

At the time of the Two-Year Progress Report, Brien McMahon High School had newly formed Professional Learning Communities and was at the infancy stages of implementing the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative. At the time, faculty members and school administrators did not fully understand the breadth of the data collection process and its impact on student learning. Since 2006, Professional Learning Communities have evolved in the development and use of common assessments. The data that is generated from the common assessments is used to identify successful instructional strategies and to pinpoint the specific needs of struggling learners. Over the course of the last three years, Brien McMahon High School has taken strides to move along The DuFour's "PLC Continuum" towards the Sustaining Stage.

Brien McMahon has placed a focus on helping freshmen students transition into high school. School counselors were reassigned, allocating three counselors to the 9th grade class. These three counselors are able to address the unique needs of the high school freshman. In 2010 - 2011, the addition of a second freshmen team further assists in the transition process and in early college awareness. Core teachers share a common group of students and meet daily to collaborate on the academic and social needs of their students. As an extension of classroom instruction, the National Honor Society (NHS) and the guidance department, developed a program called RANSACK (Relevant Academic Needed Support Aimed At College-bound Kids). RANSACK provides students with a structured environment in which to complete homework after school. Members of the NHS volunteer as tutors and the Guidance department oversees the program.

The use of technology has increased within Brien McMahon High School and the district. Technology was previously used as an instructional tool, for communication, and for student information management. Technology use in instruction has expanded to include the use of SMART Boards, Clickers and LCD projectors. Communication between the greater community and Brien McMahon High School has been improved with the development of a new school website that is directly connected to the district site. Every teacher at McMahon has access to a personalized webpage.