

**Maynard Public Schools
Superintendent of Schools
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TO: SC
FROM: Mark
DATE: 2/8/06
RE: NEASC Probation

Beginning in third paragraph this letter traces in time all the actions, reports and responses from the original April 2002 Accreditation Site Visit through the Commission's January meeting of this year. While there were a series of recommendations, as is the norm in the Accreditation process, *all* of the 'Academic' Standards within the Principal's control have been met in the ensuing years. What remains is the addition of a certified Librarian and *significant* quality and quantity of Facilities improvements cf. p.3.

“...there is no guarantee of any town monies to make additional progress on facilities deficiencies for the upcoming year, let alone fully resolve them through a comprehensive plan that is approved and funded with a firm timeline for completion. Even more importantly, there appears to be little will on the part of the town to address and resolve the problems of the facility which is tired, outdated, and in need of major renovations and upgrades in order to meet the academic needs of students in the 21st century. As a result the long unaddressed physical deficiencies will continue to impair teaching and learning at Maynard High School for the foreseeable future. *These concerns prompt the Commission's recommendations for probation.*” (Italics added)

After discussing District facilities issues with the SC last year, we moved our concerns to the nascent Town Capital Needs Committee, for several reasons: we should move together w/the Town, we intended to seek the political support of the Town's Capital Needs Committee to address District needs, and the new state School Building Assistance Bureau was/is not yet accepting applications. It is now clear that that plan is too slow to maintain our High School Accreditation.

Given our NEASC probation status, I recommend that the SC take action now to request a spring warrant for \$30-35k to fund the needed facilities study. Those monies would be used to hire architects, et al. to professionally assess the HS facilities needs. Secondly, the SC could begin formation of a Building Committee whose charge would be to guide the HS facilities review. The SC should consider charging the Building Committee with the additional task of also examining Green Meadow needs. Even if the SC chose not to advance all the HS needs at one time, it may be economical to combine HS and GM facilities needs, e.g. roofs.

Given progress we have been making regarding the NEASC recommendations, I had not anticipated this action. In hindsight, having served two terms on the middle school/elementary NEASC Commission, it's hard to fault the Secondary Commission. Essentially, they're right. While it's understandable that the District has put off high school facilities issues for years, now must be the time. I view NEASC's decision, not as a crisis, but as an opportunity to do what we all know must be done.

(Re: Correction: When this letter arrived last week, I reviewed it and requested a minor correction, which NEASC agreed to make.)