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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

Reginald Roberts  
Principal  
Norwalk High School  
23 Calvin Murphy Drive  
Norwalk, CT 06851

Dear Mr. Roberts:

The Committee on Public Secondary Schools, at its October 18-19, 2015 meeting, reviewed the decennial evaluation report from the recent visit to Norwalk 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 collaborative and inclusive process used by the Norwalk school community to identify core values and beliefs
- the time dedicated to researching and ensuring that all stakeholders in the decision-making process had a clear understanding of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills prior to determining the school communities' expectations for learning
- the creation of the school advisory council to assist the school administration in making programmatic and operational changes to improve school achievement
- the ongoing use of IDTs to impact the ability of teachers to adjust their instructional practices in order to reach all students
- the creation and use of school-wide rubrics aligned with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
- the consistent close monitoring of students during instructional time to allow teachers to personalize instruction for students
- the purposeful organization of group learning activities to ensure the needs of each student are met

- the leadership opportunities provided by the principal to the housemasters
- the teachers' ability to promote student participation and involvement in extracurricular activities
- the Norwalk community's financial support for events, field trips, performing arts, and much more

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

- the safety, security, and sense of well-being across the school building provided by the school's security employees
- the vision of the advisory committee that offers every child the opportunity to build a relationship with an adult other than their specified guidance counselor
- the School Governance Council that provides an opportunity for teachers, students, and parents to have a voice and promote changes within the Norwalk High School community
- the relationships that are created amongst the teachers and students that demonstrate dedication and mutual respect within the Norwalk High School community
- the Link Crew program that provides opportunity for upperclassmen to mentor new students to Norwalk High School and to take on leadership roles in guiding other students in being responsible, giving members to the school community
- the multiple avenues of communication and outreach used to inform and involve members of the school community in student support services and programs
- the initial development and implementation of a Learning Commons aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
- the comprehensive school health care services and community-based programs provide additional physical and mental health services to ensure that the members of the school community receive appropriate health care
- the comprehensive special education programs and staffing that provide a continuum of supports and services for identified students which is required to access an appropriate learning environment relative to their needs
- the number of capital improvements to the high school including replacing of carpet with tile in the main corridor and ramp area and a \$40,000,000 renovation project that was completed in 2012
- the purchase of New Chrome Books, LCD projectors, and Smart Boards that significantly increase access to technology for staff and students

All accredited schools must submit a required Two-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Norwalk 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:

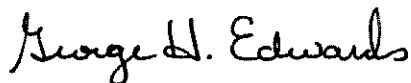
- complete the revision to all curriculum and ensure all courses have a written curriculum
- ensure staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum
- develop and implement a process to ensure teachers consistently emphasize higher order thinking in their instructional practices
- ensure that the technology provided by the district can effectively support teachers in all aspects of their instruction
- communicate academic expectations to students in the form of rubrics prior to assessments consistently and across all subjects
- develop and implement a process to ensure grading and reporting practices align with the school's core values and beliefs about learning
- create greater opportunities for the involvement of meaningful and defined roles in decision-making by the teachers, students, and parents in partnership with the administration to promote responsibility and increased ownership in the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations
- develop and implement a process to ensure adequate school-wide technology infrastructure for effective technology integration and improve technology staffing support to ensure consistent access is provided for instructional needs
- ensure the ramp located near the band storage room complies with ADA code
- ensure that asbestos-related facilities issues are being addressed to maintain the safety of the facility

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.

Reginald Roberts  
November 24, 2015  
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The school's accreditation status will be reviewed when the Committee considers the Two-Year Progress Report. Consistent with the Committee's follow-up procedures, the Two-Year 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,



Edward J. Gallagher, III

GHE/mmv(mv)

cc: Steven Adamowski, Superintendent, Norwalk Public Schools  
Michael Lyons, Chair, Norwalk Board of Education  
Catherine Knowles, Chair, Visiting Committee  
Robert E. Littlefield, Chair, Committee on Public Secondary Schools