in some courses by some teachers, we have not used this as a uniform tool across the school. Hopefully, we can address this goal during the 2007-2008 school year.

***STANDARD FOR ACCREDITATION: Leadership and Organization***

- 1. Ensure the daily schedule of the school supports student learning and is designed to provide the most effective implementation of curriculum and instruction**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* See Highlighted Recommendation #6.

- 2. Provide time for teachers to collaborate within and across departments**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* See Curriculum Recommendation #3.

- 3. Provide staff development to maximize the effectiveness of new programs and initiatives**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* For each new initiative or program we implement, we provide staff development or curriculum development as needed. For example, when we developed a new course, Forensic Law, we provided release time and curriculum development funds for the two teachers that are co-teaching the course.

In 2005-2006, we began to study how we could increase our inclusion practices so we created an Inclusion Study Team. This team researched effective inclusion practices, provided staff development on inclusion, and this year (2006-2007) implemented co-teaching practices in both a social studies and science class.

- 4. Examine the current department head structure to more effectively align the elective curriculum areas**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Through the addition of a district-wide Arts Director, our department head structure has been realigned and now the fine and applied arts teachers have their own department head. In addition, we reconfigured the position of physical education/athletic director to include health in keeping with the DOE Curriculum Frameworks. The position now is a district-wide director of health/physical education/athletics.

**5. Develop, provide resources for, and implement a comprehensive professional development plan**

**Classification:** Complete

*Response:* During the 2005-2006 school year, our district created a district-wide professional development committee to assess our professional development needs, to develop a plan for addressing those needs, and for implementing the plan in 2006-2007. We are in the implementation stage this year. The goals for professional development include: (1) to develop and implement reading strategies across the grades; (2) to improve our ability to analyze and use data; and (3) to increase our ability to teach in an inclusive environment.

***STANDARD FOR ACCREDITATION: School Resources for Learning***

**1. Ensure adequate and continuous funding for the advisory program as well as other initiatives that meet the school's mission**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* While the funding for the Advisory Program has been available each year since our last visit, we have not been able to implement the Advisory Program because its structure primarily relied on staff volunteers to be the advisors. We have developed a proposal that will make the Advisory Program an integral part of our school program where it does not rely on volunteers in order to make it run, and are awaiting the acceptance by all parties of that proposal.

Other initiatives that meet the school's mission have also been funded. For example, when we create new courses in our curriculum, funds are available for curriculum development. When we developed a new schedule model, funds were available for the necessary new staffing. To support our facility needs, a new district-wide Facilities Director was hired and is leading the regular maintenance needs of our school.

**2. Expand the advisory program to include the entire school**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* See Highlighted Recommendation #7.

**3. Include the support personnel in curriculum evaluation and revision**

**Classification:** completed

*Response:* Each time we develop a proposal for curriculum development, revision, and evaluation, the curriculum committee positions are posted and representation across schools and positions is sought. To the degree that we have a pool of applicants from support

positions (special education, library media specialist, etc.), they are represented on the curriculum committees.

**4. Implement a process by which the library is available and adequately supervised for the entire school day and before and after school**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* With the implementation of our new schedule, teachers now have a duty period during which administrative duties are assigned. One of the duties we've created is that of library support person. This duty involves providing support to the library media specialist so that all aspects of the library can be managed – the computer lab within the library and the library itself.

With regard to before and after school, we currently allow the library to be open approximately ½ hour before and ½ hour after school and use the honor system with our students to manage themselves in the library. Primarily they are using the computer lab located within the library, but some students also use the library space to study.

**5. Expand the library collection to meet changing student and curricular needs**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Since our last visit, we have increased funding for the library to \$6200 for new books, magazines, and periodicals. While we would like to increase this amount in future years, currently this is the amount that we can afford in our school budget.

**6. Institute a network security plan**

**Classification:** Completed

*Response:* Network security is now in place. Both students and staff have personal log-in names and passwords, replacing the generic log-ins that existed during the NEASC visit. Students are able to save their work on the network in a secure location, accessible only by their individual password.

***STANDARD FOR ACCREDITATION: Community Resources for Learning***

**1. Create and implement a long-range maintenance and capital improvement plan**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* With the creation of a district-wide facilities director position this year, our first task is to catch up with our back log of maintenance needs. For the next budget cycle (2007-2008) we will have identified our long-range maintenance needs and will have developed a capital improvement plan to address those needs.

**2. Create and implement a long-range technology plan that provides for future purchase, maintenance, and repair of technology**

**Classification:** In Progress

*Response:* See Highlighted Recommendation #8.

**3. Investigate and implement strategies that will increase parent involvement**

**Classification:** Planned for the future

*Response:* Our parents are regularly involved in specific areas of our total school program, including significant support for our music and athletic programs. In the future, we hope to find ways to incorporate their support and involvement in our academic program.

### **III. Mission Statement and Expectations for Student Learning**

#### ***South Hadley High School Mission Statement***

We pledge to create a challenging and supportive academic community in which each member strives to develop to his/her potential, to become a life-long learner, and to act as a responsible citizen in a diverse and global society.

#### ***South Hadley High School Learning Expectations***

Each student in our school community is capable of learning and will achieve the following by graduation:

LE1: Read, write and communicate effectively.

LE2: Define, analyze, and solve complex problems and communicate results.

LE3: Study and work productively both independently and in groups.

LE4: Demonstrates personal, social and civic responsibility.

LE5: Acquire, apply, integrate, analyze, and synthesize knowledge.

LE6: Understand, create, appreciate, and critique artistic and literary expression.

LE7: Understand and apply the Principles of Health and Wellness.

LE8: Identify and apply appropriate technologies

LE9: Take Responsibility for career and life choices

### **IV. Substantive Changes**

Other than the substantive change reported in 2005-2006 regarding our Advisory Program, no other substantive changes have occurred since the decennial evaluation.

### **V. Strengths and Achievements**

We have quite a number of achievements to note over the past two years since our decennial evaluation. First, we have implemented a new schedule model that has provided our students with a wider range of curriculum offerings and the ability to take seven courses instead of just six. A major financial commitment was made by all involved to provide the additional staffing for this major initiative.

Second, we have increased our core capacity within the school district in a number of significant areas: (1) adding a Fine/Applied Arts Director; (2) adding a Facilities Director; and (3) gaining \$100,000 to fund technology upgrades. These additions have expanded our ability to respond to a number of recommendations from the Commission's report.

Third, our faculty has come together to address the most significant issue in our school – student underperformance. We spent the majority of our time together last year looking at how we can better motivate students to achieve. This year we plan to focus more directly on the work students produce.

Finally, we have spent enormous time and effort meeting our AYP goals as determined through our MCAS assessments. With large numbers of students entering high school having scored poorly on the MCAS tests in the lower grades, we have been able to exceed our AYP goals by significant margins each year.

## **VI. Restructuring or Other Reform Initiatives**

We continue to push for an Advisory Program that can be integrated into our school day and not be a voluntary or optional program. In addition, we continue to look at our student performance and search out ways in which we can ensure higher achievement. By using the protocols for discussing student work, we believe we will gain additional insights into their performance and how our expectations play a crucial role in the products students create.

## **VII. Follow-Up Program at South Hadley High School**

While we work with all staff during our available time together on the goals of the NEASC Report, our Administrative Team comprised of assistant principals, department chairs and directors have led the charge to accomplish many of the goals outlined above. We have formed faculty groups as needed to address some of the specific goals and recommendations. This specific report has been developed with the input from our entire staff and our School Council.

The members of our Follow-Up Committee are:

Mr. Mitchell Koziol, Chair  
Ms. Mary Ellen Stroud, Library Media Specialist  
Ms. Pam Hunter, Assistant Principal