



The School District of

SOUTH ORANGE
& MAPLEWOOD

525 Academy Street • Maplewood, NJ 07040

Columbia High School

Report to the Board of Education

February 2, 2015

Update: Middle States Accreditation

What is accreditation?

Accreditation is an external, objective validation of school quality and student achievement that fosters continuous school improvement.

Profile of A Middle States-Accredited Institution:

- Adheres to the Middle States Standards for Accreditation;
- Uses its mission, beliefs, and goals as the basis for daily decision-making;
- Operates in the public interest and in accordance with ethical practice;
- Accepts responsibility for the level of performance of its students;
- Remains committed to continuous improvement in student learning and to its capacity to produce the levels of learning desired and expected by its community;
- Operates in a collegial and collaborative way with all of its stakeholders;
- Sustains its focus on implementing recommendations, addressing monitoring issues and correcting stipulations that may be part of its notification of accreditation and
- Fulfills its maintenance requirements to the Commission.

http://www.msa-cess.org/RelId/606525/ISvars/default/What_is_Accreditation.htm

Our Process

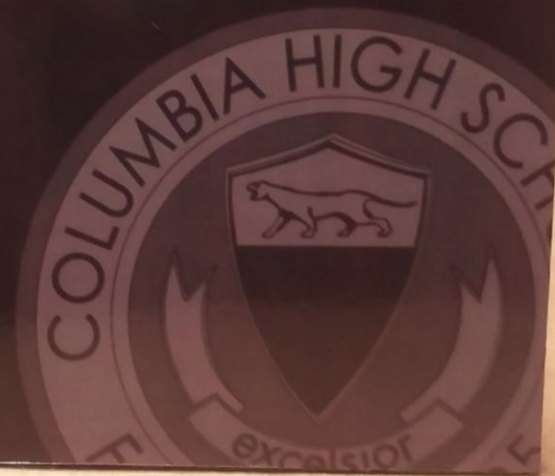
- CHS is using the “Excellence by Design” protocol established by the MSA
- Yields a 5- to 7-year strategic plan that lays out work that stakeholders determine is the future of CHS
- Process is *dynamic* and *responsive*
- Plan will shape the work that PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) will put in place to advance the strategic plan and track administrative support of its implementation
- Middle States facilitates a 3-year, mid-point review of our plan

Why go through this process?

- The Middle States accreditation process affords Columbia a framework for self-reflection. Beyond that, the visitation and subsequent observations that are made by the team serve to *validate the excellence in practice and outcomes* that allows us to join our peers as Middle States-accredited schools.

Columbia
Learning
Lab

A243



To date:

- Since spring 2013, CHS administrative team has been in regular contact with MSA
- Principal Aaron attended MSA meetings in Philadelphia in July 2013
- E. Aaron, Assistant Principal C. Ezell served as visiting team members of a three-day visit to Memorial HS, West New York, NJ
- C. Ezell & teachers S. Cohen, and J. Kaiser: completed internal coordinator training
- S. Cohen, J. Kaiser as visiting team members to a school
- All processes are in place and the work is underway for a fall 2015 visit to CHS by an accreditation team.

Excellence By Design (EbD)

- Is a template/framework for self-study
- Includes a review of:
 - Columbia's Foundational Documents
 - 12 MSA-CESS Standards
 - Development of a *Plan for Growth and Improvement*
- The self-study process typically takes between 9 months and 2 years.

Our Structure for EbD

- **Design team:** (coordinates the internal study)
 - Teachers as leaders of the process
- **Committees:** (collect and process for capacity assessment)
 - Leadership comes from the teachers (committee chairs)
- **Operations team:** (supports committees in their work)
 - Liaisons: identify needs and gather data, trained teachers in Google Docs
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
 - Parents and guardians, students, community partners, civic partners
- **Action teams** (Post-Study)

The 12 Standards

- Facilities
- Finance
- Governance and Leadership
- Health and Safety
- Information Resources
- School Improvement Planning
- School Organization and Staff
- Student Life and Activities
- Student Services
- Mission
- Assessment and Evidence of Student Learning
- Educational Programs

Key Elements of the EbD Work

- **12 Areas:** Allow us to ask key questions about curricula, facilities, teacher development, student achievement, STEM, arts, athletics, instruction, assessment
- Pathways to college and career readiness
- Student choice *for* and *on* those pathways
- ***What are and where are our strengths?***
- ***What are and where are our areas for growth? How will we implement strategies and programs for that growth, and how will we measure our success?***



Our work so far

- Professional Development Days
- Tuesday meetings – CHS staff and departments
- CHS admin team mtgs (weekly)
- Mission development (faculty meetings)
- Facilities conversations (faculty and dept mtgs)
- Budget development meetings with Business Administrator and department chairs
- Organization into committees
- Data collection
- Intra-web site

The whole staff is doing tremendous work. These teachers have taken on added roles of leadership:

- Scott Cohen
- Jerry Kaiser
- Gwen Karl
- Sisina Wilson
- Mia Degioia
- Eugene Pollioni
- Manuel Arguelles
- Clark Faulkner
- Allan Tumolillo
- Abiodun Banner
- Meghan Power
- Phil McCormick
- Jon Campbell
- Ben Hershfield
- Nicole Martelli
- Bill Gaines
- Kate Dodd
- Jenna Vecchione
- Lynn Stradford
- Amanda Buckley
- Kristie Thomas
- Joshua Enyeart
- Falynn Balassone
- Julia Leider
- Pam Noonan
- Adria Kelley

Teacher and Staff Voice

- **Why don't we..."**
- Key issues for CHS in teaching and learning:
 - Danielson Framework
 - Achievement Gaps
 - Student emotional, mental, and social health
 - Creating a school that prepares students for work, life, careers we do not yet even know exist
 - **EbD requires teachers to be the voices of the strategic plan and the guardians of it as it rolls out**

WL

Abolish
EXAMS

By September 2015...

CHS will have developed a 5-7 year Strategic plan contains **5** strategic goals:

- 2 related to student performance
- 1 related to organizational structure
- 1 related to facilities
- 1 to be determined

Conversations @ Columbia



December 2014
and January 2015





COLUMBIA: 2025

What do we want CHS to look like in 10 years?

Last time we addressed the problems. Now, we start fixing them.

“If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.

In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, come discuss your ideas on how we can improve as a school community with regards to race and student life. All are welcome.

During Periods 5, 6, and 7 in the Black Box Theatre

Conversations at Columbia: Friday, January 16th

Community Engagement

Every school event – a chance for parent/guardian voice, student and family feedback and input, engagement and participation in the EbD process:

Back to School Night (October 2014)

Robotics Tournament at CHS (November 2014)

9th grade preview night (December 2014)

Fall and winter sports and club events

Advanced Placement Information Night (January 2015)

Arts Events (5 events, fall and winter 2014-2015)

PARCC information night (January 2015)

Martin Luther King, Jr. local events (January 2015)

Parent meetings (Monthly HSA, other groups)

IEP Meetings (ongoing)

504 Meetings (ongoing)

CORE Team Meetings (ongoing)

I & RS Meetings (ongoing)

Proposed Spring 2015 Conference

GOAL: Bring parents, guardians, students, teachers, community members, civic partners in the same room to engage in the following tasks:

- **TASK #1:** Focus on the Past
- **TASK #2:** Focus on the Trends Affecting our Future
- **TASK #3:** Focus on the Ideal Future
- **TASK #4:** Focus on the Common Ground
- **TASK #5:** Focus on the Action Planning

Looking Ahead: October 2015

- 3-1/2 day site visit to CHS (Pre-visit with visiting team chair and CHS team occurs first)
- 3-4 people on the visiting team
- Team has access to our plan, supporting documents, visits classes, meets with parent group, meets with students
- Presents preliminary findings to staff at end of visit
- Visiting team feedback informs how we go forward – external feedback gives closure to process, begins circle and cycle of improvement
- MSA sends final report early 2016