



Founded in 1885

TOLLAND HIGH SCHOOL

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

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March 12, 2007

Joseph Bacewicz, Jr.
Principal
Tolland High School
1 Eagle Hill
Tolland, CT 06084

Dear Mr. Bacewicz:

The Commission on Public Secondary Schools, at its January 21-22, 2007 meeting, reviewed the Two-Year Progress Report of Tolland High School and continued the school's accreditation.

While the report featured many positive aspects of the school, the Commission was particularly pleased to learn of the following:

- the official opening of the new state-of-the-art Tolland High School
- the ongoing efforts of the professional staff related to combining the academic expectations for learning and the performance graduation requirements into one document
- the development and implementation of indicators to measure the school's social and civic expectations
- the establishment of Professional Learning Communities and their focus on curriculum, instructional practices and assessment strategies, including the discussion of student work
- the adoption of a common curriculum template used by all teachers
- the increased professional development time provided to support the Professional Learning Communities
- the use of assessment results to inform a number of changes in curriculum and instruction
- the current study underway in one of the Professional Learning Communities related to the school's grouping practices

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- the implementation of a student mentoring program
- the rewriting of the job descriptions for the assistant principals' positions
- the availability of a variety of technology to support the school's educational programs and services
- the increased custodial staffing level

Following its review of the Two-Year Progress Report, the Commission expressed concern related to staffing levels and the number (24) of recommendations in the evaluation report classified as No Action and requested that school officials submit a Special Progress Report by February 1, 2008 providing detailed information on action taken to address the following highlighted recommendations:

- report the number of additional teaching positions in the 2007-08 year requested by the principal that were funded
- report class size and the teacher/student ratio in all courses
- assess the ability of the current support services personnel to provide an adequate and appropriate level of services
- submit an update on each of the recommendations classified as No Action

Further, the Special Progress Report should also provide detailed responses to the following:

- submit a copy of the revised academic expectations document, including the school-wide rubrics
- involve the media specialist in curriculum planning

All accredited schools are required to submit a Five-Year Progress Report, which in the case of Tolland High School is due March 1, 2009. The report should provide detailed responses to the highlighted recommendations listed below:

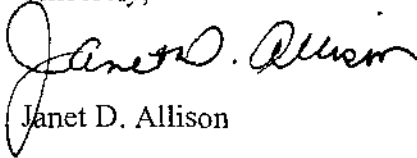
- describe the school's formal plan to assess school-wide an individual student progress in achieving the academic expectations in the mission based on the school-wide rubrics
- submit a sample report distributed to a student documenting the level of achievement of each of the academic expectations
- report any changes in the school's grouping practices resulting from the work of one of the Professional Learning Communities

School officials are reminded that all valid recommendations in the evaluation report should have been completed or be in the final stages of implementation when the school submits its Five-Year Progress Report. Inadequate progress to complete valid recommendations could result in a request for additional Progress Reports, a warning, or probationary status for the school. The Commission requests that it be kept apprised of any substantive changes in the school no later than sixty (60) days following their occurrence. 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 electronically to cpss-air@neasc.org.

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The Commission will review the school's accreditation status when it 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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet D. Allison". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Janet D. Allison

JDA/pt
Enclosure

cc: William D. Guzman, Superintendent, Tolland Public Schools
Daniel Carmody, Chairperson, Tolland Board of Education
Thomas R. Moore, Chair, Commission on Public Secondary Schools



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SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

Principals of member schools must report to the Commission within sixty (60) days of occurrence any substantive change in the school which has a *negative impact* on the school's ability to meet any of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. The report of a substantive change must describe the change itself as well as detail the impact on the school's ability to meet the Standards. The following are potential areas where there might be negative substantive changes which must be reported:

- elimination of fine arts, practical arts and student activities
- diminished upkeep and maintenance of facilities
- significantly decreased funding
- cuts in the level of administrative and supervisory staffing
- cuts in the number of teachers and/or guidance counselors
- cuts in the number of support staff
- decreases in student services
- cuts in the educational media staffing
- increases in student enrollment that cannot be accommodated
- takeover by the state
- inordinate user fees
- changes in the student population that warrant program or staffing modification(s) that cannot be accommodated, e.g., the number of special needs students or vocational students or students with limited English proficiency

(8/06)