



Founded in 1885

APR 13 2005

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

Director

PAMELA GRAY-BENNETT, Ed.D. (EXT. 325)
pgraybennett@neasc.org

Deputy Director

JANET D. ALLISON (EXT. 318)
jallison@neasc.org

Associate Director

CHARLES J. MC CARTHY, JR. (EXT. 317)
cmccarthy@neasc.org

Associate Director

ANN L. ASHWORTH (EXT. 341)
aashworth@neasc.org

Assistant to the Director

ROBERTA E. KNIGHT (EXT. 319)
rknight@neasc.org

April 11, 2005

Daniel R. Burke
Principal
Melrose High School
360 Lynn Fells Parkway
Melrose, MA 02176

Dear Dr. Burke:

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools, at its March 20-21, 2005 meeting, reviewed the Five-Year Progress Report of Melrose High School, continued the school's accreditation, and removed the school from warning status for the Standards for Accreditation on Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment of Student Learning.

The Commission was pleased to learn of:

- the use of the school's mission statement to guide decisions affecting curriculum development, assessment practices, and budget allocations by requiring all proposals to be judged against their ability to advance the mission of the school
- the review and the recent revision, in December 2004, of the mission and expectations for student learning and the accompanying rubrics to ensure their being integral to the day-to-day functioning of the school
- the identification within the school-wide rubrics of the acceptable level of mastery for students
- the identification by each course within the curriculum of the expectations being addressed by that course and the use of a corresponding rubric to assess the level of achievement by students
- the assumption, as part of the restored assistant principal position, of the responsibility for creating internships, the job bank, and job-shadow days
- the development and introduction of a program for grade 9 and 10 students, with plans to expand to all grades by 2006, to provide an adult, beyond the school guidance counselor, to personalize each student's education
- the reinstatement of the school resource officer position
- the provision of funds to upgrade the library/media center's collection, its cataloging system, and its security system

- the provision of fifteen wireless laptops for student use in the resource center and in classrooms
- the implementation of full-year MCAS review classes in grade 10 to assist students who are at risk of failing the MCAS examinations
- the filing of a technology plan with the Massachusetts Department of Education
- the approval of the capital improvement plan by the aldermen and the approval of a debt exclusion by the citizens of Melrose

The Commission requested a Pre-Self-Study Report, due February 1, 2007, to document that Melrose High School is appropriately prepared for its upcoming self-study. The report should include detailed responses to each of the following recommendations:

- provide highlighted data gathered from the planned comprehensive survey of students and parents regarding the strengths of the school as well as those areas needing attention or improvement
- describe the process that has been used to review and, if appropriate, revise the school's mission and expectations for student learning to ensure that they meet the Standard on Mission and Expectations for Student Learning and submit the updated document
- report areas of need that the school plans to address between now and the self-study so the school can demonstrate adherence to the Standards at the time of the 2010 decennial evaluation
- report on the full implementation of the program to ensure that each student has an adult member of the faculty who serves to personalize that student's educational experience

To assist schools in writing their statement of mission and expectations and in increasing their understanding of the concepts contained within each of the seven Standards, the professional staff is encouraged to avail themselves of the following: *Guide to Developing and Implementing the Mission* which can be found at www.neasc.org by clicking on CPSS and a website which discusses the Standards for Accreditation effective in January 2005, www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/neasc.

The Commission will review the school's accreditation status when it considers the Pre-Self Study Report. Consistent with the Commission's follow-up procedures, the Special Progress Report should be signed by the principal and chair of the Follow-Up Committee and sent to the Commission office in duplicate by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Sincerely,



Pamela Gray-Bennett

PGB/pt

cc: Rosemary Leblanc-Considine, Superintendent, Melrose Public Schools
Katherine Clark, Chair, Melrose School Committee
Martin Gray, Chair, Commission on Public Secondary Schools