

**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
COMMISSION ON TECHNICAL AND CAREER INSTITUTIONS**

DECENNIAL REPORT

WESTFIELD VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Westfield, MA

October 27, 2014 – October 30, 2014

**Chairperson: John Tarnuzzer
Assistant Chairperson: Eileen Illuzzi**

New England Association Of Schools and Colleges, Inc.
Commission on Public Schools, Committee on Technical and Career Institutions
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WESTFIELD VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

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INTRODUCTION

The U. S. Office of Education has officially recognized the Commission of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges as the regional accrediting agency for vocational technical schools. Membership in the Association is voluntary, and each school seeking continued accreditation must conduct a self-evaluation at least once every ten years and host a committee appointed by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

The Chairman and members of the Visiting Committee are appointed by the Director of the Commission, subject to the approval of the director of the school being evaluated. Visiting Committee members are selected from nominations submitted by member school administrators. The Visiting Committee spends at least three full days in the school reviewing the self-evaluation, visiting classrooms, talking with staff members and conducting whole group deliberations.

The staff of the Westfield Vocational Technical High School conducted their self-evaluation over a period of approximately 24 months. The basic document used for the self-study was the Commission's current edition of its Accreditation Handbook, its Self-Study Manual, including the Commission's Policies and Procedures, the Commission's Standards, and the accompanying Self-Study Questionnaires.

A Visiting Committee of twenty-three evaluators representing vocational-technical schools in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island and Vermont, was assigned by the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions to evaluate Westfield Vocational Technical High School (herein also referred to as Westfield Tech or Westfield). The Committee members spent three days in Westfield Vocational Technical High School, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, and met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, and students, observed and interviewed students, visited classes and career-technical areas, and interviewed teachers and other staff members to determine the degree to which the school meets the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented other technical schools, and building administrators, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Westfield Vocational Technical High School.

The School and Community and Philosophy and Goals reports form the basis of evaluation since these statements indicate the needs of the students and the school's plans to meet them. We also gleaned a clear understanding of the changing economics and demographics of the town of Westfield and the surrounding area.

Every subcommittee appointed by the steering committee was required to present its report to the entire professional staff for approval. All reports developed in the self-study became part of the official self-study documents only after they had been approved by the entire professional staff.

The visiting team built its report on evidence collected from the following sources:

- review of the school's self-study materials
- two and one half school days of classroom and career technical program observation

- numerous informal observations in and around the school
- tours of the facility
- individual meetings with teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning
- group meetings with students, school administrators, support staff, community stakeholders, and teachers
- visits to outside job sites and clinical settings.

Each conclusion in the report was agreed upon by team consensus. The reports include commendations and recommendations that in the team's judgment will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better meet Commission Standards.

The Visiting Committee recognized the thoroughness of the self-study completed by the school community. The self-study reports were reflective, well written, and presented a very honest assessment of the school's programs. The work of all committees is to be commended for its degree of thoroughness and professionalism. The areas of need recognized by the self-study committees provide areas of focus for continued improvement, and the Visiting Committee attempted wherever possible to support the school's self-identified needs with appropriate recommendations.

The students demonstrated an exemplary level of conduct and character throughout the visit. This climate enables students to focus on their learning without an authoritarian atmosphere in the school and facilitates the use of varied and personalized learning and assessment strategies. There is a palpably 'busy' atmosphere in Westfield. Students were engaged and seemed to enjoy their work.

The Visiting Committee, found a general feeling of student and staff optimism at Westfield Vocational Technical High School, created in large part by the veteran, highly competent staff and the competent, energetic, positive administrative team and staff. The principal, in his third year, has worked in consort with the staff to create a real, palpably positive climate. The students and staff are truly happy.

The Visiting Committee was impressed with the positive climate at Westfield Vocational Technical High School. Students were friendly, energetic and focused. It was obvious during lunch, in classrooms, and technical areas, and in general that these students were happy to be in school. There was a comfortable, natural rapport between staff and students. We saw little in the way of discord. Suspension and office referral rates are very low.

Despite the age of the facility, and the serious budgetary issues, the career technology and academic programs were bustling. Students were focused on projects, busy studying, and confidently productive and working. Technology instructors moved about the labs and production areas calmly, confident and relaxed. Most importantly, the students seemed genuinely happy, content, and interested in their work. The visiting committee was also impressed by how quiet the building was during our visit.

The Visiting Committee understands the tremendous challenge current trends in education, difficult financial times at Westfield Vocational Technical High School. Further, state mandated testing and the constant challenges of changing workplace skills and expectations
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force a continuous need to make hard decisions within time and budgetary boundaries. But the Visiting Committee saw a determined school; focused, organized and committed to using collaboration and good common sense to ensure the best possible experience for the students at Westfield.

It is our hope that this report will help WVTHS continue to improve and prosper.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Tarnuzzer	Chair	Assistant Superintendent of School, CTHS (Retired)	West Hartford, CT
Eileen Illuzzi	Asst. Chair	North Country Career Center, Director	Newport, VT
Fred Steeves	Auto Body	Oxford Hills Technical School	Norway, ME
Jon Christiansen	Automotive Technology	Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School	Charlton, MA
Francis Kruzel	Carpentry	McCann Technical School	North Adams, MA
Steven Miranda	Culinary Arts	Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School	Meriden, CT
Santina Scalia	Ed. Media	H. C. Wilcox Technical High School	Meriden, CT
Frank Barcellos	Electricity	William M. Davies Jr. Career and Technical High School	Lincoln, RI
Gregory Donovan	English/Remedial Reading	Minuteman Career & Technical High School	Lexington, MA
Timothy Cusack	Guidance	Greater Lawrence Technical School	Andover
Gail Sirko	Health Occupations	W. F. Kaynor Technical High School	Waterbury, CT
Thomas Dyjak	Horticulture	Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School	Palmer, MA

Edward Drapatin	Manufacturing	W. F. Kaynor Technical High School	Waterbury, CT
Kirsten Nicholas	Marketing	Norwich Technical High School	Norwich, CT
Tammy McLellan	Mathematics	Grasso Southeastern Technical High School	Groton, CT
Robert Pimental	Physical Education	Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School	New Bedford, MA
Kathy Peterson	Printing/Graphic Communications	Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School	Rochester, MA
Elizabeth Sherman	Science	Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School	Upton, MA
Catherine Glennon	Social Studies	Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School	Palmer, MA
Mark Dufresne	Special Education	Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School	Bourne, MA

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Committee Member	Chair of Report:	Assistant:
1. John Tarnuzzer	Chair	
	School Finance and Operations	Illuzzi
2. Eileen Illuzzi	Assistant Chair	
3. Fred Steeves	Collision Tech	Christiansen
4. Jon Christiansen	Automotive Technology	Steeves
5. Francis Kruzel	Carpentry School Facilities	Barcellos Barcellos
6. Steven Miranda	Culinary Arts	Sirko
7. Santina Scalia	Ed. Media	Peterson
8. Frank Barcellos	Electricity	Dyjak
9. Gregory Donovan	English/Remedial Reading	Glennon
	ESL	Glennon
10. Timothy Cusack	Student Records	Peterson
	Student Services	Primental
	Philosophy and Goals	Glennon
11. Gail Sirko	Allied Health	Sherman
12. Thomas Dyjak	Horticulture	Barcellos
13. Edward Drapatin	Manufacturing	Donovan
	School Staff	Miranda
14. Kirsten Nicholas	Business Technology	Christiansen
15. Tammy McLellan	Mathematics	Sherman
16. Robert Pimental	Physical Education	Miranda
17. Kathy Peterson	Printing/Graphic Communications	McLellan

	Information Technology	McLellan
18. Elizabeth Sherman	Science	McLellan
19. Catherine Glennon	Social Studies Educational Programs	Cusak Scalia
20. Mark Dufresne	Special Education Administration School and Community Relations	Glennon Barcellos Barcellos

MISSION STATEMENT

Westfield Vocational Technical High School has adopted the following Mission Statement:

The mission of Westfield Vocational Technical High School is to educate and prepare our students academically, technically, and professionally to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

VISION STATEMENT

Westfield Vocational Technical High School will be recognized as a student-centered learning community focused on integrating academic and technical achievement with career and college readiness.

WESTFIELD PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Westfield Vocational Technical High School has adopted the following Philosophy and Goals:

Westfield Vocational Technical High School provides students with unique academic and technical experiences based on the philosophy and goals of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and Massachusetts Career Vocational Technical Education Frameworks.

We are committed to providing a supportive and safe environment in order to meet the intellectual and social needs of our diverse student body. This philosophy is implemented by adhering to our core values:

Perseverance

Respect

Integrity

Diversity

Excellence

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Westfield Vocational Technical High School actively strengthens community and business partnerships with career and employment opportunities, parent organizations, mentoring programs, advisory boards, grant partnerships, field placements and volunteerism. Comprehensive counseling and special service programs complement the academic and career technical programs.

GOALS:

- To use demographic, educational, and performance data to increase student achievement.
- To provide integrated academic and vocational programs which optimize the potential of each student.
- To maintain a current and demanding curriculum that is aligned to the academic and vocational Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards.
- To align technical programs to national standards and accreditation requirements, allowing students to obtain relevant licensure/certifications.
- To teach and model the importance of respect for everyone regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or home status.
- To improve student achievement through relevant staff development.
- To enhance parent and school communication.
- To strengthen involvement and participation with Chapter 74 program advisory boards.
- To increase public awareness of Westfield Vocational Technical High School through expanded recruiting strategies and communication of student successes.
- To increase our graduation rate through a variety of intervention programs.

SECTION 1: SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Westfield Vocational Technical High Schools (WVTHS) philosophy and goals express the summation of the school's values and expectations. The Philosophy and Goals of WVTHS is posted on the school's website, and in the following places; student handbook, program of studies, classrooms, program areas, administrative offices, reception areas, cafeteria, and the gym. WVTHS has created a Philosophy and Goals that reflects the educational initiatives proposed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. With the implementation of the Philosophy and Goals the expectation is that all students will obtain academic, technical, and workplace competencies to be successful in a complex and changing society. WVTHS actively strengthens community and business partnerships with career and employment opportunities, parent organizations, mentoring programs, advisory boards, field placements, and volunteerism. Data reflects improvement in results from standardized testing.

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The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets the Standard : School Philosophy and Goals and is engaged in the process of continual improvement.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. A well thought out mission statement that reflects the staff's beliefs, values, and expectations for student learning. The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 1: Philosophy and Goals and is engaged in the process of continual improvement
2. The school has a clearly stated philosophy supported by defined goals and is designed to meet the needs of the students and the community.
3. The school's process of revising the Philosophy and Goals included the collaboration of faculty, staff, administration, students, parents, and community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Forming a permanent committee to review and modify the current Philosophy and Goals to maintain relevance and assess progress once each semester.
2. Communicating the outcomes of the committee meetings clearly and concisely to the entire school community and be open to feedback.

SECTION 2: SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is one of two secondary school options in a Massachusetts city of 41,000, serving nearly 500 students in a Chapter 74 approved, Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. The school has experienced numerous challenges over the past decade, impacting its ability to sustain stability and growth, due to multiple administrative changes. Despite the instability, the school has rebuilt its status in the community through consistent commitment to improving programming to meet diverse student needs, while increasing visibility and fostering recognition of its growing value to the community. Safety within the school building has been stressed and reinforced with strong mental and physical health support and collaboration.

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The aforementioned administrative changes have allowed the school to heal and grow through strong leadership from the Principal's role. There is a strong sense of trust in the Principal to guide the school in a positive direction, which has spurred increased interest in and support for the school from a community perspective, including strong recognition from city leaders.

Numerous efforts have been documented that have served to increase the school's positive regard within the community. Vocational programs are supported by strong industry and business involvement in program advisory committees. Initiatives that allow WVTHS students to provide community service in the elementary schools and through city upgrade projects are commendable and enhance the reputation of the school as a viable community resource. Cooperative education opportunities for students are to be targeted more vigorously, as the school has hired an additional administrator to oversee the technical programs, thus leaving a full-time administrative position for coordination of the Cooperative Education program.

Efforts to improve the process and quality of marketing to attract future students are ongoing. The school recently engaged in a SWOT analysis with an outside advertising firm to develop a strategic marketing plan. School stakeholders are reviewing the plan's recommendations and will make implementation decisions within the current school year.

Ultimately, a significant majority of WVTHS students report that their school experience is positive, safe and valuable to a successful future in the adult world. This data comes from the results of a school climate survey done in preparation for the school's NEASC self-study. Likewise, school faculty surveyed overwhelmingly reported enjoying the workplace, feeling successful with student progress, and feeling positively supported by supervisors.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 2: School and Community relations and is engaged in the process of continual improvement.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Prioritizing the development of positive community relations and student opportunities, as evidenced through multiple new agreements with businesses and local colleges and universities (Universal Technical Institute, Lincoln Tech, Westfield State University, Holyoke Community College).
2. Making a concerted effort to improve student, family and faculty access to available technology to streamline communication, market the school and promote stakeholder investment (school website, Twitter, Facebook, PowerSchool).
3. Initiating a variety of collaborative efforts to offer real-world connections to students (Mentoring, Key Club, Adult Education, Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis, FFA, Skills USA, FBLA).

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4. Constructing strong clinical safety nets for students through intensive collaboration between school personnel and community service/health organizations (school adjustment, substance abuse, police, mental health organizations, hospitals).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Developing a written procedure for consistently documenting individual articulation agreements with business/industry and post-secondary technical and academic institutions to solidify the efforts being put into the development of community relationships.
2. Updating and systematizing the presentation of recruiting materials to more consistently attract quality students that can benefit from the school's offerings, consistent with the recommendations in the school's strategic marketing plan.
3. Increasing student participation in cooperative education opportunities, thus increasing visibility and positive regard in the community, and offering students networking opportunities in business/industry.
4. Developing curricular and extracurricular programs that will attract a more diverse student pool (athletics, new trade offerings, etc)..

SECTION 3: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The educational program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is in a period of transition. Many adjustments have recently and are currently being made in curriculum, course offerings, and student interventions. These modifications are allowing WVTHS to more effectively meet the needs of its changing student body while keeping pace with new state requirements and ever evolving market trends.

WVTHS offers 11 technical programs and courses in five academic departments, with two new vocational programs in development. It operates on a nine period schedule of 38 minute periods, with double blocks for certain courses based on graduation requirements. Students are placed automatically in required courses, but the school uses teacher recommendations and/or applications for courses with levels such as English and Math. Limited elective courses are available to students in Science and Social Studies. Teachers teach six of the nine periods, with two preps and a duty period. They are generally responsible for preparation of two different courses.

Extensive professional development has been recently undertaken to prepare academic and vocational teachers for changes in curriculum design and state requirements. This process resulted in new curricula in all academic and vocational courses aligned with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Career Vocational Technical Frameworks. Program advisories were involved in the design of new vocational curricula to ensure that they meet industry standards. 56 teachers are being trained at the graduate level in the Understanding by Design (UbD) method, addressing curriculum planning and literacy instruction. An Integrated Project Team has been formed to strengthen the connection between academic and vocational programs and is being provisionally implemented.

Students in need of academic or other interventions are provided with multiple avenues to have their needs met. Recently, a team approach has been taken to working with incoming freshmen. Freshmen are assigned to teams of instructors who meet regularly to identify any necessary intervention. Students are also tested as freshmen (GRADE, SRI, GMADE) and placed in reading and math intervention programs as necessary (Read 180, Math 180, Systems 44). Optional academic support is offered as a non-credit elective, and extra help is also available through teachers and the guidance department with late busses to help students take advantage of this help. ESL support is available for Nepalese, Ukrainian, Moldovan, Russian, and Spanish-speaking students. Saturday school is also available every other weekend for students who need extra help, access to computers and printers, credit recovery, or who have had attendance issues. For the social and emotional needs of students, a full-time school adjustment counselor and substance abuse counselor are on staff. The school's mentor program, primarily for freshmen and sophomores, matches students with local adult mentors to help with educational and social growth. WVTHS also has a Renaissance

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Program, which rewards students for increasing effort in their academic or vocational area, improvement in attendance, grades, community involvement and other admirable qualities by offering rewards such as lunch in the school restaurant and gift certificates to area restaurants, and by publicly recognizing students in different ways throughout school.

During the past two years, inclusion has been implemented in social studies, some science, and some vocational related classes. These classes include paraprofessional and/or Special Education teachers in the general education classroom or vocational program area. Honors classes have also been introduced, including the school's first dual enrollment course in Psychology, chosen by a survey of students and offered in conjunction with Westfield State University. Holyoke Community College and Springfield Technical Community College also offer some coursework to WVTHS students and many of the vocational programs have articulation agreements with the local community colleges. Cooperative Education experiences, job shadowing, and internships are available to upperclassmen and are coordinated with area businesses.

The limited computer technology available to teachers is fully utilized in classroom instruction and as more technology is made available, teachers quickly integrate it into their practice. Computer lab space and library resources are regularly used and often unavailable to classes that would use them due to heavy usage. More regular access to computer technology, especially computers for student use, would be beneficial.

Evaluation of student learning is the responsibility of classroom teachers and vocational program instructors and is done based on the curricula they created for their courses. The school does not have a midterm or final exam period, so those types of assessments are up to the teacher's discretion. All vocational programs are competency-based. As curricula are implemented incorporating Common Core standards in academic courses, competencies are being introduced in those courses as well. Students are also being prepared in their vocational programs to pass career licensure or certification programs.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 3: Educational Program and is engaged in the process of continual improvement.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Providing the support, time, and professional development necessary to align vocational and academic curricula to meet new state and industry requirements.
2. Balancing the needs and abilities of a diverse group of students by moving toward an inclusion model and adding honors courses.
3. Recognizing and meeting student needs, academic and personal, through a variety of interventions and voluntary programs for students.
4. Inviting members of the community to serve as mentors to students who are in need of academic, social or emotional support.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Implementing a technology plan to increase computer technology in classrooms with appropriate staffing and resources.
2. Instituting a career awareness program that includes visits from postsecondary education and the business community.
3. Instituting cohesive department-based assessments for each discipline, including the ability to post a final exam/project in PowerSchool.
4. Limiting new initiatives to two or three per year and providing appropriate support and professional development to staff.

SECTION 3.1: ALLIED HEALTH

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Allied Health program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is certified and approved by the State of Massachusetts and the Department of Public Health annually. The program follows the CVTE framework curriculum for nursing assistant certification. In 2012 this program was evaluated by the Department of Education and was found to meet all the standards. The program has 16 members on their advisory committee. Members include representatives from Noble Hospital, Western Massachusetts Hospital, Westfield State University and Holyoke Community College. College affiliation is important because 80% - 90 % of the program graduates pursue further education. Most colleges require earned credits in Chemistry, Biology, and Anatomy & Physiology to be accepted into their medical degree programs.

Allied Health has two locations, both on the 2nd floor but not close to one another. One room, which is used as a lab, has three hospital beds, desks, chairs, storage and computers. The other location is a classroom where theory is taught. Both rooms are small and cluttered with very outdated furniture and equipment. There is only one hand-washing sink for students to use within the lab room. The textbook for 10th grade is outdated, but the other textbooks are new and adequate.

This program has three RN instructors for 36 students; approximately 12-13 students per grade. Of the 36 students, three are male and the rest are female. There are 18 freshman students interested in enrolling this year but due to allocated space and computers they will have a problem accommodating this number of students. Students have the ability to earn many certifications at the completion of the program. Certifications include: Certified Nurse Assistant; CPR/AED & First Aide; Nutritional Assistant; Homemaker/Home Health Aide; Caring for People with Alzheimer's Disease; and Blood Borne Pathogens.

Federal law requires that instructors maintain a maximum level of student/instructor ratio of 10/1 while at the clinical sites. In addition, WVTHS needs to respect the requests made by the participating facilities regarding the number of students allowed onsite due to the varying sizes of the facilities and the severity of residents' healthcare needs. Therefore there are times when all three instructors will go out to three different facilities on the same day using the school vans. The 9th and 10th grade students are less than 16 years old and are prohibited by federal guidelines to have any hands on contacts with residents, so they visit facilities to learn and practice communication skills with a variety of people of different ages. These students are taken to Noble Hospital, Franklin Avenue Elementary School, Head Start, and the Senior Center. This program provides a great deal of clinical laboratory hours to promote the profession of health careers in all four years of the curriculum. In the junior year the

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students visit the two participating nursing homes for 75-100 hours to reinforce their nursing assistant skills. At the end of the year students are tested for the Massachusetts Nursing Assistant Certification. In 2013, 2011, & 2010 all the students passed the exam. In the senior year the students participate in shadowing careers at Noble Hospital, assist with the care of residents at the Clark Building, Westfield Center for Alzheimer's and participate in the Home Care Aide Program and Cooperative Education program. The program has maintained a positive relationship with all clinical sites throughout the years.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Achieving very high percent rate for students passing the Nursing Assistant exam for the last 5 years.
2. That 80-90% of the graduates are accepted into post-secondary education in the medical field.
3. Students are very involved in community service and are exposed to more than twenty community facilities.
4. Providing seven certifications to the students at completion of the four years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Providing additional updated transportation to clinical laboratory facilities.
2. Replacing old equipment with equipment that mirrors what is currently used in healthcare facilities including, hospital beds, wheelchairs, Hoyer lift and manikins.
3. Providing a vocational area that consolidates the program into one adjoining space with ample storage opportunities.
4. Providing additional hand wash sinks.
5. Offering Chemistry and Anatomy and Physiology classes to meet college requirements.
6. Updating sophomore textbook to the current edition.

SECTION 3.2: AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Automotive Technology Department at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) consists of three instructors and one assistant. The assistant handles all incoming job orders, fields all customer calls and concerns, and monitors the tools. Each instructor is responsible for related theory and shop/labs for their grade level. Current enrollment in the automotive program is approximately 35 students; 32 male and 3 female. They are expecting an additional 16 from the freshman exploratory. About 40 percent of the students are identified as special education. All instructors are A.S.E. certified in the areas they teach. The program is currently N.A.T.E.F. certified until February 2019. Competencies are tracked through the N.A.T.E.F. frame works, which mirror Massachusetts state standards. The teachers in the program are enthusiastic about the technical area in which they teach. Students are all actively engaged with their projects and were proud to field questions asked of them. The program depends on live work to supplement their budget and train the students to trouble shoot and repair real world problems. The program advisory committee consists of 13 active members. Currently the program has two students out on Cooperative Work Experience, with more jobs available to those that are academically eligible.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Strong dedicated advisory committee.
2. Achieving and maintaining N.A.T.E.F. certification.
3. Students are actively engaged in Skills/USA and Ford AAA.
4. New textbooks and CDX on-line software to train latest technology.
5. MCAS scores are up over previous years due to integration and team teaching.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Closing storage cabinets in front of alignment rack that are in the walk way when not in use.
2. Funding for new CDX on-line software needs to be secured in the annual budget.
3. Adjusting rests on bench grinder.

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4. Installing appropriate safety shield on the brake lathes.
5. Installing appropriate safety guards on the drill press.
6. Moving vehicles behind yellow safety lines.
7. Providing adequate area, ventilation and Personal Protective Equipment for welding.

SECTION 3.3: BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Business Technology Department at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is comprised of two fulltime teachers and a fulltime instructional aide. The Business Technology program at WVTHS serves 29 students from freshman to senior year. Current enrollment in the Business Technology program is as follows: twelve sophomores, nine juniors, and eight seniors. There are 25 female and four male students enrolled in the program. Four students are on Cooperative Work Experience and two are on an internal internship on an as needed basis in the school's administrative office.

The program area and related spaces are clean and well organized. There is a copy center managed by a student and services are available to teachers and faculty. Students each have their own work area with a computer and there are networked printers. Another component of the program is a small, counter-based school store, the Tigers Den, in the main entrance area of the school that is located on a different level from the program. The instructors have created an environment that emphasizes real-life applications during related and program time.

The business technology curriculum reflects the MA Curriculum Frameworks. Teachers utilize detailed student competency area checklists. Instructors evaluate student performance by implementing rubrics and assessments which address each major competency area. As the business industry evolves, so too does the curriculum. Learning objectives and student expectations are clearly defined and posted. Students are self-directed and are responsible for submitting their daily task accomplishment list to teachers via Microsoft Outlook. In addition, 21st century skills are documented on weekly student time cards. Students self-assess in five different skill set areas. The teachers then provide students with specific performance feedback. An Employability Skills Grading Sheet is used to assess students who work in the Tigers Den.

The Business Technology program provides additional education and employment opportunities for their students through job shadows, internships, and cooperative education activities. Cooperative education activities take place during the students' junior and senior years. Students also compete in SkillsUSA and FBLA competitions. Upon graduation, students can earn nine college credits through Holyoke Community College, Westfield State University and Springfield Technical Community College, where the program is articulated.

The Business Technology program has an active Advisory Committee, representative of local industry, which meets once per month. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee reports to the Principal of WVTHS to ensure the program meets current industry standards and to recommend purchases for updated equipment and curriculum changes.

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Students in grades 12 write an actual business plan, where students seek startup funding and create an actual product. Upon completion of the business plan and idea, the products are sold during a special event opened to the entire school.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Developing detailed, industry specific student portfolios.
2. Creating college pathways for students by securing articulation agreements with local higher education institutions.
3. Providing concrete, ongoing student performance feedback via grading sheets, rubrics and competency checklists.
4. Offering diverse, real-world work experiences for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Implementing a program email address to facilitate use of software applications.
2. Expanding the hours of the Tigers Den.
3. Developing a DECA Chapter and pursuing School Based Enterprise certification.
4. Reinstating Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification and software program.
5. Updating older computers in Room 200 to be current with software applications and curriculum standards.

SECTION 3.4: COLLISION TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Automotive Collision Repair Technology (Collision Technology) program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is located in the lower level of the school. The program is in one of the largest shop areas in the building, approximately 90 square feet and 45 feet tall at the roof peak. Sound reverberates off the roof and walls when equipment is running and production is happening in the busy shop. The physical area consists of an instructor office, a large related classroom, a tool crib, an equipment storage cage, a compressor room, and a student locker area. There are two paint spray booths; one is a cross draft and the other is a Devillebliss down draft. There is a paint mixing room with a P.P.G. water base paint mixing bank, a Chief frame straightening machine, a Genesis electronic measuring system and a post lift. There is also a welding competency station and metal fabrication area with various metal bending, forming and welding equipment. Outside, the program has access to a shipping container that is used to store sheet metal panels and vehicle parts, but there is little inside storage for materials and consumables.

The program students are taught by three instructors and each instructor is responsible for related theory and program/labs for their grade level. Current enrollment in the Collision Technology program is approximately 22 students; 18 male and four female. The program is expecting approximately 16 new students from the freshman exploratory class. Approximately 43 percent of the students are identified as special education. All three of the instructors are A.S.E. certified in the section that they teach and one is a Master certified Auto Collision Technician. All instructors are licensed motor vehicle damage appraisers and have achieved certification in P.P.G. water base paint technology and Chief frame machine training. The program is not N.A.T.E.F. certified.

The instructors were very helpful and show a lot of devotion for the school. Students are all actively engaged with their projects and are able to knowledgeably answer questions asked of them. The program depends heavily on live work to supplement their budget, which is low in a program that depends heavily on consumables. The program has a positive advisory committee that has helped place numerous students in the industry. Currently the program has two senior students out on cooperative education placements.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. The recent acquisition of a Pro-Spot welding machine.
2. The use of water base painting technology.
3. The use of SMART Board and lap top technology in the classroom.
4. Implementing SP/2 safety training.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Acquiring and implementing noise suppression/reduction in the program area, as per 2006 safety report.
2. Separating the ventilation fan from the circuit that runs the rear lights in the classroom and running a dedicated switch for said fan to eliminate excessive noise during lessons.
3. Purchasing up to date textbooks for all levels of students.
4. Acquiring or creating a respirator maintenance plan that follows OSHA standards.
5. Adjusting rests on bench grinders.
6. Replacing the seals on the vacuum system.
7. Acquiring an adequate storage area for materials and supplies.
8. Aiding the maintenance department in developing and implementing a maintenance plan for the program, including, but not limited to; the paint booths, compressor, equipment, and lighting.
9. Purchasing an industry recognized curriculum and fully implementing it throughout the program.
10. Allowing funding for and achieving N.A.T.E.F. certification in at least one standard.
11. Establishing at least one articulation agreement.

SECTION 3.5: CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Construction Technology program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) consists of three instructors and one instructional aide. In the program area, one instructor predominately works with juniors and seniors, and two instructors work with the freshmen and sophomores. The aide works predominantly with the junior and senior instructor on outside building projects. Related classes are held during the academic week. Current enrollment in the Construction Technology program is 27 students: 11 sophomores, eight juniors, and eight seniors. Freshmen have not yet chosen their technical area. The enrollment in the program is 70% male and 30% female. 19% of the program's students are identified as Special Education. The program area and related spaces are well-lit, clean, and organized.

All three instructors hold a Construction Supervisors License, an OSHA 10 hour card, and Lead Certifications. Two instructors have a Home Improvement Contractor License and Powder Actuated Tool Certifications. The Construction Technology aide holds an OSHA 10 hour card, a Powder Actuated Tool Certification and a Massachusetts hoisting License. All members adhere to the school's philosophy and goals and follow the Massachusetts State Frameworks.

Each instructor brings a unique background to the program. One Instructor has a strong background in Commercial Construction while the other two have strong backgrounds in Residential Construction. The curriculum has been upgraded, is project based and sequential. Learning objectives and student expectations are clearly defined and posted. All instructors in the program are enthusiastic about the technical area in which they teach. Their enthusiasm is reflected in the students and their projects, and is very evident in their work and organization within the program.

The Construction Technology program provides additional education and employment opportunities to the enrolled students through field trips, guest speakers and cooperative education activities. Cooperative education activities take place during the students' junior and senior years. Currently there are two seniors participating in cooperative education. Students also compete in SkillsUSA contests and are issued 10 hour OSHA certification cards. Upon graduation students are given one year credit of work experience when applying for a CSL.

The Construction Technology program actively engages in outside building projects; typically this involves a residential type project. As a result of these outside projects, the program has been able to closely align work with the state vocational technical frameworks and the International Residential Code. These outside jobs also provide good sources of vocational integration with the electrical program. The program has two trucks, a trailer and

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a building for storage of tools and equipment allowing the program to complete projects within the scope of the curriculum.

Program Advisory Committee members are active participants in the program and help in cooperative job placements. The board meets three to four times yearly.

Freshmen and sophomores predominately work on program-based projects. When freshmen first enter the program, they spend a significant amount of time working on safety and learning how to operate the program equipment. Sophomores progress through a series of projects leading to immersion in the outside program. As a result of how the curriculum is taught, the program equipment is in continuous operation.

Academic and vocational integration is evident in all levels of student work. For example, students are required to do short writing assignments on a project wrap up sheet, word walls and weekly time cards integrating the English framework. Math skills are addressed during related math class, as well as problems in shop projects and on the jobsite. Juniors and seniors are required to do estimating assignments that integrate math. Instructors do some of this integration in a dedicated related room.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Enthusiasm of the instructors in teaching their curriculum.
2. Students active in community projects.
3. Students and instructors dressed professionally.
4. Maintaining a well-organized program shop area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Providing funding to maintain, repair and replace equipment.
2. Providing an adequate amount of materials to fully implement curriculum.
3. Reinstating a fourth instructor to engage students in building design and CAD fields.
4. Replacing or repairing the current dust collecting system.

SECTION 3.6: CULINARY ARTS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Culinary Arts program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is a production environment that services a full service restaurant that feeds staff and the community. All facets of the industry are covered within the curriculum. The department caters all functions throughout the building and also for carry out. The department is made up of two full time chef instructors and one program assistant. There are a total of 34 students, 10 males and 24 females. There are six freshmen, 10 sophomores, 10 juniors, and eight seniors. The Department follows the Massachusetts CTE Frameworks. The bakery is an extremely small area of the shop which presents logistical and safety issues because of overcrowding. The equipment throughout the department is well maintained and clean but could use some updating. Smallwares, hand tools, and china need replacing as they are used on a daily basis by all students and are showing signs of wear. The department is affiliated with the American Culinary Federation (ACF), National Restaurant Association (NRA), and Skills USA. Students and staff volunteer to perform extracurricular catering functions on a regular basis. The Culinary Arts program mirrors real life experiences in the foodservice industry.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Although 20 years old, the facility still meets industry standards.
2. The school restaurant showcases student work to the public and staff.
3. The school is affiliated with several professional organizations.
4. The department has a strong and knowledgeable advisory committee.
5. Approximately half of graduates are pursuing Culinary Arts or related degrees.
6. Students participate in the National Restaurant Association ServSafe Sanitation program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Replacing smallwares, hand tools, and china as necessary.
2. Repairing or replacing major shop equipment.
3. Expanding the bake-shop area.
4. Providing front of the house instruction.
5. Updating textbooks and curriculum materials.
6. Providing adequate funding and resources to allow for delivery of the full curriculum

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SECTION 3.7: ELECTRICAL WIRING

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Electrical Wiring program at the Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) serves 54 students from freshman exploratory to senior year. Current enrollment in the Electrical Wiring program is as follows: 14 freshmen, 13 sophomores, 14 juniors, and 13 seniors. There are 54 male and no female enrolled in the program. One student of the program is identified as Special Education. The program area and related spaces are well-lit, clean, and organized and are conducive for a stimulating learning environment.

The three instructors are all master electricians and all adhere to the school's philosophy and goals and follow the Massachusetts State Frameworks. The instructors have created an environment that stresses real-life applications of practical knowledge. Each instructor created their own grade-level curriculum based on the National Electrical Code and the NCCER (National Center for Construction Education and Research). Each instructor is responsible for teaching one grade of electrical wiring and related math and science. Curriculum is being updated to improve theoretical knowledge pertaining to electrical theory and applicable codes. In addition, PLCs (programmable logic and controllers) and a fire alarm training station have been added to the program. The projects are competency-based and students have a clear expectation of learning goals and grading procedures. Learning objectives and student expectations are clearly defined and posted. Students are aware of grading rubrics.

The Electrical Wiring program provides additional education and employment opportunities to the enrolled students through job shadows, internships, and cooperative education activities. Cooperative education activities take place during the students' junior and senior years. Students also compete in SkillsUSA contests. Upon graduation, students can receive credit for 1800 work hours and 300 classroom hours towards their electrical apprenticeship. The Electrical Wiring program does not have any articulation agreements.

The Electrical Wiring program has an active Program Advisory Committee which meets once per month. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee reports to the Principal of WVTHS to ensure the program meets current industry standards and to recommended purchases for updated equipment.

In addition to the work being done in shop, the Electrical Wiring program does extensive work throughout the school, including the wiring of the new horticulture greenhouse. The program also does work outside of school including the gazebo project in town, as well as work in local elementary schools such as Highland Elementary school.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

5. Building workstations to simulate live work.
6. Having an active Program Advisory Committee.
7. Providing numerous work opportunities internal and external of the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

5. Increasing the budget to allow purchase of needed materials and equipment.
6. Starting an articulation agreement with a post-secondary institution.
7. Providing appropriate student transportation to and from worksites.

SECTION 3.8: ENGLISH

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The English program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is made up of five certified English instructors. Two of the five teachers are responsible for delivering the freshman and sophomore curriculum. Two of the remaining three teachers are responsible for delivering the junior and senior curriculum, and the remaining teacher is solely responsible for implementing the Read 180 and System 44 curriculum. The English Department offers both general education and special education classes at each grade level, and based on a spike in data, the department has begun to implement junior and senior year honors curricula; there are plans to implement a sophomore honors curriculum in 2015-16. Currently, all students are assessed for reading abilities using the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) multiple times each year. Freshmen testing at a reading Lexile score of 850 or below, and sophomores testing at 900 or below, are placed in a Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention reading program, Read 180 and System 44. Students engaged with Read 180 and System 44 work with individualized and adaptive reading software, whole-group instruction, and small-group differentiated instruction to increase reading proficiency. Students transition out of the intervention program after raising Lexile scores by 300 points.

The five members of the English Department are immersed in an ongoing process of adapting curriculum to meet the requirements of Common Core, PARCC, and Understanding by Design (UbD). The department develops curriculum using the district-approved structure provided by UbD, which focuses on student outcomes. The department has begun to implement the district-wide rubric for argumentative writing, which was adapted from PARCC. Changes in curriculum have yielded strong growth in MCAS scores; curriculum continues to be adapted based on close examination of MCAS scores. The department uses technology, to the extent that it is available, to collaborate, to research, to write, and to present. The curriculum of the department reflects the school's mission to prepare students for career readiness through numerous integrated projects (resume writing, career research, career reflection) and for college by utilizing canonical and contemporary texts.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Significant improvement of MCAS scores over the past three years.
2. Continuing to reshape the curriculum to meet the needs of all students, while also fulfilling the vision of Common Core and PARCC.

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3. Displaying leadership by volunteering to be among the first teachers to pilot the new evaluation rubric - 100% participation.
4. Seeking graduate-level training in Understanding by Design to better implement the district's curriculum template focusing on student outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Purchasing at least one laptop cart for the freshman and sophomore classes (laptops or Chromebooks) to better implement web-based research, assessment tools like WriterKey, presentation tools like Prezi, collaboration tools like Google Drive, etc.
2. Purchasing textbooks aligned to meeting the non-fiction needs of Common Core, PARCC, and UbD.
3. Adding freshman and sophomore honors-level English classes.
4. Training in NMSI's "Laying the Foundation" to meet standards associated with reading informational texts and expository writing.
5. Creating vertical alignment to the curriculum.

SECTION 3.9: ESL

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The ESL program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is made up of one certified instructor. The Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) program is designed to meet the needs of students (English Language Learners or ELLs) with limited English proficiency. The department currently services nine students who collectively speak five languages: Moldovan, Nepali, Russian, Ukrainian and Spanish. The ESL curriculum focuses on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for English Language Arts and Literacy and the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English proficiency levels to align with Common Core Standards.

In concert with the Guidance Department, the ESL program uses assessment results to appropriately place students in courses that focus on interventions needed to demonstrate proficiency in Mathematics and English Language Arts; this has been expanded to include History in 2014-15. Students are placed in ESL based on MCAS test scores and Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) test scores. Once placed in ESL classes, ELL students are also placed into Read 180 and System 44 classes for addition English language support. ELL students attend 180 days of instruction in the ESL classroom (double ESL blocks during their academic week and single ESL blocks during their vocational program week). Currently, students are mainstreamed into general education classes based solely on MCAS and ACCESS test scores.

The lone ESL instructor is responsible for delivering the ESL class curriculum, as well as two ESL content class curricula for Financial Literacy and for United States History. The students are provided with strategic instruction and assistance geared toward smooth assimilation into the school and community cultures in preparation for vocations and future educational opportunities. ESL instruction has shifted from a teacher-centered approach to a student-centered one to offer more individualized instruction. Through the incorporation of dynamic lessons focusing on context-based language learning, students build confidence, independence, and a sense of responsibility for life-long learning, as they develop proficiency in all modals: comprehension, reading, writing, and oral production.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Advocating for, and attaining, an ESL content class in United States History that fulfills graduation requirements.
2. Continuing to strategically tailor curriculum to address the specific, and varied, needs of all ELL students.

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3. Fostering life-long language independence in all ELL students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

21. Including the ESL instructor in all scheduling decisions for all ELL students, ideally before the school year begins.
22. Connecting existing classroom technology to a network for student access.
23. Adding oral production to the list of indicators for mainstreaming all ELL students.
Maintaining the ESL United States History content class as a course offering to better ensure all ELL students are afforded the opportunity to meet graduation requirements.

SECTION 3.10: GRAPHICS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Graphic Arts program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is a very organized, spacious, hands-on learning environment that prepares students to meet the challenges of today's competitive graphics industry. The thirty students enrolled in the program are provided up to date educational experiences through the use of computers, updated software, fieldtrips, internships, work experience, meaningful customer-based production work, creative projects, and in school and community printing projects.

The program has two full time instructors and one assistant, each possessing a diverse skill set in the graphics field, which adds to the viability of the curriculum. The instructors are energetic and passionate about their program and its students. The students seem to flow seamlessly through outlined objectives prepared by the instructors, performing a variety of different skills that keep projects moving forward.

The lab/classroom is spacious, has an abundance of natural light, and fosters a creative learning environment for all students. Student work is showcased proudly around the classroom space and throughout the school. The physical space is divided into three rooms, a lab space that houses twenty iMac computers equipped with the latest version of the Adobe CC 2014 software. Attached to the lab space is a classroom with Screen Printing Technology, Vinyl Sign Cutting and two copy machines. There is an AV Rover Portable Projector with touch screen capabilities that can be moved into each of the printing areas. The printing room which is across the hall is equipped with a guillotine paper cutter, four duplicating presses, a plate setter and several pieces of bindery equipment.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Imaginative combinations of production based and project based instruction.
2. Networking with industry to attain donations of money, paper stock, and equipment for the program.
3. Exceptional management and organization of student responsibilities.
4. The quality print materials provided to the school and community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

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1. Providing resources to continue PrintEd Re-Certification.
2. Continuing to develop a more effective competency tracking system.
3. Working with the District to adopt a long and short-range plan to insure that technology remains state of the art.
4. Incorporating Digital Printing Technology into the curriculum.

SECTION 3.11: ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Ornamental Horticulture Department at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) currently serves 27 students with room for 12 incoming freshmen. There are 20 male and seven female students; eight of these are special education. There are two professional instructors and a teacher assistant available for the program and all bring a wide range of knowledge and experience. The program adheres to district philosophy and goals, and follows Massachusetts DESE frameworks. This industry is a growing sector within the Massachusetts economy. The instructors have created a vibrant environment that stresses real life application and practical knowledge. The program has implemented innovative and experimental studies designed to engage and expand student knowledge and contribute to the school's stated mission. The projects are competency- based and the students have clear expectations of learning goals and grading procedures. Learning objectives are posted daily.

The Horticulture program provides additional education and employment through cooperative education opportunities, and career opportunities in Landscape, Arboriculture, Greenhouse, Food Production, Turf Management, and Floral in the local green industry. The Massachusetts Pesticide Applicators License, Hoisters License, and Certified Landscape Professional License are all part of the curriculum. The program also prepares students to take the Certificate of Occupational Proficiency (COP) exam. Students who wish to continue their education can take programs directly related to Ornamental Horticulture at the University of Massachusetts: Stockbridge School of Agriculture, Springfield Technical Community College and SUNY Cobleskill, N.Y. There is an articulation agreement in place with Springfield Technical Community College.

Students participate in Future Farmers of America (FFA) the nation's largest youth organization that promotes leadership, personal growth, and career success through a variety of state competitions and workshops. The program has an active advisory committee that advocates for recommendations and updates. In addition to the innovative projects in the program (hydroponics, aquaponics, compost fertilization, pond construction, upcoming farmers market) the program is heavily involved with outside landscape construction projects. These projects are located throughout the city improving parks, schools and municipal buildings, as well as private properties. This program has enhanced the quality of life in the community and WVTHS.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Building landscape features and planting sites at the school and throughout the City of Westfield.
2. Expanding the program with a new student built greenhouse, new growing systems, Apiary and Fruit Tree Orchard.
3. Growing awareness of the scope of horticulture and how it integrates with other trade areas.
4. Raising revenue for the program with sales and marketing.
5. Providing numerous employment and educational opportunities for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

3. Securing funds to replace 15 year old New Holland tractor/backhoe.
4. Securing funds to repair 1980 Stake- body truck.
5. Addressing staffing concerns to ensure appropriate supervision.

SECTION 3.12: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Instructional Technology program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is well run and cleverly operated, which includes students from freshman exploratory through senior level. The 32 students enrolled in the program are provided up to date, rigorous, and differentiated educational experiences. The students' educational experience is enhanced with outside visits to local businesses, college visits, fieldtrips, shadowing, internships, cooperative education, and team based projects. The students also operate the Tiger TechCenter to perform PC repairs to the public.

The program provides hands-on-training and a broad background in IT skills during freshman and sophomore years. The curriculum allows for student selection of career paths based on interest. Beginning in the junior year students choose one of three pathways: Computer Science (Web/Programming), Information Systems (User Support, PC Repairs, Network Support) and IT Management (CS and IS). Instructional Technology Related is taught during the vocational program cycle. The program is affiliated with the Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA) and Cisco to bring the students course materials in computer repair via the Cisco Academy IT Essentials course and in networking by using the Cisco Academy Certified Cisco Network Associate Course (CCNA). The curriculum covers instructional objectives that provide the students with a foundation for obtaining Professional IT certifications from CompTIA, Cisco, and Microsoft. While not a requirement, students are encouraged to participate in these exams.

The program has three full-time instructors and one assistant, each possessing a unique skill set in the IT field which adds to the diversity of the curriculum. The instructors are energetic and passionate about their program and its students. The instructors work as a team to move the students through the curriculum. The program offers a wide variety of courses during sophomore and junior year. Senior year students are allowed to choose from a list of electives and leadership opportunities depending upon interest, which include: VOIP Telephony, Integrated IT Project, Linux2, TechCenter Manager, Windows Active Directory Server, Explorer's Assistant, IT Security, and Cooperative Education.

The IT program has articulation agreements with Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) and Westfield State University (WSU). Currently students who graduate from the program are eligible for 15 credits at STCC when they major in Computer Systems Engineering Technology.

The Instructional Technology program has a strong and supportive Program Advisory Committee (PAC) which evaluates curriculum objectives, staff knowledge and appropriate technology needs. Most recently the addition of the VOIP course was enabled with donated

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equipment and instructor training by Advisory Board members. The PAC also funds the top student in the IT programs first year of college at Westfield State University.

The lab/classroom space is divided into three rooms, Networking and Web/Programming, which are connected by a workspace that is used for a data center, instructor, storage and meeting space. There is a separate classroom around the corner which is used for Computer Repair. The three classrooms each have ample storage space and use all their space effectively. The IT program runs its own network and is not connected to the school network. The program has 42 Double Screen computers with brand new workstations. The Tiger TechCenter has five workstations designated for customer repairs. In the Networking classroom there is an ample supply of routers, switches and servers. The program added a brand new 20 Laptop Cart and 20 Bamboo drawing tablets. The program has four iMac computers for student exposure to the OSX platform and computer repair.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Implementing 21st century learning via web-based course-ware such as Cisco NetAcad and Codecademy.
2. Creative, diverse and rigorous course offerings.
3. A strong and supportive Program Advisory Committee.
4. Community Access to the Tiger TechCenter for PC Repair.
5. Addition of a New Chapter 74 Programming and Web Program to the IT Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Working with the District to adopt a long and short range plan to insure that technology remains state of the art.
2. Utilizing the Instructional Technology Program within the building for technology support and maintenance.

SECTION 3.13: MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Manufacturing program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) serves 64 students from freshman exploratory to senior year. Current enrollment in the Manufacturing program is as follows: 16 freshmen, 16 sophomores, 17 juniors, and 14 seniors. There are 40 male and four female students enrolled in the program. The freshman class is currently going through exploratory. The vocational program area and related areas are well-lit, clean, and organized, and are conducive for a stimulating learning environment. The shop is sectioned off by rooms that house the 9th and 10th grade in one section, and the 11th and 12th grade in another. The CAD classroom is across the hall in a well defined area.

The four instructors all adhere to the school's philosophy and goals and follow the Massachusetts State Frameworks. The instructors have created an environment that stresses real-life application of practical knowledge. The instructors collectively created the instructional materials and projects for 9th grade through 12th -grade based on the competency-based curriculum provided by the state of Massachusetts, as well as curriculum provided by the National Tooling and Machining Association (NTMA). Each instructor is responsible for teaching several trade-related subjects: related math, blueprint reading, CNC programming, CAD and CAM. Curriculum is being updated to improve theoretical knowledge pertaining to manufacturing theory and new manufacturing processes. In addition, all software or CAD and CAM licenses are current. The projects are competency-based and students have a clear expectation of learning goals and grading procedures. Learning objectives and student expectations are clearly defined and posted. Students are aware of all grading rubrics.

The Manufacturing program offers a diverse set of projects and instructional materials for all grade levels that meet current employment demands. All students go through a continuous safety program beginning in 9th grade and continuing through grade 12. There is a high expectation for all students to be successful. The students are introduced to tools, machines, and skills used in local industry. Benchmark tests are utilized during the school year to assess expected student outcomes. Instructors are provided IEPs and/or 504 plans to assure that each student is meeting his or her full potential. Upon completion of the Manufacturing program, students have attained a variety of skills in the areas of expertise to enter the workforce.

The Manufacturing program provides additional education and employment opportunities for their students through job shadowing, internships, and cooperative education activities. Cooperative education activities take place during the students' junior and senior year. Students also compete in SkillsUSA events. Manufacturing Technology students can earn up

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to six post secondary credits at STCC and students are strongly encouraged to continue their Education at institutions of higher learning

The Manufacturing program has an active Program Advisory Committee, which meets four to five times per year as a group; additional meetings take place between the Manufacturing instructors and Manufacturing business partners throughout the year. The meetings are well attended by state and local public officials. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee reports to the Principal of WVTHS to ensure the program meets current industry standards, and to recommend purchases for updated equipment.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Developing a strong Advisory Committee.
2. Placing 100% of graduating seniors in diverse manufacturing career paths.
3. Continuing education to stay abreast of current trends in technology.
4. Continuing to explore fundraising activities like the annual golf tournament.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Adding a budget line item to repair or replace equipment.
2. Developing a computer-based tracking system for student competencies.
3. Purchasing adequate storage containers for materials and tools.
4. Developing articulation agreements with local colleges.

SECTION 3.14: MATHEMATICS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Mathematics program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) offers two levels of courses for grades nine through twelve. Students are scheduled into math class for a double period every day on alternating weeks with students in grades 9 and 12 scheduled together and grades 10 and 11 scheduled together. There are six mathematics teachers; two are new within one year. Two of the veteran teachers mentor the two new department members. Two instructors teach the freshmen and sophomores and two instructors teach the juniors and seniors. One math instructor is teaching special education to 9th, 10th and 12th grade students in a self-contained environment. A math interventionist instructs one 9th and one 10th grade class as well as pulls out 10th grade students for a single period during their technical program. The pull-out students have been identified for remediation through eighth grade MCAS scores. In addition, there is one special education instructor that teaches self-contained math. Five of the six math instructors have attained or are working towards a Master's degree in Mathematics or Secondary Education. The math teachers are very active in the school environment, including: tutoring students, advising clubs, and running the Saturday School Program.

The WVTHS mathematics curriculum for 9th and 10th grades have been designed and aligned to meet the requirements of the Common Core State Standards, the Massachusetts Frameworks and the Westfield District Curriculum Standards. The ninth grade teachers give a pretest to incoming freshmen to determine proper placement into math classes. Freshman students are grouped onto a team of subject area teachers one from each of the disciplines (math, English, social studies, and science). This team of teachers has a common planning time once a day. Algebra 2 books are fairly new but are not aligned to the Common Core State Standards. There are 20 Probability and Statistics books for 47 senior students enrolled with 27 students in the largest class.

SMART Boards are used in three of the five math classrooms. One of the other two math classrooms has been measured for the SMART Board and one will be installed as soon as the money is released. All the math department teachers have a classroom set of graphing calculators. The math teachers can schedule time in the library to use the laptop cart. A few working computers have been installed in a former science room.

Instructors use word walls to increase the students' comprehension of mathematical terminology. Tabletop discussions between students are used once a week during the last 30 minutes of the double period. Seniors are limited to two course selections, Pre-calculus and Probability and Statistics, despite a wide variety of ability levels. Thirty ALEKS (Algebra 1)

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programs were bought and integrated into the ninth and tenth grade self-contained mathematics classes taught by the math instructor in special education.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Providing professional development workshops to prepare teachers to teach technical mathematics and problem solving skills to attain success in high stakes testing as well as in their technical programs.
2. Updating Algebra 1 and Geometry textbooks and aligning the curricula with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, Westfield District Curriculum Standards and Common Core State Standards.
3. Collaborating and integrating math class and technical programs, such as, Collision Technology and Electrical Wiring, for student-driven round robin table top discussions.
4. Using remediation and extra practice worksheets from online resources: khanacademy.org, sheppardsoftware.com, mathisfun.org, havefunteaching.com, and mnrussbaum.com.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Reinstating a department head in the building to organize and hold formal meetings as well as, disseminate information in regards to student progress and curriculum goals.
2. Providing more student access to computers for use with the mathematics curriculum and instruction.
3. Offering a wider variety of course selections for seniors.
4. Obtaining another classroom set of Probability and Statistics books.
5. Reducing the size of the larger classes or providing a co-teacher in those courses.
6. Purchasing additional ALEKS program licenses to accommodate all students.

SECTION 3.15: P.E. – HEALTH

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Physical Education and Health Department at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) consists of two teachers, one full time physical education instructor and one full time health instructor. During freshman year, all students take each class for two semesters each (each class is worth .25 credits). During sophomore, junior and senior years, students can elect to take each class for the entire year (each class is worth .5 credits). Class periods are 38 minutes long, and typically 15 classes will make up a semester.

Some students will not have either subject, based on a variety of reasons, which include shop related periods, classes with double periods or students with IEP's. Grades are given to students on a numerical scale, which is based on class readiness/participation, skills testing, and test/quizzes.

The gymnasium floor has been replaced, and they are waiting for padding to be installed on the baselines. Bleachers are on one side of the gym, and there is a boys and girls locker room area with showers. There is also an exercise room off the gym, stocked with exercise equipment and free weights. There is available equipment, some dated, for class, so some creativity is needed for certain activities. The health room is an open space that provides instructor and students with plenty of room for class room interaction. However, 10 computers were relocated from that classroom to create a computer lab in another part of the building. There are also textbooks for the classes, but there is only one health text for all four levels of class.

There is an existing curriculum for physical education, while the health curriculum is a work in progress. The health instructor is also teaching a personal finance course for juniors. The administrator in charge of this department does not work in the building on a full time basis, but does spend one day a week at WVTHS.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends Westfield Vocational Technical High School for the following:

1. Replacing the gymnasium floor and addressing the drainage issues around the gymnasium.
2. Department faculty working diligently and professionally, despite obvious issues within the department (outdated health textbooks and no male physical education teacher).

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3. Ensuring the philosophy and curricula of the physical education and health department ensures the student body age appropriate topics that address a variety of learning styles and ability levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Addressing the need for male staff coverage in the boys' locker room before and after each class.
2. Updating textbooks and teacher resource materials for all health classes.
3. Replacing the 10 computers, provide printer access and add more white board space in the health room.
4. Updating existing physical education equipment.
5. Creating a district health curriculum based on indicators from the National Education Health Standards.

SECTION 3.16: SCIENCE

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Science Department at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) offers a variety of science classes including a recent shift in the science department regarding freshmen. Previously, freshman students were enrolled in biology and took the MCAS or were enrolled in engineering and took the Technology/Engineering MCAS. Within the last four years, all freshmen students are enrolled in Engineering and take the Technology/Engineering MCAS in June. Engineering is a project-based course which frequently integrates with vocational areas. Engineering teachers are actively involved with creating and updating the curriculum in partnership with the Museum of Science. Freshman students are broken up into teams, which allows a team comprised of English, Math, Social Studies, and Science teachers to meet on a weekly basis to discuss student progress.

Grades 10-12 take science courses specific to their vocational program which includes: biology, chemistry, engineering II, forensics, physics, and robotics. Students choose their science classes based upon discussions with their current science teachers and vocational instructors. Beginning with the class of 2018, students must complete a total of two and one half science credits rather than the two credits required from previous years. Class sizes range from 10 to 33 students, including inclusion classes.

There are three instructors in the Science Department who collaboratively work together to develop new curriculum and improve upon already established courses. Each instructor comes from industry and incorporates their knowledge into their courses. Every instructor has two preparatory/common planning periods and one duty per cycle. Instructors are actively involved in school after school activities including sports and extracurricular activities.

Two science instructors have recently switched classrooms, which resulted in the instructor who currently teaches biology and chemistry being in a classroom that is not conducive to laboratory classes. The biology/chemistry classroom does not have gas, a locked chemical storage room to properly store chemicals, or adequate running water. Important safety equipment such as a safety shower, eyewash, fire extinguisher and fire blanket are also absent from the room.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Successfully switching from biology to engineering for freshmen to more accurately reflect the needs of the students.
2. Creating new course offerings directly related to vocational programs.

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3. Dramatically improving MCAS scores.
4. Collaborating with the Museum of Science to update and modify a project based engineering curriculum that directly relates to vocational technical education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Updating chemical storage area to ensure chemicals are stored according to their chemical classification and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.
2. Replacing desktop computers in Physics lab with laptops to further facilitate project based learning.
3. Creating a chemistry/biology laboratory classroom that meets Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) guidelines.
4. Providing an additional science teacher to aid with the teaching of new courses, increased student enrollment and inclusion courses.
5. Developing a Chemistry and Biology curriculum including inquiry based labs that mirror college level programs.

SECTION 3.17: SOCIAL STUDIES

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Social Studies program at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is a dynamic department with energetic faculty, offering courses for students at all levels in Grades 9-12, with US I, US II, and Personal Finance as required courses and electives in American Government and Current Issues. Courses are “Competency Based” focusing on ELA Standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks: 1. Reading, 2: Writing, 3: Speaking and Listening, 4: Research and Evidence and course curricula have all been aligned successfully with both the MA State Content Frameworks and Common Core Standards.

The Social Studies Department has four instructors, including one dual certified in Special Education. The Department has completely integrated Special Education students into their program. The Special Education faculty works with the Social Studies instructors to meet the various needs of all students in inclusion settings and also consults with general education teachers about the special needs of their particular students. Without a lead teacher or department head, the department faculty works collaboratively on projects such as the creation of Curriculum Maps during the 2013-14 school year.

Available technology is well utilized by the entire department; full advantage is taken of school computer labs, library facilities, and classroom technology (SMART Board, Elmo, etc). Students work regularly on guided and independent research using computer technology on topics relevant to their lives and their vocational areas. Content relevant to vocational areas is stressed in required US History courses, especially labor history and research based on vocational content.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Connecting history content to students’ lives with focus on modern research skills vocational content, local history, and relevant real-life experiences.
2. Integrating Special Education students and staff into all Social Studies courses through inclusion classes.
3. Using technology regularly within school, making the content and skills accessible to all students, regardless of home access.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Increasing access to computer technology in all courses.

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2. Designating a department head or lead teacher to help disseminate information, provide opportunities for content-based professional development and network with local Social Studies departments.
3. Acquiring new resources for courses in Personal Finance and American Government.

SECTION 3.18: SPECIAL EDUCATION

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) provides educational services to nearly 500 students in a Chapter 74-approved, Career and Technical Education program school, as a part of the Westfield Public Schools. A portion of the school's Mission, Vision, Philosophy and Goals states following: "We are committed to providing a supportive and safe environment in order to meet the intellectual and social needs of our diverse student body. This philosophy is implemented by adhering to our core values: Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Diversity, Excellence."

The services coordinated to meet the needs of students with disabilities are implemented with the school mission firmly in mind. The percentage of students serviced through the Special Education eligibility and Individual Education Plan (IEP) process is approximately 28%; 135 students of a total school population of 482. Six percent of students with IEPs are identified to have disabilities on the Autism spectrum, for which the district offers part-time support to students and faculty. All students are accepted to WVTHS in a manner consistent with the school's approved Admissions Policy.

The Special Education department consists of the following personnel:

- A half-time Special Education Supervisor, hired at the district level, who has duties at other city schools.
- Seven duly licensed, building-level special education teachers. Three of those hold dual licenses, covering special education and a content area.
- Eight building-level paraprofessionals, flexibly utilized to support students in both academic and technical settings.

Supervision and support for department staff is limited by the partial-week presence of the Special Education Supervisor, although frequent communication is available through other means, as needed. The Supervisor serves as Team chairperson for all initial and re-evaluation eligibility Team meetings. Special Education teachers serve as Team chairperson for most annual review Team meetings, based on an assigned liaison caseload, and have primary responsibility to develop the IEP draft document, based on the findings and recommendations of the IEP Team. The Special Education Supervisor coordinates the educator evaluation process with all of the teachers and authorizes the utilization of district-level specialists that support both direct and related services.

A potential challenge to service delivery is the district re-assignment of supervisors to different sites on a semi-regular basis. This practice constrains growth and adversely impacts services to students, counteracting the powerful impact of the energy expended to build quality relationships with students, parents and faculty, leading to consistent service delivery and positive student outcomes.

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The program model currently utilized to meet the academic needs of students with disabilities relies primarily on small-class instruction outside the regular education classroom in English and Math. An initiative to move toward an “inclusion” model in Science and Social Studies has been undertaken and is in early stages of implementation. Additionally, instruction in life skills and learning strategies are also offered within a small-group setting for students with identified needs. Although the efforts to move toward providing instruction and supports in the least restrictive setting and with access to the same instruction offered to general education students are commendable and mandated by law, early challenges will require assessment/solutions in the following areas: overall class sizes, percentage of disabled students in a class, available instructional resources and personnel to adequately address student instructional needs, space availability, common planning time for staff teaming in inclusion settings.

Ultimately, sound educational decisions are made based on immediate student need rather than adherence to a philosophical model that may not be able to be consistently implemented, due to inadequate resources and logistics. However, that variation is a potential threat to the long-term viability of the school’s commitment to the model.

It is apparent that student success for diverse learners is based on the compassion and commitment of the faculty and administration at WVTHS. The entire school culture is filled with passion for students and their success, regardless of ability. This has fostered a climate of communication and cooperation at all levels of the operation, with student success being the ultimate measure of worth. As this relates to special education services, the shared commitment allows students of differing abilities to receive maximum attention to their needs, in spite of a lack of resources in a number of key areas. The one resource that is never lacking is caring for each and every student in the school. The dedication of the faculty has built a structure that lifts all students, especially those with the highest need. A culture of “celebration” of student accomplishment is developing daily.

There is evidence of a high level of communication between administrators at all levels, along with student service and special education personnel, regarding the academic, technical, and social-emotional needs and welfare of students at-risk. School administrators provide direct support in getting IEP information to academic and technical teachers for review and planning. Numerous processes exist to identify, refer, and ultimately accommodate students in need of support in all areas of their educational experience. A few notables include the following: a Mentoring program spearheaded by the Principal, a Building Support Team that meets bi-weekly to identify and resolve student needs, and the existence of a full-time School Adjustment Counselor and Substance Abuse Counselor available through Student Services. There is no specific data at present, but it can be presumed that the multiple layers of support offered touch student populations of the highest need most often.

By all indications, special education personnel are working effectively to meet their regulatory responsibilities in regards to the special education process, with support from the Special Education Supervisor and building administration. It is reported that special education staff communication with parents is prioritized and is an essential component of student commitment and growth. Moving forward, it is the vision of the department staff to

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continue to provide quality educational opportunities to all students served, collaborating with their academic and technical colleagues to expand access to programs and to support students to function in the least restrictive academic and technical settings possible.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for:

1. Developing a strong commitment to educational success for all students, regardless of ability.
2. Communicating and sharing diligently as a faculty to provide quality services to students, with limited resources.
3. Collaborating to successfully implement student supports across academic, technical and social-emotional realms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Increasing the Special Education Supervisor role to full-time at WVTHS.
2. Providing increased resources to support the inclusion initiative, as necessary to address identified barriers to model success.
3. Significantly upgrade access to technology (hardware and software) to improve instruction and student learning.
4. Increasing the number of staff available to support students with disabilities in technical environments to assure required access to the curriculum.

SECTION 4: EDUCATIONAL MEDIA SERVICES

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The library media center at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is located on the third floor of the academic wing and services the whole student body. It is open during the school day with the exception of the academic lunch and has extended hours one day per week. The library media specialist performs administrative duties one period per day during which time coverage is provided. The library media center is closed when the library media specialist is not in the building.

Since the introduction of the Common Core, the library media center has seen an increase in class visits, individual use, circulation and collaboration. This collaboration includes creating a lesson for assignments on how to access appropriate resources for specific assignments. In addition to teacher, this year the library media specialist is working with freshman students during exploratory to introduce students to the library media center and explain how to navigate the Destiny library catalog and databases within their Lexile levels.

The library media center has an attractive webpage with links to the library catalog, database icons, hours of operations and other basic information. Popular books are displayed and book series are clearly marked and displayed for better accessibility. There are 58 magazine subscriptions that cater to personal enrichment, academic and career related periodicals and local newspapers. Twelve computer stations and 30 laptops are available for use in the library media center. Approximately 12,000 volumes make up the collection with the age ranging from 12 to 18 years, with the exception of graphic novels (five years). A large percentage of the collection is outdated especially the age sensitivity of five years for the science, social sciences, medicine, history. To align with the Common Core, the library media specialist has started to augment non-fiction materials and purchased some e-books. There are also audio-books and videos that complete the collection. Since students can access the Destiny catalog from local schools, they can request materials through Inter Library Loan. Recently, the Destiny catalog and the databases are accessible off campus through the library media center webpage. The databases are provided by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Over the past several years, the library media center budget has been reduced and for the past three years it has remained at \$5,000.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 4: Educational Media services and is engaged in the process of continual improvement.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Collaborating with teachers in the academic and vocational programs.
2. Meeting with other library media specialist in the district.

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3. Providing accessibility of the library media center catalog off campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Providing coverage when the library media specialist is not in school.
2. Providing coverage to allow time to meet with departments to collaborate with instructors.
3. Withdrawing outdated books from the collection.

SECTION 5: STUDENT SERVICES

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Student services extend into four areas of the self-study. They include: Admissions, Guidance, Health and Safety, and Auxiliary (Transportation). There is professional staff for student support services in these areas that include, but are not limited to the dean of students, guidance counselors, special education director split between three schools in district, school adjustment counselor, substance abuse counselor, school nurse, school resource officers, special education secretary, and a student services secretary. Health Service providers include one vision and hearing screener shared through the school system and two Emergency room physicians, part-time for the school system. There is also one vision specialist and one hearing specialist shared in the system. They have a physical therapist and an occupational therapist that are shared with the district that have offices at the high school and are available for scheduling based on students' needs.

Admission to the Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is available to all students upon entrance to the ninth grade. WVTHS has an admissions committee appointed by the principal composed of members of the guidance department and special education department. Students return their completed applications to the guidance department where their counselor completes their portion and then forwards it to WVTHS. The student is interviewed and applications are reviewed by the admissions committee using an application assessment form. The admissions committee grades applicants based on five factors: scholastic achievement, attendance, student interview, school discipline, and local guidance recommendation. The state approved rubric is based on 100 points and the cut off score for admittance is 60 points out of 100. WVTHS typically admits 120-140 students.

WVTHS guidance counselors have a caseload of approximately 250 students. They serve all students grades 9 through 12 and are split alphabetically. The MASS Career Inventory Service is completed by the guidance counselors with 9th grade students and students in transition. Big Future through College Board is a program designed to assist students with post-secondary options such as career choice and/or college placement based on PSAT and SAT scores. Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery is also available for students.

Emergency care is provided by one full time school nurse; two part-time school physicians provide emergency care. WVTHS also uses 911 EMS services and Noble Hospital as well as Code Blue Emergency Response team in school with staff trained in CPR and AED. The Nurse is a certified CPR instructor through the American Heart Association. The building has two AED's; one in the upper campus and one in the lower campus. Shops, vans, and trucks are supplied with first aid kits. The Building Support Team meets every other week and referral forms are given to all staff. Faculty and staff are given medical information for students when necessary based on the federal HIPPA regulations. Individual Health Care Plans are written by the nurse, physician, and parents. These plans are shared with staff when necessary, based on the federal HIPPA regulations.

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Students in grades 11 and 12 take OSHA 10 in the Electrical Wiring, Construction Technology, and Ornamental Horticulture programs. All freshmen have three days of safety training on recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of safety and health hazards in the workplace. The school nurse gives in-service training regarding life threatening allergies, anaphylaxis, and use of an EpiPen. The school practices fire drills and lockdown drills.

The building support team at WVTHS does crisis intervention. Any staff member who has knowledge of a student at risk notifies a building support team member. The building support team members include administration, adjustment counselor, substance abuse counselor, school nurse, and school resource officer. An assessment is made and the parent is notified. Students are sent to the crisis center at Noble Hospital or Baystate Behavioral Health. Students are also referred to community agencies and private therapists. WVTHS has a crisis intervention team and code blue team to intervene with emotional and physical threats to the student body. The school also offers grief groups for the students and the ART Program for the girls' therapy group. Staff is offered a flu clinic at the school. Faculty and staff at WVTHS receive updated publications for various physical and mental health issues. The school also offers referrals to the Salvation Army, Baystate Behavioral Health and other community organizations to help with health and safety needs. The school offers physicals for work and sports. There is a school-run food bank on site for students and families in need.

Transportation to WVTHS is provided by the school department in two waves; buses bring students to WVTHS and then proceed to Westfield High School. The second wave brings students to Westfield High before proceeding on to WVTHS with the WVTHS students. Alternate transportation is provided for students in the essential life skills program. There is little funding provided for transportation for students involved in extra-curricular activities outside of athletics. School initiatives include Read 180 and System 44. These programs have increased overall testing scores within the school. The freshman academy program of three teams of academic teachers encourages cooperation with academic departments to ensure student success.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 5: Student Services and is engaged in the process of continual improvement.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Programs that encourage academic success (Read 180 and System 44) have increased overall testing scores within the school.
2. Returning the position of a full-time substance abuse counselor to address needs around substance abuse.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The visiting committee recommends:

1. Continuing to expand programs offered to students for career and education advancement.
2. Offering CPR and First Aid professional development training at times more suitable to staff schedules in order to encourage better enrollment.
3. Creating a budget that incorporates transportation for career area programs and academics.
4. Providing increased funding for transportation for extra-curricular activities after the school day.

SECTION 6: STUDENT RECORDS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) has 494 students enrolled in 11 vocational programs. The school serves 135 special needs students.

All student records are kept in electronic format and hard copy. The records are regularly maintained and updated throughout the school year. All medical records are stored in the nurse's office, cumulative records in the guidance office and Special Education records in the Special Education office. Guidance, special education, and nurse personnel are responsible for adding or including updated documentation in student folders. The vocational technical instructors maintain individual competency attainment and hours.

The Westfield Public School uses an SIS system, PowerSchool, in which pertinent information regarding all students registered in the Westfield Public Schools is maintained. School staff has access only to the students registered in their schools. Students and parent/guardians can access individual student accounts online using specific log-in credentials generated for student accounts.

Confidentiality of computer records is maintained. Entry into the system is pass code protected and managed by the Technology Center. Confidentiality of student folders is maintained by limiting access of these records to key personnel, and by securing files in locked cabinets and offices when school is not in session.

Report cards are completed on PowerSchool. The teachers record students' grades into PowerSchool. Report cards are then generated from PowerSchool and issued to students in their career areas, except for the fourth quarter when they are mailed home. WVTHS also has Parent's Night which allows parent/guardians that do not own a computer to access their child's school progress and attendance reports. Mid-term reports are given to each student who is failing an academic or vocational class. Special education teachers are to complete quarterly progress reports on each student in their respective special education classes. These reports are completed on a web based program, ESPED and are handed out to the students after the report cards are distributed. Some education plans mandate biweekly progress reports be sent home. These reports are different from the progress reports and require the teacher to complete the current grade and comments. Liaisons distribute the reports, collect the completed report, and mail or email them to the parent/guardian.

First period attendance is inputted directly into PowerSchool at 7:22 a.m. by the class teacher for daily attendance. Subsequent attendance reports, taken each class period, are also

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inputted directly into PowerSchool. There is a daily attendance report provided to teachers by 8:06 a.m.

Health records are maintained by the school nurse. Records of students with significant health issues are kept in a locked cabinet for confidentiality. Emergency cards are sent home with all students at the start of the school year and are held by the nurse after they are returned. The nurse medical record system, known as SNAP, has multiple layers of security. At the network level, access to the nurse server that contains the system is blocked to students. This system is a separate system and does not allow teachers or students any access. Access to the SNAP system requires an administrative computer, an administrative network connection, a windows user name and a SNAP user account.

A survey is presented to seniors before graduation, asking them information regarding post-graduation plans. Graduates are contacted with a follow-up survey which is mailed home and/or phone calls are made to check with the graduates. The results are then entered into the DESE's security portal under the CVTE Survey. Students' cumulative folders are locked up in a storage area for one year in the school. Cumulative folders are filed and kept in a locked file cabinet for up to seven years. Graduating students' transcripts have been archived in PowerSchool since 2013 and in a student information system named STARBASE for students from 1999 to 2013.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 6: Student Records and is engaged in the process of continual improvement.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Adding the position of Student Services Secretary to help ensure that records are maintained in an adequate and timely manner.
2. Implementing the PowerSchool system that allows teachers, students, and parent/guardians access to necessary information.
3. Creating a Parent's Night that allows all parent/guardians to have access to PowerSchool regardless of owning a home computer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The visiting committee recommends:

1. Expanding Parent's Night to include computer literacy training for parent/guardians.
2. Providing comprehensive training for the staff on the PowerSchool system.
3. Hiring a full time tech person for the school that is available to staff on a daily basis to provide support and maintenance.

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SECTION 7: SCHOOL STAFF

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The School Staff at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) consists of four Administrators, 30 Vocational instructors, fifteen Academic teachers, two ESL teachers, two Health-PE teachers, one Library Media Specialist, four Counselors, seven Special Education teachers, one Psychologist (shared throughout the district), fifteen Paraprofessional support staff, three Clerical Support Staff, four Food Service Staff, one Westfield Police Officer (school resource officer) and seven Custodial Staff. There is no (WVTHS) technology coordinator on staff currently. WVTHS has many committees through which staff have input into decision making process. The lead teachers for vocational programs, along with administrative staff and the director of marketing make decisions on Chapter 74 budgetary issues, Perkins fund allocation, large scale community involvement and building use.

Staff members communicate a commitment to excellence by setting high standards with the expectation that all students will be able to successfully transition to the work force, military, or pursue higher education upon graduation. Staff members serve as role models by demonstrating professionalism, a strong work ethic, good citizenship, and an enthusiasm for learning in and outside the classroom. Staff uses the best instructional practices to maximize student engagement for increased learning. WVTHS is following all guidelines of the state initiatives. The staff is highly involved with the student population, as evidenced by the high standards that the student body is held to. The school staff is sufficient to support all educational programs and others as indicated by student needs and the school mission statement.

The faculty and staff have a strong sense of their unique and diverse student body. The students are offered many kinds of clubs and committees such as You Lead, Renaissance Club, Key Club, Gay Straight Alliance, Youth Medical Reserve Corp, FBLA, Prom Committee, Drama Club, Student Council, Rachel's Challenge and Yearbook. Many of these clubs are run after normal school hours by staff volunteers. The staff all agrees that (WVTHS) is a safe place for students to be after school, and faculty want to encourage and foster that belief.

Sports play a big part of the community and the staff at WVTHS act as coaches for basketball, soccer, golf, softball and baseball.

The school has a substantial student mentoring program. This year 124 students are being mentored by community members. Each mentor provides one-on-one attention in order to help the students with academics, continuing educational needs, social and emotional issues, organizational skills, and other difficulties the student might be experiencing.

School staff work collaboratively to meet the defined goals of WVTHS. The staff and faculty meet or exceed all state and local certification requirements. Educators on waivers show evidence of progress in obtaining licensure. Professional development on the new teacher evaluation system has been initiated. Union negotiations on the use of SMART goals and the district evaluation tool are awaiting final approval. The staff encourages professional growth and student support.

The school calendar provides four professional development days and six half days per year. Teachers and administrators participate in all professional development days. The administration team plans the school- based professional development activity. The first half of the year the focus of the school has been on conditions of school effectiveness and the integration of the vocational and academic sides of the building; the second half of the year, district teachers lead the sessions and faculty and staff are allowed to choose which training session fits their needs most.

Staff enjoy the work environment at WVTHS, working with each other for the best interest of the student body. Each department from administration to maintenance/custodial demonstrate pride in their work and in their school. They make it happen and get it done.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 7: Staff and is engaged in the process of continual improvement relative to that standard.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Staff encourage a positive culture and climate. Staff and students feel supported.
2. Staff realize the importance of integration across the curriculum.
3. Staff has implemented a strong student mentoring program.
4. Staff adhere to Special Education documentation guidelines.
5. Staff identify at-risk students and move these students into a system of support.
6. A substance abuse counselor has been added to the staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Creating a full-time administrative position of Academic Coordinator.

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2. Hiring an in-house educational technician and/or technology support person to support technology instruction and remedy technical issues in a timely manner.
3. Providing content specific training and workshops that can assure meeting recertification requirements.
4. Creating faculty collaboration time on a regular basis.
5. Aligning district goals utilizing staff input.
6. Encouraging multi-school departmental collaboration.
7. Utilizing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) training to cross multiple disciplines.

SECTION 8: ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Administration at Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) consists of five male personnel in the following roles: Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Student Services, Director of Vocational Programs and Cooperative Education Placement Director (CEPD). Each member of the Administrative team has generally defined duties consistent with administrative responsibilities at most technical schools, under the overall direction of the school Principal.

The Administration of WVTHS has undergone significant reconstruction over the past 10 years, but has seen an increase in stability and leadership under the current Principal. The climate of the school has improved considerably, energizing faculty and students and instilling a sense of pride in the community at large.

The Principal functions as the educational leader of the school, makes decisions and authorizes the use of resources within the school building, and is the conduit for information and initiatives that flow from District administration. The Principal assigns additional duties based on district initiatives to members of the Administrative team, as needed.

Administrators generally function autonomously in their roles, with the oversight of the school Principal. The Principal's role is currently one of notably strong leadership, with passionate belief in the WVTHS mission and commensurate practice to achieve the school community's stated goals.

The Administrative team, functioning as a building-level leadership unit for the purpose of planning and implementing practice consistent with the school's mission and goals, utilizes four of the five administrators in a format of bi-weekly, collaborative meetings. These sessions cover all aspects of the school operation, leading to a unified message to students and faculty. The CEPD does not routinely participate in these sessions, due primarily to the priority of pursuing community-based vocational opportunities for students, over Administrative team input and involvement. The cooperative education program is currently

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considered to be significantly underutilized. The Director of Vocational Programs supervises the CEPD.

The Director of Vocational Programs position is a new administrative position, approved by the Superintendent and School Committee at the request of the Principal, and is considered necessary to alleviate stagnancy in the Cooperative Education program and provide increased curriculum development and delivery and support. The stagnancy was suspected to be due to the time and logistical burden of combining the CEPD role with that of the Director of Vocational Programs in the recent past.

With the oversight of the Principal, all school administrators are assigned evaluation responsibilities, as informed by the Educator Evaluation process outlined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Administrators provide support and feedback to their assigned evaluatees on goal setting and gathering evidence of progress. School improvement efforts are guided by the Principal and are structured through the existence of a School Improvement Council with representation of parents, students, teachers and administrators. Development of the School Improvement Plan is based on directed input from the Council, and is aligned with the district's improvement plan. Structures from the most recent Plan include curriculum mapping, the formation of a Data Team, creation of a School Climate Committee, and implementation of a new student information system (PowerSchool) that increases communication and parent access to instructional information. The current school improvement efforts are laudable and realistic, given the momentum that is building in the school community.

Academically, the school lacks necessary administrative oversight. The Principal, Assistant Principal, and Director of Student Services work together, to plan, implement and monitor curriculum and instruction. Academic departments do not currently utilize veteran teachers in "lead teacher" roles, which has potential as an alternative to fully dedicated administrative oversight. Ultimately, the school needs to address curriculum development in a targeted, on-going manner. The current administrative structure does not allow for the level of support needed.

As addressed in the Special Education report, nearly one-third of the school population is identified as eligible for special education services. The school currently is provided a half-time, district-level Special Education Supervisor to coordinate the special education regulatory process, as monitored by DESE's Program Quality Assurance process, evaluate special education staff, and provide programming support in conjunction with building administration. Given the level of student need, the overall level of district support for special education service development and oversight is less than adequate, in spite of constructive and cooperative working relationships between building administrators and the Special Education Supervisor.

The Administration has created and supports structures that increase student input into the quality of school programs. Student representation is present at School Committee meetings. School Council and Student Council structures are in place to include students in dialogue about all aspects of school programming. Class officers are elected, providing leadership and

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event/fundraising opportunities. Numerous co-curricular and extra-curricular clubs are also available for student participation, including Skills USA, Key Club, FFA and Renaissance Club, among many others. The athletic programs are developing and can be a source of attraction for future student recruitment. The impression is clear that the Administration supports the creation of organizations that assist in developing well-rounded and civic-minded young adults.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 8: Administration and is engaged in the process of continual improvement relative to that standard.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. Providing strong, inspirational leadership from the Principal's office.
2. Fostering improved visibility and community presence through administrative support of quality student programs.
3. Implementing various initiatives that address student needs at all levels of student development, in a nurturing and timely manner.
4. Creating a school culture that embraces and bonds all school community stakeholders, driving school improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Providing administrative oversight for the school's academic programs/curriculum development.
2. Supporting development of staff and curriculum through a "lead teacher" model.
3. Expanding the role of the Special Education Supervisor from half-time to full-time building level utilization.
4. Increasing support for development and supervision of athletic programs to enhance student development.
5. Continuing to prioritize and direct resources toward development of the Cooperative Education program to expand opportunities for student growth.

SECTION 9: FINANCE AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

As a Westfield district school, funding is provided by the school district. Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is one of two secondary schools in the city of approximately 50,000. WVTHS receives both Carl D. Perkins and Title 1 funds. Perkins contributions amounted to \$67,436 for SY 2013-2014 to support the purchasing of equipment and educational materials that support the technical educational programs above the district's education budget. The school received \$90,000 in Title 1 funds for FY 2013-2014 which are used for the mentoring program and a math interventionist. It should be noted that Title 1 funds have decreased by over \$7,000 for the period.

The school principal is responsible for developing the school budget each year in consort with the district's Director of Technology and Business Services. The principal has been very proactive and has established an excellent working relationship with district office personnel. Because of his efforts and the strong support he has garnered from the students, staff, Advisory Committees and local political leaders, the district continues to provide help whenever it can. Further, to the school's credit, and despite the real budgetary shortfall, the school continues to answer the call to provide help in community projects.

However, financial resources of the school have been in decline for several years. The reasons for the reductions in overall budget are many and they mirror the overall economic conditions of a town and a region in transition. Both the school and the town officials who are responsible for providing funding to the school recognize that the school's funding is not adequate. It is in this collective recognition that there is hope for the future. This is not to say that the town of Westfield has abrogated its responsibilities to WVTHS. The town recently invested over seventeen million dollars in facility renovations to the 'upper' campus building (built in 1931). This investment, and the direct involvement and honest dialogue provided by the district fiscal official responsible during our visit, show a strong bond between the school and the district. The district has also provided additional funding for various school improvement projects.

However, the reality is that WVTHS has special needs specific to the technologies embedded in the programs at the school. Capital equipment and the associated materials that are specific to preparing students for entry into 21st century workplaces need regular updating and replenishment just as in the industries the school strives to serve. Further, WVTHS must also provide a comparably strenuous academic program for its students, many of whom require additional services to meet their individual learning needs, just like any comprehensive secondary school.

Despite the budgetary issues, the school, under its new leadership, has not stood still. The school has applied for and received over one hundred and eighty thousand dollars in grant money from various sources to provide much needed services. There are ongoing efforts to

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fill budgetary holes in a variety of alternative ways including admirable fundraising efforts and live work in the technical programs.

The budget is developed at the district level as part of the broader education budget; staff input exists but it is limited. The staff is kept updated on the budget process as it unfolds, through staff meetings and through access to minutes of budget meetings. Prior to the close of the budget process, staff are provided a two week window for input, and requests are considered based on real need and reasonable rationale.

Efficient, albeit rudimentary, procedures for the requisitioning of materials and equipment are maintained and exercised. Staff complete requisitions forms that are submitted to the Administrative Assistant for approval by the building principal. All requisitions over \$25,000 must be sent out to bid. Records of all funds collected and disbursed in connection with any part of the school's program are kept in an accurate and systematic form. The Principal's Administrative Assistant oversees all deposits and expenditures allowed. Appropriate systems for the collection and disbursement of funds seem adequate. Money collected for approved live work done in the technical areas is processed through the main office. Those funds are deposited to the district account and then credited back to the technical program through their revolving account.

Receipts for services rendered are received by the main office and deposited in a timely fashion. Any funds not immediately deposited are kept in the school's safe until they are deposited (no longer than once a week).

Additionally, adequate funds are not being appropriated to support the Student Activity program. While the advisors' compensation is funded by the district, student activities are not directly funded. No seed money is appropriated and all student activities must be self sustaining. Consequently, students and staff collaborate on fundraising activities to continue to buttress activities that are important to students and supportive of the school's stated mission and goals.

The governing board and the administration exercise control over all financial operations and an appropriate system of checks and balances is in place to ensure integrity in the collection and disbursement of all school funds. Records of all funds collected and disbursed are audited at appropriate intervals (all accounts are audited by an outside firm yearly) in accordance with local and state requirements.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 9: Finance and Business Operations and is engaged in the process of continual improvement relative to that standard with the important exceptions delineated above and illuminated by the visiting committee recommendations below.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

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1. The principal has taken the initiative to seek grant funding and every other available source to fill gaps in the budget.
2. The purposeful efforts by the administration to develop positive, collegial relationships with district administrators to ensure that the vision of the school is known and respected.
3. Continuing to meet the growing educational needs of the students despite budgetary shortfalls.
4. The excellent service provided by the Principal's Administrative Assistant in all matters pertaining to school finance.
5. The entrepreneurial spirit exhibited by the entire school community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Establishing a dedicated capital fund for the ongoing budgetary needs of the school.
2. Continuing to seek out all possible revenue sources until budget shortfalls are mitigated.

SECTION 10: SCHOOL FACILITIES

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The School Facilities at the Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) serve 482 students, 57 teachers, sixteen paraprofessionals and shop assistants, two guidance counselors, one school adjustment counselor, one school nurse, one school resource officer, one library media specialist, six administrative assistants, five administrators, one head custodian, and seven custodial workers. There is one cafeteria supervisor overseeing five cafeteria workers.

The mailing address is 33 Smith Avenue Westfield, Massachusetts. Smith Avenue, King Street, Franklin Avenue, and Hubbard Street bound the school and playing fields. The school is situated on twelve acres and eighteen additional acres are taken up with sports facilities. The total physical plant totals 220,000 square feet.

WVTHS consists of two large buildings joined by an enclosed connector system of hallway, stairs and elevator. The upper campus was constructed in 1931 and served as the Westfield High School. The lower campus was constructed in 1962 and served as Westfield Trade School. The middle campus was constructed in 1994. There are thirty-seven classrooms including related rooms located in both upper and lower campus buildings. There are eleven technical areas. The lower campus houses eight technical programs including: Collision Technology, Automotive Technology, Culinary Arts, Graphic Arts, Construction Technology, Information Technology, Manufacturing Technology, and Ornamental Horticulture. The upper level building houses Electrical Wiring, Business Technology, and Allied Health.

The current capacity of the school facility is as follows: Upper Campus Classrooms 250, Auditorium 786, Lower Campus Classrooms 250, Cafeteria 200, Gymnasium 450.

Both the upper and lower level campus buildings of the WVTHS have security measures in place to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff. Cameras are located sporadically throughout the buildings' hallways, one parking lot area, the main entrance, and some technical areas such as Electrical Wiring. Security cameras throughout the building, with the exception of Electrical Wiring, are accessible to the Principal and the School Resource Officer via the internet and are connected to recording media. Technical areas that receive deliveries or provide services to the community do not have the means to identify visitors before opening doors. Visitors to the main office are buzzed in via remote pushbutton and a visual monitor operated by administrative assistants. There is an insufficient number of cameras to ensure the safety of students and staff. There is insufficient lighting in the upper parking lot for student and staff safety. WVTHS employs a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) who is also part of the Westfield Police Department. The SRO works with the Substance Abuse Counselor to address students' issues. The SRO also assists students

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arriving and departing on school buses and assists the crossing guard monitor. The SRO also cites drivers for speeding and not obeying traffic bus stop flashing lights and signage.

The administration participates in the Westfield District Safety Committee which was newly formed this year. In response to national school emergencies, the Committee provided training in ALICE (Alert- Lockdown- Inform- Counter- Evacuate). The Principal and School Resource Officer of WVTHS will ensure training for staff and faculty. Regular fire drills and lockdowns are scheduled in accordance with district mandates. Evacuation drills have not yet been implemented. There are three defibrillators in the upper campus building with one located on each floor. Only the school nurse and SRO are trained in their usage.

Administration is planning to add three more defibrillators and determine their location on a future date. Building wide training on defibrillator usage needs to be implemented.

Considering the age of the physical plant, the custodial staff does an excellent job of upkeep given the available resources. The custodial staff is dedicated and performs routine maintenance of the building during the day and when school is not in session. Custodial and maintenance requests are handled on-demand, in-house either via email to the Principal or verbally with custodial staff. The administration of WVTHS is part of the Westfield District Facilities Committee. Technical and academic areas submit requests for orders and/or repairs which are then reviewed by the Principal and presented to the Committee for approval.

The bathrooms in both the upper and lower campus buildings are not handicapped accessible and all have plumbing fixture issues and outdated tiling which constitute a safety and health hazard. There are accessibility issues including handicapped access and there is insufficient spacing between stalls and within stalls for usage. Some bathrooms are missing doors and others are closed for renovations without proper signage.

The auditorium serves as a venue for outside community events in addition to student assemblies. The auditorium is bi-level with wooden seats in the upper level which are unsuitable for adult seating. The lower level seating was donated in the 1990's from a local middle school and are severely worn. The auditorium does not have audio/video/digital capabilities for modern presentations. The stage curtain pulls do not operate properly but one set of curtains do meet fire codes. The upper level balcony does not have adequate safety railings to prevent students from falling. There are exposed wires behind stage along with graffiti on walls. There are no sprinklers installed in the auditorium. Emergency lighting is insufficient.

The dust collection equipment in Construction Technology does not operate properly, consistently or effectively. This defect is a cause of concern for the health and safety of students and staff as well as to the physical structure of this program. The existing dust collection system was disconnected when the roof was repaired and reconnected improperly. The result of this action is the formation of condensation inside the dust collection tubes. This condensation freezes during the winter and eventually melts causing water to damage the newly installed floor.

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The upper campus building has sprinkler systems in only two main areas: a storage area which was formerly an HVAC shop and the Electrical Wiring program, which was formerly the school's gymnasium. Sprinkler systems do not exist anywhere else within the upper campus building, including the academic classrooms. Sprinkler systems are installed in the lower campus building except for the gymnasium. The main incoming sprinkler line was inspected during July of 2014. All fire extinguishers in the technical areas were recently inspected and up-to-date.

The upper campus building does not have adequate emergency lighting systems operational in the hallways, stairwells, related, and program areas. The existing emergency system consists of three to four single lamp direct-current shrouded lighting fixtures facing down in the hallways and stairwells. Existing emergency luminaires did not function when tested during the visit. The hallway lighting is obscured by the HVAC renovations to the upper campus building. In the event of a power outage, there would be insufficient lighting to ensure student and staff safety, especially during evening parent, athletic and community events. Places of refuge are not clearly marked in case of an emergency.

The lower campus building has battery backup ballasts installed for every other lighting fixture in the hallways. Exit signs are also backed up with battery power. There is no permanent, on-site gasoline/diesel generator for the purpose of providing emergency electric power to critical school systems, such as security, heating, and refrigeration in Culinary and school kitchen in both the upper and lower campus buildings. There was a natural gas powered generator at one time which was removed during the 1994 renovations/construction.

The upper and lower campus buildings both lack modernizing and beautification including replacement of damaged or stained suspended ceiling tiles and re-painting of walls and ceilings throughout the campus and stairwells.

All issues found during the October 16, 17, and 18, 2013 Safety Inspection have been corrected.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 10: School Facilities and is engaged in the process of continual improvement.

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends the WVTHS for the following:

8. Maintaining clean and functional physical plant and grounds.
9. Updating the HVAC and air handling equipment in the upper campus.
10. Replacing the roof, windows, and repointing existing masonry.
11. Installing replacement floors in the gymnasium and construction technology.
12. Replacing the stage floor.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Replacing plumbing fixtures and tiling in bathrooms throughout the campus.
2. Addressing accessibility issues as per ADA requirements in all bathrooms.
3. Repairing the dust collection system in the Construction Technology program.
4. Installing more effective lighting in the upper campus parking lot off of King Street.
5. Installing more security cameras inside and outside of WVTHS.
6. Developing a long-term plan to properly maintain the site and associated structures.
7. Providing staff training on defibrillator usage.
8. Implementing an electronic facilities maintenance repair request system.
9. Replacing damaged, stained, or missing ceiling tiles.
10. Replacing damaged or missing floor tiles.
11. Repainting ceilings, walls, stairwells and banisters where paint is chipping.
12. Installing sprinkler systems in the upper campus building, and where required by state fire protection codes.
13. Implementing an evacuation plan and drills for students and staff.
14. Ensuring proper evacuation signage throughout the buildings.
15. Providing A.L.I.C.E. training to all faculty, staff, and students.
16. Installing emergency lighting system in the upper campus building.
17. Designating sufficient areas of refuge to serve students and staff of WVTHS.
18. Securing covers of electrical panels throughout the campus.
19. Installing missing electrical box and fitting coves throughout the campus.
20. Storing gas cylinders in auto mechanics properly and securely.
21. Abating mold issues on the ceiling of the boys' locker room and shower.
22. Removing tripping hazards (floor tiles, rugs, old exposed pipes) throughout the building in hallways and classroom entrances.
23. Removing exposed wiring hazards found in rooms 312 and 115, the roof above auto collision and behind the stage in the auditorium.
24. Securing and labeling gated stairs at connector hallway near elevator.
25. Repairing anchor bolts supporting the fixed metal ladder in boiler room.
26. Removing old desk and other debris in courtyard near room 212.
27. Replacing broken doors/glass on fire extinguisher enclosures throughout the campus.
28. Repairing the following items in the future Aviation Technology room: exposed electrical box, holes in cinder block wall, and improperly mounted fire extinguisher.
29. Installing fire rated doors at the bottom of the connector stairwell to alleviate drafts.
30. Labeling and/or numbering of interior and exteriors doors.
31. Purchasing a riding snow thrower with sanding attachment.
32. Replacing carpet in library due to wear and tripping hazards.
33. Repairing/repainting elevator doors in both campus buildings.
34. Repairing broken light fixture located at the end of the upper campus building adjacent to the apiary.
35. Installing lighting along upper campus building near driveway adjacent to soccer/football field.

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36. Replacing missing vinyl siding on the gable end of the carpentry vehicle storage shed.
37. Replacing missing school lettering outside lower campus building south of main entrance.
38. Closing and securing hatch that leads to attic area at top of stairwell near room 409.
39. Removing general clutter from parking lot outside of the boiler room.
40. Installing safety railings in the upper level balcony in the auditorium to prevent students from falling.
41. Painting behind the stage area to remove the graffiti.
42. Repairing all holes in masonry throughout the campus.
43. Repainting the small shed (used as a ticket booth) and repairing the electrical issues.
44. Installing proper safety equipment in the Chemistry/Biology room 312.
45. Ensuring proper storage of chemicals in room 410 and all science labs.
46. Providing adequate grade D air to the respirator system in the Auto Collision program.
47. Updating all compressed gas cylinder storage throughout the campus to meet OSHA standards.

SECTION 11: SCHOOL ATMOSPHERE

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Westfield Vocational Technical High School (WVTHS) is the vocational technical high school that serves the city of Westfield. The school staff takes time to create events that attempt to unify the students. The first day of school involves the Back to School Assembly where seniors have their first opportunity to sit in the auditorium balcony, which is a long time tradition that students look forward to. WVTHS also hosts a Freshman Bar-B-Q and invite all freshman students, parents, and staff and which is prepared by the Culinary Arts seniors and staff. After eating, the three freshman academic teams are introduced to the parents. Clubs, coaches and faculty advisors are available to talk to students and parents about being involved. WVTHS also honors all student-athletes at the end of the fall season with a sports recognition assembly. WVTHS traditionally hosts an Annual Craft Fair as a fundraiser for the Senior Class. This provides an outlet for clubs and school organizations to let residents know about their outreach programs.

The WVTHS culture supports the school mission through school advisory boards, which provide collaboration to improve the quality of instruction, along with cooperative education opportunities for students. Students are included as members of the career area advisory boards. There are also numerous opportunities for academic and career area collaboration, which includes: English teachers assisting with resume writing and practice interviews and the Tech Math Project, which includes collaboration between math and career area instructors.

WVTHS has clear expectations for student and staff behavior through the 5 B's that are posted in each academic and career area classrooms. WVTHS main focus is to prepare students for the world of work in their trade areas so they are expected to behave in the workforce as they are in school. The student handbook contains the school discipline code in hard copy and is also posted in the school website.

In January 2014, there was a survey on school climate given to every student and completed anonymously so that there could be a better understanding of how students felt about the WVTHS school environment. The results were very positive with 92.6% of the students reporting they were happy with their decision to attend the school. Students also felt safe in their career and academic areas. The results showed that 88.8% found WVTHS is a supportive environment. WVTHS has created a mentoring program bringing in community residents to mentor and to work with 124 students that need the adult support to continue to be successful. WVTHS is also working with Massachusetts DSAC to create focus groups that will start to address areas that need improvement based on the student survey results.

WVTHS demonstrates a safe, secure welcoming environment for students. It is evident that staff is working in a safe, welcoming environment. The recent climate survey results show 98% of staff are happy to work at WVTHS. Staff has also expressed that they are grateful for

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the stability following a period of administrative turnover. Student and staff demonstrate pride in achievement and reflect a school unified in spirit. The school fosters and encourages activities and volunteerism. Students and staff are informed of school information through a system of open communication which offers students and staff opportunities for input. WVTHS recognizes that there is only a limited amount of programs encouraging multicultural diversity in a school that has students who speak Moldovan, Ukrainian, Russian, Spanish, and Nepali. Students and staff also recognize and express a desire to increase extra-curricular activities and to add athletic teams.

The Visiting Team agrees that Westfield Vocational Technical High School meets Standard 11: School Atmosphere and is engaged in the process of continual improvement

COMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee commends WVTHS for the following:

1. The willingness of the staff to put in the extra time when needed and to be flexible.
2. Cooperation and communication between administration and staff for important school-wide decisions.
3. School outreach programs and career area projects in the City of Westfield.
4. Creating a school climate committee to continue the improved communication between administration, staff, and students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Committee recommends:

1. Increasing educational budgets to create a better culture of learning and more effective educational programs.
2. Continuing to make improvements to the visual appearance of WVTHS.
3. Increasing extra-curricular and athletic opportunities for the students at WVTHS.
4. Increasing programs that encourage multicultural diversity such as the return of the annual diversity dinner.

CONCLUSION

This report of the findings of the Visiting Committee is forwarded to the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions which will make a decision on the accreditation of Westfield Vocational Technical High School.

The accreditation program for technical schools, as mentioned earlier, involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the Commission's Visiting Committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study and the valid recommendations of the Visiting Committee and those identified by the Commission in the follow-up process. Continued accreditation requires that schools be reevaluated at least once every ten years and that the school shows continued progress addressing identified needs. At intervals of two and five years, a report is required of the schools showing progress on recommendations produced in the decennial report. Additionally, a focused visit team will visit the school at the five-year point to add its own observations and findings relative to the progress the school is making.

The Visiting Committee has every confidence that the Westfield Vocational Technical High School community will embrace the recommendations in the spirit that they were made: the sincere desire on the part of all of us, your colleagues, for the very best future for your students and the continued improvement of your school.

The Visiting Committee wishes to thank the staff and administration of the Westfield Vocational Technical High School for its warm welcome and its cooperative efforts in providing the Visiting Committee with sufficient materials and information to complete this evaluation. The willingness to accommodate all requests and the sincere attention paid to our needs helped to make the process efficient, thorough, and rewarding.

Most importantly, the visiting committee found the budget for this school wanting. The unique nature of the programs at WVTHS demands monetary support. Just like industry, funds are required to update technology in a timely fashion. Strategic planning in consort with the industries it serves and the school system of which it is a part must be a priority. These efforts must be made to determine proper funding levels to ensure adequate alignment with the expectations of the business client/employers with which WVTHS wishes to partner, now and in the future.

The years ahead pose some daunting challenges for WVTHS. The Visiting Committee sincerely wishes the Westfield Vocational Technical High School students, faculty, staff, administration, advisory committees, strategic partners, and families the very best.

Special Commendations:

1. The school is focused and students are on task in the vast majority of areas every day and the real sense of happiness that pervades the building;
2. The palpable improvement in overall leadership and school wide vision;
3. The clear, honest self assessment provided to the visiting team;
4. The student body that seemed genuinely very happy to come to school each day;

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5. Veteran staff who are happy in their work and very committed to Westfield and their students;
6. The wonderful, accommodating, and flexible attitude of staff and students.
7. The 'can do' attitude that pervades the building starting with the principal and the staff he very competently leads.

Special Recommendations:

1. Providing additional Computer/LAN technology support personnel to service the existing and future computer technology/peripherals needs so that the school can continually improve and grow into the 21st century.
2. Increasing the school budget to a level that will ensure that the school can achieve its mission and goals especially in the areas of student activities, athletics, and up to date computer technology with the staff required to ensure continuous growth and improvement.
3. Establishing a capital improvement line item in the town budget specific to Westfield Vocational Technical High School that recognizes the special nature of its programs especially in the technology programs.
4. Developing a computer-based tracking system for student competencies in all instructional areas wherein they apply.