

Eastern Suffolk
BOCES

Educational Services That Transform Lives

HIGHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 2007

Special Edition

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EASTERN SUFFOLK BOCES AND THE MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION PROCESS

In 2000 Eastern Suffolk BOCES became the first intermediate educational agency to be accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Our divisions and educational services programs followed with accreditation in 2001 and in 2004. This accreditation represents our agency's commitment to strategic planning and to providing services that meet rigorous standards and serve our lifelong learners.

Throughout the 2007-08 year we will be reappraising the work we have done over the past seven years and getting ready for our reaccreditation visit that will occur in the fall of 2008. A planning team made up of administrators, teachers and staff, component district representatives, parents, and business and higher education stakeholders will help facilitate and lead the process. An outline of the reaccreditation timeline is shown below.



REACCREDITATION TIMELINE

<i>Spring, 2007</i>	Agency Recommitment to AFG Protocol Planning Committee Expansion / Invitations
<i>May – September, 2007</i>	Collect Data for Period of Appraisal Revise Strategic Plan
<i>August, 2007</i>	Annual Review by Agency Strategic Planning Council
<i>October, 2007</i>	Begin Re-evaluation of Middle States standards File Application for Evaluation Do Profile of Graduates/Completers
<i>Winter, 2007-08 & Spring, 2008</i>	Formulate and Submit 2009-2016 Agency Objectives for Middle States Technical Review
<i>August, 2008</i>	Annual Review by Agency Strategic Planning Council
<i>September, 2008</i>	Finish Self-Study Document and send to Middle States and Visitation Chair
<i>October, 2008</i>	Pre-visit by Chair
<i>November/December, 2008</i>	Validation Visit

As our service agency is continuously evolving in response to district needs and interests as well as state and federal mandates, we will be asking for reaccreditation on an agency basis for the 2009-2016 period, incorporating the several previous separate accreditations into one agency accreditation for all programs and services.

Membership in the Middle States Association requires that each agency demonstrate that it meets certain standards for accreditation. As noted in the process timeline, one of the activities we need to conduct is a re-evaluation of our performance and status related to those ten Middle States Standards for Service Agencies. Staff, parents, students and other stakeholders will be asked to reflect on the agency's (Eastern Suffolk BOCES) ability and success in implementing these standards. The Middle States Association is in the process of developing the survey for service agencies and we will be sending it out throughout the fall of 2007.

If you have any questions about the upcoming reaccreditation process, please feel free to contact Dr. Candace White-Ciraco, Director of Planning and Program Improvement, at 631-687-3263.

In this Issue...

<i>Middle States Association Standards for Accreditation of Service Agencies</i>	<i>2-3</i>
<i>The Board Reaffirms Commitment to AFG</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Eastern Suffolk BOCES Eighth Annual Strategic Planning Council Meeting</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>History of the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Strategic Planning Initiative</i>	<i>6-7</i>



MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION OF SERVICE AGENCIES

The standards with each of their performance indicators will also be posted on the ESBOCES home page in shared documents. The ten (10) standards are somewhat different from the twelve (12) standards with which the educational services programs have become familiar. We encourage administrators and staffing groups to review and discuss them before the official survey is administered sometime this fall.

1. STANDARD: Philosophy/Mission/Beliefs/Objectives

Rationale for the Standard: Whether large or small, an institution functions more effectively and harmoniously when stakeholders understand and participate in the development of the organization's philosophy, mission, beliefs, and goals. The mission provides the unifying theme that illuminates the purposes and clients of the organization. This theme must be supported by beliefs that form an ethical core. Often an organization will have parameters that guide daily conduct of business as well as a set of objectives that provide focus for improvement and growth efforts. These documents should be appropriate for the groups served, prominently displayed, and periodically reviewed.



2. STANDARD: Governance and Constituent Relations

Rationale for the Standard: Effective governance and positive relations with constituent groups are key to the long-term well-being of any high quality service agency. The governing body, staff, and constituent groups must work in partnership to assure the integrity, quality, and usefulness of programs and services. There should be an atmosphere of mutual respect and purposeful effort on behalf of students and their learning. The governing body should focus its activities on policy development, planning, assessing the service agency's performance as well as that of the agency leadership.



3. STANDARD: Leadership and Planning

Rationale for the Standard: In an effective service agency, the head of the agency ensures 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 agency. The focus of a service agency is typically two-fold: improving the performance of the students it serves and meeting the needs of its clients.

4. STANDARD: Resources

Rationale for the Standard: Financial, physical, and human resources must be sufficient to contribute to the fulfillment of the mission and objectives of the organization. Buildings should be safe and secure and sufficiently maintained. Class sizes should be appropriate to meet student needs. Learning materials, technology and equipment should be up-to-date and accessible to students and staff.



5. STANDARD: Business Practices

Rationale for the Standard: The business practices of a service agency should promote confidence in the organization's ability to responsibly manage fiscal and material resources and to follow prescribed budgeting and accounting principles. The agency should effectively allocate fiscal resources to accomplish the mission and identified goals of the organization and to meet the needs of end users. Stakeholders should have opportunities

to provide input into financial plans and levels of income and expenditure should be in appropriate balance. Educational service agencies are expected to deliver cost-effective programs and services that contribute to the educational health of the local community.

6. STANDARD: Organization and Administration

Rationale for the Standard: The organizational structure of a service agency is the vehicle for carrying out the established philosophy and goals of the educational program and support services. A clearly defined set of reporting relationships is key, and administrative, instructional, and support staff that is qualified, competent and sufficient in number is essential for success. Founded in organizational theory and exhibited in the daily functioning of any service agency is the realization that relationships among the staff and administration sustain the dynamic nature of that organization.



7. STANDARD: Instructional Programs and Services

Rationale for the Standard: The instructional program of a service agency should reflect a well-orchestrated and appropriate balance between carefully planned rigorous curriculum programs and effective instructional pedagogy. The curriculum at all levels is defined in scope and sequence and is consistent with the agency's stated purposes. It should be designed to stimulate student learning at all levels for all abilities. The materials, technology, and equipment for instruction are appropriate, current, functional, and well-maintained. Programs should be aligned with the standards for appropriate state, local, and school district requirements and is supported by adequate record-keeping and good communication.



8. STANDARD: Support Services

Rationale for the Standard: Effective service agencies are designed to deliver a broad array of instructional, management, staff development, and technical support services to its clients. Needs assessments are used to make decisions regarding the type and nature of services to be offered and assessments of customer satisfaction, efficiency and effectiveness are conducted.



9. STANDARD: Results/Outcomes

Rationale for the Standard: An effective service agency looks at a host of results and outcomes in assessing its effectiveness in areas such as student learning and performance, performance results for support services, customer satisfaction, follow-up surveys of graduates, and cost effectiveness of programs and services. Results are used to develop strategies for improving service and program quality.

10. STANDARD: Human Resources Development

Rationale for the Standard: The Human Resources Development program of a service agency should emulate the agency's mission and belief statements. Personnel practices should promote recruitment of quality staff, facilitate communications, advocate for the fair and equitable treatment of staff, ensure that staff accountability practices are followed, and assist in the design and delivery of staff development/professional growth programs. At the same time, service agencies are concurrently challenged to maintain relationships that are reflective, honest, open, and representative. Ongoing professional development, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and collegial relationships among staff and administration are critical to the effective delivery of quality education to students.



THE BOARD REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO AFG

At the June 2007 Board Meeting, the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Board approved the Middle States Association Accreditation for Growth (AFG) Commitment Form. In approving this form, representatives of the Board, district and agency endorsed the five commitments described below and committed to use the AFG protocol throughout the next Middle States Accreditation for Growth period of 2009 through 2016.

By choosing *Accreditation for Growth (AFG)* as its accreditation protocol, an institution confirms its commitment to provide evidence of the following parameters:

A Focus on Student Performance and Growth

- The institution's improvement efforts will focus on growth and improvement in student performance and the institution's capacity to affect that growth and improvement. Improvement efforts are aimed at targeted growth and improvement in student learning, student performance, and student results.

A Culture of Accountability in Student Performance

- The institution's objectives are measurable, there is a viable process monitoring achievement of the objectives, and there is an accountability system for monitoring accomplishment of the objectives and the action plans to achieve them.

A Planning Ethic

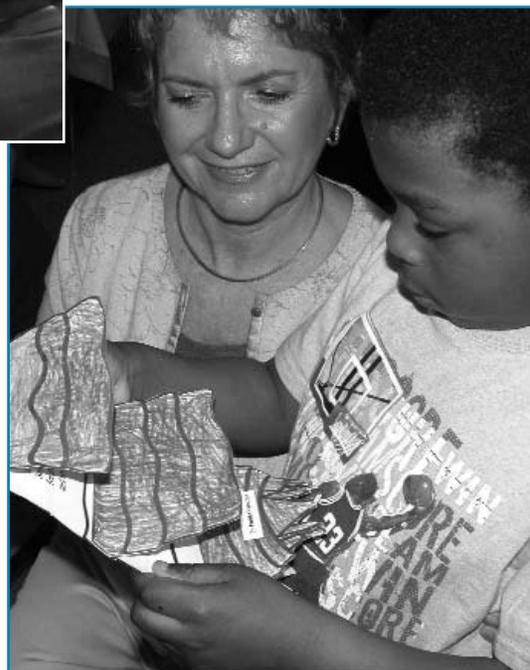
- The institution is engaged in a continuous clarification of its unique mission, beliefs, and expectations in terms of student performance. The institution is action-oriented as shown by the development of long-term strategic action plans that integrate program, services, facilities, and other support systems to address growth needs.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

- The institution is committed to continuous evaluation, an annual review process, peer review, and a dynamic process with the flexibility to modify action plans.

Involvement of Representative Constituents

- A broad spectrum of the institution's stakeholders are involved in identifying the mission, beliefs, profile of graduates, objectives for growth and improvement in student performance, and action plans to achieve the objectives. Stakeholders are also involved in overseeing implementation of action plans and monitoring achievement of the objectives.



EASTERN SUFFOLK BOCES EIGHTH ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING

August 2007

On August 15, 2007 Eastern Suffolk BOCES conducted its Eighth Annual Strategic Planning Council meeting at the Best Western in Riverhead, New York. Out of the 191 internal and external stakeholders invited, 136 accepted, 95 people attended, and 12 staff gave support to the meeting. The attendees represented a variety of Eastern Suffolk BOCES staffing levels, the agency's leadership team, superintendents and staff from a number of school districts, as well as faculty members from colleges and universities, business and non-profit representatives, and leaders of a variety of religious, community, parent and governmental organizations. The purpose of the meeting was to convene a regional group to share highlights of Eastern Suffolk BOCES 2006-07 accomplishments and gather input for the proposed 2007-08 strategic plan that will be presented to the Board at the November 1, 2007 meeting.

After welcomes from Eastern Suffolk BOCES Chief Operating Officer Gary D. Bixhorn, and District Superintendent Edward J. Zero, the group observed a presentation highlighting the agency's strategic plan accomplishments for the 2006-07 year. A DVD of the presentation is being distributed to interested attendees, the Board, Administrative Council members, Building Principals, and has been placed on our website for the public to see.

The main part of the meeting entailed the group breaking into nine focus/discussion groups to give feedback to Administrative Council members in charge of each part of the strategic plan. Group members offered their perceptions of the proposed plan, provided suggestions for resources, discussed potential challenges, and gave additional ideas for action plan activities for the 2007-08 year and beyond.

Each group had a lively conversation giving many valuable ideas and perceptions that will be considered by the group facilitators for incorporation into the final draft of the strategic plan.

Some of the successes cited by the attendees include:

- the cultural competency training done internally and externally
- putting all the ESBOCES facility information in one place and making it available electronically
- helping to bridge the gap of the digital divide
- providing the Career Fairs every year
- increased communications about BOCES internally and across the region
- internal and regional support from Education Support Services

- support from ESBOCES for the professional development and information sharing of business officials
- the expanding RIC services responding to the district needs
- building greater capacity in the region to obtain special funds to serve Long Island's learners
- the SED certifications of the CTE programs approved for academic credit
- the successful mid-point review of the remaining seven educational service sites and the plan to integrate the process into one agency-wide accreditation for the years 2009-2016
- The RIC staff support is very helpful. Meetings on ways to strategize ongoing project management are very important.
- the agency's growing awareness of the importance of valuing diversity, recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, and preparing students to be productive citizens of the world

Some of the focus groups' suggestions included:

- Include measuring graduation/completer and drop-out rate in the student performance outcome data.
- Keep trying to involve parents in the agency's work.
- Continue to include character development for our K-12 students.
- Collaborate as much as possible with higher-education, business, teacher centers, civic, faith-based and other community organizations.
- Find more ways to direct students to ESBOCES and the opportunities it provides.
- Explore ways to help programs and districts support projects that have been grant-funded and need to be continued.
- Give additional professional development support to business officials, especially the many people new to the field.
- Explore the various possibilities for sources for BOCES program space.
- Continue to provide videoconferencing and distance professional development.
- Give more help to the middle school teachers and administrators...also math teachers.
- Continue to provide appropriate training to all staff members (mailroom to boardroom) to ensure they demonstrate skill, attitudes and practices to achieve intended diversity results.
- Ensure supervision, observation and evaluation practices support diversity goals.

Overall, the meeting provided a great deal of input for the 2007-08 strategic plan and feedback to help Eastern Suffolk BOCES continue to carry out its mission and go forward with its educational cooperative of 51 school districts to transform the lives of Long Island's diverse community of lifelong learners.



HISTORY OF THE EASTERN SUFFOLK BOCES STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE

Improvement and Change Through The Power of Community and Leadership

The Strategic Planning process was initiated at Eastern Suffolk BOCES in November 1998 by a Board action adopting six agency-wide goals guiding Eastern Suffolk BOCES through the year 2000. One of these goals focused on the introduction of the strategic planning process.

Board Goal – Strategic Planning: Eastern Suffolk BOCES will identify and prioritize its improvement and development through a strategic planning process that develops, maintains, and, at least annually, updates a three- to five-year plan and aligns resources to accomplish that plan.



This goal was an outgrowth of a previous Board effort to evaluate existing programs for relevance, efficiency, and quality, as well as to position ESBOCES for the future.

In preparation for the comprehensive strategic planning effort, the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) conducted a major survey of ESBOCES staff, students and parents. The study provided the agency with information concerning perceptions of ESBOCES instructional programs that has been used in our planning efforts.

Since then, Eastern Suffolk BOCES has embarked on an unprecedented journey that has led our agency into a new millennium of change and improvement. The major historic highlights are listed below.

Middle States Association Accreditation

A major advantage of implementing strategic planning for organizational improvement at Eastern Suffolk BOCES is the agency’s accreditation from the Middle States Association under their Accreditation for Growth (AFG) Program. The primary benefit of accreditation by the Middle States Association (MSA) is that it encourages and facilitates improvement by providing public accountability, stakeholder involvement and commitment, and validation by an external review team. The focus of accreditation is growth toward self-defined goals; it is a widespread process that involves the entire Agency and all of its stakeholders in a unified vision targeting areas of student growth and achievement. Eastern Suffolk BOCES was the first BOCES in the state to attain Middle States Accreditation.



A Special Thanks goes out to all the students who contributed photos, from Don Miellie’s Professional Photography/Digital Photography program.



Highlights of Strategic Planning Timeline

- 11/98 Board adopts Strategic Planning goal
- 12/98 NSSE Self-Study of Instructional Programs presented to Board
- 2/99 Board approves application to MSA-AFG Program
- 2/99 Cabinet develops “Plan to Plan”
- 5/99 Agency-wide Strategic Planning Council Retreat
- 11/99 Board adopts Agency-wide Strategic Plan
- 12/99 Instructional Programs Strategic Planning Council Retreat
- 3/00 Administrative Services and Instructional Support & Technology (ASIST) Strategic Planning Council Retreat
- 4/00 Action Plan Task Force Committees begin work
- 5/00 MSA Accreditation granted at Agency level
- 8/00 First Annual Meeting of Agency-wide Strategic Planning Council
- 10/00 Board approves Divisional Mission Statements
- 11/00 Board approves amendments to Strategic Plan
- 1/01 Site/Program Planning initiated
- 3/01 MSA Validation Visit – Divisional level
- 8/01 Second Annual Meeting of Agency-wide and Divisional Strategic Planning Councils merged
- 10/01 MSA Accreditation granted at Divisional level
- 6/02 Revised SDM Plan integrating Strategic Planning and TQM into SDM process submitted to NYSED
- 7/02 Mid-Point Review
- 8/02 Third Annual Meeting of Eastern Suffolk BOCES Strategic Planning Council – divisional missions rewritten to reflect organizational restructure at central administrative level
- 9/02 Site Planning begins
- 8/03 Fourth Annual Meeting of Eastern Suffolk BOCES Strategic Planning Council
- 12/03-3/04 MSA Validation Visit – All 17 Eastern Suffolk BOCES program sites were recommended for Middle States accreditation
- 8/04 Fifth Annual Meeting of Eastern Suffolk BOCES Strategic Planning Council
- 8/05 Sixth Annual Meeting of Eastern Suffolk BOCES Strategic Planning Council
- 11/05 Middle States Mid-Point Review – agency
- 5/06 Middle States Mid-Point Review of seven instructional program sites
- 8/06 Seventh Annual Meeting of Eastern Suffolk BOCES Strategic Planning Council
- 12/06 Middle States Mid-Point Review of remaining seven instructional program sites
- 8/07 Eighth Annual Meeting of Eastern Suffolk BOCES Strategic Planning Council



Check out our website to learn more at www.esboces.org



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