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

Director
PAMELA GRAY-BENNETT, Ed.D. (EXT. 325)
pgraybennett@neasc.org

Deputy Director
JANET D. ALLISON (EXT. 318)
jallison@neasc.org

October 26, 2005

Kenneth Healey
Principal
Lisbon High School
591 Lisbon
Lisbon Falls, ME 04252

Dear Mr. Healey:

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools, at its September 18-19, 2005 meeting, reviewed the evaluation report from the recent visit to Lisbon High School and continued the school's accreditation in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

The Commission wished to commend the school on the following:

- the connection of curriculum documents to the school-wide academic expectations through curricular alignment with the Maine Learning Results
- the inclusion of course-specific learning goals, suggested instructional strategies, and suggested assessment techniques in the curriculum documents for required courses
- the ample opportunities provided in the curriculum for students to practice and achieve school-wide expectations
- the wide variety of opportunities for all students to extend learning beyond normal course offerings, including trips to museums, college fairs, distance learning, school-to-career programs
- the efforts to formally coordinate American History and American literature in an interdisciplinary program
- the purchase of additional technology through successful grant applications
- the rapport established between faculty and students to personalize instruction
- the implementation of the Senior Exhibition based on the values of "excitement about learning" from the school's mission statement
- the widespread use of project based learning to actively engage students
- the development of an American citizenship class required of all freshmen
- student familiarity with the rubric-based scoring assessments to help them understand school expectations for their learning
- the significant use of assessment data by teachers to address curriculum revision
- the frequent and multiple methods of communication regarding student achievement which contribute to a successful environment at the school
- the autonomy provided the principal by the superintendent and school board

209 BURLINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730-1433 | 781-271-0022 | FAX 781-271-0950

www.neasc.org

Associate Director
CHARLES J. MC CARTHY, JR. (EXT. 317)
cmccarthy@neasc.org

Associate Director
ANN L. ASHWORTH (EXT. 341)
ashworth@neasc.org

Assistant to the Director
ROBERTA E. KNIGHT (EXT. 319)
rknight@neasc.org

- the collaborative management style of the high school administration
- the principal's campaign to reinvigorate "Greyhound Spirit"
- the development of the advocacy groups that personalize the educational experience for each student
- the flexibility of the school's schedule which supports a variety of teaching strategies and which allows students to participate in additional programs
- the commitment of all support staff to meeting student needs
- the efforts to build support systems with parents and the community to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of students
- the especially productive business and community partnership designed to provide real world experience for students
- the cooperation between the school and the Lisbon Recreation Department
- a fully developed technology plan which articulates a clear vision for technology acquisition, staff development, and programming through 2009

Nevertheless, the Commission expressed concern regarding the school's adherence to the Standards on School Resources for Learning and Community Resources for Learning. Concerns include, but are not limited to, the following:

School Resources for Learning:

- limited access to computers and outdated technology in the library
- the closure of the library at lunch, and both before and after school
- the lack of time to coordinate library resources with school curriculum
- the lack of time available for the librarian to collaborate with teachers around the curriculum
- closure of the library for use to support study halls, blood drives, etc., further limiting access to the library
- lack of adequate support staff to assist guidance counselors
- inadequate communication between support service staff and administration

Community Resources for Learning:

- the lack of a comprehensive preventative maintenance plan to address facilities deficiencies
- health and safety issues in the woodshop area, including a small industrial arts area with little room for students to move freely without concern for moving machine parts and with several pieces of equipment without proper guards
- inadequate custodial staffing to ensure cleanliness in the building
- lack of a plan to maintain and upgrade technology
- inadequate size of the school cafeteria, resulting in three lunches and a negative impact on student scheduling
- severely limited storage areas, impacting the size of learning areas
- air quality issues in the boy's locker room
- gym bleachers without side rails and in violation of safety codes
- student restrooms which do not have handicapped accessibility hardware including rails, sinks, and faucets
- an antiquated heating system which results in excessive heat and cold temperatures
- insufficient computers to permit adequate access to technology to support teaching and learning

Given these concerns, the Commission voted to place the school on warning for the Standards on School Resources for Learning and Community Resources for Learning

The Commission requests that school officials submit a Special Progress Report by July 1, 2006 indicating how the following recommendations have been addressed:

- ensure the library is open to students and staff before and after school as well as throughout the school day
- report and assess the adequacy of the budget for 2006-2007 school year to provide and maintain appropriate school programs, staffing including supervisory personnel, services, facilities, equipment, technological support, materials, and supplies
- increase custodial support for the regular maintenance of the building and assess its adequacy
- describe the plan and timeline to fully resolve facilities inadequacies related to heating and air quality, inadequate access to technology, inadequate storage space, cramped space in the industrial arts area, handicapped accessibility, unsafe gym bleachers, and the small cafeteria
- indicate steps taken to resolve each health and safety concern indicated in the evaluation report

In addition, the Commission requests that school officials submit another Special Progress Report by November 1, 2006 indicating how the following recommendations have been addressed:

- confirm (1) that the school is using the Guiding Principles from the Maine Learning Results and performance indicators as its academic expectations or (2) that the school has a separate set of academic expectations with attendant rubrics and submit such expectations
- report progress on how the school has clarified for faculty, students, and parents the learning expectations that it expects all students to achieve and the relationship between the academic expectations and the local assessment system
- develop and submit performance indicators for the civic and social expectations in the school's mission statement
- develop and fund a plan for the ongoing development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum that includes professional development as well as time for faculty to work and collaborate on curriculum
- develop a process that ensures there is curricular coordination and articulation between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools
- develop a professional development program, based on identified teacher needs, to ensure instructional strategies personalize instruction, make connections across disciplines, engage students as active and self-directed learners, involve all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding, provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills and promote student self-assessment and self-reflections
- develop and implement a formal program for the mentoring of new teachers

Consistent with Commission policies, the school's warning status will not be removed until the school can demonstrate that it has satisfactorily completed these and other evaluation report recommendations related to the cited Standards areas of concern.

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All accredited schools must submit a required Two-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Lisbon High School is due on October 1, 2007. In that report school officials should indicate the status of all recommendations in the school's evaluation report by classifying each in one of five categories: Completed, In Progress, Planned for the Future, Rejected or No Action. In addition, they should provide a brief description of the action that has been taken on each valid recommendation in the evaluation report and include anticipated dates of completion where applicable. Special care should be taken to include appropriate information to justify the Rejected or No Action status of any recommendation.

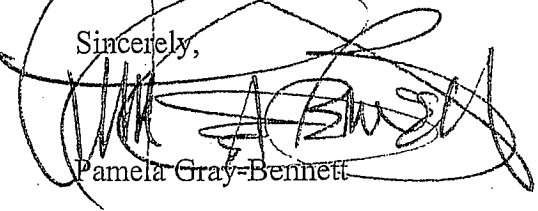
The Two-Year Progress Report should also provide detailed explanations regarding the manner in which each of the following highlighted recommendations has been addressed:

- develop and implement a process for the regular review and revision of the mission, ensuring that parents, students and community members are involved in the process
- provide examples to illustrate how the school uses the mission and expectations for student learning to guide the procedures, policies, and decisions of the school
- ensure that curriculum documents for all courses prescribe content, integrate relevant school-wide learning expectations, include course-specific learning goals, and suggest instructional and assessment strategies
- report progress on the implementation of the plan to develop, implement, evaluate, and revise curriculum, including the provision of professional development in support of this effort
- increase formal and informal opportunities to integrate the curriculum
- take steps to emphasize depth of understanding over breadth of coverage in the curriculum
- describe the process the school will use to assess and report to students and parents as well as the community the achievement by each student of school-wide expectations

The Commission congratulates the school administration and faculty for completing the first two phases of the accreditation program: the self-study and the evaluation visit. The next step will be the follow-up process during which the school will implement valid recommendations in the evaluation report. The Commission's Follow-Up Seminars should help you and your faculty develop a schedule for implementing valid recommendations. In addition, the Commission's *Accreditation Handbook* provides information on follow-up procedures.

The school's warning status will be next reviewed when the Commission considers the Special Progress Report. Consistent with the Commission's follow-up procedures, the Special Progress Report should be signed by the principal and chair of the Follow-Up Committee and sent to the Commission office in duplicate by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Sincerely,



Pamela Gray-Bennett

PGB/pt

cc: Shannon Welsh, Superintendent, Union #30
Deborah Danuski, Chair, Lisbon School Committee
Patrick Larkin, Chair of the Visiting Committee
Martin Gray, Chair, Commission on Public Secondary Schools