



Founded in 1888

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

Director

JANET E. ALLISON
Direct line (781) 541-5419
jallison@neasc.org

Executive Assistant to the Director

DOMINA M. SPRINGER WILSON
Direct line (781) 541-5419
dswilson@neasc.org

*Celebrating 125 years 1885-2010
Demanding Excellence. Honoring Difference.*

Associate Director

ANN L. ASHFORTH
Direct line (781) 541-5441
aashforth@neasc.org

Associate Director

GEORGE H. EDWARDS
Direct line (781) 541-5445
gedwards@neasc.org

Associate Director

EDWARD J. BRALLAGER, III
Direct line (781) 541-5422
ejobrager@neasc.org

November 22, 2010

Michael J. Hobin
Principal
Coventry High School
40 Reservoir Road
Coventry, RI 02816

Dear Mr. Hobin:

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools, at its September 26-27, 2010 meeting, reviewed the decennial evaluation report from the recent visit to Coventry High School and voted to award the school continued accreditation in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

The Commission wishes to commend the school on the following:

- the commitment of the faculty and administration in the development and implementation of the mission statement and learner expectations
- the proactive response of reducing eighteen learner expectations to nine
- the enthusiasm of students and teachers in their celebration of successful completion of the learner expectations
- the number of opportunities provided for students to practice and achieve the learner expectations
- the rich variety of opportunities for students to extend their learning beyond the normal course offerings and school campus
- multiple opportunities for the personalization of instruction leading to student success as self directed learners
- the many opportunities for students to assess their own learning
- the extensive portfolio process developed to ensure that students demonstrate mastery of the learner expectations
- the rich variety of authentic assessments used by many teachers
- the extensive use of course-specific rubrics used by teachers, resulting in clear student understanding of what is expected
- the extensive portfolio system

- the antiquated storage in the nurse's office
- the serious issues with the roof which leaks and is in need of immediate attention
- the presence of technological deficiencies in the auditorium
- the extreme fluctuations in temperatures throughout the entire facility due to an aging HVAC system
- the poor condition of the athletic fields in need of improvement, including bleachers in need of replacement, and a track which cannot be used
- the reliance on grant funding for technology
- the number of donated computers in classrooms
- the negative impact of space constraints on the delivery of the curriculum
- the outdated electrical wiring and infrastructure
- an inadequately funding program of building and site management
- the lack of any plans and the securing of funding to resolve the 35-year old leaky roof
- the negative impact of the ongoing pattern of level-funding or budget cuts over the past few years on the school's ability to provide a full range of educational programs and services
- a proposal which would have updated the roof and athletic fields but was defeated in 2008, resulting in the absence of a plan to fund needed improvements to the facility

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

The Commission requests that school officials submit a Special Progress Report by November 1, 2011, indicating how the following recommendations have been addressed:

- develop and implement a plan for the regular replacement of equipment
- develop both short-term and long-term plans, including a timeline, to address all identified facilities concerns
- update the technology plan and ensure a consistent schedule of maintenance and replacement
- ensure an adequate and dependable source of revenue to provide and maintain appropriate school programs, personnel, services, facilities, equipment, technological support, materials, and supplies for student learning
- provide time, resources, and a formal process for teachers to review and revise curriculum and to collaborate around instructional and assessment issues
- develop and implement a common format for curriculum documents which includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills; the school's learner expectations; instructional strategies; and assessment practice that include the use of school-wide rubrics

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.

The Commission was equally pleased to acknowledge the following:

- the dynamic leadership of the principal who provides vision for educational reform and best practice
- the shared vision, direction, and focus of the school community on student learning
- the organization of the school and its programs to promote the mission and expectations for student learning
- the implementation of an advisory program which connects every student with at least one adult in the building and can serve as a basis to personalize learning for every student
- the effective leadership roles of teachers
- the meaningful roles provided to students, parents, and teachers in the decision-making process
- the regular celebration and display of student success
- a climate which is safe, positive, and supportive, resulting in a sense of pride and ownership by stakeholders
- the student support services personnel who work collaboratively and with dedication to ensure that all students meet expectations for learning
- the effective collaboration between the media services staff and classroom teachers to support student learning
- the extensive opportunities for family and community involvement in students' educational programs
- the many productive business/community/higher education partnerships that support student learning

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

Curriculum:

- the limited availability of computers in the library/media center
- the inadequacy of electrical outlets throughout classrooms impacting the use of technology to support the curriculum
- the inadequacy of some science labs to conduct experiments limiting students' abilities to apply their knowledge
- the lack of space in the science area to store materials and equipment
- the need to schedule classes in rooms that are not conducive to that area of study
- the fluctuating heating and ventilation in classrooms
- the outdated foreign language texts
- the absence of a comprehensive plan for the ongoing development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum

Community Resources for Learning:

- the inadequacy of the facility which does not support the school's educational programs and services
- the number of classrooms with one electrical outlet

All accredited schools must submit a required Two-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Coventry High School is due on October 1, 2012. 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.nease.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 recommendations from within 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:

- ensure that teachers and students regularly use the school-wide rubrics in assessing student achievement of the learner expectations
- ensure that all teachers regularly provide students with opportunities to engage students in inquiry, problem-solving, higher order thinking, and the authentic application of knowledge and skills
- increase the integration of the curriculum in order to make connections for students across the content areas to enhance their learning
- provide professional development offerings on research-based effective instructional practices that personalize learning; engage students in cross-disciplinary learning; emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking; apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks; engage students in self-assessment and reflection; employ technology as a teaching and learning tool
- examine current grouping practices and make necessary changes to ensure the grouping patterns foster heterogeneity and reflect current research and best practices
- develop and implement a system to collect and analyze data from use of the school-wide rubrics to inform instruction and curriculum improvement
- ensure the library/information services program is effectively integrated into the instructional program for all students

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.

Michael J. Hobin
November 22, 2010
Page Five

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 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: epsreports@neasc.org.

Sincerely,



Janet D. Allison

JDA/sb

cc: Kenneth R. DiPietro, Superintendent, Coventry Public Schools
Katherine Patenaude, Chair, Coventry School Committee
Patricia Kennelly, Chair of the Visiting Committee
David Abbott, Associate Commissioner Rhode Island Department of Education
Victor D. Mercurio, Chair, Commission on Public Secondary Schools