Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Donna Morelle, Superintendent
Cumberland Public Schools
2602 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864

February 15, 2010

Dear Superintendent Morelle,

Congratulations to you and to your school community on successfully completing the 2010 Commissioner's Review.

As you are aware, in January 2008, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education approved a new set of secondary-school regulations. These regulations require local educational agencies (LEAs) to develop a means to certify that, beginning with the Class of 2012, all students demonstrate the required proficiencies in order to graduate. Additionally, the regulations specify that the Commissioner review the level of implementation of the Diploma System in each LEA, every two years.

The review process for 2010 was primarily focused on access and opportunity, development of local assessments including standard-setting; and personalization, focused on the ILP. The review criteria for the 2010 Commissioner's Review were used to determine the validity and effectiveness of implementation of each LEA's diploma system as well as, the level of progress made toward meeting the 2012 criteria. Across the state, sufficiency and standard setting are identified as critical areas of need. The expectation for 2012 is that all districts adopt clear policies that define proficiencies, describe sufficiency and establish the standard setting process for graduation decisions.

Through review of documentation and on-site collection of evidence, Commissioner's Review teams reviewed the evidence of implementation of the Diploma System in each LEA. As a result of this review process, it is determined that **Cumberland successfully completed the 2010 review process and has made progress toward meeting the 2012 criteria**.

To meet the 2012 criteria for full approval will require maintenance of effort in those areas of the diploma system that are well implemented and greater attention to the identified gaps in your diploma system. The gaps in your system that must be addressed before full approval can be

awarded for 2012 are identified in the complete CR Final Feedback Report previously sent following your site visit.

The following represent ***a few of the key findings*** from the district review.

In your District, there was evidence of:

- Establishment of a grade 9 program for accelerating student achievement
- Development, implementation and support of the middle level ILP

The following items represent key areas that need more immediate and focused attention:

- Complete alignment and subsequent analyses that ensures access and opportunity for all students
- Develop an accountability process that ensures students demonstrate proficiency through the comprehensive course assessments and portfolio apart from course grades
- 3-Tiered Literacy Program must be fully implemented for 2012 (refer to state literacy policy and PLP guidelines and Commissioner Visit Report)
- Establish consistent strategies across all Advisories (information periods) that supports personalization

Finally, enclosed is a copy of a parent/guardian letter to use in your communications with key stakeholders regarding the results of the 2010 Commissioner's Review.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence or to obtain the complete copy of the Commissioner's Review for your district, call the Office of Middle and High School Redesign, at 222-8461.

Sincerely,

Deborah Gist, Commissioner

Enclosure: Parent letter

cc: Dorothy Gould, HS Principal
Richard Drolet, MS Principal
Armand Pires, MS Principal
Roderick McGarry, Union President
Donald Costa, School Committee Chairperson