

**New England Association of
School and Colleges, Inc.**

Commission on Public Schools



**School Summary Report for
Premier HS**

School and Community Summary

School and Community Summary

Premier High School (PHS) is located in City, MA and is open to all students through the yearly school choice lottery. The governance in this school provides autonomy over budget, staffing, governance, curriculum/assessment, and the school calendar to provide increased flexibility in its organization and staffing to best meet students' needs. The school opened in September 2002 and offers a college preparatory curriculum where technology is a bridge connecting the student to authentic and engaging learning experiences. Students are exposed to a wide array of technology: Chromebooks, MacBooks, mobile interactive whiteboards-Span Nureva/Padlet Collaborative System Boards, Google Apps for Education, podcasting, and video production. These technologies are integrated into all subjects offering students multiple ways to learn. Students use laptops throughout the day. As a 24/7 Google School, students see technology as a constant tool to access an ongoing learning process.

The school is in the largest village within the City, located in County, Massachusetts. The population of the village is nearly 100,000. The village is a large and diverse community. Of the population, African Americans comprise 60 percent; Whites are 21 percent; Latino/Hispanics are 13 percent; and Asians are 6 percent. The local unemployment rate is 16.2 percent, which is significantly higher than the citywide rate of 7.2 percent. In addition, 32 percent of local homes are headed by a single female parent. The median income of the school's postal area is \$36,000 per household and that 22 percent of the population live below the poverty level. There are 16,000 Haitian immigrants, most of whom have settled in the two villages of the City, which are adjacent to Premier, bringing the population of Haitian students to 30 percent of the overall population in the school. Industry in the neighborhood is comprised of three major components: health and human services, hospitality/service, and small business.

There are 15 community-based health and outreach organizations within two miles of the school. Some of these include Health Center, Multi-Service Center, YMCA, Villager House, Senior Center, Hospital, and small medical offices. Located three blocks away from the school, the Square retail district consists of barbershops, beauty salons, a variety of repair shops ranging from autos and computers, take-out and full-service restaurants, and a variety of family-owned stores and businesses. PHS serves the City. The CPS student population has decreased from 56,000 to 55,594 in the last 10 years. Spending per student is at \$18,318 with a foundational budget at \$12,846. The communities in the CPS district are, for the most part, economically, racially, culturally, and ethnically diverse. However, this distribution is not necessarily reflected in public schools across the district. Out of the students in the CPS, 46 percent is African American, 26 percent is Hispanic, 18 percent is Asian, 9 percent is White, and less than 1 percent is American Indian ancestry. In addition, 11 percent of students of school-age children go to out-of-district public schools and 16 percent are in private and parochial schools leaving 73 percent of the total school-age population in the CPS.

PHS consists of grades 6-12 with a current total enrollment of 987 students with 56 percent male and 44 percent female. The student enrollment has grown at the secondary level over the last five years; however, it has decreased significantly in grade six. This can be attributed to the school having no feeder school and to the numerous options this age group has in new charter and private schools within walking distance. The ethnic, racial, and cultural composition has remained relatively consistent since its inception with 65 percent African American, 26 percent Latino, 3.3 percent Asian, and 2 percent White. The average dropout rate over the last two years has been 2 percent, the average daily student attendance 92 percent, and the average attendance rate among teachers 98 percent. Staffing data by race and ethnicity of full-time teachers shows that 61.6 percent of the staff are white, 33.8 percent are African-American, and 3 percent are Hispanic. With respect to gender, 61 percent are female and 39 percent are male. The student body comes from every zip code in the City with more than half coming from two villages. Approximately 43 percent of the students do not speak English as their primary language at home; 100 percent of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch; and 21.6 percent of the students are considered special needs students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs). Because the school is inclusion-based, there are no substantially separate classes for students on IEPs.

There are currently 82 full-time teachers at PHS. The student/teacher ratio is 14:1 with the average class size of 24. The average student load for teachers is approximately 90 students. Of the faculty, 70 percent have initial certification in their field, and 30 percent have professional status. Professional development for the staff begins one week before the start of the regular school year at the summer institute when staff is introduced to new technology and given instruction on different practices with technology. Staff review school-wide learning goals, academic, social and civic expectations, and building protocols. During the school year, the students are released at 11:30 a.m. every Wednesday to allow staff to attend professional development from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. The faculty work on grade-level teams, academic teams by subjects, or student support teams. The administrative team also meets on a weekly basis. It is the primary time that faculty professional learning communities discuss student achievement to make sure appropriate support is given and effective intervention strategies are implemented so that no student falls through the cracks.

While at PHS, high school students must take 4 years of science, math, and English, 3 years of history, 2 years of world language, and 2 years of a technology elective. Seniors are also required to create a digital portfolio and present a senior final exhibition. Outside community programs include Upward Bound, Project Breakthrough, Local College Scholars, Admissions Guaranteed Program, Partnership, and the City Foundation. PHS has distinguished itself for its success with student achievement on the state test. Approximately 17 percent of the current senior class earned a scholarship. PHS has also distinguished itself in athletics. In March 2018 the boys' basketball team won the school's first-ever championship.

Teachers provide key leadership essential to the success of school improvement planning. The summer institute is the cornerstone of the school's efforts in establishing and implementing a shared mission and learning expectations. PHS faculty members also have varied opportunities in the school improvement process in biweekly common planning periods (within and across grade-levels), bi-weekly department meetings, and participation on the governing board. Additionally, the co-headmasters have an open-door policy where faculty and staff are free to propose initiatives that can advance new initiatives in teaching and learning. The headmasters also play a central role in school improvement planning. This happens by participating in biweekly faculty meetings, gathering input from monthly governing board meetings, and attending common planning meetings across grade-levels. The headmasters meet monthly with representatives from the teachers' union to listen to and address their teaching and learning concerns.

Parents and community members are valued stakeholders in school improvement planning. Each constituency is represented on the governing board and helps monitor academic, environment, behavior, and technology indicators relevant to the school's mission and learning expectations. Additionally, these governing board stakeholders participate in decisions regarding hiring/evaluation of the headmaster and approval of the budget. The parent council provides feedback to the administration on school policies and procedures. In the reflection about our School and Community Profile, the Governing Board has identified the most critical challenges facing the school in the future.

Core Values, Beliefs, and Vision of the Graduate

Premier High School Mission Statement

Premier High School's essential belief is that every student can learn and develop into a responsible citizen by providing an environment that is both nurturing and challenging. PHS offers a college preparatory curriculum, which includes interdisciplinary project-based learning where technology is the bridge that connects the students to their learning experiences. Core Values and Beliefs

- *We believe in teaching excellence through reflecting on our practice; engaging students in active learning; and encouraging collaboration*
- *We believe that technology enhances all teaching and learning We believe in helping students become independent creative and critical thinkers*

- *We believe students learn best when they can apply what they have learned in authentic assessments based on real life*
- *We believe in addressing the needs of the whole child We believe in creating community-based on respect, responsibility, and empathy*

Vision of the Graduate

Based on the school motto "RISE" the Premier Community developed and approved our Vision of the Graduate in September 2018.

Successful Graduates of Premier High School RISE

R	I	S	E
Demonstrate civic and social Responsibility	Possess Integral 21st century skills	S uccessfully navigate their world	Demonstrate E xcellence in academics
Act as leaders in their community working with others to identify problems and offer actionable solutions.	Effectively collaborate with others to solve complex problems.	Demonstrate agency in their lives, acting as motivated and industrious self advocates for the benefit of themselves and others	Have foundational content knowledge and habits of study to be successful in post- secondary pursuits
Be respectful of differing viewpoints.	Think critically and offer creative and imaginative solutions.	Be reflective, empathetic and honest.	Engage with complex print and non-print texts.
Consider the needs of others and act as responsible citizens in both their local and global communities.	Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in face of difficult obstacles and change.	Be self-reliant, resourceful, and resilient.	Evaluate, analyse, draw conclusions and develop creative problem solving skills.
Be culturally competent and cultivate positive relationships with people from all backgrounds.	Demonstrate strong technology and information literacy.	Demonstrate a growth mindset.	Demonstrate strong oral and written communication skills.

Standards & Principles

Foundational Element 1.1a - Learning Culture

The school community provides a safe environment.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 1.1A

The school meets Foundational Element 1.1a. Premier High School provides a safe environment for its staff and students. The school has updated its crisis plan to ensure the safety of all students and provides a safe and secure educational environment by including and practicing A.L.I.C.E training as well as instituting monthly evacuation drills.

The school has an access control plan that ensures only students, staff, and others who are authorized in the building are admitted to the facility. Since last year's visit, the school has installed a set of new, solid wood, main entry doors that are not only more secure but are fitting with the building's historic architecture. The school has also made a capital request through facilities to alarm all exterior doors, but that request has not yet been met. A new arrangement of the main entrance is planned to be instituted in September 2019 based on district approval. The school secretary will be located at a new station right at the front door and no one will be allowed through the metal detector until cleared by the secretary. All deliveries and visitors will wait behind the metal detectors until the receiving party receives that individual. In addition, the tardy table has moved to the front entrance until 9 a.m. and is staffed with two high school administrators and one middle school staff member to better facilitate the flow of student traffic after the start time. Middle school teachers have also been assigned rotating hall duties outside the cafeteria, in keeping with the present work agreement, to better regulate middle and high school student movement during lunch. Staff and students show a strong commitment to the development and maintenance of a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 1.2a - Learning Culture

The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 1.2A

The school meets Foundational Element 1.2a. At the end of the last school year, the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) refined the vision of the graduate to include transferable skills, enduring understandings from content, and general dispositions highlighted in grade levels throughout the previous year. The ILT continued to use in the process exemplars from NEASC Resources and Envision Learning Partners to help frame and revise the vision. The week-long, 2018 Summer Institute further focused on the core five elements of a learner-centered environment needed to support the Vision of the PHS Graduate: 1. Relevant and Contextualized Learning; 2. Open-Walled; 3. Socially Embedded; 4. Competency-Based; and 5. Learner Agency. Both grade level and content teams worked during the Institute to develop a vertical alignment of skills and dispositions needed to achieve the vision. The final version was shared with the community at the end of September 2018. Our mission and core values and beliefs statement was revised before the Collaborative Conference in 2018. The key change to the mission statement was the inclusion of project-based learning as the primary way we promote interdisciplinary connections.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 2.2a - Student Learning

There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments across the school.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 2.2A

The school meets Foundational Element 2.2a. There is now a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments. The shared instructional goal of all grade-level and content teams was to develop vertically aligned curriculum in a consistent format that included essential content understandings, dispositions, and transferable skills. The first step of this process was to develop new curriculum maps that focus on vertically aligned, discipline-specific and transferable skills throughout content areas. The goal of this year's curriculum initiative was to maintain and respect teacher autonomy over curriculum while creating coherence in skill development. Content teams worked within the following research-based, school-wide instructional skillset template and chose skills that were most fitting with their core content goals, and then built a vertically aligned curriculum template. Next steps will involve cross-walking all content-based curricula and aligning it to the six central learning expectations of the vision of the graduate. In addition, an instructional goal of the 2019-2020 school year will be for content teams to develop common assessments connected to the written curriculum.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 3.1a - Professional Practices

The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 3.1A

The school meets Foundational Element 3.1a. The school has a current school improvement plan in place that serves as a road map that provides clarity to specific priorities and actions that are most important for the year. Action steps and growth are re-evaluated every 90 days by the administrative team in conjunction with the teacher-based ILT. The plan consists of student goals in 5 categories that include ELA, math, science, EL proficiency, and absenteeism and high school completion goals. The plan is developed with the help of ILT and is approved by a district-based academic superintendent. The following are the essential elements of the plan:

Priority / Instructional Focus: Our community of adult learners at Premier High School will focus on increasing student engagement and critical thinking by developing student agency in authentic, relevant learning opportunities that may occur anytime or anywhere so they will develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to exceed standards and to be prepared for college, career, and life in the 21st century.

Priority / Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices Continuum Goal: To build authentic relationships with student and their families to create a learning partnership.

School Improvement Initiative Focus Area: Supporting EL students in making progress in their language development.

Quick Plan Goal: Our staff will begin to work on building their capacity to create a learner-centered environment starting in our Summer Institute and will begin to implement these practices as the school year begins. We will begin to measure student engagement right away, as well as assessing baseline reading levels so that we are able to monitor our progress and celebrate our success. These practices also encourage student voice and choice which should impact authentic relationships in terms of building learning partnerships between teachers and students.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Foundational Elements 4.1a - Learning Support

The school has intervention strategies designed to support learners.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS 4.1A

The school meets Foundational Element 4.1a. Students who need assistance are referred to the student assistance team. The team reviews all referrals and determined any strategies that need to be in place for the student, beginning with Tier 1. The SAT monitors the action plans and changes delivery of services or removes services as needed.

Since the time of the Collaborative Conference, Premier added intervention strategies to support all students. This year three additional initiatives support the social and emotional growth of all our learners. The school welcomed Becoming a Man (B.A.M.) to the school as daily support and intervention for our at-risk male students in grades 7-9. There are weekly advisories for these middle and high school students with lessons designed to develop skills on conflict resolution, integrity, accountability, anger redirection, and respecting womanhood. BAM staff serve as support at the main entrance at the beginning of the day and at dismissal. The college team, in conjunction with senior student support, offers additional supports for seniors following alternative pathways to careers and lifework. An alternative pathway fair was held to offer seniors support and options for noncollege-based career and life-tracks.

The middle school introduced a formal advisory program to better track early-warning indicators for our at-risk youth. All middle school students meet in a large and small group each Wednesday. Sessions focus on personal goal setting, community building, life-skills, as well as tools for school and learning. Weekly senior advisories also introduced a similar curriculum to focus on tracking academic, social, emotional indicators that indicate off-track behaviors that could hinder graduation goals.

RATING

Meets the Standard

Foundational Element 5.1a - Learning Resources

The school site and plant support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 5.1A

The school does not meet Foundational Element 5.1a. Although the school recently completed significant upgrades including all new windows, roof repair, repointing of all brick, and new main entrance doors, Premier is not on the district's plan for any major upgrades to the facility. The school completed the redesign and outfitting of its learning commons with its own resources. The district provided approximately \$200,000 in new *Steelcase* furniture for classrooms throughout the school in September 2018.

Premier school leaders have communicated to the district the need for exterior door alarms, a reconfiguration of the front entry and main office layout, HVAC upgrades and lighting, heating, and sound improvements in the auditorium. Although the district provides bottled water in limited areas of the building, the school still does not have a working water fountain system. Although we believe we meet the foundational elements of this standard, the PHS community is in strong agreement that the building still needs a wide range of fundamental upgrades to be able to best deliver its curriculum, program, and services.

RATING

Does Not Meet the Standard

Priority Area 1

PRIORITY AREA Please list your priority area goal.

Develop the vision of the graduate as well as the vertical alignment of skills and dispositions needed to achieve and begin its explicit integration of instructional practices (1.2)

ACTION - IMPACT - GROWTH Please describe the actions you have taken to achieve your goal, the impact it has had on student learning or the school community, and your next steps or questions regarding this priority area.

Premier demonstrated solid growth in this priority area. Our vision of the graduate was finalized and approved by the staff at the end of the 2018 academic year. In a feedback survey distributed in June of 2019, 64 percent of staff rated the school's growth this priority area as **Developing**, while 28 percent found that we were best described as "Implementing."

The foundational principle of student agency from our vision of the graduate became our instructional priority goal for 2018-19:

Premier High School Instructional Priority Goal for 2018-19

*"Our community of adult learners at Premier High School will focus on increasing student engagement and critical thinking by developing **student agency** in authentic, relevant learning opportunities that may occur anytime or anywhere so they will develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to exceed standards and to be prepared for college, career, and life in the 21st century."*

Content Teams worked during 2018-19 to develop a vertical alignment of skills needed to achieve the vision within content-specific classes, while the ILT worked to develop the four key competencies that define learner agency for the Premier student that are aligned with the vision of the graduate. The key agency competencies that evolved out of this work are student choice, self-assessment, goal-setting, and feedback. A level of agency rubric was created by ILT through research and collaborative design. A 2019-20 ILT goal is to support the roll-out of this measure in order to promote concrete connections to our vision of the graduate.

The combined instructional activities (as noted in the evidence section) have helped create a culture where staff and students feel like the whole school is moving towards a more learner-centered environment that promotes the elements of our vision of the graduate. Close to 20 teachers have participated in earner excursions regionally and nationally (through Next Generation Learning and the Center for Collaborative Education) to see model learner-centered schools. Accordingly, these visits have increased staff capacity to see what is possible with agency as part of a learner-centered vision. All Premier teachers are given structured time to work on their professional practice goal as part of their yearly evaluation. In 2018-19, our professional practice goal was to develop student agency as a way to increase engagement, achievement, and promote our vision of the graduate.

At the beginning of the second semester, ILT members reflected on the progress of the school's instructional practice goal: developing a learner-centered school vision. It used the school's instructional district plan as a guide. ILT will continue to advocate and support

ways of assessing the school's overall growth in promoting student agency and create plans to help this become more of a whole-school discussion on half-day Wednesdays. School leadership has also demonstrated a strong commitment in resources and training so more teachers can embrace project-based learning activities which align with our mission. Teachers have acknowledged in their grade level cohorts that there is still much work to do around alignment of transferable skills, setting a strong instructional foundation around the Vision, and creating more coherency for our learner-centered environment.

At the end of this year's professional development sequence in May, teachers shared student work and reflections around this year's project-based learning activities. Teachers were in strong agreement that their experiences with project-based learning revealed deeper content understanding, agency, and more student excitement about learning. Teachers felt also very united in project-based learning as a comprehensive way that promotes our school's mission and vision. The next steps will be to develop and align performance-based assessments of PBL so we can measure student growth of the competencies central to our vision. This fall, the school began a major initiative to work with each educator in the building with intensive mentoring and coaching from the Buck Institute/My PBLWorks to move from the initiation to full implementation phase of project-based learning as the key pathway of achieving the goals of our vision of the graduate.

EVIDENCE Please upload, link, or explain any evidence that you examined to determine growth in this priority area.

The following are examples that demonstrate the progress the school has made with the integration of core vision of the graduate competency of student agency into instructional practices:

- 1) Development of new curriculum maps focusing on discipline-specific skills, content knowledge and 21st century skills and dispositions
- 2) Grades 10-12 and Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) teachers engaging in project-based learning training- developing PBL units
- 3) Design work in middle school- 6th grade: Art as Activism; 7th grade: Student-created play; 8th grade: career exploration and exhibition
- 4) 9th grade STEAM Studio interdisciplinary term projects, including students regularly going offsite to engage with their community
- 5) School-wide offsite learning days each term where students have to authentically engage with their community
- 6) The senior project and presentation have become more robust and students are finally understanding that they have an opportunity to do something they really want to do
- 7) The learning commons has become a central area reserved for true learner-centered opportunities
- 8) ILT classroom visits looking for examples of student agency

Priority Area 2

PRIORITY AREA Please list your priority area goal.

Write the curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments. (2.2)

ACTION - IMPACT - GROWTH Please describe the actions you have taken to achieve your goal, the impact it has had on student learning or the school community, and your next steps or questions regarding this priority area.

Premier has demonstrated rapid growth in the development of a curriculum in common written format. There is now a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments. In a feedback survey distributed in June of 2019, 66 percent of staff rated the school's growth this priority area as **Developing** while 29 percent found that we were best described as "Implementing."

The shared instructional goal of all grade-level and content teams this past year was to develop a vertically aligned curriculum in a consistent format that included essential content understandings, dispositions, and transferable skills. As part of last summer's institute, content areas began the process of choosing a set of *discipline-specific skills* to use as a foundation to build their respective curriculum. All teachers, regardless of the specific content of their course, were asked to reflect on these guiding questions:

What are the skills related to my discipline that should be embedded in my lessons?

What are the units that my department needs to build upon for students to be successful according to our vision of the graduate?

In addition, teachers were also asked to consider more competency-based skills that demonstrate what it means to think historically, mathematically, scientifically, according to the vision of the graduate. Content areas eventually created a vertically aligned set of skills for all classes at every grade level. Examples from every content area are included as a hard copy example in the visiting team workroom.

A curriculum map framework, supported by work of the ILT, was created in late 2018. Teachers in every content team populated their individual curriculum in a common, written format that contained discipline-specific, transferable 21st-century skills, respective curriculum standards, resources, and course products. The school-wide learning expectations of collaboration, communication, agency, and creativity will be developed and added in 2019-20. The curriculum template will be used by current and any future teachers to create their units and lessons. There is now a clear, school-wide curriculum goal to have coherence within departments, as well as across the school from grades 6-12 while allowing teachers to have autonomy over their curriculum. There is a common understanding these maps are fluid, and as a school, we can continue to refine them over time as needed.

Grade-levels teams began an initial discussion around the school-wide competencies of collaboration and communication, and also examined research-based "look fors" that students would demonstrate and would be able to "know" and "do" at each grade. Levels of success of reaching these competencies were also discussed from beginning to expert level. This discussion will continue in 2019-20 at each grade level in order to add descriptors to these competencies on each curriculum map. Again, it is important to emphasize that these core competencies and common learning expectations are tied to our vision of the graduate.

Continuing on our curriculum work, common assessments across grade levels will be created and calibrated as a goal over the next two years to give students a solid opportunity to match these competencies. Grade level facilitators are in agreement that it is not only important to document what we are doing, but also to develop a process of communicating how students are achieving across grade levels. Accordingly, the school will also examine and pilot ways to report to families and the outside community how our students are doing meeting the school-wide competencies. Grade level teams have also acknowledged that persistent gaps in student skill are most probably tied to lack of consistency in overall vertical alignment.

EVIDENCE Please upload, link, or explain any evidence that you examined to determine growth in this priority area.

Since the collaborative conference, all content areas have created a vertically aligned set of transferable, 21st-century skills. In addition, there is now a common curriculum template that all teachers are expected to use in developing overall units and lessons. There is a curriculum template for every content class which is included in the school's curriculum catalog. Core examples have been attached.

Priority Area 3

PRIORITY AREA Please list your priority area goal.

Provide more tutoring resources such as SAT prep and expand individualized tutoring, develop a structured student mentoring system to better utilize peer mentoring and tutoring and tie both initiatives into an academic support structure that runs across all content areas to support teaching and learning (4.1)

ACTION - IMPACT - GROWTH Please describe the actions you have taken to achieve your goal, the impact it has had on student learning or the school community, and your next steps or questions regarding this priority area.

Premier High School has demonstrated strong growth in developing innovative academic interventions across grade levels. In a feedback survey distributed in June of 2019, 49 percent of staff rated the school's growth in this priority area as **Implementing** while 44 percent found that we were best described as Developing. This year, the high school senior advisory program focused on academic intervention and support as a central goal. Each week, every high school senior meets 30 minutes with a Premier educator for academic and personal check-ins, as well as developing learning goals for the year. Advisors get to know student course grades and how seniors are feeling about each class. Accordingly, advisers meet with seniors to make plans to be more successful in any difficult class and/or address concerns as they come up. Preparation of the senior project and portfolio in advisories is combined with the academic check-ins. Senior advisors are expected to call families on a regular basis to update them on academic progress as well as involve them in an intervention plan.

There was significant growth in this priority area also in grade nine. Each 9th-grade student is now in an advisory with 10-12 other students. Advisory meets once a week for 30 minutes each time. Advisory meetings are focused on college and career readiness, social/emotional, and habits of mind. This year, everyday students an academic enrichment block that occurs an hour per day each with a different teacher. These enrichment blocks are opportunities for students to receive additional support or enrichment in a class from teachers and other students. Advisors and grade nine teachers collaborate weekly to ensure each student has a personalized plan for tiered interventions.

On the junior and sophomore level, teachers meet biweekly in grade level teams to discuss the academic progress of their respective students. Student academic and behavioral needs are then presented for appropriate tiered I, II, or III intervention with student support personnel and the respective administrator. Intervention plans are developed at grade-level, and student progress is the monitored with updates from student support staff and core teachers. Premier offers a state test mathematics boot camp for the four-weeks previous to the May test for sophomores. A core group of teachers work after-school on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays with individualized intervention strategies.

At the middle school level, Premier has partnered this year with Student Year to provide a structured, direct, in-class, student mentoring system to almost all sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students. Student Year also provides one-on-one group tutoring during and after school to help students work through their academic challenges. Student Year members run after-school clubs to give students a

positive and safe activity to participate as well as make positive phone calls home about academic progress. Student Year members lead energetic morning greetings for all R Academy middle school students to create an encouraging learning environment. Student Year joins Lacrosse as two surround care academic support and mentoring systems that provide full-day and after-school academic support for our middle school. There are a total of 13 full-time mentors in both groups. In addition, the school still benefits from the Scholar Athlete program which provides daily academic intervention and social/emotional support for all athletes during and after school. Tutors from local colleges and programming staff work diligently to improve the academic standing of our scholar-athletes. The school does not yet have a general drop-in tutoring center for all its high school's students but continues to look at options to provide this service.

For the first time in its history, Premier High School was accepted as part of the SAT School Day program for its juniors. Being a NEASC accredited school was instrumental in gaining approval from the College Board. As part of this program, SAT support is now offered directly in ELA and math classes with students able to take two free Saturday SATs, six free subject tests, and two free question/answer service reports for students. The integrated support for the SAT School Day test, in ELA and math classes, replaces out-serviced SAT prep classes which had low attendance and received poor reviews from students. Close to 100 percent of all juniors were able to take the SATs as a result of this program.

These academic intervention initiatives have shown various aspects of growth within this priority area. The ILT has recommended some more formalized and personalized intervention approaches, similar to the advisory approach in grade 12, to strengthen an academic support structure that runs across all grade levels to support teaching and learning. In its year end reflection session, the ILT would also like to use more quantitative data analysis such as attendance patterns and MCAS results to further propose strategies for more specific academic interventions. A focus for the next year's ILT is to present attendance pattern findings to the whole staff for a collaborative discussion around possible solutions.

EVIDENCE Please upload, link, or explain any evidence that you examined to determine growth in this priority area.

Priority Area 4

PRIORITY AREA Please list your priority area goal.

Complete the implementation of the Learning Common innovation, in conjunction with its learner-centered grants and initiatives and the director of the public library resources, to provide more opportunities for open-walled learning, independent research, literacy, way-finding, and uses of group collaborative technologies such as NuReva which have been installed in the common area (4.4)

ACTION - IMPACT - GROWTH Please describe the actions you have taken to achieve your goal, the impact it has had on student learning or the school community, and your next steps or questions regarding this priority area.

Premier High School continues to show strong growth in its Learning Common (LC) innovation. In a feedback survey distributed in June of 2019, 61 percent of staff rated the school's growth in this priority area as **Implementing** while 27 percent found that we were best described as Developing. "The LC director and the LC team have developed a four-year timetable which correlates with both the Public Library Services 5-Year Strategic Plan and the school's personalized learning goals. This past year the school funded a full-time, certified library/media specialist to manage and lead the Learning Commons.

With respect to independent research and literacy, circulation has increased from 0 last year to over 1,000 books during the 2018-19 school year. Twenty to thirty books are checked out per week. The circulation population is mostly middle school students. The director also reports that 20 to 30 percent of all circulation is from our Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) population.

An instructional goal of the LC this year was to create a set of standards and competencies that would be explicitly taught in the space. To support students in their research and way-finding skills, the LC director created pathfinders for courses in civics, ELA and the ninth grade STEAM studio for science/math/engineering/social studies. Students are oriented to individual class or topic pathfinders when visiting the Learning Commons. While there, students are introduced to the school's virtual learning commons, the public library media resource page, and to bookmark key sites on their Google account, and activate their public library card. This initiative for wider library use will continue and expand next year through the LC.

The Learning Commons supports the school's commitment to open-walled learning by supporting teachers in hosting TED talks; partnering with the Design Academy and NASA to house Career and Technical Education (CTE) forums; collaborating with grade nine and M.I.T to showcase STEAM Studio interactive sessions, as well as wellness forums with the Square Health Center. The LC director works with the Instructional Leadership Team to establish cross-sectional integration with each content area and to explore ways the Learning Commons can promote hands-on partnerships and project-based learning as a way to grow the school's open-walled educational goals.

The Learning Commons continues to support Premier's core instructional goal of collaboration" as an approach to inquiry. Last year, the school piloted the NuReva Span System as a central technology to promote group collaboration and inquiry in the Learning Common space. The school's agreement with NuReva will continue for another year, and the Learning Commons will begin in 2019-20 using Padlet as another central collaborative technology for the Span interactive system. Padlet is easier for teachers and students to

access through their Google accounts, and provides similar collaborative and interactive features for students' real-time development of their work, as well as showcasing work and providing immediate teacher feedback. Providing professional development to encourage and enhance the use of the Span System will be a priority goal for the Learning Commons this year. In addition, in keeping with the LC's goal of greater literacy for our diverse student population, the LC director will lead the further creation of a culturally and linguistically, student-centered, collection that promotes more literacy engagement for our non-native English speakers. Further instructional programming using I-Ready and Lexia literacy scores will also be used to build better fluency and comprehension. Planned next steps in this priority area will also include the expansion of the Research Pathfinder innovation that curates resources at multiple reading levels to assist all students to successfully gather and make sense of research (print, digital, video).

EVIDENCE Please upload, link, or explain any evidence that you examined to determine growth in this priority area.

Priority Area 5

PRIORITY AREA Please list your priority area goal.

Ensure there is adequate drinking water available for students and staff; that persistent heating problems in the annex and learning common area of the building are addressed; and that alarms are installed on all exterior doors in the building to better ensure building safety (5.1)

ACTION - IMPACT - GROWTH Please describe the actions you have taken to achieve your goal, the impact it has had on student learning or the school community, and your next steps or questions regarding this priority area.

Premier High School has made some progress since the Collaborative Conference in this priority area. In a feedback survey distributed in June of 2019, 63 percent of staff rated the school's growth this priority area as **Developing**, while 22 percent found that we were best described as Initiating. The school requested and received at the beginning of the year 30 portable, refillable water fountains. These were placed in various high traffic areas throughout the main building and middle school annex. Students and staff are requested to bring their own water bottles. However, student support staff are provided disposable cups for students. This approach will continue until a more comprehensive district solution is developed. Many older buildings in the district have similar problems with interior piping to older fountains, that have traceable amounts of lead. All traditional fountains and sinks are clearly marked with signage that states "this water is only for washing, not for drinking."

Heating problems in both the annex and learning common continue to be an issue. Premier is located in the building erected in 1928. Accordingly, the main building has one of the oldest heating and cooling systems in the district. The annex, which was built as sub-separate special education addition to the former high school in the 1990s, has four of its own boilers separated from the main building but connected to the district's calibration network. However, the heat distribution sensors are not properly calibrated with the district's main calibration frame often leaving classrooms cold. Premier operations staff made 20 heating service calls this year to the district's facilities for both the annex and main building. It is clear to school administrators and staff that the main boiler system is outdated and lacks the capacity to fulfill the school's heating needs and provide a comfortable environment for teaching and learning. As shared at our Collaborative Conference, the district released a comprehensive building and renovation plan in early 2018. However, Premier High School was not part of the district's overall renovation plans. There is a widespread feeling that the main building's outdated heating and cooling systems, which go back 90 years, need to be part of the overall district building and capital plan. The band-aid approach to our heating problems is no longer a sufficient solution.

Security has been a prime operational focus area this year, and given recent local and national events, the school has reached out to the district for more on-going support and resources. Since the Collaborative Conference visit, Premier has installed a new intercom and more secure front entry system. The front security doors were also replaced in September 2018. The overall intercom system was updated for full functionality in every classroom and office. All hall and outside cameras have also been repaired and are now in good working order. Images are monitored throughout the school day in both the school police office as well as in the discipline office. With respect to alarms on other exterior doors, Premier operational leaders are in the planning stage for capital investment for 2019-20. All

classroom doors have new automatic, locking mechanisms that were installed in September 2019. The school has been promised by the district to have all exterior doors secured all doors with alarms. The plan is to have the alarms operational by January 1, 2020.

EVIDENCE Please upload, link, or explain any evidence that you examined to determine growth in this priority area.

Principle Rating Changes

Please list any principles that you feel may have changed ratings on the Principles of Effective Practice Rubric since the Collaborative Conference based on your work in your priority areas or other areas of the school. List each principle with a very brief explanation of the work that has been done.

PRINCIPLE

Standard 2 Principle 2

RATING AT COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE

Developing

RATING AT DECENNIAL

Implementing

EXPLANATION

Premier made the development of a written curriculum in a consistent format in all departments a professional practice goal for the school. Staff worked this past year to create a spectrum of transferable skills in each content area, grades 6-12, and a common curriculum template which includes essential content understandings, Massachusetts curriculum standards, core school competencies, as well as key dispositions. Teachers populated the curriculum template for each course. The next stage is to focus on the "look-for" for each course competency and align with the vision of the graduate. Common assessments will also be created over the next two years as ways to measure student achievement in meeting curriculum goals.

PRINCIPLE

Standard 3 Principle 1

RATING AT COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE

Developing

RATING AT DECENNIAL

Implementing

EXPLANATION

Premier's improvement/growth plan is known as the "QSP" which is a template the City Schools provide for quality school improvement. This year the ILT and the governing board provided direct input and development of not only formulating goals but discussing and providing evidence of the plan's success. The ILT evaluates the plan every 90 days and adjusts priorities based on what is needed to better achieve the school's 21st-century learning goals. Below is an overview of the process of how stakeholders are engaged in the plan"

Directions for ILT and governing board input:

The QSP serves as a road map that provides clarity to specific priorities and actions that are most important to improve success. The QSP serves as a road map that provides clarity to specific priorities and actions that are most important in the short-run. The plan will help ensure the focus of all stakeholders toward an aligned understanding of the implementation and progress of the school's growth plan. School leadership builds plans around three-to-four core priorities that must be prioritized and addressed to achieve this year's academic goals. Each action included in the QSP should tie to priorities and be able to lead to dramatic change.

The QSP is meant to be fluid and thus we hope your school leadership team continuously discusses, monitors, and updates the plan throughout the semester. The second-semester plan ideally builds directly off the progress made during the 1st semester while also articulating new priorities and actions necessary to achieve success. Each 2nd-semester priority may or may not be in the same big rock or domain area as 1st-semester priorities, but regardless has sharpened focus, new actions, and new progress indicators based on learning and current reality.

PRINCIPLE

Standard 3 Principle 4

RATING AT COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE

Developing

RATING AT DECENNIAL

Implementing

EXPLANATION

Based on our priority area, curriculum coordination and implementation were the focus of last year's summer institute, content areas, and grade-level teams. Large and small group teams reflected on the key transferable skills of each content area and aligned them in a 6-12 alignment of the curriculum. Essential understandings and learning dispositions were also developed in content areas, while school-wide learning competencies were defined and developed in grade levels. The ILT was the central group which took feedback from all constituents and calibrated many aspects of the curriculum process by analyzing student benchmark data. Content team leaders lead the implementation process. The success of the school's work on curriculum this year was directly related to the collaborative structures of core teacher leaders. Premier educators accomplished more in curriculum coordination in one year than in all the years combined since our last decennial evaluation.

PRINCIPLE

Standard 5 Principle 4

RATING AT COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE

Developing

RATING AT DECENNIAL

Implementing

EXPLANATION

The Premier High School Learning Commons is now directed by a full-time, certified library/media educator. The director also cooperates directly with the ILT.

Part 4 - Capacity for Continuous Growth as a Learning Organization

Please evaluate your school's capacity for growth as a learning organization based on the four criteria below - conceptual understanding, commitment, competency and capacity.

CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING Is there a shared understanding of what optimal or effective learning looks like in the school? How do you know?

Since the school's inception in 2003, the staff has had an exceptionally strong commitment to its core belief that every student can learn and that technology is a bridge to strong student engagement and central to project-based learning. Every educator who is hired must meet the approval of a personnel hiring committee composed of teachers, students, parents, and administrators that looks for a clear commitment and evidence of these central beliefs. In addition, almost half of our educators have been mentored and supervised by a local college, which places prospective urban educators with these core beliefs as interns at the school. As a result, the belief system permeates all that we do to promote effective learning.

Effective learning at Premier is tied to a vision of the graduate that supports the following learner-centered principle: learning that is contextualized, relevant, and open-walled that promotes student choice and agency. Over the past three years, the school has invested heavily in a revisioning process tied to our foundational goals of personalized and project-based education. We see project-based learning as a more accurate description of our inter-disciplinary focus. Weekly professional development, student and professional practice goals for educator evaluations, as well as major innovation initiatives such as the ninth grade STEAM studio, Senior Project and Advisory, middle school curriculum re-design all, demonstrate a shared understanding of a learner-centered culture. Key showcase opportunities like "PHS Shines," where every teacher shares student products in line with our core vision is an optimal example of what effective learning is at Premier. The school has been awarded significant personalized learning grants from the Center for Collaborative Education, Next Generation Learning Challenges, and the BARR Foundation in recognition of Premier's strong culture centered on learner-centered goals. Individual educators have received grants from the Shah Family Foundation as well as the Boston Teacher Union's Teacher Leadership Fund to further design thinking and personalized learning initiatives.

COMMITMENT To what extent are members of the school community committed to the school's vision of the graduate? To what extent are members of the school community committed to a growth mindset for students? For adults? For the school? To what extent is the school community committed to alignment with the Standards for Accreditation?

. A 12-member, voluntary Instructional Leadership Team meets biweekly to focus on the research-based conversation around ways the community can better connect our graduate's vision to teaching and learning. In preparation for our revisioning process, Premier has used more learner-centered 2020 accreditation standards as measures for planning, implementation, and reflection. Over the past three years, the full Premier learning community has participated in a revisioning process aligned to its core mission as described in its original 2002 vision paper and school framework. The school's revision centers on a learner-centered, personalized program that is

rooted in a vision of the graduate that advances agency, open-walled learning, competency-based assessments, as well as contextualized/relevant instruction and socially embedded learning. Although tied to our core mission, these central elements have been a central element of staff reflection and planning on a more concrete Vision of a Premier Graduate that guides our grades 6-12 program. Each grade-level and content team has worked biweekly on curriculum and school-wide learning competencies that support a growth mindset for all our students. Premier High School is a full inclusion school and close to one-third of all students are English learners. The shared commitment to a vision of the graduate that promotes a growth mindset for ALL students is a foundational aspect that the school was founded upon. Accordingly, all educator evaluations have student learning and professional practice goals tied to individualized and group goals that promote continuous learning and learner-centered innovation

COMPETENCY To what extent does the school community understand and acknowledge the changes that need to be made in order to align with the Standards? To what extent do faculty members, staff members, and school and district leaders have the skills, knowledge and dispositions necessary to help students achieve the school's vision of the graduate? What additional professional learning will be required for the school to align with the standards?

The Premier community has fully embraced a learner-centered growth process that promotes 21st century competencies and aligns to the Standards. The school committed significant resources to train all PHS educators in Project-Based Learning (PBL) methodology through the Buck Institute/PBL Works. At this past summer's institute, all PHS educators completed a three-day training led by Buck Institute leaders in the development of specific project design. All Premier educators will continue to be exposed to the project-based learning methodology in group professional development throughout the year. Teachers collaborated on essential design elements, shared project ideas, received feedback, and created PBL models for current and future use. Consistent discussion at all-school faculty and grade-level meetings that relates PBL to the vision of the graduate gives strong evidence that the school community understands how our program should align with the Standards.

Premier has specific school-based autonomies that strengthen our ability to develop innovate, mission-based ways of helping students achieve the school's vision of the graduate. These autonomies are:

1. **Staffing:** Premier has the freedom to hire and excess its staff in order to create a unified school community.
2. **Budget:** Premier has a lump sum per-pupil budget with discretion to spend in the manner that provides the best programs and services to students and families.
3. **Curriculum and Assessment:** Premier has the freedom to structure curriculum and assessment practices to best meet students' learning needs. Pilot schools administer state and district required tests, but with the flexibility to determine the school-based curriculum and assessment practices that will prepare students for these assessments.
4. **Governance and School Policies:** Premier has the freedom to create their own governance structure that has increased decision-making powers over budget approval, headmaster selection and evaluation, and school policy while being mindful of state requirements.
5. **School Calendar:** Premier has the freedom to set longer school days and calendar years for both students and faculty.

As a result, the school has a longer school day than other district schools and a half-day on Wednesday where teachers can work more intimately and collaboratively on design models like PBL than can impact our students and can better embrace our vision of the graduate. The school has a director of innovation for personal coaching of teachers who embrace a design thinking approach to learning and can align personalized and off-campus professional development to each teacher's learner-centered goals. Our PHS Innovation Office is instrumental in arranging national visits of Next Generation Learning Coalition (NGLC) model schools so teachers can observe best practices in learner-centered instruction that promote a common vision of a graduate, first-hand. Twenty Premier teachers have participated in this initiative so far. More freedom in curriculum and assessment has allowed our middle school staff to embrace a full-year redesign sequence that has involved students in creating a more learner-centered academic, social, and civic program.

CAPACITY Does the school have the time, resources, and support needed to make progress on its identified priorities?

Premier High School's autonomies and shared leadership structure allow the school to have sufficient time, resources, and support needed to make significant progress on its identified priorities. The identified priorities emanate from key elements of our common instructional priority goals to

- increase **student engagement**
- increase **critical thinking**
- develop **student agency**
- create **relevant learning opportunities**
- develop **core knowledge, skills, dispositions** for success in college, career, and life

Through our half-day Wednesdays, generous foundation grant funding, and partnership opportunities, the school has been able to make a significant commitment to staff growth in all of these areas. For the past two years, the core work of the ILT has also been focused on making progress with these identified priorities. The addition of a school director of innovation has allowed staff to have a personal connection to professional development opportunities to advance skills and foster commitment to learner-centered goals. Over the past two years, at least a quarter of the staff has participated in opportunities to build their capacity as learner-centered educators such as

- NGLS national school visit program
- Barr Foundation Learner-Centered Intensive Training
- Buck Institute-PBL three-day training
- College STEAM Studio Training and Weekly Support
- Middle School Redesign Initiative
- Project Lead the Way Training for Robotics, Architecture, and Engineering
- Teacher Leadership Fund Recipients
- Innovation Grants
- AutoDesk Design Thinking Cohort
- Academy with NASA and the Public Library

In spite of district budget cuts to our overall program, the school's leadership has remained consistent with its commitment to learner-centered innovation that advances our instructional priorities. With one-to-one technology for all students and as a Google district, the school has ample technology resources to support 24/7 access to learning. The Teach Next Year pipeline program for new teachers has provided a rich pool of interns, socialized by our learner-centered approach, as potential staff members. Premier has 82 full-time classroom teachers. Close to half of those teachers came from the Teach Next Year program. However, the school needs stronger resources and support to fulfill its facility needs. Although the governing board and school leadership consistently advocate for a facility that can better deliver its program to students, Premier is not mentioned the updated versions of the district's long-range facilities plan. The facility needs heating, cooling, water, and space reconfiguration to provide a 21st century building that can support its instructional priorities.

Part 5 - Planning for the Decennial Visit

In preparing for the Decennial visit, the steering committee should identify any areas, in addition to the priority areas, that the school would like the visiting team to look at and provide feedback on. Also, the steering committee should begin to brainstorm possible activities they will plan during the visit to demonstrate growth in their priority areas.

ADDITIONAL AREAS OF FOCUS Please provide information on any particular areas for the visiting team to review more deeply concerning the current priority areas or any areas of growth for the future and suggest any specific areas of focus for the team's classroom observations.

Specific areas for the team to look for in classroom observations

Student Agency

Student Agency is the central component of our vision of the graduate, as well as a core instructional priority as a pathway to greater student engagement and academic, civic, and social growth. The ILT created a measure of the levels of agency this past year using research-based standards and look fors. A particular focus area for the team's classroom observations could be evidence of student choice, self-assessment, goal setting, and use of feedback. Insights on the instructional methods that foster student agency would be valuable for the school to use in order to create more direct supports and connections to our vision of the graduate.

Collaboration

A teaching and learning culture that focuses on collaboration is a central tenet of our vision of the graduate. Student agency is the first instructional priority area we have centered on for capacity building. Core competencies such as collaboration and communication, will be priority areas in the future. We seek observational data that gives us insight into teaching that reinforces interpersonal, group, and communication skills so that students seek out their peers as resources.

Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices

Premier has fully embraced the importance of culturally and linguistically sustaining practices as a centerpiece of the instructional plan. This priority is also a core district goal. As stated in our vision of the graduate, we want Premier students to become the leaders, scholars, entrepreneurs, and leaders of tomorrow. That means that they need to be prepared for a dynamic workforce setting and interact with people who may have opposing viewpoints or world views. Over the past two years, all Premier educators have had several capacity-building experiences in which they could develop culturally and linguistically sustaining instructional skills. It would be extremely helpful if our continuum could be used to capture observational classroom data to help us gauge our effectiveness in meeting this goal.

VISIT PLANNING What activities are you planning for the decennial visit to demonstrate growth in your priority areas?

Priority Area 1: Vision of the Graduate

Activity-Instructional Leadership Team Discussion

The ILT has been at the forefront of all aspects of developing and refining our vision of the graduate based on community feedback. We plan on having the visiting team participate in a focus group composed of ILT members. These educators will review our process of creating the vision as well as the next steps in making more significant connections with teachers and students. As part of this session, grade seven students and teachers will present their model school capstone project from last year which focused on their vision of a graduate.

Priority Area 2: Curriculum Development

Activity-Content Team Leadership Discussion

Content Team leaders have led the schoolwide curriculum revision process during the 2018-2019 school year. We plan on having the content leaders explain the timeline and products that resulted from the process and the next steps in completing our written curriculum

Priority Area 3: Academic Intervention and Support

Activity-Advisory Teacher Leaders and Grade Level Facilitators Round Table Discussion

Key teacher leaders of the senior, freshman, and middle school advisory programs will discuss how their pilot programs have contributed to positive impacts in this priority area. Grade level facilitators from 10 and 11th grades will also join the discussion to illustrate how grade levels support comprehensive academic intervention.

Priority Area 4: Learning Common

Activity-Learning Common/SPAN System Demonstration

A grade 9 educator will demonstrate with students how the Learning Commons collaborative SPAN system promotes the schools focus on tactile, collaborative learning. The Learning Commons director will present the overall development timeline of the program and the next steps to promote the school's learner-centered focus with key educators who have strong connections to the innovation.

Priority Area 5: School Facilities and Resources for Learning

Activity-Roundtable Discussion on School Safety and Physical Climate

The co-headmaster, district facilities representatives, and school staff responsible before, during, and after-school safety will discuss progress in this area as well as areas of growth and support.

Part 6 - School Improvement/Growth Plan

Please upload a copy of your most recent school improvement/growth plan and note that you have attached it.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT/GROWTH PLAN

The school improvement/growth plan is attached.