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Superintendents and Principals:

As you may know, last year the NH Legislature passed Senate Bill 180 which is now written into RSA 193 E. This bill completed the third component of the task assigned by the Supreme Court to 1) define, 2) cost out, and 3) create an accountability system for guaranteeing that schools are offering the "opportunity for an adequate education."

A task force of your peers and a Commissioner's Task Force created by the legislation have been working for the past year to develop a system that will satisfy the law, be fair, and not be burdensome for either schools or the Department. RSA 193-E:3-b includes a two pronged approach for accountability: an input based system and a performance-based system. In brief, the input based system requires that:

- school officials submit a narrative explanation of compliance with each of 12 specified 'adequacy' standards
- the commissioner review each school's responses
- schools meeting the standards resubmit every 2 years
- schools not meeting the standards resubmit annually until met

The Commissioner's Task Force is still working on what the performance-based component will look like. However, by the 2011-2012 school year, each school will be evaluated using both systems. A school that satisfies the requirements of either system will have demonstrated that it is providing the opportunity for an adequate education.

This letter and the accompanying User Guide are designed to introduce you to the new input based system and to explain your responsibilities in this first step in the implementation of the developing NH Accountability System. We think that we have developed a process that minimizes the work that you will need to do to produce the required "narrative" response. We have created a web based survey in the myNHDOE single sign on location (<https://my.doe.nh.gov/myNHDOE/Login/Login.aspx>) that allows you to explain how you comply with each standard in the following way:

- ✓ select “YES” and the system will insert text from the standard as your “narrative”;
- ✓ select “NO” and you will be asked to provide the narrative; and
- ✓ select “OTHER” and explain how you meet the standard in an alternative way

When you log in, your password will automatically bring up the correct survey for your school. Once your information is entered, the system will produce a narrative that you can review before submitting.

The Single Sign-on location includes directions on how to create a user name and password for the myNHDOE site if you don't already have one. Once you log on, the User Guide is there to download and a video guide is also available. Please read through the guide before you begin. It will save you time and effort in the long run.

The twelve ‘adequacy’ standards specified in RSA 193:E are:

- English/language arts and reading
- mathematics
- science
- social studies
- arts education
- world language
- health education
- physical education
- technology education
- information and communication technologies
- school year, and
- minimum credits for a high school diploma

This new requirement for the twelve standards identified above will augment the existing school approval process. The remaining 36 minimum standards for school approval will continue to be evaluated every five years. Eventually, we hope to add those standards to the automated reporting system. For SY 2010-2011, it will be important for those schools that are going through school approval to ensure that their responses on the 12 standards are consistent in both reporting systems.

The law requires that schools must respond beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, which we recognize is fast coming to a close. We are asking you to respond between now and the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year (September 2010 for most, August 2010 for some) based on your school status for the current year. We realize that the timing is less than ideal, but we hope you find the effort we took to build a system that minimizes your work to be worth the shortened timeline. We know that this first year will be the most labor intensive, but once you have entered your evidence and responses, the information will

be kept for future years. You will only have to update any sections that have changed.

The task force would like to hear any and all comments on the input system as you use it. And, we will continue to update you and seek your feedback throughout the summer and next year as we develop the second piece specified in the legislation, the 'performance-based' component. The User Guide contains links to the entire legislation if you would like to read the details.

This first year, teams at the Department will review your responses to determine whether schools have satisfied the requirements of the adequacy standards, and notify each school of its status in the fall.

Both the NH Accountability Task Force and the Commissioner's Task Force encourage you to participate in the development and review process. All agendas, meeting dates, and notes are posted monthly on the NH Accountability web page:

[http://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/school\\_improve/account\\_sys.htm](http://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/school_improve/account_sys.htm)

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Accountability Task Force, please let me know.

I will be available by phone or by email throughout the summer if you have questions or comments. I will also be available at the Commissioner's Conference and the Principal's Conference.

Sincerely,



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*(This letter is being emailed and also sent by US mail. If you received this by email, the User Guide is an attachment. Otherwise, you can find a copy of the **User Guide** at the NH Accountability web page link above.)*

C: Commissioner Barry  
Paul Leather  
Kathleen Murphy

