

**MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION OF  
COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS**

**COMMISSION ON  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**



**REPORT OF THE  
*ACCREDITATION FOR GROWTH*  
VALIDATION TEAM**

**Northern Burlington Regional County School District  
Middle School and High School  
Mansfield Township, New Jersey  
May 4-7, 2009**

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# INTRODUCTION

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools is a non-governmental, nonprofit, peer-administered organization of diverse educational institutions committed to the highest quality education for students. Its purpose is to ensure the continuous improvement of its member schools through effective leadership, self-study, peer evaluation, accreditation, exemplary programs, and supportive services. For more than 75 years, the Association has provided leadership in school improvement for its member schools in six states in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, the subcontinent of Asia, and Africa.

*Accreditation for Growth (AFG)* is a unique accreditation process that uses strategic and site-based planning as vehicles for school improvement and growth in student performance. The process, developed by the Commission on Secondary Schools (CSS), Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, provides linkages between district and site planning efforts. The primary determinants of progress are actual student results rather than the input of resources. *AFG* requires the school to base its objectives on a vision of a preferred future and thus is a future-oriented process. *AFG* provides for a continuous review of programs and services and allows diverse constituent groups to participate in charting the future of the school.

The *Accreditation for Growth* process requires that the school meets CSS standards. A school site plan, developed by a planning team of representative stakeholders from the school and community, should be consistent with the vision of the district's strategic plan. It should contain the following components: mission, beliefs, two to four measurable student performance objectives, and action plans that detail activities, timelines, individuals and group responsibilities, as well as resources provided to accomplish these objectives.

In addition, a planning process should be in place that will ensure that the school has both the capacity and the will to implement its action plans. The planning process typically includes an internal coordinator responsible for monitoring the plan, procedures for communicating planning activities to the school community, provision for annual reviews of the plan, and one or more action plan teams responsible for implementing the plans.

By choosing *AFG*, Northern Burlington County Regional School District has made several commitments.

- 1) It has committed to focusing on the end result – improved student performance – as the primary priority for school improvement efforts.
- 2) It has committed to operating from a vision of where it wants and needs to go with the mission and beliefs serving as a unifying force for change.

- 3) It has committed to including a varied spectrum of stakeholders in the process of continually defining a preferred vision, in developing the means to get closer to that vision, and in implementing action plans developed by these stakeholders.
- 4) It has committed to a process where progress will be continuously reviewed.
- 5) It has agreed to participate in a peer review and external validation process by accepting outside visitors.

The Middle States Validation Team is a group of professional educators appointed by the Commission on Secondary Schools to visit a school using the *Accreditation for Growth* process. The purpose of the team visit is threefold. First, the team assesses the planning processes used by the school in developing the plan; the team determines the school's adherence to planning requirements as outlined by the Commission, as well as, whether the planning processes will ensure continuous improvement and commitment. Second, the team reviews the content of the school's plan to judge the validity and clarity of the plans along with the level of commitment to implementation. Finally, it is the team's responsibility to review the school's maintenance and implementation of the CSS standards.

The five members of the Validation Team to Northern Burlington County Regional School District used the three and one-half day visit to review written documents regarding the plan and its development. The Team interacted with as many of the school's stakeholders as possible regarding their knowledge, understanding and support for the plan. The groups interviewed included the internal coordinators, the Board of Education, staff, administration, student leaders, parents, a randomly selected group of students, guidance counselors, library staff, department heads, curriculum supervisors, implementation team chairs, the Planning Team, supervisor of buildings and grounds, athletic director, student activities coordinator and club advisors. The Team concluded that they had a full and rich experience of the school, leading to the following report and assessment.

# DISTRICT AND SCHOOL PROFILES

## District Profile

The Northern Burlington County Regional School District is an important part of its growing community.

The Northern Burlington County Regional Middle School and High School are located in Mansfield Township. Its constituent elementary districts are Chesterfield, Mansfield, North Hanover, and Springfield Townships. In addition, the district serves the children of United States Air Force personnel stationed at McGuire Air Force Base.

The regional school district provides comprehensive educational programs for pupils in grades seven through twelve. Students in grades 7 and 8 are housed in a separate Middle School building located on a 53-acre parcel of land. Students in grades 9 – 12 are housed in two separate buildings located on a 146-acre parcel of land adjacent to the Middle School. The high school east building houses 9th graders and the high school west building houses grades 10 – 12.

Northern was formed in 1959 and began operation with the completion of the original building in 1960. Additions were made in 1961, 1965, 1976, and 1995. In December of 2000, a \$28 million referendum, which included the purchase of a 53-acre parcel of land adjacent to the existing school campus, was approved. In September of 2004, the construction of the new 800-student Middle School was completed. All 7th and 8th grade students are now housed in the new Middle School.

The district's education offerings include academic subjects; business subjects, including cooperative education offerings; industrial arts; a vocational agriculture program; special education classes, including resource centers; art; music; and a basic skills remedial program. The area is ripe for continued development and the future of the regional school district seems to promise continued growth and expansion.

The Northern Burlington County Regional School District is a very attractive place to live. Citizens enjoy the rural community atmosphere while living in commuting distance to Trenton and points north as well as to Philadelphia. In addition, the area is also convenient to Atlantic City and the Jersey Shore.

Chesterfield Township is in the extreme northern part of Burlington County and borders on Mercer County and is 21.61 square miles in size. The 2000 census shows the populations of the township to be 2614 persons. Chesterfield Township provides educational facilities for kindergarten through grade six at the Chesterfield Elementary School. Significant growth is anticipated in this community in the next five years.

Mansfield Township lies to the west of Chesterfield Township and is 21.72 square miles in size.

Mansfield is a growing community. The 2000 census shows the population of the township to be 5090. This is an increase of 1216 from the 3874 on record for the 1990 census and additional housing developments are being completed. Mansfield Township provides educational facilities for pre-school handicapped children ages three to five and for grades kindergarten through six. Springfield Township lies to the south of Mansfield and Chesterfield Townships and is 30.4 square miles in size. Growth in Springfield has been modest. The 2000 census shows the population of the township to be 3227 persons. This is an increase of 199 from the 3028 reported in the 1990 census. Springfield Township provides educational facilities for kindergarten through grade six at the Springfield Elementary School.

North Hanover Township lies east of Chesterfield and Springfield Townships and borders on portions of Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base are adjacent to the township. The township is 17.14 square miles in size. The 2000 census shows the population of the township to be 7347. This is a decrease of 2647 from the 9994 persons identified in the 1990 census. North Hanover Township provides educational facilities for kindergarten (four and five year old pupils) through grade six at five separate schools. Four of the five schools are located on McGuire Air Force Base in a single educational campus. The fifth school is in Jacobstown, several miles from the Base.

The Northern Burlington County Regional School District continues to expand and change to reflect the needs of its growing community. School facilities are constantly improving and services to students are being assessed and revised as appropriate. For a more comprehensive review of both the Middle School and the High School academic, extra-curricular, and co-curricular programs, please carefully review each Principal's message.

## **High School Profile**

Northern Burlington County Regional High School serves students from Chesterfield, Mansfield, North Hanover, and Springfield Townships, as well as students from McGuire Air Force Base. The diversity of the students in terms of their backgrounds and life experiences adds to the culture of the school and provides a superior foundation upon which to prepare the students for their futures. At Northern Burlington, they are proud of their rigorous academic offerings, the talented and dedicated instructional staff, and their commitment to each and every student in the Northern Burlington region. As evidenced by their mission statement, "Inspire the Desire for Continued Growth...One Kid at a Time," they take great pride in not only preparing the students to be successful in high school, but also preparing them to continue learning throughout their lives. They monitor student performance on a regular basis and go to great lengths to ensure that every student has the opportunity to seek additional help in any area in which they may struggle. They are committed to the idea that building personal relationships with students is the best way to encourage them to work to capacity and achieve both inside and outside the classroom. Northern Burlington County Regional High School currently offers a wide array of both core courses and elective offerings in many different disciplines, with additional courses under development. The English program focuses on the development of writing skills through an analysis of British and American Literature, as well as, elective offerings in Creative Writing and Journalism. In addition to the traditional World and United States History requirements, the

Social Studies program boasts electives in Economics, Sociology, Criminology, and Psychology. In addition, they have a Ninth Grade Humanities course that draws connections between the Ninth Grade World Literature and World History courses. Both the English and Social Studies programs culminate with highly successful Advanced Placement courses.

The Mathematics and Science programs continue to evolve to meet the needs of a changing world. The teachers in each discipline are working hard to raise the bar for their students academically, ensuring that all students experience a rigorous and challenging curriculum that will prepare them to compete in a global economy based heavily in science and technology. In addition to their traditional Science program, Northern Burlington offers a top-notch Agriscience program that focuses on teaching students about plant, animal, and life sciences utilizing an operating greenhouse and livestock. Their Floral Design program is one-of-a-kind and results in many student awards throughout the school year.

In the World Language program, Northern Burlington offers Chinese as well as the more traditional French, German, and Spanish language offerings. Their Health and Physical Education Department features programs that are geared to enhance the development of students physically, emotionally, and psychologically. With their Peer Leadership program, the upperclassmen work with freshmen on team-building and character development in a safe and highly-interactive setting.

Their elective offerings are extensive and continue to expand as teachers bring new levels of expertise and enthusiasm into the programs. The Visual and Performing Arts programs include outstanding offerings in drawing, ceramics, and sculpture, as well as award-winning theatre arts, band, and choral groups. Each of these programs allows their students to show off their talents both locally, across the state, and throughout the country. The Applied Technology, Family and Consumer Science, Business and Technology offerings are constantly updated to reflect the needs of the workplace, the contemporary family, and society. Two new highlights in this area will be their Video Production and Engineering programs. The Video Production program gives students experience working with and editing video and ultimately allows them to work with Northern Burlington's own cable television station. The Engineering track is designed to prepare students for a career in engineering. Finally, they offer the seniors an opportunity to take on leadership roles and serve as classroom assistants through their Senior Instructional Leadership Corp program (SILC). From architectural design work using AutoCAD to graphic design work using modern software packages and laser engravers to an operating child care lab serving the needs of the community, their students leave Northern Burlington with skills that are unmatched elsewhere.

No profile of Northern Burlington would be complete without a brief description of the people who make the school one of the most successful in Burlington County. The Parent-Teacher-Student-Connection (PTSC) provides an important link to the parents and community. Efforts of the Executive Board and members have paid off with increased communication and unprecedented community support. The talented and caring teachers are certainly an important asset to their school. With their dedication to the success of the "whole student," the teachers and staff members are moving Northern Burlington from good to great! And finally, Northern

Burlington would be nothing without the energy, enthusiasm, and excitement brought to them by their students. They are, without a doubt, the cornerstone of their success and they appreciate them every minute they are in their presence. Although they have tried to create an environment that is welcoming, caring, and supportive of individual differences, it is their students who make that all happen. They are the driving force behind the healthy school culture, the positive environment, and the overall success of their school. Their students are the core of what makes Northern Burlington County Regional High School a very special place to learn.

As one can tell, they are proud of their programs, their faculty, and their students. Together with a very supportive Board of Education and top-notch facilities and support departments, they continue to strive toward the highest standard of excellence in their attempt to “Inspire the Desire for Continued Growth...One Kid at a Time.”

## **Middle School Profile**

Northern Burlington County Regional Middle School proudly serves four communities – Chesterfield, Mansfield, North Hanover, and Springfield Townships. McGuire Air Force Base dependents also attend Northern Burlington and provide a rich component to their school community. The community continues to grow with families seeking exceptional educational opportunities for their children in an area that has ready access to Philadelphia, Princeton and New York.

Northern Burlington County Regional Middle School is part of a regional school district for pupils in grades seven through twelve. The middle school which occupies a 53-acre parcel of land is adjacent to the high school’s two separate buildings on a 146-acre parcel. The two schools are separated by the football field and a number of athletic fields. The sending school districts include four elementary, K-6 districts: including McGuire Air Force Base.

April 2004 marked the completion date for the new Northern Burlington County Regional Middle School. The facility is equipped with state-of-the-art instructional tools that ensure greater academic and social success for their students. The school administration, faculty, and staff have a clear understanding of the nature and needs of the seventh and eighth grade students and are committed to meeting those needs through innovative instructional and co-curricular programs.

Students are structured into learning communities or interdisciplinary teams. Each team consists of five content specific teachers (Math, Elements of Reading, Elements of Writing, Social Studies, and Science). The learning process assures cooperative responsibility for the instructional needs of a core group of students which leads to an improved learning climate, enhanced contact with parents, and a higher level of student achievement.

Students identified as exceptional are assigned a curriculum designed to meet their individual educational needs. Northern Burlington's Special Education programs are recognized for their outstanding learning support, speech, hearing and multiply disabled components.

No profile of Northern Burlington Regional would be complete without a brief word about their students. They are indeed the cornerstone of their success story. Although they have tried to create an environment that is welcoming, supportive and appreciative of individual difference, it is their students that make it all happen. They are the ones that drive their charitable initiatives to help the less fortunate. They are the individuals that work so effectively in their peer support programs and welcome wagon initiatives to make their newest students feel comfortable. They also drive the desire to provide the most advanced technology in their classrooms and media center. The students are indeed the central core of what makes their school so special.

They are proud of their programs, their committed faculty and their students. Together with a supportive Board of Education and community they will continue to strive for the highest standard of excellence.

The Validation Team wishes to acknowledge the Northern Burlington Regional School District for its culture of learning. Focus is on student achievement and a myriad of programs to meet the diverse and individual needs of their students.

# THE PLANNING PROCESS

## The Planning Team

The Northern Burlington Regional School district has been preparing for the AFG protocol since 2005-2006 when an 18 member team began the planning process. Unfortunately, due to retirements of faculty and a turnover in administration caused the visitation to be delayed. Currently the Steering Committee is comprised of six people, all of which are administrators and there is a strategic planning committee comprised of 12 teachers. Over the course of four years there have been 89 documented meetings on the AFG process which includes the Standards for Accreditation:

### **Foundational Standards**

- Standard 1 Philosophy/Mission
- Standard 2: Governance and Leadership
- Standard 3: School Improvement Planning
- Standard 4: Finances
- Standard 5: Facilities
- Standard 6: School Climate and Organization

### **Operational Standards**

- Standard 7: Health and Safety
- Standard 8: Educational Program
- Standard 9: Assessment and Evidence of Student Learning
- Standard 10: Student Services
- Standard 11: Student Life and Student Activities
- Standard 12: Information Resources and Technology

Northern Burlington County Regional Schools' planning team is comprised of a collaborative broad based committee representing the key stakeholders in the endeavor to move this district forward in its educational journey. Originally, the committee members consisted of teachers, parent representatives, students, department leaders, internal coordinators and administrators. This process began four years ago by a team of dedicated professionals who sought to transform their school into an institution that dedicated itself to educating the whole child. An eighteen member team began this dynamic planning process which has developed over the course of the past four years. The team was originally composed of all major stakeholders from both the middle and high school levels. During the 2006-2007 school year, building committees were formed to continue the work on this comprehensive plan process. Since the 2007-2008 school year, the planning team streamlined themselves into a six member steering committee consisting of representatives from both the middle school and high school staff members, as well as,

representatives on a strategic planning committee which works in tandem with the Steering Committee.

The Team clearly understood its charge and appreciated the value of a commitment to the process because of the many issues that come forth from such activity. The Team began by forming a mission statement and indicated gratefulness for the important discussions and beliefs that came from that process. The Validation Team commends the school for incorporating a diversity of members from the school constituencies on the original Planning Team and also recommends that it utilize a wide range of stakeholders on the Implementation Team. We also commend the core members of the Planning Team for sustaining their commitment to this multi-faceted undertaking during the changes in administration and teaching staff over the course of this process. The developments of their objectives are clearly aligned with the collective vision of the district using a collaborative approach. We applaud the school's rigorous effort for including the counsel of the major stakeholders in the creation of the broad based development of the mission and growth plan.

The AFG team suggests that the district return to its foundational premise of including both students and parent representatives to both your steering and strategic planning committees to help foster the positive home/school relationship that is vital in educating children across all grade levels. There is a positive culture for the exchange of information among the PTSC members; this is an exemplary model of communication in relationship building with the community base. This positive relationship should serve as a model which demonstrates a platform that can encompass comprehensive parent involvement. This will ensure that all stakeholders will assume ownership of the school's growth plan.

We hope that the district will continue to strive in inviting all members of this community, encompassing students, parents and administrators in continually reassessing, revisiting and realigning their vision with the fast- paced needs of a dynamic curriculum in preparing students to be critical problem solvers.

## **Implementation Team**

- The Internal Coordinators feel that the planning team will continue the process by working on implementation of their plan in collaboration with other teams. Although the Validation Team is confident of this occurrence, we feel that a formalized written plan should be in place in order to ensure the success of the implementation. It would be beneficial to create a structured timeline which will help facilitate the implementation of this district's objectives that will further promote systemic transformational change within the Northern Burlington County Regional School District. This will ensure an attainable goal of actualizing the objectives set forth in your plan. The Validation Team feels strongly that the Northern Burlington Regional School District has all the "right people on the bus and sitting in the correct seats." With open dialogue with all stakeholders, clear organizational objectives and responsibilities, mutual respect and clear communication- you will have your ROADMAP on your destination on the road of going from GO TO GREAT. We as a Validation Team believe that the AFG Protocol and your annual reviews of your Goals and Objectives will be the process to bring a unified approach to the desired outcome of Inspiring the Desire- One Student at a time.

## **Role of the Administration**

Strong, capable leadership is a must for successful educational change. Leadership must work to build capacity within the school in order to sustain changes necessary for student achievement and school improvement. Clearly, Northern Burlington Regional Leadership Team is successfully facilitating educational change. The Validation Team commends the administration for its dedicated support of collaborative processes. As cautioned in the Oral report, a consistent concern among a significant number of faculty has been in the many changes in Central Office over the past three years. Clearly defining roles and responsibilities between central office administrators as well as building principals will clarify the process for Continuous School Improvements. This will also help in gaining more participation and "buy in" for many of the worthwhile educational objectives set forth in this plan.

The superintendent and both building principals have been very supportive in the planning process. The building principals see their role as a staff facilitator in order to ensure that the action plans continue to move forward.

## **Role of the Governing Body**

The Board of Education has hailed the initiatives of the plan by allowing the melding of the district's long-term goals with the *AFG* performance objectives and action plans. One Board member served on the Planning Team. The Validation Team was able to meet formally and informally with a number of Board members. All indications are that the Board is supportive of the *AFG* process, supportive of the mission and belief statements of the district, focused on their role as "governance" not administration, and committed to making Northern Burlington Regional School District the best it can be. The Team's acknowledges the Board's support of the *AFG* process and their commitment to the strategic plan.

### **Role of the Internal Coordinators**

At Northern Burlington Regional School District the role of two internal coordinators has been vital to the success of the planning process.

Cathy Zaic, the high school internal coordinator, is a 35 year veteran in education at Northern Burlington Regional School District and has been involved directly with two previous school evaluations. Her role has provided leadership in the planning phase not only for the high school but as council for the middle school as well. Amy Stella, the middle school internal coordinator, is in her second year at the school and was contracted as the school district's math and science coordinator as well as the internal coordinator for the middle school. As a curriculum coordinator for the district her expertise in vertically integrated education fits well with *AFG* planning process. Two main goals were noted by the internal coordinators. First, was to do a comprehensive self study of the middle school and high school; and the second was to improve the district. The planning process has been ongoing for four years. The district should be commended for their choices of the internal coordinators.

The duties of the coordinators have included overseeing the entire planning process, co-chairing the Planning Team, facilitating work sessions, and compiling the planning document.

The Validation Team recommends that the school identify and structure the role of the Internal Coordinator for the future in order to coordinate the implementation process. We further recommend that the school actively and continually develop new leaders for its Planning and Implementation Teams.

## **Communication and Awareness Activities**

There are at least three distinct reasons for communication in the planning process. One is simply to *inform*, a second is to build *understanding*, and a third is to invite *input*. Stakeholders have a need and a right to know and be involved in what is going on in their school.

The success of the plan, however, is not dependent upon how many people know about the plan. More important is the degree of *shared understanding* about the key elements of the plan, particularly among those stakeholders who must move from vision to reality. In an effort to engender commitment and encourage involvement by all who have a stake in the school, the *Accreditation for Growth* process asks the school to involve the broadest possible group of stakeholders in the Implementation Team. We encourage you to consider broadening your Team to include more teacher, and representation for students, community members, and parents to have a “seat on the bus.” The Validation Team also believes that know you are entrenched with the work of implementation of the strategic plan, the process needs to find a way to communicate the mission, plans, objectives, goals and progress with the entire school community.

## **Annual Review Process**

Effective strategic planning requires that stakeholders understand and become involved in periodic review and updates to the plan. Key to continued improvement is a common understanding of when data is to be gathered, who will conduct analysis and how often that analysis is to occur, as well as what procedures will be used to make updates to the action plans in response to that analysis. While Middle States has labeled this process an Annual Review, it frequently encompasses activities that happen more than once a year. Celebrations for success are often included and should be considered an integral part of any ongoing strategic plan.

## **CONTENT OF THE PLAN**

School Leadership has a well -organized plan and the Goals and Objectives were clear in its desire to increase student achievement, foster positive social growth, and create multiple pathways to meet emerging career skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Validation Team believes that the school has a sound strategic plan to achieve their desired outcomes.

## **Mission**

A school's mission should reflect the school community members' deepest desires for what they want the school to become. Therefore, it is inappropriate for a Validation Team to fundamentally alter the direction or focus that the mission sets. The same is true of belief statements. Only members of the school community can define their vision and identify their deeply held beliefs.

A Validation Team can, however, offer an objective perspective on what is unclear or seems inconsistent or incomplete in these documents. Ultimately, it is the school that has to decide if the Team's comments are legitimate and relevant. It is in this spirit that the following observations on the Northern Burlington Regional School District's mission and beliefs are made.

A mission statement should describe in broad and visionary terms what the school is and is striving to become. It should be outcome-based, providing clarity on the school's audience (whom it serves), its action (what it does), its aim (the purpose for which it exists) and its function (how, in broad terms, it will do it).

## **Belief Statements**

Belief statements serve as the foundation of a strong strategic plan. They are the formal expression of a school's fundamental values and serve as its ethical code. Beliefs describe the moral character of a school. In a planning process involving diverse stakeholder groups, they represent the composite of the personal values held by individual planning team members.

Because belief statements are a matter of faith, not a matter of fact, they express the school's overriding convictions, it promotes commitment and understanding. They outline what members of the school community are willing to "go to the mat" defending. Because beliefs identify the "line in the sand", they can be used as a lens through which to examine the worthiness of the school's potential decisions or future actions.

## **Northern Burlington Regional Mission Statement**

The Northern Burlington County Regional School District, established in 1960, proudly serves the communities of Chesterfield, Mansfield, North Hanover, and Springfield. The mission of the district, in partnership with home and community, is to provide a safe environment in which to prepare all students to become creative, independent, life-long learners, critical thinkers, problem solvers, and responsible citizens in a rapidly changing and diverse global community.

## **We Believe...**

- All children have the right to an education in a safe and caring environment where learning is valued.
- Our children are our community's most valuable asset and our educators are our most valuable resource.
- All students should be accepted as individuals and guided to meet their potential.
- Life-long learning through professional and personal development creates a culture of enduring greatness.
- A rigorous curriculum is the framework for nurturing an academically challenging, child-centered environment that encourages intellectual exploration.
- We have the obligation to nurture a culture of respect that honors the uniqueness of the individual and fosters responsibility toward the community and the environment.

The belief statements of the Northern Burlington Regional School District prove that the district puts their students first, and that they see their children as the future of mankind. The importance of community interaction is emphasized, and beliefs about values they hope the students will learn are also evident. Creating an environment which promotes life-long learning for both students and educators shows dedication to keeping pace with a changing world. The beliefs are designed to challenge students to the best of their abilities, while maintaining a safe and caring environment, and preparing them to reach their highest potential beyond their life as students in Northern Burlington Regional.

The team feels that the belief statements of the Northern Burlington Regional School District strongly supports the values of the school district, and demonstrate evidence of a living, breathing document, as was apparent in the interview process.

## **Profile of Graduates**

The Profile of Graduates answers the following question: When our students have completed our entire educational program and have had the benefit of the services and activities provided by the institution and its community:

- What do we expect them to know?
- What do we expect them to be able to do with what they know?
- What qualities or characteristics do we want them to demonstrate?

A Profile of Graduates:

- Describes the students at the point of exit from the institution.
- States the values, achievement, and readiness that each student will manifest upon graduation.

- Should be considered both as a Bill of Rights and set of corresponding responsibilities for students, faculty, staff, administration, and the institution's community.
- Defines the outcomes each and every student will attain if the mission is operative and appropriately translated into programs and services.

A Profile of Graduates serves to:

- Translate the identity, vision, and values expressed in the beliefs and mission into statements that describe student outcomes.
- Translate and transform concepts from the ideal and global to specific expression in the development of a student in the institution.
- Give expression to what the mission means in the operational life of the institution.
- Define an outline or shape each student is expected to grow into regardless of specific courses taken or post-graduation plans.
- A concrete reference point for faculty, staff, and the institution's community when designing curriculum, instructional experiences, service programs, auxiliary resources, and student and family services.

## **Profile of a Graduate**

### **Fundamental Knowledge and Skills**

Every graduate of the Northern Burlington County Regional School District possesses the skills and knowledge to:

1. Communicate effectively through reading, writing, and speaking
2. Investigate and solve problems that have not been solved previously
3. Identify the value of literature and the arts
4. Demonstrate a sense of national and international geography, as well as, a sound historical understanding
5. Successfully manage money and finances
6. Remain physically fit throughout life

### **Informational Literacy**

Every graduate of the Northern Burlington County Regional School District possesses the skills and knowledge to:

1. Explore various career categories and make informed decisions about the future
2. Research, use, and manage information

## **Technological Literacy**

Every graduate of the Northern Burlington County Regional School District possesses the skills and knowledge to:

1. Use new technologies to explore contemporary issues and problems in a real world setting

## **Interpersonal Qualities**

Every graduate of the Northern Burlington County Regional School District:

1. Respects others, value cultural differences, and celebrate diversity
2. Handles stressful situations by establishing appropriate priorities and managing time effectively
3. Develops personal and professional goals that will carry through life
4. Demonstrates the ability to work both independently and as a member of a team, assuming leadership responsibilities when appropriate
5. Develops and maintain self confidence, a positive attitude about the future, and a healthy self image
6. Makes good, healthy choices in life
7. Understands the value of giving back to the community
8. Serves as an ambassador for the NBCRSD and the NBC community

## Objectives

The *Accreditation for Growth* process requires schools to have 2-4 measurable student performance objectives. The Northern Burlington County Regional School District has developed the following three objectives that meet all Middle States criteria for *AFG* objectives.

### ACCREDITATION FOR GROWTH

### OBJECTIVES AND BASELINE DATA

#### Objective One and Baseline Data

##### Academic

*By June 2014, students of Northern Burlington Regional Middle School and High School will demonstrate a greater degree of success in the study of rigorous academic courses as measured by:*

- 100% of students achieving a score of Proficient or above on the Mathematics section of each assessment as part of the NJ Assessment Program
- 100% of students achieving a score of Proficient or above on the Language Arts section of each assessment as part of the NJ Assessment Program
- Ensuring that no student fails any course aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards

#### Middle School NJ ASK Percent Proficient

Subgroup	Mathematics			Language Arts		
	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Total population	78.9%	77.6%		85.3%	91.0%	
General Ed	82.9%	86.5%		92.1%	96.0%	
Students with Disabilities	37.7%	20.5%		38.9%	59.0%	
Limited English Proficient	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	
White	80.5%	79.1%		85.9%	93.8%	
African American	73.9%	64.9%		81.2%	81.1%	

Asian	79.2%	85.7%		83.3%	78.5%	
American Indian	N/A	100%		N/A	100%	
Hispanic	67.8%	78.6%		89.3%	85.7%	
Other Race	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	
Economically Disadvantaged	70.5%	61.3%		76.2%	80.6%	
Male	77.1%	76.3%		79.8%	86.2%	
Female	80.5%	79.2%		90.9%	96.4%	
Migrant Students	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	

### High School NJ HSPA Percent Proficient

Subgroup	Mathematics			Language Arts		
	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Total population	84.0%	77.4%		93.3%	87.3%	
General Ed	90.0%	83.6%		97.0%	93.4%	
Students with Disabilities	20%	46.9%		63.3%	56.3%	
Limited English Proficient	N/A	100%		N/A	100%	
White	87.700%	79.8%		93.60%	87.0%	
African American	67.600%	60.0%		91.90%	85.7%	
Asian	N/A	90.0%		N/A	90.0%	
American Indian	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	
Hispanic	N/A	61.6%		N/A	92.3%	
Other Race	N/A	100%		N/A	100%	
Economically Disadvantaged	70.000%	56.3%		85.00%	68.7%	
Male	86.100%	82.4%		90.80%	83.6%	
Female	81.500%	71.7%		96.20%	91.3%	
Migrant Students	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	

### Student passing rate by NJ CCCS areas

#### Middle School

NJ CCCS Areas	2006-2007		2007-2008	
NJ CCCS Areas	2006-2007		2007-2008	
Language Arts Literacy	(582/602)	96.6%	(567/593)	95.6%
Mathematics	(589/602)	97.8%	(584/593)	98.5%
Total Student Population	602		593	

## High School

NJ CCCS Areas	2006-2007	2007-2008
Language Arts Literacy	(1194/1254) 95.2%	(1129/1210) 93.3%
Mathematics	(1164/1254) 92.6%	(11442/1210) 94.4%
Total Student Population	1254	1210

## Objective Two and Baseline Data

### Culture

*By the year 2014, Northern Burlington County Regional High School and Middle School students will foster positive and productive personal and social behavior within the school and community through the development of core ethical values – respect, responsibility, compassion and honesty - as demonstrated by:*

- 100% grade eight and grade eleven/twelve student participation in one or more school/community service projects such as peer mentoring and mediation, charitable fundraisers, blood drives
- 100% student participation in one or more extracurricular activities
- Zero incidents requiring suspension as per our disciplinary code
- Zero incidents of bullying

Category	Middle School	High School
<b>Volunteer Work, etc.</b>		
2006-2007	52%	55%
2007-2008	56%	56%
<b>Activity Participation</b>		
2006-2007	74%	75%
2007-2008	75%	77%
<b>Suspension Rate</b>		
2006-2007	6.8%	5.3%
2007-2008	6.9%	6.7%
<b>Incidents of Bullying</b>		
2006-2007	4	4
2007-2008	8	4

### Objective Three and Baseline Data

#### Multiple and Diverse Paths to Career Development and Profile of A Graduate (Essential Skills)

*By the year 2014, 100% of the Northern Burlington County Regional High School Grade 12 students will demonstrate continuing education and career preparedness readiness by achieving*

a score of 4 or higher as measured by the NBC Regional High School Career Development Matrix

% of seniors scoring a 4 or higher on the Career Matrix	2007-2008	19.73%
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#### Northern Burlington County Regional School District Career Matrix

	Unaware of program	Made aware of program	Made informed choice to participate / not participate	Has participated in one program	Has participated in numerous programs	Rating Average	Response Count
Program to Expedite Graduation (Option II; Independent Projects)	59.1% (68)	23.5% (27)	13.9% (16)	2.6% (3)	0.9% (1)	1.63	115
Post Secondary Schooling (College; Technical School; Financial Aid)	9.6% (11)	34.2% (39)	33.3% (38)	15.8% (18)	7.0% (8)	2.76	114
Pre-College Credit (College course for credit; AP)	11.4% (13)	26.3% (30)	19.3% (22)	18.4% (21)	24.6% (28)	3.18	114
Career Path (Co-Op; Career Investigation programs; Career Placement;	15.7% (18)	43.5% (50)	31.3% (36)	6.1% (7)	3.5% (4)	2.38	115

Career Portfolio)							
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**Action Plans**

Action plans are the point of contact between vision and reality; they are the bridges to the future. Here is where teams shift from poetics and emotion to metrics and task analysis. Implementation of the action plans is the point in the process where idealism and creativity meet the realities of time constraints, the budget and the natural and frustrating resistance that accompanies innovation and change.

When talking about the objectives, a number of faculty member noted that “ we are continually seeking to do things better, more efficient, while focusing on the student achievement.” Clearly, there is a culture of school improvement at Northern Burlington Regional. Another individual said that the Validation Team should recommend “that we commit to this plan and be consistent in the process and keep the lines of communication open.” Yes we do! We feel, however, that with the many initiatives on your plate, we would be remiss if we didn’t caution you to keep your focus on the many good things that you are doing and to celebrate your successes and achievements as they are noteworthy.

## STANDARDS OF THE MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION

Northern Burlington Regional School District (Middle School and HS) gathered information regarding how well the school meets the Middle States standards by having subcommittees of faculty members complete the survey provided by Middle States. The Validation Team found that Northern Burlington Regional School District is in continued compliance with the standards set forth for accredited members of the Middle States Association.

### Northern Burlington Regional School District Mission Statement

The Northern Burlington County Regional School District, established in 1960, proudly serves the communities of Chesterfield, Mansfield, North Hanover, and Springfield. The mission of the district, in partnership with home and community, is to provide a safe environment in which to prepare all students to become creative, independent, life-long learners, critical thinkers, problem solvers, and responsible citizens in a rapidly changing and diverse global community.

#### **Our Beliefs**

- We believe that all children have the right to an education in a safe and caring environment where learning is valued.
- We believe that our children are our community's most valuable asset and our educators are our most valuable resource.
- We believe that all students should be accepted as individuals and guided to meet their potential.
- We believe that life-long learning through professional and personal development creates a culture of enduring greatness.
- We believe that a rigorous curriculum is the framework for nurturing an academically challenging, child-centered environment that encourages intellectual exploration.
- We believe that we have the obligation to nurture a culture of respect that honors the uniqueness of the individual and fosters responsibility toward the community and the environment.

**C.1. Philosophy, Mission, Beliefs, and/or Objectives** – *The institution has clearly written statements of philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives that convey the general and specific purposes of the educational programs and that express expectations for quality. Stakeholders, including staff, parents, and governing body members, understand, accept, and give input into the development of the organization’s philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives. These documents are appropriate for the groups served and are reviewed periodically.*

**The Philosophy, Mission, Beliefs, and/or Objectives standard are met.**

The philosophy, mission, beliefs and/or objectives are generally understood and accepted by the governance, staff, parents, and students. The school provides opportunities for representative constituents of the community to offer input into the school’s organizational philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives. While this is done well with the faculty, getting wider range input from students and parents will increase ownership of strategic plan. The philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives are free of contradiction, ambiguity, and excessive abstraction and can be discussed by school authorities in terms of operation, action, movement, and direction, and the mission and beliefs are appropriate for the students enrolled and the communities served. The Philosophy/Mission Statement can be found on the school’s website, in the district’s faculty handbook and in the student handbooks for both the high school and middle school. The mission statement was not consistently displayed in all classrooms and the Visiting Team recommends that the very powerful motto of “Inspire the Desire, One Student at a Time” be included at the top of each mission statement. The motto, as well as, its wide spread distribution should help to insure that this mission becomes a living document. Moreover, the Team encourages wide range distribution of the philosophy, mission, beliefs and objectives and asks that they are periodically reviewed to ensure that the statements are appropriate to the needs of the school community. Since there is strong leadership and planning initiatives from the Central Office, articulation and communication with a broad spectrum of stakeholders as well as a broad spectrum of delivery of methods will ensure the future success of all Middle States objectives.

**C.2. Governance and Leadership** – *The governance and administration work in partnership to ensure the integrity, effectiveness, and reputation of the organization through the establishment of policy and oversight of leadership. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect and purposeful effort on behalf of students and their learning. The administration of the organization provides a productive work environment, timely and open communication, and the leadership necessary to plan both day-to-day operations and the long-term future of the institution. The school is chartered, licensed, or authorized by a state, nation, or authority, which operates in the public interest.*

**The Governance and Leadership standard is met.**

