



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

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November 28, 2017

Ryan Parkman
Principal
Northfield Middle & High School
37 Cross Street - Unit 2
Northfield, VT 05663

Dear Mr. Parkman:

The Committee on Public Secondary Schools, at its October 23-24, 2017 meeting, reviewed the decennial evaluation report from the recent visit to Northfield Middle & 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 inclusive process used to create a meaningful and relevant mission statement as well as clear core values and beliefs about learning
- the implementation of the PBIS program that integrates the school's core values to teach and assess character, life skills, and civic expectations
- the variety of events that align with the school's core values which creates a sense of community and pride throughout the middle and high school
- the development of a new mission statement and learning expectations that clarify vital and relevant skills to students
- the creation of curriculum that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts, content and skills, teaching strategies and assessment criteria with measurable criteria for success
- the commitment of the middle-school team to design curriculum that enables cross-disciplinary learning, which results in a more enriching educational experience for students

- the intentional and purposeful integration of the school's core values and 21st century learning expectations as a prominent part of instruction at the middle school
- the numerous opportunities provided by teachers for students to receive additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom
- the organization and assembly of data spreadsheets for data team meetings that inform interventions for struggling students
- the adjustment of instructional methods to address a wide skill range based on formative assessment data and the opportunities students are afforded to revise their work to show proficiency
- the links made between proficiency-based graduation requirements, transferable skills, and school learning expectations in communicating student progress

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

- the commitment of NMHS to heterogeneous grouping throughout the core curriculum
- the effective and varied use of the weekly faculty meeting time to review data and exchange best practices that enhance teaching and learning
- the autonomy afforded to the principal as the clear leader of the school
- the commitment of teachers to sponsor significant programs that enhance the student experience and the culture and climate of the school
- the proactive, school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support system
- the dynamic use of technology and data to inform the school community about health-related information
- the caring and supportive staff who care for the social/emotional and academic life of the student
- the wide variety of programs, services, and technology supported by the community and school board
- the preservation of staffing levels that support teaching and individualized learning
- the community's support that funds quality programs and services, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements
- the variety of media used to reach out to parents as partners and the myriad opportunities for authentic activities for parents to engage with the school community
- the success of the STAR program and its ability to meet the needs of traditional and non-traditional students

All accredited schools must submit a required Two-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Northfield Middle & High School is due on October 1, 2019. 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:

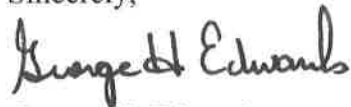
- develop and implement school-wide rubrics or another form of measurable criteria for success to clearly demonstrate each student's progress in meeting each of the school's 21st century learning expectations
- emphasize curricular strategies to incorporate opportunities for authentic learning for students to learn relevant skills and make connections to the greater community and informed and ethical use of technology
- formalize opportunities for teachers to examine instructional practices to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
- increase the presence of higher order thinking, authentic tasks, self-assessment, and cross-disciplinary learning across all areas of the high school to improve instruction and to ensure that students reach the school's 21st century learning expectations
- use formative assessment data, strategic grouping practices, and targeted differentiation to provide students with needed learning strategies and supports and to improve instruction
- ensure that individual and school-wide progress toward meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations is reported to the students, their families, and the community in a timely manner
- increase opportunities for students and parents to have clearly defined roles in the decision-making processes at NMHS
- ensure adequate infrastructure to support the growing demands of technology integration for teaching and learning

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 Commission's *Accreditation Handbook* provides information on follow-up procedures.

Ryan Parkman
November 28, 2017
Page Four

The school's accreditation status will be reviewed when the Committee considers the Two-Year Progress Report. The school's Two-year Progress Report should be submitted only by the principal through the accreditation portal by clicking on the green "mark progress report complete" button. 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,



George H. Edwards

Sincerely,



Edward J. Gallagher, III

GHE/EJG/sb

cc: Laurie Gossens, Superintendent, Washington South Supervisory Union
Justin B. Wrigley, Chair, Washington South Supervisory Union School Board
John T. Fischer, Deputy Commissioner, Vermont Department of Education
David A. Sweet, Chair, Visiting Committee
Francis T. Kennedy, Jr., Chair, Committee on Public Secondary Schools