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

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November 24, 2015

Parry Graham  
Principal  
Nashoba Regional High School  
12 Green Road  
Bolton, MA 01740

Dear Dr. Graham:

The Committee on Public Secondary Schools, at its October 18-19, 2015 meeting, reviewed the decennial evaluation report from the recent visit to Nashoba Regional High School and voted to award the school continued accreditation in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

The Committee was impressed with many of the programs and services and wishes to commend the following:

- the dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process used to develop the I-CARE set of core values, beliefs, and expectations
- the school culture that embodies the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
- the incorporation of the I-CARE core values and beliefs on the school-wide discipline referral form
- the creativity of teachers in working around the space, materials, and technology challenges the facility creates
- the development of interdisciplinary classes to promote student achievement of core learning expectations
- the varied opportunities for students to experience authentic learning both within the school and in the community
- the varied instructional practices that support the achievement of the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
- the wide use of varied formative and summative assessments to determine student performance and to inform instruction

- the frequent use of teacher-generated, course-specific rubrics to inform students of assessment expectations
- the collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data by individual departments to improve teaching and learning

As well, the Committee was pleased to note the following:

- the creation of a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive school community
- the development of a strong sense of community and family that is working to becoming more inclusive of new students and those with diverse needs
- the variety of courses that are accessible to all students based on academic ability and interest
- the collaboration of all service providers which results in effective support for all students
- the freshman transition program that is a coordinated and targeted effort to ensure a solid foundation for new freshmen
- the active engagement of parents in several booster groups that support students in the arts and athletics
- the development of strong and productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning
- the dedication of the custodial, grounds, and maintenance staff to keeping a well-maintained and clean facility

The Committee engaged in a thoughtful and lengthy discussion about the visiting committee report. They expressed significant concern over issues reported in the Standard on School Culture and Leadership, specifically the principal being provided with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school and the opportunities for teachers to have meaningful and defined roles in decision-making at both the school and district level. The Committee gave due and thoughtful consideration to placing the school on Warning for the Standard on School Culture and Leadership but has decided to delay that decision to allow these issues to show significant improvement by the requested Special Progress Report.

The Committee requests that school officials submit a Special Progress Report by September 1, 2016 providing detailed information on action taken to address the following:

- site specific examples of building-based responsibilities and decisions that rest with the building principal in order to more effectively manage the instruction, expectations, and day-to-day running of the school
- ensure that building-based decisions follow established procedure and protocol moving through staff, building administration, and school council in order to ensure that they are being made in the best interest of the students and staff
- site specific examples of staff being provided with meaningful roles in the school and district's decision-making processes
- ensure that school priorities are set by the high school principal and that he is provided with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school

All accredited schools must submit a required Two-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Nashoba Regional High School is due on October 1, 2017. Information about the proper preparation of the Two-Year Progress Report was provided to school representatives at the

Follow-Up Seminar and can be found at <http://cpss.neasc.org> under the "Ongoing Accreditation" tab, *Two-Year Progress Report*. In that report school officials are required to respond to two types of recommendations: (Section I), highlighted recommendations from this notification letter and (Section II), general report recommendations from the school's decennial evaluation report. As well schools are reminded to provide the requested information in Sections III - IX.

With regard to the reporting of action taken on evaluation report recommendations, school officials should indicate the status of each recommendation by classifying it in one of five categories: Completed, In Progress, Planned for the Future, Rejected, or No Action. In addition, for each valid recommendation in the evaluation report there should be a brief description of the action that has been taken to address the recommendations, including 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.

In addition to providing information on action taken to address each evaluation report 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:

- ensure that the school-wide rubrics are used across the curriculum to assess individual and whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
- develop and implement a formal process to communicate individual student and whole-school progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
- develop and implement a formal, ongoing program or process through which each student has an adult in the school (other than his/her guidance counselor) who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century goals
- provide appropriate, teacher-driven professional development opportunities which will enhance curriculum development and revision to improve student learning
- provide time for teachers to collaborate regarding best practices and pacing as defined in curriculum guides, specifically those teaching the same course
- assess and revise, if needed, the building administrator's roles for specific departments in relation to the other management issues they oversee to ensure that they can be more effective in sharing a combined view of their vision and instructional leadership with staff members
- develop formal strategies for the gathering and analysis of feedback from a variety of sources including parents, students, and staff to improve student service programs
- provide appropriate certified personnel to staff the ELL position
- develop and implement short- and long-term plans to ensure that the Nashoba physical plant will be supportive of effective instructional practice
- provide access to sufficient and dependable technology to support a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment including replacement of outdated equipment

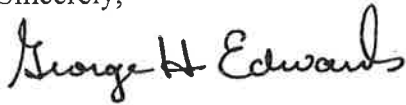
The Committee congratulates the school administration and faculty for completing the first two phases of the accreditation program: the self-study and the evaluation visit. The next step will be the follow-up process during which the school will implement valid recommendations in the evaluation report. The Committee's Follow-Up Seminars should help you and your faculty

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develop a schedule for implementing valid recommendations. In addition, the Committee's *Accreditation Handbook* provides information on follow-up procedures.

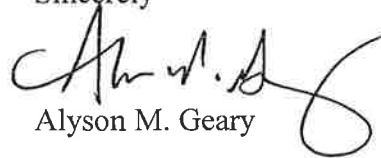
The school's accreditation status will be reviewed when the Committee considers the Special Progress Report. Consistent with the Committee's follow-up procedures, the Special Progress Report should include an electronic signature of the principal and chair of the school's Follow-Up Committee and be sent electronically to the Committee office at the following address: [cpssreports@neasc.org](mailto:cpssreports@neasc.org). As well, please notify the Committee office immediately of any changes in the names of the principal and/or superintendent along with their corresponding e-mail addresses by submitting this information electronically to [cpss-air@neasc.org](mailto:cpss-air@neasc.org).

Sincerely,



George H. Edwards

Sincerely



Alyson M. Geary

GHE/AMG/mms

cc: Michael L. Wood, Superintendent, Nashoba Regional School District  
Nancy Federspiel, Chair, Nashoba Regional School Committee  
Paul R. Mangelinkx, Chair of the Visiting Committee  
Robert E. Littlefield, Chair, Committee on Public Secondary Schools