



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

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November 6, 2017

Francis Thompson  
Principal  
Jonathan Law High School  
20 Lansdale Avenue  
Milford, CT 06460

Dear Mr. Thompson:

The Committee on Public Secondary Schools, at its October 23-24, 2017 meeting, reviewed the decennial evaluation report from the recent visit to Jonathan Law 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 learning expectations that encompass academic, social, and civic competencies
- the teachers' instructional practices that exemplify the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations and core values and beliefs
- the alignment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations between the two high schools in the district
- the commitment to the informed and ethical use of technology
- the instructional emphasis on higher order thinking skills to support student achievement
- the freshmen academy that provides additional support for students transitioning from middle to high school
- the commitment to lifelong learning by many teachers who pursue professional learning opportunities and the district's increased funding support for such opportunities
- the variety of assessment strategies used by teachers
- the specific and corrective feedback on student work that is evident across disciplines throughout different units of study
- the review and revision of grading and reporting practices

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

- the positive, respectful, safe, and supportive culture
- the direct intervention strategies available to all students through Law Academic Support Services
- the staff's dedication to students and their pride in the school
- the professional development provided for administrators in calibration and reflective practices
- the maintenance of small class size that allows teachers to meet the learning needs of students
- the variety of intervention strategies that support the achievement of all students, including identified at-risk students
- the variety of methods used to inform families about available student support services
- the efforts of the college and career center counselor to support students' transitions to post-high school life
- the delivery of a comprehensive guidance program by the school counseling department which systematically meets the career, academic, and personal/social needs of students
- the commitment of the health services staff in supporting the physical and mental well-being of all students
- the many high-quality resources and technology offered by the media center to support student learning
- the responsiveness of the school, in conjunction with the facilities department, to provide prompt maintenance, repair, and a clean environment
- the five-year replacement plan for both desktop and laptop computers that supports the integration of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills
- the school site and physical plant that supports the delivery of high quality instruction and school programs
- the efforts to engage the larger Milford community for continued investment and support of programs and activities

The Committee expressed some concerns regarding the school's alignment to the Accreditation Standards on Curriculum, Assessment of and for Student Learning, and School Culture and Learning and requests that school officials submit a Special Progress Report by October 1, 2018 providing detailed information on action taken to address the following:

- ensure the curriculum is written in a common format that includes units of study with essential questions, concepts and skills, the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations, instructional strategies, and assessment practices including use of specific and measurable criteria for success, such as school-wide rubrics
- develop and implement a plan to create curriculum documents for courses in which they do not currently exist and to fully revise existing curricula to comply with the school's common curriculum format
- develop and implement a formal system to assess individual student and whole-school progress in achieving the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
- develop and implement a formal system to report individual student progress in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to students and their families as well as whole school progress to the school community

- report on efforts underway to develop formal communication systems between central office and building administration to achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.
- report on efforts to develop a formal collaboration processes between and among building administration, district supervisors, and central office personnel in decision making.
- report on efforts to develop a formal process to ensure that a variety of teachers, representative of the school community, have ongoing formal opportunities to exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of students' engagement in learning

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

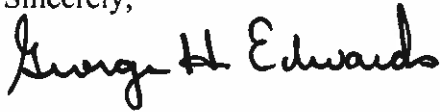
- develop and implement a more collaborative and inclusive process that engages all stakeholders in the ongoing development of the school's core values, beliefs, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations
- provide additional time, resources, and opportunities for teachers to participate in the curriculum revision process
- increase opportunities for integration of technology in the formal, written curriculum in all subject areas and provide professional development for teachers to familiarize themselves with instructional strategies involving technology
- develop and implement a formal process of collecting, disaggregating, and analyzing data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement
- develop and implement a process to ensure the advisory program clearly provides strategies to show that it establishes a relationship with another adult in the school community and how this process assists students in achieving the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations

- provide opportunities for the media specialist to formally integrate research skills into the curriculum in major subject areas
- develop a plan to address safety concerns regarding school security, roof access, and parking lot concerns

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

The school's accreditation status will be reviewed when the Committee considers the Special Progress Report. The school's Special 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](mailto:cpss-air@neasc.org).

Sincerely,



George H. Edwards

Sincerely,



Edward J. Gallagher, III

GHE/EJG/mms

cc: Elizabeth E. Feser, Superintendent, Milford Public Schools  
Susan Glenon, Chair, Milford Board of Education  
Nicholas J. Spera, Chair of the Visiting Committee  
Francis T. Kennedy, Jr., Chair, Committee on Public Secondary Schools