

June 7, 2021

Dear Parents United Leadership,

We hope you are well as this extraordinary school year comes to a close.

Your first email called on us as accrediting bodies to ask schools to demonstrate a commitment to "freedom of inquiry, diversity of viewpoints, and independent and critical thinking." Our reply attempted to outline how our Standards reflect that commitment.

We shared that AISNE's First Standard states that "The school's mission and philosophy guide all facets of its operation and program." Similarly, the Fourth Standard requests that schools "provide a mission-driven educational program that promotes student learning and growth." The subsequent indicator asks schools to show evidence of a "program that enables students to develop the skills to navigate a complex future" and poses this question for schools to answer: "How does the school encourage intellectual inquiry and teach critical reasoning, analysis, independent thinking, and respect for differing perspectives?"

We also shared that the NEASC Standards ensure that the school's mission, program, and student experience are aligned. Schools are asked to show a commitment to "broadening students' perspectives" and demonstrate that "every aspect of the program reflects awareness of and commitment to equity, justice, and inclusion." In addition, schools are asked to illustrate how "students' perspectives and opinions are appropriately heard and addressed."

We believe in the importance and integrity of the accreditation process, which is designed and developed in collaboration with representatives from our membership. It is not our practice to redraft or change Standards with organizations that are not part of our membership. Thank you for understanding.

With regards,

Claire Leheny, Executive Director, AISNE
Cameron Staples, President, NEASC

