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NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES, INC.
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June 7, 2013 (Corrected letter September 11, 2013)

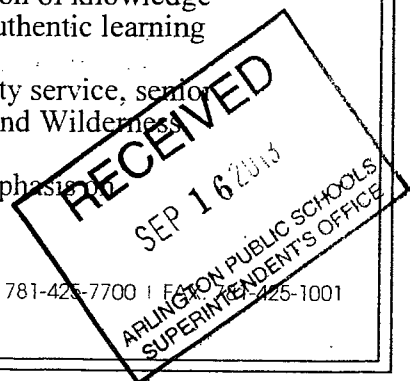
Mary Villano
Interim Principal
Arlington High School
869 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476

Dear Ms. Villano:

The Committee on Public Secondary Schools, at its April 7-8, 2013 meeting, reviewed the decennial evaluation report from the recent visit to Arlington 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 identification of a set of values (ICARE) embodied by the vast majority of students and professional staff that positively impacts the culture of the school
- the identification of learning expectations that are challenging, measurable, and address academic, social, and civic competencies
- the use of the school's core values and beliefs in guiding the decision-making process
- the initial progress in the development of a formal process to regularly review and revise the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
- the ongoing development of a common curriculum template through the use of Atlas Rubicon
- the teachers who are committed to delivering high quality curriculum to all students
- the teachers' emphasis on depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry, problem-solving, higher order thinking, and authentic learning opportunities both within and outside of school
- the multiple authentic learning opportunities through community service, senior capstone project, physical education courses such as Survival and Wilderness Camping, and the on-site daycare program
- the incorporation of technology into the curriculum and the emphasis on informed/ethical use of technology



- the work to create common assessments to validate the alignment of written and taught curriculum by academic departments
- the commitment of the teachers to high quality instruction
- the engagement of students as active and self-directed learners through a variety of research-based instructional techniques
- the community's implementation of the Learning Center to support student learning
- the specific, timely, and corrective feedback provided by teachers to ensure students revise and improve their work
- the teachers' use of a wide variety of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments, in order to revise and improve curriculum and instruction

The Committee was equally pleased to commend the following:

- the provision of a positive school culture which makes the school a safe and welcoming place for students and members of the professional and support staffs
- the school committee, superintendent, and principal for having a strong and effective system of communication and collaboration
- the impressive array of co-curricular clubs and organizations available to students
- the number of one-time or short-term events that foster student involvement, such as after-school activities, international exchange programs, and community service opportunities
- the instructional leadership of the principal and other building leaders that is rooted in the school's core values and beliefs
- the formal student advisory program
- the teachers' who exercise initiatives and leadership to increase students' engagement in learning
- the number of new student activities, clubs, and events that have been established by teachers
- the comprehensive array of academic, social, and emotional supports for students
- the school-wide collaboration among student services support staff, special education teachers, and regular education teachers
- the connections that have been fostered with community social service and health agencies
- the hiring of additional teaching positions resulting in more manageable class sizes
- the library media specialist's active role in supporting the curriculum
- the renovated library media center that provides students with the opportunity to achieve 21st century learning objectives

Following a thorough and thoughtful discussion, the Committee identified concerns related to the school's adherence to the Standards for Accreditation on Curriculum and Community Resources for Learning. The concerns include the following:

Curriculum

- the negative impact of the facility on the delivery of the school's written curriculum
- the insufficient number and size of general classrooms and art classrooms
- the layout and design of classrooms with columns and posts that limit students' vision and obstruct their movements
- the insufficient size and design of science labs
- the need for the increased availability of a full range of technology
- the lack of and/or limited access to safety eyewash stations and showers
- the absence of documentation of current inspections for eyewash stations and showers
- the lack of safety shut-offs for laboratory gas
- the lack of fire blankets

Community Resources for Learning

- the school site and plant that minimally support the delivery of the school's high quality educational programs and services
- the poor condition and lack of cleanliness of the building
- the lack of handicap access and egress to the facility
- the lack of ADA compliance in the auditorium and in "the pit"
- the lack of cleanliness and functioning soap dispensers, faucets, and stalls in bathrooms
- the presence of broken and rusted lockers
- the presence of peeling paint in the locker rooms
- the closure of a classroom due to environmental concerns
- the falling ceiling tiles
- the presence of dust and lint in vents
- the worn, broken, and poor condition of desks and tables, and lab supplies that are not up to current standards

Given these concerns, the Committee voted to place the school on warning for the Standards for Accreditation on Curriculum and Community Resources for Learning.

The Committee requests that school officials submit a Special Progress Report by January 15, 2014 providing initial plans to address the following highlighted recommendations related to identified facilities concerns:

- submit short-term plans to address all health and safety issues, including science labs and studio arts areas, egress plans for evacuation, and handicap accessibility
- improve the overall cleanliness of the facility

The Special Progress Report should also include a detailed response to address this additional highlighted recommendation:

- develop one definitive list of 21st century learning expectations which are inclusive of academic, civic, and social expectations

All accredited schools must submit a required Two-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Arlington High School is due on October 1, 2014. Information about the proper preparation of the Two-Year Progress Report was provided to school representatives at the Follow-Up Seminar and is included in *Directions for the Preparation of the Two-Year Progress Report* which can be found at <http://cpss.neasc.org>. In that report school officials are required to respond to two types of recommendations: (1) highlighted recommendations from notification letter(s) and (2) general report recommendations from the school's decennial evaluation report.

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:

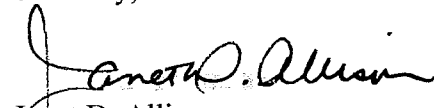
- develop school-wide analytic rubrics that assess student progress in achieving each of the school's social and civic expectations
- ensure that the school-wide rubric measuring the 21st century learning expectations is being used across all disciplines by all teachers
- describe the ongoing progress in place to ensure that each student is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course over the student's high school experience
- ensure that the families of all students are receiving report cards and other school communications regardless of Internet access
- submit an example of a report that identifies student progress toward meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations to parents, students, and the community
- provide sufficient formal time for teachers to collaborate in the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments
- submit long-range plans to resolve the identified facilities and space issues

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

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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. 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.

Sincerely,



Janet D. Allison

JDA/rt

cc: Kathleen M. Bodie, Superintendent, Arlington Public Schools
Kirsi C. Allison-Ampe, Chair, Arlington School Committee
Timothy J. Sullivan, Jr., Chair of the Visiting Committee
Robert E. Littlefield, Chair, Committee on Public Secondary Schools