# Assessment of Student Learning
*Teaching and Learning Standard 4*

**4.1 Colchester High School (CHS) has a developing process to assess school-wide and individual progress in achieving the academic expectations in the mission based on school-wide rubrics.** During 2005-2006, the school community identified four EEs that a CHS graduate should master. Once the EEs were established, specific rubrics were developed that outline a total of 17 related descriptors. The rubrics were finalized in 2007-2008 and are available to all members of the school community on the shared drive of the school's computer network. Since 2007, these EEs have increasingly become the driving force behind assessment at CHS. In 2009-2010, posters explaining the EEs were placed in every classroom and throughout the building. Some teachers include the EEs in their course syllabi and in communications with parents. The EEs are included in the yearly planner received by each student in the school and are reviewed with freshman and transfer students during Smart Start. They are painted on the walls in the cafeteria, included in the Program of Studies, available on the CHS Web site and are in the *The Laker View*, the school's newsletter that is mailed home.

The EEs and EE rubrics are used in a variety of ways by departments and individual teachers in the classroom. During in-service time at the start of 2009-2010, the faculty brainstormed how, when and in what context the EEs are used in their classes. This list is extensive and shows that the EEs are used widely. Also during 2009-2010, through a district-wide initiative, teachers were provided with in-service time to prepare, revise and refine KUDs for courses. EEs addressed and assessed in the course are included as a portion of the KUD. When the KUDs for each course are completed, they will be placed in the course's Red Notebook and made available on the CHS Web site.

In 2005-2006, Science teachers used CWG time to develop a Culminating Assessment rubric for work in Essential Topics classes using EE language. Starting in 2008-2009, all major products in Business and Technology II began to be assessed using EE 3.2. Also in 2008-2009, the PE department linked the Learning Habits EE to units covered in class and uses this rubric for student assessment. During 2009-2010, the Humanities Department began to use the EE rubrics to assess student work in the required Senior Seminar course and also uses the Writing EE descriptors to assess student work in the Green House. Application of the Reading EE rubric has led to implementation of standardized reading assessment in the Green House and a formative assessment program in 9th grade Humanities. Honors distinction in Green House courses has been linked to specific Habits of Mind since 2003-2004 and has served as a portion of requirements for Honors Distinction in the majority of Blue House courses since 2004-2005. These specific Habits of Mind were replaced with the Learning Habits EE. In 2009-2010, the administrative team drafted a position statement regarding Honors Distinction clearly articulating the link with the Learning Habits EE.

*There are gaps, however, in the current process used to assess students using the EE rubrics. Since finalization, their implementation primarily has been subject to teacher choice. CHS does not have a systematic approach to ensure that all students have been formally assessed on all EE descriptors prior to graduation. Additionally, though the faculty has approved these rubrics after an extensive editing process, as their use has increased there has emerged a need to format the EE rubrics in "kid-friendly" and "discipline-friendly" language to help students clearly understand what each descriptor means in relationship to how they are being assessed.*

**4.2 Colchester High School has a developing process for using data to assess the success of the school in achieving its civic and social expectations as described in the school's mission statement.** The CHS Mission states that "all students will develop...social skills and character to be fulfilled, responsible and involved citizens." CHS has a variety of pathways for meeting the social and civic needs of its students. Students in grades 9-11 are enrolled in TA, which is designed to provide each student a non-academic connection with one adult daily. TA is typically 7 minutes in length, though extended periods of up to 60 minutes occur throughout the year. Extended TA periods and Senior Forum focus on developmentally appropriate content. Although they are not required to attend the daily TA, seniors are required to attend Senior Forum during the extended periods.

In addition to the TA program, the Senior Seminar course is a graduation requirement for ALL students. The purpose of this course is to prepare students for the challenges of participating actively in a democratic society. A key element of this course is the Community-Based/Service Learning Project, which challenges students to become active learners and to develop an interest-based project connected to the larger community.

The Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey is administered every other year. Results from this survey have been used to make informed curricula changes in Health courses. Recently this survey indicated higher rates of depression and suicidal tendencies in Green House students and higher rates of teen pregnancy in Blue House students. The curricula in Human Ecology and Life 101 have been adjusted to address these issues by incorporating specific learning activities.

Finally, according to the VSAC 2008 Senior Survey, the majority of students taking the survey indicated that CHS provided them with a strong education and prepared them well for their future endeavors.

Student support services and programs providing students with alternate pathways to graduation also serve as a means of achieving CHS's civic and social expectations. The Educational Support Team meets regularly to review and discuss referrals made by faculty members for students who need additional supports in the classroom. Over the last three years, on average, there have been 42 EST referrals for 33 different students. Approximately 15 percent of these referrals were duplicates; however, most EST referrals had successful outcomes. In addition to EST plans, some students fall under 504 and special education law for additional support. On average, over the last two years, 60 students have been on 504 plans and over the last three years, on average, there have been 25 students per grade level on IEPs. Each of these systems functions to provide additional supports for students in and out of the classroom and help students meet civic and social expectations stated in the CHS mission.

The Target Graduation and CAP programs also function to provide students with opportunities to meet the school's civic and social expectations. Students in these programs tend to have experienced difficulty in traditional classroom environments. The Target Graduation program is less structured than a traditional classroom and students have more freedom and autonomy in how they meet graduation requirements. CAP, however, is more structured but has a lower student-to-teacher ratio. It is possible for students to be dual enrolled in both CAP and Target Graduation programs, and students can complete Target Graduation requirements through the CAP program. In 2007-2008, more than half of the 18 seniors enrolled in Target Graduation received diplomas with their class. In 2008-2009, 89 percent of CAP students graduated with

their class.  In exit interviews with administrators, many students report they would have dropped out of school without these programs.

Co-curricular and athletic programs provide opportunities for students to achieve CHS civic and social expectations.  On average over the last three years, 200 students per season have been involved in athletic programs.  All athletic teams are required to complete community service projects.  Approximately 95-100 students per year (over the last three years) have been involved in co-curricular programs.  A number of these groups have a community service component, though it is not specifically required.

*Although there are many opportunities for civic and social engagement for CHS students, the only formal system for tracking student success in meeting these goals is the Senior Seminar course; it is not clear how this data is used to assess the school's success in meeting the civic and social expectations stated in the mission.  A more comprehensive system tracking success in grades 9-12 is needed.*

**4.3 Most teachers at CHS clarify to students course-specific learning goals that will be assessed on learning activities, and some teachers clearly identify school-wide academic expectations on learning activities.**  Course-specific learning goals and school-wide academic expectations are communicated by teachers in a variety of ways.  Each course should have KUDs by the end of 2009-2010.  In addition to being placed in each course's Red Notebook, the administration plans to make all KUDs available to the public on the CHS Web site by the start of 2010-2011.  KUDs are explained to students and parents in a variety of ways.  Some teachers include them on their course syllabi; other teachers provide a KUD to students at the start of each unit or may publish their course KUDs on their class Web site. While the EEs are not explicitly stated in the CHS Mission, they do reflect the skills every student should possess to "develop the

academic proficiency, social skill, and character, to be fulfilled, responsible, and involved citizens." In early 2010, the CSD began a process to revise the district vision to more closely reflect 21st century learning goals. The CHS Mission is directly linked to the CSD Mission so will likely be revised as well.

On a school-wide survey, 84 percent of teachers reported that during a two week period at least one learning activity in their classes was directly linked to the EEs. Over this same two week period, 53 percent of teachers report including the EEs specifically on learning activities and/or in their grading tools. Most departments were able to provide examples of this work. On major projects in all levels of World Language classes, the EEs addressed and assessed are clearly communicated to students. In Science Essential Topics courses, the EEs assessed are articulated on the shared portion of the culminating assessment rubric. In Business and Technology II classes, all major products are assessed using EE 3.2.

According to NEASC self-study survey results, students and parents strongly agree that grade criteria are clearly explained by teachers. Some teachers may include enduring understandings directly on their assessments. Other teachers do not explicitly state enduring understandings on assessments, but when viewed along with the KUD, the link is apparent. For example, in Art 2, on the Surrealist Self-Portrait assessment, the task begins with the course main themes, clearly explains to students what the project will help them know, understand and do, and allows them to choose a challenge level. In the Humanities Strategic Reader course, 4-Way Thinking assessments clearly reflect the course essential questions articulated in the KUD. It is not typical for teachers to include course-specific learning goals on traditional assessments such as homework, tests or quizzes.

*A limited number of examples of major project-type assessments with articulated course-specific learning goals linked to KUDs were available, and 24 percent of teachers reported that the EEs were explicitly stated on their unit or course summative assessment. Teachers are able to determine if students are meeting course-specific learning goals through work on these assessments and by linking them directly to the EEs. These same assessments provide a lens through which CHS could determine individual student success in meeting the EEs. The administration would like all major project-type assessments to include course-enduring understanding(s) and EEs in documents provided to students and in scoring tools. To meet this expectation, teachers will need formal time to revise assessments.*

**4.4 Teachers at CHS base classroom assessment of student learning on course-specific rubrics. The use of school-wide rubrics to assess student work varies from department to department.** Course-specific scoring tools are used widely to assess student performance. Some scoring tools include EE rubric language and/or have links to specific EE descriptors, while some teachers use the EE rubrics in their original form to assess student work. These scoring tools range in complexity from checklists to detailed rubrics.

A checklist is used by Math teachers to evaluate student work on a shared assessment in Algebra I--"To Bash or Not to Bash?" This project requires students to apply their algebraic reasoning skills to figure out if a student should purchase a season pass, Bash Badge™ or daily lift tickets to Smuggler's Notch, a local ski area. The science department uses shared rubrics to assess student work on abstracts and lab reports. The Writing EE rubric is used by Humanities teachers as the basis for all student assessment in the Green House. In Physical Education, each unit has been linked to the Learning Habits EE. Students receive a specific description of what learning looks like in a particular unit and regularly receive feedback on their progress. Many

Math courses give a weekly Learning Habits grade based on teacher and self-assessment. In Fine Arts, Art I students prepare an Artist's Statement prior to the CHS Art Show. In this piece of writing, students are asked to describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate their own artwork using an appropriate writing style. In Special Education, the Crossroads Program, Opportunities Program, and Consulting Program use the Learning Habits EEs and Writing EEs to provide feedback for students as they hone their professional work skills in the school store, in their job search process and to evaluate organization of writing. The CAP program uses the writing and problem-solving EE rubrics to evaluate student work in history and science.

*In general, Green House teachers were able to provide more comprehensive and well-developed examples of use of EE rubrics and/or language on course-specific rubrics. It is possible that this trend was observed because most Green House core courses are taught by multiple teachers or teacher teams while many Blue House core courses are taught by a single teacher. Formal directed time for collaboration between Blue House teachers could help increase the degree to which EEs are assessed in these courses. Though examples exist in every department, not every course was able to demonstrate an example of the use of EE rubrics and/or EE language on course-specific rubrics. Regardless of grade level taught, 76 percent of CHS teachers indicated that relevant EEs are not explicitly included on their unit summative assessments and scoring tools. Teachers may need formal directed time to complete this work.*

*Students are regularly assessed on their progress in meeting the Learning Habits and Writing EEs. Evidence of the use of the reading EE outside of Green House Humanities courses was limited and use of the Problem Solving EE was limited overall. CHS needs a formal system for tracking student assessment and progress towards meeting all EEs. This system could*

*determine who is doing what and when regarding EE assessment and potentially identify significant areas of overlap or gaps.*

**4.5 Teachers at CHS use a wide variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student knowledge, skills and competencies and to assess student growth over time.** Data from the NEASC self-study survey indicates that parents and students agree that teachers use a wide variety of strategies to assess student learning. The CHS commitment to differentiated instruction is reflected through various types of assessments and assessment strategies used school-wide. Assessments are student-centered and frequently take student choice and learning style into consideration. Assessment takes two primary forms—formative and summative. Formative assessments are used on a more frequent basis and may look different from classroom to classroom. Some teachers, though, have worked collaboratively to create common formative and summative assessments. Overall a wide variety of strategies are used to assess student knowledge and learning.

Some teachers use formative assessments as a way to "jump start" class. These "Do Now" type activities provide teachers with information about how well students understand a particular topic or are sometimes used as a pre-assessment prior to the start of a new unit. This work may be collected for written feedback. For example, in Green House Humanities courses, students complete "Seven-Minute Writes" on a routine basis. Some teachers use the same approach but use Exit Cards to assess student learning during a particular class period. Students are accustomed to using dry erase boards in most of their classes to answer questions, demonstrate problem-solving techniques, or prepare short presentations. These types of formative assessments provide useful information to teachers; they provide insight into student understanding, inform instruction and can be used as a basis for readiness grouping.

Teachers in the Humanities department have developed a specific system for formative assessment in their classrooms called "The Big Game" which connects to reading and writing. The concept behind this system is to help prepare students for any type of summative assessment using a sports metaphor. During "practices" or "scrimmages" students are assigned appropriate readiness-level texts to read. While reading the text, each student completes a graphic organizer and a specific written response. Feedback is provided throughout this process. Students are expected to be able to apply these skills, developed through formative assessment, in a "Big Game"—specifically a summative assessment.

In mathematics classrooms, students can expect regular homework checks. These checks help teachers identify those students who have not been doing homework and also students who may be struggling with a topic. Homework checks are completed during class and submitted for feedback.

Writing is taught as a process -one that requires feedback and editing to improve work. Teachers across the school report having students submit drafts of their work for feedback. Peer editing of work is frequently used, as are self-assessments and reflections. For example, in Thinkers and Revolutionaries, peer conferencing is used to provide specific feedback during the Writing Your River Tooth assessment. In science classes, students frequently read and provide feedback for their peers on self-designed lab procedures, providing them with the tools to making informed changes in their work.

Students are frequently provided multiple pathways to demonstrate their learning on any given topic; teachers consider learning styles and allow for student choice when designing learning activities and assessments. In Special Education Direct Instruction courses, students are provided with a learning styles-oriented menu with increasing degrees of challenge for

communicating what they have learned from a particular reading assignment.  In The Human Experience: Legacies of the Past, students explore the historical ramifications of the Black Death by choosing from a learning styles menu; a similar approach is used in Lab Biology courses, students work using all four learning styles to convey their understanding of the cell membrane. In Health classes, students demonstrate their knowledge by choosing from a menu to evaluate the accuracy of advertising and interpreting medical information.  Students in Consumer Math courses choose from a learning styles menu to show their understanding of saving, investing and the tax code.

A wide variety of other summative assessment approaches are also used.  In addition to homework, tests, quizzes, writing pieces and projects, portfolios are used in some courses to demonstrate growth in student learning throughout the year.  These portfolios tend to serve as a portion of Honors Distinction requirements in a course for those students who opt to pursue it, while other courses require it for all students.  Students in Earth Systems Science set goals for themselves based on specific learning habits and document their progress toward meeting these goals throughout the year in a portfolio; their growth is evaluated using the Learning Habits EE. In The American Experience, students pursuing Honors Distinction create a portfolio where they collect work on three orbital projects related to the fundamental aspects of the class and reflect on their learning habits.  Students opting to pursue Honors Distinction in Algebra II/Trigonometry create a portfolio that includes completed extension projects each quarter and reflections that link classroom learning activities to specific learning habits.

Student work is exhibited and explained to the public in after-school presentation sessions by students in Senior Seminar, American Experience, Public Speaking, and Science Essential Topics courses.  For the Senior Seminar and Science Essential Topics sessions,

students create visual and electronic presentations explaining their particular project and are expected to articulate their understanding to people attending the event. During these presentation sessions, students may receive peer, teacher and public evaluations of their work. Students enrolled in art courses are required to exhibit their work, prepared to professional standards, at the CSD Art Show and have the opportunity to enter their work in other area art shows, including the Chittenden County show. The public is informed of and invited to these events.

*While most departments were able to provide examples of different types of assessments and assessment strategies, Green House teachers were able to provide more comprehensive and well-developed examples of summative assessments linked to learning styles and that allow for student choice. It is possible, again, that this trend was observed because most Green House courses are taught by multiple teachers or teacher teams while many Blue House courses are taught by a single teacher. Advanced Placement classes in the Blue House, which have more specific and prescribed curricula, could also contribute to this trend. Potentially, more formal, directed time for collaboration between Blue House teachers could help increase the degree to which learning style directed assessment options are included in these classes. Additionally, though formative assessment results are used to inform instruction at CHS, a greater commitment to them could lead to timely adjustments to instruction during the learning process rather than at the end.*

**4.6 Teachers at CHS have sufficient opportunities to meet collaboratively to discuss and share student work and the results of student assessments for the purposes of revisiting the curriculum and improving instructional strategies.** In the NEASC self-study survey, 95

percent of teachers reported meeting regularly with colleagues to discuss and share student work to improve classes. Since 2005-2006, a significant portion of faculty meeting and department meeting time has been diverted into CWGs. While CWGs have gone through multiple structural iterations, their intent has remained intact—to provide teachers with the opportunity to meet to create shared assessments and assessment tools; to share and discuss student work and to make changes in the curriculum. Teachers have the opportunity to learn about other group's work during CWGs at galleries at the end of each semester.

Teacher schedules are set up to intentionally foster collaboration. In the Humanities Department, Green House interdisciplinary teams have common planning time. All special educators often have a common planning period. Common planning time may happen for teachers of shared courses in other departments. Many teachers in the Humanities and Science departments have common office space and in many cases the same lunch times. Informal discussions of what is happening in individual classrooms frequently come up at these times. In cases where common planning time is logistically challenging, teachers frequently share work they have developed by making it available on the shared drive of the school's computer network. In a school-wide survey, 62 percent of teachers reported accessing the shared drive for collaboration purposes at least once during a two week period; 21 percent indicated they use the shared drive daily. School-wide resources such as learning styles information, EE rubrics and differentiated instruction materials are available on the shared drive and can be accessed easily. In 2009-2010, the IT department installed a SharePoint server. The intent of this system is to improve teacher communication and collaboration. *Time for directed ongoing training and examples of its use will be necessary in order for this system to be used to its full potential.*

Time provided for teachers for reflection and collaboration has prompted several positive curriculum changes. For example, prior to 2006-2007 Blue House humanities courses were semester-long. As a result of teacher discussions and reflection on standardized test scores, new year-long history and English classes were planned and implemented for juniors not enrolled in AP classes. Steps have been taken in the Math and Science departments to increase student access to courses. Several year-long upper-level math classes were adjusted to include single-semester options and an AP Statistics class was added. In Science, some core courses were adjusted to a lower credit load, Essential Topics courses were created and AP Chemistry was added. In the Business department, course curricula were revised to more closely reflect 21st century learning goals. All of these changes help better serve the needs of students.

*Although teachers report having extensive time to meet collaboratively to share student work, discuss instructional strategies and revise curriculum, the majority of this work has been focused within departments. The semester end CWG galleries have been effective at providing a snapshot of what other groups have been doing. Cross departmental or district-wide CWGs could help to develop broader shared assessment strategies for specific student skills linked to the EEs. In addition, the emphasis of CWG in core departments shifted in 2008-2009 to address improvement of NECAP scores. While no group of teachers was denied a topic and teachers valued data related to instruction, many felt a loss of autonomy in the CWG process; many teachers focused CWG efforts on external summative assessments rather than course-specific assessments. Carving out time in a packed schedule is an ongoing challenge.*

**4.7 In addition to CWG time, other professional development programs and systems at CHS provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing a broad range of student assessment strategies.** According to NEASC self-study survey results, 80 percent of

teachers believe that professional development programs at CHS provide opportunities to collaborate with other teachers in developing a broad range of student assessment strategies. In previous years, teachers have been encouraged to present Best Practices at faculty meetings. The principal publicizes professional development opportunities in her bimonthly newsletter and directs content-area specific opportunities to team leaders and department members. Teachers regularly take advantage of these opportunities. For example, teachers from the Math, Science and Humanities departments have participated on NECAP item review committees. Teachers also receive information about professional development-related opportunities through the mail and can access other information in discipline-specific bins located in the faculty lounge. Over the last five years there have been multiple summer course offerings focusing on differentiated instruction taught by current and former members of the CHS community; each of these courses had an assessment-related strand. Teachers are frequently provided with summer curriculum work time to develop and revise assessments. For example, in 2009, Math teachers developed practice NECAP exams and Humanities teachers focused on the development of the Green House Writing program with the Writing EE as a central theme. Finally, the New Teacher Mentoring program provides the opportunity for teachers new to CHS to discuss assessment and assessment strategies with more experienced teachers.

To provide focus and direction for professional development, the position of Teacher Liaison was created in 2005-2006. In this position, Bill Rich worked collaboratively with the leadership team to develop and plan teacher in-service days and other professional opportunities. These opportunities were directed at and/or accessible to all faculty members. *This position was eliminated in 2009-2010 due to budgetary constraints. It has been very helpful for a teacher to be compensated to design and implement a cohesive professional development program. It may*

*become increasingly difficult for the administration to maintain this level of professional development given their other responsibilities. In addition, there have been few school district-directed opportunities related to assessment over the last several years. In 2009, summer funds for curriculum work were primarily targeted—by the district—to focus on low NECAP scores, limiting the departments receiving funds to Mathematics and Humanities. All departments could benefit from summer curriculum work funds.*

**4.8 The professional staff at CHS has an acceptable process for communicating individual student progress in achieving school-wide academic expectations to students and their families.** Several courses have performance pieces as a portion of their culminating assessments. In the Humanities department, the Senior Seminar course has a presentation evening each semester as do the Science Essential Topics courses. A significant culminating event in the Public Speaking course is the Tribute Speech Evening, and a true highlight of the American Experience class is the Heritage Banquet. The community is invited and encouraged to attend these evening events. Events such as these are publicized to the community in a variety of ways. *The Laker View* is mailed home and is available on the CHS Web site as is the student newspaper, *The Laker Voice*. An auto dialer communication system was added in 2001-2002 that has recently been replaced by Alert Now. The Alert Now system includes an e-mail feature and is used for emergency communication as well as proactive promotion of upcoming events such as Open House and Parent/Teacher conferences. Open House is held yearly by mid-September. Parents are encouraged to attend this evening where they can meet their child's teachers, and obtain copies of course syllabi.

Teachers use technology in a variety of ways to communicate student progress to families. Teacher e-mail addresses are available on the CHS Web site. Teachers and parents

frequently use e-mail and telephone conversations as a way to communicate regarding individual student progress in specific classes. Some teachers have class Web sites, blogs and wikis that are used to communicate course-specific information.

CHS reports student progress through four interim reports and four quarterly reports yearly. All reports are submitted electronically and are mailed home to parents/guardians. It is also a common practice for teachers to provide students with progress reports on a more frequent basis. Prior to 2007-2008, interim progress reports were provided directly to students by teachers. Changes were made to improve communication between school and home as an additional support to students. On progress reports, teachers report a grade range for each student and can also include additional comments regarding learning habits, attendance and classroom behavior.

Parent/teacher conferences are held each semester during the evening. Before 2005-2006, these conferences were scheduled during the school day. Scheduling changes were made to increase community access to the high school and to improve communication between home and school. Parent/Teacher conference attendance rate has been approximately 70 percent over the last two years. Data on the number of conferences held is collected by teachers and the attendance rate is calculated by the principal. These changes were made several years in advance of the directive regarding scheduling of conferences published by the Commissioner of Education, Armando Vilaseca, in 2009. *A data management system is needed to accurately track attendance at events to which the public has been invited.*

The EEs were developed with the approval of the CSD and School Board and can be found along with the Mission Statement on the CHS Web site for easy access by members of the community.

**The CHS professional staff has a developing process for communicating the school's progress in achieving all school-wide expectations to the school community.**  Information regarding student performance on standardized tests is reported to the community in several ways.  The school report, published annually, is mailed home once a year, and is available on the CSD Web site.  The principal also prepares a presentation related to the school report and shares it several times during the Parent/Teacher conference evening.  Assessment data is also made available to the community during the 8th Grade Open House and during the Island Student Recruitment Night.  Assessment data is shared with the community via press releases and is published annually in the local newspaper.

*CHS does not however, have a system in place for reporting the school's progress in achieving all school-wide expectations to the school community or the community at large. Though the EEs are available on the CHS Web site, the community is not aware of how these EEs are addressed and assessed.   The Senior Seminar course has the potential to be a strong data source to begin this process.  Once a clear process for reporting this information is established, benchmarks at each grade level should be included and published.  This approach will enable CHS to measure student growth and actively monitor achievement of school-wide expectations from grades 9 through 12.  Lastly, an intervention model to assist students needing additional support to meeting the EEs also needs to be created.*

# Assessment of Student Learning
*Executive Summary*

Teachers at CHS utilize a wide variety of assessment types and strategies that reflect the school's commitment to differentiated instruction. Assessments range from traditional tests, quizzes and homework to projects, writing pieces, portfolios and presentations. They are frequently differentiated based on student readiness, interest and learning profile and require students to think critically and creatively. Assessments reflect the EEs through course-specific and school-wide rubrics. The EEs were developed and approved by the CHS faculty with the support of the CSD and School Board. These EEs reflect the skills at the "heart of all learning," the skills students need to be "fulfilled, responsible and involved citizens."

EEs can be found on posters throughout the building, on course syllabi, in the student planner, in the Program of Studies, on the CHS Web site and in communications sent home to parents. Some departments have grade-level common assessments and assess student work directly with EE rubrics or with rubrics that include EE language. Most teachers were able to provide examples of how EEs are addressed and assessed in their courses using course-specific rubrics. In order to grow in this area, CHS needs to develop systems to ensure all students are assessed on the 17 EE descriptors and to effectively collect data on how students are meeting the civic and social expectations in the Mission.

Students and their families are well-informed about educational progress; the community, however, needs more opportunities to become informed about assessment of student learning at CHS.

**The Assessment Committee believes that CHS deserves an <u>acceptable</u> rating for its assessment of student learning.**

## Assessment of Student Learning
*Strengths & Needs*

**Strengths:**
- Clearly articulated Essential Expectations that are used in courses throughout the school.

- A wide variety of formative and summative assessment strategies and techniques including writing across the curriculum, portfolios and presentations outside of school hours that incorporate artistic and technological skills and peer and self-reflection.

- A commitment to differentiated instruction. Assessments are routinely differentiated by process, product, learning style and readiness.

- An administration that is dedicated to providing faculty with the time and resources needed to create assessments linked to the Essential Expectations.

- An innovative and collaborative faculty who routinely use data to inform instruction and creatively use time provided to develop new assessments and revise current ones.

**Needs:**
- Create a measurable way of assessing the effectiveness of teacher advisory and co-curricular activities for meeting the civic and social needs of the student body and individual learners.

- Develop a variety of processes to inform the Colchester community about how CHS students are meeting the Essential Expectations and to display student work.

- Continue and expand the use of professional development time and paid summer curriculum work time (particularly targeted toward Blue House teachers) to create and implement course-specific and shared formative and summative assessments linked to the Essential Expectations.

- Create a user-friendly data management system or specific process to track student progress in meeting and achieving the Essential Expectations.

- Create and publish multiple benchmarks and a system to monitor progress of student achievement towards meeting the EEs and develop an intervention model for students who are not making adequate progress.