

October 21, 2005

Charles P. Ruopp
Principal
Wayland High School
264 Old Connecticut Path
Wayland, MA 01778

Dear Mr. Ruopp:

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools, at its September 18-19, 2005 meeting, reviewed the evaluation report from the recent visit to Wayland High School and continued the school's accreditation in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

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

- the reflective process used to develop and articulate the mission statement and expectations for student learning with participation by faculty members, administrators, students, and parents
- the mission statement that represents the core values and beliefs of the school community and serves to “unite and inspire the school as a community of learners”
- the development and implementation of school-wide rubrics
- the significant number of co-curricular organizations and clubs that are available and contribute to students’ ethical, social, and civic development
- the rigor of the curriculum that focuses on inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills
- the dedication of the faculty in their commitment to delivering high quality instruction to all students
- the warm and caring relationship among faculty, students, and the administration
- the pride in quality teaching and learning that students and staff consistently exhibit
- the resources dedicated to instructional materials and professional development
- the opportunities students have to apply their knowledge in other learning experiences
- the media center’s resources that positively and effectively support the curriculum

- the range of instructional strategies that successfully personalizes instruction, engages students as active and self-directed learners, involves all students in higher order thinking to promote depth of understanding, and reflects the mission and expectations for student learning
- the positive impact of the intensive supervision and evaluation of performance provided to first year teachers
- the civic and social expectations that are an integral part of the curriculum and the culture of the school
- the connection between academic expectations and civic and social expectations that is exemplified by the action plan students develop in civics classes and implement in the community as well as the requirement that students in physical science donate eight hours of service "to the earth"
- the extensive writing experiences students have across the curriculum
- the degree to which students exemplify the social and civic expectations through the level of self-monitoring of their behavior in the open campus model
- the excellent communication of clear academic expectations to students and parents
- the organizational structure that capitalizes on teachers' deep knowledge of content and commitment to personalized learning for all students

Further, the Commission was pleased to acknowledge the following:

- the highly effective educational leadership of the principal
- the leadership role of the faculty in a variety of forums and activities
- the use of the mission and expectations by the building administrators and faculty members in the decision making process
- the recognition and celebration of student learning and accomplishments
- the positive, respectful, and safe school climate
- the school committee's support for the mission and expectations for student learning
- the student support services personnel for establishing a direct link between their programs and services and the mission and expectations for student learning
- the commitment to fully fund special education and guidance services to allow for smaller caseloads and more intensive support
- the support provided students by the academic center and its insightful involvement of a wide range of students helping each other to learn
- the extensive access to the media center and academic center which speaks to the school's commitment to learning for all students
- the active support and involvement of parents in the school
- the Wayland Public Schools Foundation's support of the school
- the community and higher education partnerships that help Wayland High School to meet the needs of all students, link classroom knowledge with authentic applications, and fulfill civic and social expectations for students
- the custodial staff for maintaining the facility adequately despite the great challenges created by the age of the buildings and the overcrowding
- the town's approval of \$350,000 for the development of a design concept for a new school

Following its review and discussion of the school's decennial evaluation report, the Commission expressed its serious concern related to a number of facilities, space, and health and safety issues throughout the campus facilities as detailed in the Community Resources for Learning section of the decennial evaluation report. Those concerns include, but are not limited to, the following:

- the limited extent to which of the present school site and plant support all aspects of the educational program and services
- the severe overcrowding throughout the building, including the number of small classrooms
- the practice of overusing classrooms
- the insufficient amount of storage space which is not secure, and not easily accessible
- the outdated and aging condition of the science labs that lack the capacity for the plumbing essential for creating student lab stations
- the lack of a space, other than the field house, to hold full school assemblies and performances
- the inadequate plumbing and electrical systems infrastructure
- the inadequate infrastructure for technology
- the heating and ventilation systems that are more than forty years old and compromise air quality
- the insufficient daylight in the north facing section of the facility
- the corridors that are narrow, below code requirements, resulting in egress that is compromised in an emergency
- the presence of study carrels that block corridor egress
- the lack of appropriate spaces for teachers to meet with small groups and individual students
- the insufficient athletic field space and issues with some fields having substandard drainage
- the failure of the current physical plant and facilities to meet all applicable federal and state laws and maintain compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations
- the lack of handicapped accessibility to the second floor of the arts building, the field house, and the lecture hall

Accordingly, school officials have been requested to submit a Special Progress Report by April 1, 2006 providing detailed information on action taken to address the following facilities, space, and health and safety concerns:

- provide sufficient classroom space to adequately meet the educational needs of all students
- provide adequate, accessible, secure, and safe storage space throughout the facility
- provide a facility that is fully in compliance with all building codes
- provide a facility that is fully in compliance with ADA handicapped accessibility requirements
- develop and implement a plan to provide a technology infrastructure that meets the instructional needs of students and teachers
- immediately remove storage shelves and furniture that block the required thirty-six inch egress from all classrooms and corridors
- provide contemporary science classrooms with one student lab station per student in the class
- provide within the facility a common space for whole school assemblies and sufficient seating for performances and theatrical events

- provide sufficient space to accommodate the meetings teachers have with individual and small groups of students
- correct the conditions causing improper lighting, including glare
- correct the conditions preventing proper air quality, heating, and ventilation in all spaces used for instruction
- correct all electrical system deficiencies
- correct all athletic facilities deficiencies, including inadequate field drainage

Finally, the Special Progress Report should include specific information on both short and long-range plans, including a timeline, to resolve all facilities, space, and health and safety recommendations identified above. Given these concerns, the Commission advises school and system officials and the governing body of its intent to monitor closely the school's progress in addressing these identified issues.

All accredited schools must submit a required Two-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Wayland High School is due on October 1, 2007. In that report school officials should indicate the status of all recommendations in the school's evaluation report by classifying each in one of five categories: Completed, In Progress, Planned for the Future, Rejected or No Action. In addition, they should provide a brief description of the action that has been taken on each valid recommendation in the evaluation report and include 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.

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 performance indicators for social and civic expectations that can be used to assess the school's progress in achieving these school-wide expectations
- ensure that all curriculum guides prescribe content, integrate school-wide learning expectations, identify course specific learning goals, suggest instructional strategies, and suggest assessment techniques including the use of school-wide rubrics
- develop and implement more interdisciplinary programs to provide students with more opportunities to integrate their learning
- provide designated and sufficient time for teachers to balance the conflicting demands of students seeking their help and the need to engage in rewarding sustaining professional conversations about teaching and learning
- increase the capability of the computer network to promote integration of technology into classroom teaching
- develop and implement a formal method for all teachers to examine student work collegially and use the results to improve instruction and assessment
- develop and implement a formal plan to evaluate the guidance, special education, and media services programs
- update selection, weeding, and challenged materials policies for the media services program

The Commission 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 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.

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The school's accreditation status will be reviewed when the Commission considers the Special Progress 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. 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

Sincerely,

Janet D. Allison

JDA/pt

cc: Gary Burton, Superintendent, Wayland Public Schools
Jeff Dieffenbach, Chair, Wayland School Committee
Jacqueline Soychak, Chair of the Visiting Committee
Martin Gray, Chair, Commission on Public Secondary Schools