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

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BELMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF THE  
SUPERINTENDENT  
2009 FEB - 10:03

February 3, 2009

Michael Harvey  
Principal  
Belmont High School  
221 Concord Avenue  
Belmont, MA 02478

Dear Mr. Harvey:

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools, at its January 25-26, 2009 meeting, reviewed the deferred Special Progress Report of, and the findings from a Commission-directed visit to, Belmont High School and continued the school's accreditation. While the Commission acknowledges the school's progress as noted below, until all concerns have been satisfactorily resolved, the school will remain on warning for the Standards for Accreditation on Instruction and Community Resources for Learning.

The Commission was pleased to learn of the following:

- the work of the curriculum directors and the assistant superintendent for curriculum in completing the alignment of course outlines with the school's academic expectations for student learning
- the dedication of an area in the upper library to provide a technology lab focused on supporting individualized learning
- the renovation of a large amphitheater space for use as a health classroom
- the completion of renovations to five science laboratory/classrooms to enable them to better support best practices in science instruction
- the completion of the replacement of the rooftop HVAC units at a total cost of \$1,000,000
- the ongoing phased replacement of window treatments
- the installation of twenty-three Smart Boards to support instruction
- the progress achieved in the ongoing solicitation of funding from private sources combined with a local appropriation to underwrite the cost of renovating the school's outdated foreign language lab, with an anticipated completion date of Fall 2009
- the generally acceptable availability of technology to support teaching and learning

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- the creation of a writing lab in one of the smaller amphitheater style classrooms
- the plans to request funding to support a \$1.3 million allocation to replace the individual room univents

The Commission has asked that school officials submit a Pre-Self-Study Report, due May 1, 2009, to document that Belmont High School is appropriately prepared for its upcoming self-study. The report should include detailed responses to each of the following recommendations:

- describe the process that has been used to review and, if appropriate, revise the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations to ensure that they meet the new Standard on Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations and submit the updated document
- based on a review of the Commission's new Standards, currently available in draft form and in final form in March 2009 at <http://cpss.neasc.org> by clicking on "Getting Started", identify specific indicators in the Standards on which the school needs to take action in preparation for the 2012 decennial evaluation

Given the Commission's concerns related to school facilities and their impact, the Pre-Self Study Report should also provide detailed responses to the following highlighted recommendations:

- provide an update on renovations to more of the science laboratories
- provide an update on the funding initiative for, and the planned renovation of, the language laboratory
- describe further efforts related to facility concerns, such as storage, particularly in the music and art areas

The school's accreditation status will be reviewed when the Commission considers the Pre-Self-Study Report. Consistent with the Commission's follow-up procedures, the Pre-Self-Study Report should include an electronic signature of the principal and chair of the Follow-Up Committee and be sent electronically to the Commission office at the following address: [cpssreports@neasc.org](mailto:cpssreports@neasc.org). The Commission requests that it be kept apprised of any substantive changes in the school before that date. For your convenience, we have enclosed a copy of the Substantive Change Policy. 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,



Pamela Gray-Bennett

PGB/mms

cc: Patricia Aubin, Superintendent, Belmont Public Schools  
John Bowe, Chair, Belmont School Committee  
Victor D. Mercurio, Chair, Commission on Public Secondary Schools