

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



**SELF-STUDY GUIDE**

**1**

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

**FOR 2019 SCHOOLS  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies. Each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.
3. The school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.

# Directions 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 aligning to the Standard for Accreditation on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations. Committee members should remember that the process of determining alignment to the Standard is a reflective one. It begins with the committee developing a deep and rich understanding of the Standard and the Rating Guide. As evidence is gathered and discussed, the committee's conclusions may change and evolve, be altered and refined. Once the evidence has been fully discussed and conclusions have been finalized, the committee will begin the writing of the Narrative. The final step in the process is for the committee to write an Executive Summary and to assess the extent to which the school is aligning to the Standard using the Rating Guide. This rating, and the committee's list of strengths and needs for the Standard, will become part of the Executive Summary.

## I. Gaining an Understanding of the Standard and Preparing to Begin

Make a copy of this Self-Study Guide for each member of the Standard Committee from the website:

<http://cpss.neasc.org>.

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 from the document, *Explanation of the Standards for Accreditation*, which can be found on our website under the "Getting Started" tab. Also, establish common definitions for terms in the standards so that discussions among school staff are based on a shared understanding of the terminology.

## II. Collecting Data Related to the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

### A. Data already gathered

The results of the Endicott College opinion surveys given to parents, students, and teachers with regard to this Standard

### B. Data to be gathered by the committee

Gather the following information as evidence you will need for each indicator in the Standard. You will be organizing this evidence by uploading it to the portal, linking it in the Narrative Essay, or making it available in the workroom at the school for your use and use by the visiting team.

#### **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.*

- ✓ The school's approved statement of (1) core values, (2) beliefs about learning, and (3) its 21<sup>st</sup> 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)
- ✓ The names of individuals and the constituent group he/she represents 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)
- ✓ A description of the process used, including the specific educational research examined, to identify the school's core values and beliefs about learning (1.1)
- ✓ The dates that the document was approved by the school board/board of education, the faculty, and any other group.

### **Indicator 2**

*The school has challenging and measurable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies. Each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.*

- ✓ The specific and measurable criteria for success, such as analytic rubrics, developed for the school's 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.*

- ✓ Provide examples of ways that the culture of the school reflects the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations (1.3)
- ✓ Provide examples of how the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations are used in driving decisions and practices regarding (a) curriculum, (b) instruction, and (c) assessment (1.3)
- ✓ Provide examples how the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations are used to guide decisions regarding school policies, procedures, and decisions (1.3)
- ✓ Provide examples of resource allocations, including budget decisions, that have been made in response to supporting the school's core values, beliefs, and its 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations (1.3)

### **Indicator 4**

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

- ✓ Provide the school's plan for the regular review of the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. If applicable provide 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 (1.4)
- ✓ Provide a list of data (standardized test data, local assessment data, etc.) used by the school in its review of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations (1.4)
- ✓ Provide a list of educational research used in the school's process of reviewing the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations (1.4)
- ✓ Provide a list of district and school community priorities that were considered in the process of reviewing the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations (1.4)

## **III. Analyzing the Evidence, Writing a Conclusion Sentence(s), and Writing an Indicator Narrative**

Once you have gathered the data, use the directions that follow to guide your analysis and discussion on the gathered evidence and information as it relates to the various indicators in the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations. Only after these steps have been completed should the Committee begin the process of writing the narrative. The narrative writing will be entered into the appropriate sections of the school's self-study web portal. Supporting documentation can also be linked into the Narrative Essay or uploaded through the portal.

### **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*

#### **Analysis:**

Using the examples in Section II and Endicott survey results to form your discussion, 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?

State the **extent or degree (use the continuum of terms)** 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*.

**Writing a conclusion sentence(s):**

In the online portal in the dialogue box entitled “Conclusions,” write one or two sentences which identify the **extent or degree** 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*.

Example:

The school community participated in a collaborative process to create its core values statement and learning expectations; however, it was informed by limited use of current research-based best practices and the process of revision was not inclusive of the school community.

**Writing the narrative for the Indicator(s):**

Now, in the “Evidence and Explanation” dialogue box, write sentences based on your discussion and analysis that justify or support your conclusion. Your evidence in these sentences comes from your examples in Section II and your discussions regarding those examples which have just occurred in Section III.

This writing will form your Narrative Essay. It should be written in the third person.

**Indicator 2**

*The school has challenging and measurable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies. Each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.*

**Analysis:**

- a. Using the examples in Section II and Endicott survey results to form your discussion, what does the evidence show about the *level of challenge and measurability* of the school’s 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations in academic, civic, and social areas?

Based on the analysis of your information, state the **extent or degree (see continuum of terms)** to which the school’s 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations are *challenging, measurable, and inclusive of academic, civic, and social competencies*.

- b. Using the examples in Section II and Endicott survey results to form your discussion, what does the evidence show about the *existence of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement for each of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations?*

Based on the analysis of your information, state the **extent or degree (see continuum of terms)** to which the school’s 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations *have specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, with targeted high levels of achievement*.

**Writing a conclusion sentence(s):**

Write one or two sentences which identifies the **extent or degree** to which the school has challenging and measurable 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and that each expectation is defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, which define targeted high levels of achievement.

Example:

Sample High School staff identified nine challenging academic, social, and civic learning expectations; however, the school has only created the academic rubrics with identified high levels of achievement as their specific and measurable criteria for success.

**Writing the narrative for the Indicator(s):**

Follow the directions as detailed under this heading in Indicator 1.

**Indicator 3**

*The school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> 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.*

**Analysis:**

Using the examples in Section II and Endicott survey results to form your discussion, 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*?

Based on the analysis of your information, state the **extent or degree (see continuum of terms)** to which the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> 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*.

**Writing a conclusion Sentence(s):**

Write one or two sentences which identifies the **extent or degree** to which the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> 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*.

See examples for Indicators 1 and 2.

**Writing the narrative for the Indicator(s):**

Follow the directions as detailed under this heading in Indicator 1.

**Indicator 4**

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

**Analysis:**

- a. Using the examples in Section II and Endicott survey results to form your discussion, what does the evidence show about the *regularity* of the school's review and revision of its core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations?

Based on the analysis of your information, state the **extent or degree (see continuum of terms)** to which the school has a *regular process* to review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.

- b. Using the examples in Section II and Endicott survey results to form your discussion, what does the evidence show about whether reviews are based on *research, multiple data sources, and district and school community priorities*?

Based on the analysis of your information, state the **extent or degree (see continuum of terms)** to which the school's review process is *based on research, informed by the analysis of multiple data sources, and informed by district and school community priorities*.

**Writing a conclusion sentence(s):**

Write one or two sentences which identifies the **extent or degree** to which the school has a *regular process* to review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and the **extent or degree** to which the process was *based on research*, was *informed by the analysis of multiple data sources*, and was *informed by district and school community priorities*.

See examples for Indicators 1 and 2.

**Writing the narrative for the Indicator(s):**

Follow the directions as detailed under this heading in Indicator 1.

#### **IV. Writing the Standard Narrative**

When you have finished the writing for all of your individual indicators in a Standard they should be combined into one longer narrative for the entire Standard. This process will occur through the portal when the school enters the “print self-study report” command.

#### **V. Writing the Executive Summary, Standard Rating, Strengths, and Needs**

- a. Write a one-page executive summary of the evidence from the Standard’s narrative essay, which will be used to support the committee’s judgment of the school’s level of alignment to the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations in the portal. The basis for this summary can be derived from the conclusion sentences at the beginning of each indicator; some additional information may be added to clarify these conclusions.
- b. Use the rating guide provided to determine the school’s level of alignment to the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations, based on the conclusions and supportive evidence written in the Narrative Essay. Check the box of the corresponding level in the Executive Summary section of the portal in the section entitled “Advisory Rating.”
- c. Identify the school’s strengths in aligning to the specific indicators in the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations and enter them into the portal in the section for Strengths.
- d. Identify the school’s needs in aligning to the specific indicators in the Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations and enter them into the portal in the section for Needs.
- e. 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.

Please consult the Self-Study Seminar Handbook or the portal for a sample Executive Summary.

**Continuum of Terms for Writing Conclusions**

Quantitative	Qualitative
ALWAYS	by design – not by design
all	individually – collaboratively
across the school	deliberately – haphazardly
pervasively	formally – informally
often	implicitly – explicitly
the vast majority	purposefully – lacking connection
most	systematically – happenstance
extensively	consistently – inconsistently
consistently	commonly – seldom
frequently	targeted – scattered
sometimes	regularly – sporadically
in some areas	not yet
occasionally	
limited	
infrequently	
rarely	
NEVER	



# RATING GUIDE

## Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

A rating of **NOT YET MEETING THE STANDARD** is appropriate if any of the following exist:

- The absence of a statement of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
- 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies
- A lack of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics, that identify targeted high levels of achievement for all 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement, but does not yet have:

- An active commitment by members of the school community to use 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by observable, specific, and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement, and:

- The school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations drive decisions about curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices and guide school initiatives, policies, and procedures
- The culture of the school, curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations reflect the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations in keeping with district priorities