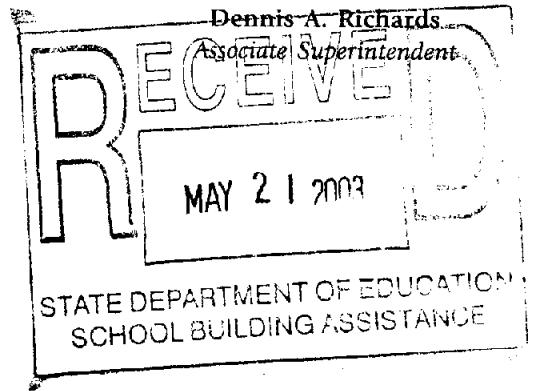




**READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**ADMINISTRATION OFFICES**

Harry K. Harutunian, Ph.D.  
*Superintendent*

82 Oakland Road, Post Office Box 180  
Reading, Massachusetts 01867-0280  
Telephone 781-944-5800  
Fax 781-942-9149



May 16, 2003

Ms. Christine Lynch  
School Building Assistance  
Department of Education  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02140

Dear Christine,

Please find attached a memorandum from Janet Allison to me stating concerns she has as Associate Director of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges regarding the physical condition of Reading Memorial High School.

On behalf of the Reading Public Schools I request that you and your department review this memorandum and determine if her concerns change our ranking from 55<sup>th</sup> out of 63 school building projects you anticipate being submitted this year. As you know I am leaving the Reading Public Schools at the end of June so I would appreciate your attention to this matter as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Harry K. Harutunian, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

CC: Chair Dahl, Reading School Committee  
Commissioner Driscoll, DOE  
Representative Jones  
Senator Tisei  
Jeff Wulfson, SBA



Founded in 1885

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

**Director**

PAMELA GRAY-BENNETT, Ed.D. (EXT. 325)  
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**Assistant to the Director**

ROBERTA E. KNIGHT (EXT. 319)  
rknight@neasc.org

May 15, 2003

Harry Harutunian  
Superintendent  
Reading Public Schools  
82 Oakland Road  
Reading, MA 01867

Dear Dr. Harutunian:

At your request a facilities tour of Reading Memorial High School was conducted on May 6, 2003. Observations made included, but are not limited to, the following:

- the overall aging condition of the plant
- the noticeable impact of the lack of an ongoing capital expenditures budget to maintain the facility in an appropriate manner
- the inoperable, outdated public address system, creating serious safety and security concerns
- the presence of a number of outside doors, many of which are difficult to secure
- the presence of electrical wiring in open spaces
- the outdated electrical system
- the presence of electrical boxes on the floors of several classrooms
- the presence of lexan throughout the building which has been used to replace broken/damaged windows
- the presence of missing ceiling and floor tiles
- the water problems caused by roof leaks as evidenced by stains throughout several areas of the facility
- the large number of inoperable windows
- the worn stair treads
- the decaying concrete on the casing of support columns and window casings
- the rusted window casings
- the significant number of overcrowded classrooms
- the lack of confidentiality in the guidance offices or meeting space and the nurse's office
- the lack of any conference space in administrative offices
- the lack of handicapped accessibility in the nurse's office
- the lack of handicapped accessibility to the second floor of the media center
- the deplorable condition of the passage way from the cafeteria to A Building
- the limited number of parking spaces which creates safety concerns in the event of emergency vehicles accessing the grounds

**Associate Director**

JANET D. ALLISON (EXT. 318)  
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**Associate Director**

JUDITH S. KELLY (EXT. 341)  
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CHARLES J. MC CARTHY, JR. (EXT. 317)  
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Harry Harutunian  
May 15, 2003  
Page Two

- the lack of sufficient storage space
- the inadequate level of heat in the student locker area between B and C buildings
- the outdated, poor condition of equipment and furniture throughout the facility
- the heating and ventilation issues in C Building originally designed as an open concept facility but which has been converted into closed classroom space
- the presence of rusting metal support columns
- the presence of peeling paint on walls
- the use of masking tape to hold some tiles in place
- the limited number of student restrooms
- the closing of two student restrooms for the past several years due to lack of funding to make needed repairs
- the daily use of the stage for band practice, due to space constraints in the music room
- the aging condition of the field house which has outdated HVAC and electrical systems, and a floor in need of replacement
- the limited locker room facilities available for female students who must use facilities in another area of the plant, requiring them to travel outside in all types of weather
- the limited availability of technology for instructional purposes
- the deplorable condition of window shades
- the poor quality of lighting in a significant number of classrooms
- the limited number of computers in the school's media center which impedes its ability to function as a learning hub of the school
- the outdated conditions in some science labs
- the outdated computer network which is not reliable for teacher planning and student learning
- the poor condition of carpeting which is worn and dirty
- the lack of any appropriate storage space for the drama program
- the inappropriate placement of the kiln in the art room
- the poor condition of the weight room
- the clutter of materials, supplies and equipment throughout the facility due to limited storage space

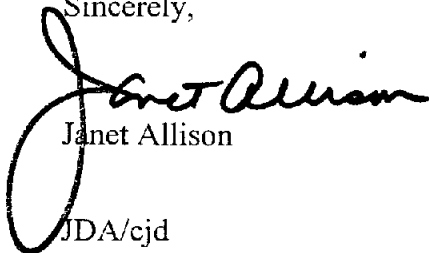
Reading Memorial High School is scheduled for a decennial accreditation visit on October 5-8, 2003. In preparation for the four-day visit, the professional staff at the school is in the final stages of completing its Self-Study. Following the visit, an evaluation report based on the Standards for Accreditation will be finalized and will be considered by the Commission on Public Secondary Schools at its March 2004 meeting. At this time, the high school is fully accredited with no adverse status. Any change in that status would be determined by the twenty-six member Commission.

Dr. Harutunian, please understand that while serving in my role as Associate Director I have visited a number of schools and conducted several facilities tours as requested by the Commission; however, in no way do I consider myself an expert in the area of school facilities. The observations offered above confirm issues identified both by members of the professional staff in advance of the tour and by the individuals who led the facilities "walk-through." While there is no doubt that many of the identified issues impact teaching and learning and present health and safety concerns, the scope of the three-hour visit was not sufficient to determine the full extent to which they are negatively affecting the delivery of the school's educational programs and services. The Fall 2003 on-site visit, however, will enable the visiting to committee to make those determinations.

Harry Harutunian  
May 15, 2003  
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Please extend my appreciation to Frank Orlando, principal of Reading Memorial High School, and Dom Cacciapuoti, Director of Facilities, for their assistance during the tour.

Sincerely,

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

Janet Allison

JDA/cjd

cc: Pamela Gray-Bennett, Director, Commission on Public Secondary Schools  
Frank Orlando, Principal, Reading Memorial High School