



## NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

July 2, 2025

Bridget Irish  
President/Chief Executive Officer  
Cotting School  
453 Concord Avenue  
Lexington, MA 02421

Dear Bridget,

The Commission on Independent Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges met on June 26-27, 2025, and reviewed the Five-Year Progress Report submitted by Cotting School. Your Report was accepted without reservation.

The Commission wishes to thank Cotting School for submitting a comprehensive, thoughtful, and forward-looking Five-Year Progress Report. It is clear from the report that Cotting is well prepared to manage an increase in referrals, reflecting the heightened acuity of student needs observed since the pandemic. Strengthening student screening efforts during the referral process; shifts in programming and staffing; Cotting's efforts to respond to the increase in multilingual learners with a focus on minimizing language and cultural barriers; and strengthening the ability to build bridges and connection to the Cotting community all point to concerted efforts to provide a well-rounded supportive environment for the students at Cotting School. Cotting is especially commended for launching Cotting Transition Institute to provide interested families with programing, resources, and support after the age of 22.

The Commission commends Cotting School for its forward-thinking initiatives in many realms. The school prioritizes empowering student independence as evidenced by the Campus Center featuring accessible and creative learning spaces and, as the Commission heard anecdotally, ramps have been installed as just one more way to encourage students to move around the campus freely. Significant work has been done in the last two years to provide a safer, more responsive, and inclusive environment for students and staff alike. Specifically: renovation and expansion of the Health Services department; strengthening the Collaborative Care Model; expanding the Support Team; training in Safety Care and de-escalation techniques; professional development on neurodiversity; and schoolwide integration of *Responsive Classroom*, all point to a school committed to providing a safe, efficient, inclusive and supportive learning environment.

The school has shown its commitment to ongoing improvement by introducing five strategic initiatives that culminated in an update of the school's mission, vision, values, and defining what *The Cotting Way* really means to this special community. The school has established a shared SEL framework utilizing *Responsive Classroom*. In addition, the school has diligently mapped its curriculum and streamlined its processes for logging student progress. Cotting has begun using the Vector platform through the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework as a comprehensive vehicle to support continuous improvement for its educators.

Governance practices have become more forward thinking, with many processes improved and more transparent. The school's finances are healthy, and steps taken to review external services and pricing have been prudent.

In addition to submitting the school's annual reports, the next major responsibility regarding accreditation will be the decennial evaluation visit scheduled for a Foundation Visit in Spring 2029 and a Program Visit in Fall 2029.

In preparation for a school's decennial Self-Study, the Commission expects that each head of school will participate on a NEASC Visiting Team, preferably in a leadership role. This participation should optimally take place after a school has completed its Five-Year Progress Report and before its preparation for the next Self-Study. The Commission is grateful to all those who participate regularly on Visiting Teams in support of our member schools.

Please note that all Commission decisions are ratified at the next full NEASC Board of Trustees meeting on September 11-12, 2025. In the unlikely event that the Board does not ratify the Commission's decision, the school will be notified within one week of the meeting and further information will be provided.

As your NEASC liaison, please do not hesitate to contact me at 781-425-7737 or bhamilton@neasc.org if I can be of any assistance.

The Commission and the Association wish to acknowledge all that you have accomplished to date on your accreditation and school improvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth Hamilton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Beth" and last name "Hamilton" clearly distinguishable.

Beth Hamilton  
Senior Associate Director for Accreditation and School Improvement

cc: Mr. Eliot Klein, Chairman of the Board of Trustees