

**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, INC.**



SELF-STUDY GUIDE

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***CORE VALUES, BELIEFS,
AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS***

**FOR 2011 SCHOOLS
COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

The Charge for the Committee on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

This Standard Committee is charged with the responsibility of developing a document that demonstrates the extent to which the school is adhering to the Standard for Accreditation on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations. Committee members should remember that the process of determining adherence to the Standard is a dynamic one. As evidence is gathered and discussed, the Committee's conclusions may change and evolve, be altered and refined.

STEP 1 -- Understanding the Standard and Preparing to Begin

- A. Make a copy of this Self-Study Guide for each member of the Standard Committee from the website: <http://cpss.neasc.org>. Take care you have printed the 2011 version.
- B. Read and discuss the Standard for Accreditation on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations so that all members of the Standard Committee develop a common understanding of the effective practices in the Standard. The Standard is comprised of both the narrative portion and the numbered indicators. The concepts in the narrative portion are manifested through the indicators. As part of your discussion, use the guiding questions and glossary from the document, *Explanation of the Standards for Accreditation*, located at <http://cpss.neasc.org> under the "Getting Started" tab.
- C. Engage all members of the committee in an activity to identify (imagine) what practices one would see for each indicator at a school which was meeting the Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations Standard at the highest level. For example, with regard to Indicator #4, committee members might suggest:
 1. annually the faculty discusses its core values and beliefs about learning at a designated faculty meeting;
 2. as part of the work of PLC's faculty regularly discusses research on learning to include an assessment of the implications of such research on the school's beliefs about learning;
 3. the school examines data about students' achievement of school-wide learning expectations, student performance on standardized tests, and student work as part of a review of targeted school-wide learning priorities;
 4. and/or the faculty incorporates discussion of district and community priorities into its discussion of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.
- D. When the practices have been generated, compare the practices to the Standard's Rating Guide in the acceptable and exemplary categories on page 9 of this booklet.

Teaching and Learning Standard

1

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Effective schools identify core values and beliefs about learning that function as explicit foundational commitments to students and the community. Decision-making remains focused on and aligned with these critical commitments. Core values and beliefs manifest themselves in research-based, school-wide 21st century learning expectations. Every component of the school is driven by the core values and beliefs and supports all students' achievement of the school's learning expectations.

1. The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.
2. The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement.
3. The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.
4. The school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.

STEP 2 -- Collecting Data Related to the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

A. Data Already Gathered

1. State Report

Examine your school's state report for its implications for the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations. Identify the indicators in the Standard for which the specific data in the report is relevant.

2. Opinion Surveys

Review the results of the opinion surveys administered to parents, students, and teachers with regard to each indicator in this Standard.

B. Data to be Gathered by the Committee

1. Gather the following information as evidence you will need later in this process. You will eventually need to **attach this evidence to the self-study narrative essay.**

- a. The school's approved statement of (1) core values, (2) beliefs about learning, and (3) its 21st century learning expectations, labeling those learning expectations that are academic, civic, and social and labeling the school's core values and beliefs about learning. (1.1 and 1.2) *N.B. – You are labeling your school's core values, beliefs about learning, and 21st century learning expectations for the purpose of your self-study committee's analysis and for the visiting committee, not to create a document that has a particular prescribed format or design*

2. Gather the following information as evidence you will need for each indicator in the Standard (as noted in parenthesis). You will eventually **make this evidence available in the workroom at the school.** *Please note: it is possible that you may not find evidence for all indicators.*

Indicator 1 -- *The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.*

- a. The names and positions of individuals involved in the most recent review of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations as well as the time period during which the review process took place (1.1)
- b. A one-page description of the process used, including the specific educational research examined, to identify the school's core values and beliefs about learning (1.1)

Indicator 2 -- *The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement.*

- c. The analytic rubrics developed for the school's 21st century learning expectations (academic, civic, and social), with the targeted level of achievement indicated for each (1.2)

Indicator 3 -- *The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.*

- d. A list of examples of ways that the culture of the school reflects the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (1.3)
- e. A list of examples of specific changes made to the (a) curriculum, (b) instruction, and (c) assessment in response to the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (1.3) (*see the CPSS website for a graphic organizer which may be helpful*)
- f. A list of examples of specific changes to, or adaptations of, school policies, procedures, and decisions resulting from examination of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (1.3) (*see the CPSS website for a graphic organizer which may be helpful*)
- g. A list of resource allocations that have been made in response to supporting the school's core values, beliefs, and its 21st century learning expectations (1.3)

Indicator 4 -- *The school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.*

- h. A list of dates and processes used in recent reviews of the school's guiding documents (mission, core values, etc.) since the last decennial evaluation (do not include the school's response to #2 - b, on page 5) (1.4)
- i. A list of data (standardized test data, local assessment data, et.al.) reviewed by the committee and used to develop the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (1.4)
- j. A list of educational research reviewed in the process of developing the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (1.4)
- k. A list of district and school community priorities that were reviewed in the process of developing the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations (1.4)
- l. Other evidence deemed relevant by the committee, especially relating to innovative thinking and practices, that relates to core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

STEP 3 -- Analyzing the Evidence, Drawing Conclusions, and Providing Supporting Details

Once you have gathered the data requested in Step 2, and using the prompts that follow in Step 3, analyze and discuss all the gathered evidence and information as it relates to the various indicators in the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations.

- A. Write at least one paragraph for each indicator in the Standard; for some indicators with bullets, you may need to write more than one paragraph.
- B. Write a conclusion for each indicator and underline the conclusion in the paragraph. For example, for Indicator #4, "Review of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations rarely includes the examination of research, but the review consistently responds to identified district learning goals identified from the review of standardized test data."
- C. Write sentences to complete your paragraph that justify or support your underlined conclusion. Your evidence in these sentences forms the details that justify or support your underlined conclusion.
- D. This narrative essay should be 6-9 double-spaced pages.

Prompts for Step 3

- 1. The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.**

Analyzing the Evidence

- a. Based on a review of the evidence, including opinion survey results and any other relevant evidence, what does the evidence show about how the school community engaged in a *dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive* process that was *grounded in research* to identify its core values and beliefs about learning?

Drawing a Conclusion

- b. State the extent to which the process to identify the school's core values and its beliefs about learning was dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive and the school's foundational beliefs about learning are grounded in research.

- 2. The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement.**

Analyzing the Evidence

- a. Based upon a review of the evidence, including opinion survey results, what does the evidence show about the level of challenge and measurability of the school's 21st

century learning expectations/competencies in academic, civic, and social areas, the clarity of the definitions of the school's learning expectations as expressed in analytic rubrics, and the rigor of the school's 21st century learning expectations?

Drawing a Conclusion

- b. State the extent to which the school's 21st century learning expectations are challenging, measurable, inclusive of academic, civic, and social competencies, and have targeted high levels of achievement.
- 3. The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.**

Analyzing the Evidence

- a. Based on a review of the evidence, including opinion survey results, what does the evidence show about how the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, are deliberately used to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and are used to guide specific school policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations?

Drawing a Conclusion

- b. State the extent to which the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are *actively reflected in the school's culture, deliberately drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.*
- 4. The school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.**

Analyzing the Evidence

- a. Based on a review of the evidence, including opinion survey results, what does the evidence show about the *regularity* of the school's review and revision of its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations and the extent to which such reviews *incorporate research, multiple data sources, and district and school community priorities?*

Drawing a Conclusion

- b. State the extent to which the process used by the school to review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations was *grounded in research, was informed by the analysis of multiple data sources, and was informed by district and school community priorities.*

RATING GUIDE

Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

A rating of **DEFICIENT** is appropriate if any of the following exist:

- The absence of a statement of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
- The failure of the statement to identify a set of core values and beliefs for the school beyond generic goals
- A statement of core values, beliefs about learning, and learning expectations that is not informed by current research
- A statement of core values, beliefs, and learning expectations that was not developed through a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process
- A lack of challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and a lack of school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement for all 21st century learning expectations

A rating of **LIMITED** is appropriate if the school has engaged in a dynamic process informed by current research to identify its core values and beliefs about learning and has developed challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement, but lacks:

- School-wide rubrics that clearly define in observable, measurable terms the 21st century learning expectations of the school
- An active commitment by all members of the school community to using the core values and beliefs about learning to guide the school

A rating of **ACCEPTABLE** is appropriate if the school has engaged in a dynamic process informed by current research to identify its core values and beliefs about learning to which all members of the school community are committed and has developed challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined in observable and measurable terms by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement, and:

- the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations at least minimally drive school initiatives, policies, and procedures and decisions about curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices
- the culture of the school, curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations generally reflect the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations

A rating of **EXEMPLARY** is appropriate if all the descriptors in the **ACCEPTABLE** rating are met and:

- The school's formal processes to ensure that the core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations
- The school has in place an established, ongoing process with prescribed timelines, research and data sources, and identified members of the stakeholders to guide the regular review and revision of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations in keeping with district priorities

STEP 4 -- Writing the Executive Summary

Write the Executive Summary of the conclusions and evidence. Consult the Guidelines for Review of Standards Essays and Executive Summaries in the *Accreditation Handbook* (page 37).

Content of the Executive Summary

- Use the rating guide provided on the previous page to determine the school's level of adherence to the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations, based on the conclusions and supportive evidence in the narrative essay.
- Write a one-page summary of the evidence in the narrative essay that led to the committee's judgment of the school's level of adherence to the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations, making sure you include the rating, e.g., "acceptable."
- Identify and list the school's strengths in adhering to the *specific indicators* in the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations.
- Identify and list the school's needs in adhering to the *specific indicators* in the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations.
- Attach a list of the names, positions, and signatures of the committee members responsible for the preparation of this narrative essay and executive summary. Signatures of committee members attest to the thoroughness of the committee's work and to the veracity of the narrative essay and executive summary.