



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

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July 23, 2020

Paula Callan  
Principal  
Messalonskee High School  
131 Messalonskee Drive  
Oakland, ME 04963

Dear Ms. Callan:

The Commission on Public Schools, at its June 30, 2020 meeting, reviewed the Decennial Accreditation Report from the recent visit to Messalonskee High School and voted to award the school continued accreditation in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

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

- the extensive involvement of all constituencies in the development of the core values and beliefs about learning and the Guiding Principles for the school
- the embedded, organic nature of the core values in the climate and practices of the school
- the substantial input from teachers in shaping the school's professional development plan
- the varied and skilled use of instructional practices representing sound pedagogical knowledge and application
- the district's financial support of all teachers in earning at least one master's degree
- the use of Tag Time, Guided Study, and monthly GAB weeks to provide regular reviews of student performance and mechanisms of support for students who need more time and attention
- the wide range of formative and summative assessments used to measure student progress
- the devotion of the school community to creating a safe, positive, respectful and supportive climate for all students and staff
- the involvement of students on the leadership team of the school

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

- the community support for a \$13.9 million bond to address infrastructure renewal and facility upgrades

- the development and encouragement of alternative pathways, including career and technical education, the alternative program, and numerous online and dual enrollment classes
- the Year End Studies program that provides students creative, multi-day opportunities for study and learning related to a topic of interest
- the development of a school-wide rubric tied to the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and guiding principles and the pilot use of that rubric in certain courses
- the positive, respectful interactions between staff and students on a daily basis
- the student of the month assemblies that recognize students for a wide variety of accomplishments
- the considerable investment and use of technology and staff to support teaching and learning
- the high percentage of staff who recognize the support provided to curriculum and instruction by the library and media services

All accredited schools must submit a required Two-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Messalonskee High School is due on May 1, 2022. 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 <https://cpss.neasc.org> under the “Process” 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 Accreditation Report. As well schools are reminded to provide the requested information in Sections III - IX.

With regard to the reporting of action taken on accreditation 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 accreditation 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 accreditation 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:

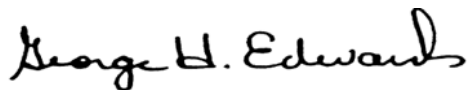
- develop and implement a plan for the creation of common formative and summative assessment in all curriculum areas, including ensuring the assessment of the guiding principles based on each curriculum area’s responsibility for particular principles
- review the feasibility of creating common planning time for teachers who teach the same courses or for departments to facilitate the development of common curriculum and assessments tied to both content objectives and the guiding principles
- extend the reach and application of school-wide analytic rubrics tied to the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and guiding principles
- build student capacity and experience for self-reflection on their learning in all disciplines
- evaluate the effectiveness of the 5 x 5 schedule to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum to support student learning
- enhance direct school counseling services through regular, timely meetings with students
- formalize the process of developing long-range plans that address programs and services, enrollment changes, and staffing needs, facility needs, technology, and capital improvements
- review opportunities for the creation of additional cross-disciplinary options for all students
- evaluate and address the gap in the depth of instruction and level of expectations in lower level versus higher level classes to ensure that all students benefit from opportunities for a high level of learning and thinking

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The Commission congratulates the school administration and faculty for completing the first two phases of the accreditation program: the self-study and the accreditation visit. The next step will be the follow-up process during which the school will implement valid recommendations in the accreditation 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.

The school's accreditation status will be reviewed when the Commission 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 Commission 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



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GHE/AMG/rm

cc: Carl Gartley, Superintendent, RSU #18  
James Isgro, Chairman, Regional School Unit #18 School Board  
Edward G. Wilkins, Chair of the Visiting Commission  
Robert N. Baldwin, Chair, Commission on Public Schools