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NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES, INC.
COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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July 8, 2009

Kenneth Healey
Principal
Lisbon High School
2 Sugg Drive
Lisbon Falls, ME 04252

Dear Mr. Healey:

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools, at its June 23-24, 2009 meeting, reviewed the letter from Lisbon High School in which it sought to show cause why it should not be placed on probation.

After considerable discussion and review of the school's correspondence, the Commission unanimously affirmed its decision to place the school on probation for failure to adhere to the Commission's Standards for Accreditation on Instruction and Community Resources for Learning.

Among the concerns expressed by the Commission were the following:

Instruction:

- the numerous small classrooms that limit the use of varied instructional strategies
- the interruptions in the availability of computer technology when computers cannot be wheeled outdoors to portable classrooms in inclement weather
- the extreme temperature fluctuation in numerous classrooms caused in part by outdated windows
- the use of hot plates in science labs that result in blown fuses
- the gym floor that slopes and has numerous rips in the flooring
- the air handling problems in the gym that result in ceiling paint continuously peeling and falling to the floor
- the two sets of stairs at one end of the gym that are so close to the playing area that students are at risk of serious injury
- the presence of a padded I-beam that impedes the exit off the stage
- the bleachers that are a hazard when pulled out because they are so close to the lines on the gym floor

- the noise infiltration from band into algebra rooms, from music labs into geometry classrooms, and from the gym into art rooms located on the floor
- the lack of soundproofing in special education rooms making it difficult to test students
- the inability to darken some classrooms
- the inadequate storage space necessitating the use of classroom space, as in art, for storage, thus limiting already cramped classroom space

Community Resources for Learning:

- the two shabby, worn, 20-year old, detached portable classrooms, some with taped ceilings, carpeting patched with duct tape, lifting siding, and torn screens
- a small cafeteria which does not meet the needs of students
- the temperature fluctuations which remain in some parts of the building despite the work in the gym and art room
- the use of multiple propane burners that necessitated shutoff of propane lines under science rooms
- the old-fashioned radiators that pose a burn hazard and are unreliable
- the water-stained ceiling tiles from a roof which leaks

When there is a Commission vote to take the adverse action of placing a school on probation, the school has the opportunity to appeal that decision to the Association's Board of Trustees. We have enclosed a copy of the Association's Policy and Procedure for the Appeal of Adverse Action which indicates that a school wishing to appeal the action shall submit notice of its intent no later than fifteen (15) days following the date of this letter.

A binder of \$7,500 must accompany such a letter of intent. If the school decides to appeal the Commission's action, the accreditation status of the school will not change until all rights of appeal pursuant to the Policy and Procedure are exhausted or extinguished. Once the Board of Trustees of the New England Association decides to place a school on probation, the decision is final and cannot be appealed.

Despite the Commission concerns identified earlier, it does wish to acknowledge the following:

- the efforts on behalf of school officials to create an alternative plan that might be acceptable to taxpayers to resolve the serious facilities concerns identified by the Commission
- the relocation of the school bus to another location to reduce exhaust fumes in the girls' locker room
- the replacement of the heater in the male physical education teacher's office
- the plans to pipe propane gas into science classrooms to eliminate use of portable propane tanks
- the installation of a clay trap in the art room to improve running water use
- the efforts to bring some heating issues under control
- the plans to construct protection covers for the old-fashioned radiators

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School officials are reminded that the Commission in its notification letter dated April 14, 2009, requested a Special Progress Report due September 1, 2009, which should provide detailed responses to each of the following recommendations:

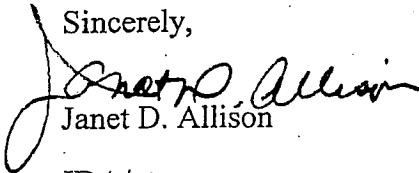
- immediately address all health and safety concerns, including the gym floor, and the unsafe use of multiple portable propane burners
- immediately develop and begin implementation of a short-term plan to address all identified facilities concerns
- develop a long-term plan and time-line to address serious facilities issues including the gym floor, sound-proofing, issues with running water, extreme temperature fluctuations, the shabby, outdated portables, and the number of small classrooms
- report further progress on attempts to obtain state funding for a new building or renovation project

In addition, the Commission requests the school provide detailed responses to the following additional recommendations:

- confirm that propane gas has been piped into science classrooms and that portable propane burners are no longer in use
- confirm that all individual restroom stalls have privacy doors

The school's probationary status will be reviewed when the Commission considers the Special Progress Report. Consistent with the Commission's follow-up procedures, the Special Progress Report should include an electronic signature of the principal and chair of the Follow-Up Committee and be sent electronically to the Commission office at the following address: cpsreports@neasc.org.

Sincerely,



Janet D. Allison

JDA/pt
Enclosure

cc: Richard A. Green, Interim Superintendent, Lisbon School Department
Prudence Grant, Chair, Lisbon School Committee
Victor D. Mercurio, Chair, Commission on Public Secondary Schools

