



**New England Association of Schools and Colleges  
Commission on Independent Schools**

**Report of the Visiting Committee**

**Crossroads Academy**

**Lyme, New Hampshire**

**November 1-4, 2015**

## **Visiting Committee Members**

### **Crossroads Academy**

**November 1-4, 2015**

**David J. McCusker, Jr, Chair**  
Head of School  
Cardigan Mountain School  
Canaan, NH

**Julie Hansen, Assistant Chair**  
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Hampstead, NH

**Marty Wennik**  
Teacher (English Department Chair)  
Cardigan Mountain School  
Canaan, NH

### SCHOOL DATA SHEET

School Name: Crossroads Academy

Address: 95 Dartmouth College Highway

Lyme, NH 03768

Telephone: 603-795-3111

Date of Founding: 1991

Total Enrollment (at the time of evaluation visit): 121

	PS	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	PG	Totals
Male		5	4	3	3	6	5	8	5	4						43
Female		4	4	6	10	7	13	11	12	11						78
Day		9	8	9	13	13	18	19	17	15						121
Boarding																
Homestay																

**International students included in the above table who are not U.S. residents:**

Day																
Boarding																
Homestay																

Number of Faculty: 10 full-time; 9 part-time

Number of Administrators: 4 full-time; 0.5 part-time

**Brief statement of school’s history, mission, and culture – what makes this school unique?**

Crossroads Academy is an independent, co-educational day school founded in 1991 with the dual purpose of promoting academic excellence and moral integrity. To promote academic excellence, we teach the skills and knowledge embodied in the Core Knowledge Sequence. To promote moral integrity, we teach an understanding and appreciation of the character traits found in the Core Virtues Program. At Crossroads Academy, our focus on the Core Virtues creates an ethos of responsibility and caring that fosters a disciplined, passionate, and cooperative pursuit of our program. As students master the content and practice the virtues, they gain, over time, an appreciation of who they are and who they aspire to be.

Person(s) completing this form: Amy Kreuzburg  
9/25/15

Date:

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## INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1885, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC) is the nation's oldest accrediting agency. Since its inception in 1885, the Association has awarded accreditation to educational institutions in the six New England states that seek voluntary affiliation.

The governing body of NEASC is its Board of Trustees which oversees the work of four Commissions:

- Commission on American and International Schools Abroad
- Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
- Commission on Independent Schools
- Commission on Public Schools

The evaluation program which the schools undergo is a three-fold process: the self-study conducted by the school, the evaluation by the visiting committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study (Part II), and the valid recommendations of the visiting committee and the Commission. The Commission on Independent Schools oversees the entire process.

Each school is evaluated in terms of compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation*, the quality of *Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion*, and how well it is serving the needs of its students. Because each school is different, the base that undergirds the evaluation is the school's own statement of mission and core values.

The visiting committee would like to thank all members of the Crossroads Academy community for the warm and gracious welcome we received. From the start, as reflected in the self-study report and through all of our many interactions with members of the Crossroads community, we were pleased and impressed with the open and honest conversations we had with faculty, staff, students, parents, and administrators. We also appreciated the seriousness of purpose we observed among community members for the self-study process, and the opportunity it presented for deep evaluation and to support the school's commitment to ongoing improvement. While we understand the self-study process was truly a "team effort" at Crossroads, we would like to give special thanks to Jean Behnke and Amy Kreuzburg for leading the self-study process, and then again to Amy Kreuzburg and Brad Choyt, who ensured that our visit was well supported and that our needs to do this work were met.

Crossroads Academy endeavored to make full use of its decennial reaccreditation process to evaluate itself honestly and thoroughly, leveraging opportunities for reflection, dialogue, and to recommend improvements in all areas of school life. The School looked to Amy Kreuzburg to organize and facilitate the overall process, and Amy worked with her colleagues, who led the process to review and discuss individual standards. In some instances, trustees and parents were consulted, but this was largely a staff-driven process, which bridged a significant leadership transition as Crossroads welcomed a new head of school. All standards were reviewed by the entire faculty, and the full faculty voted on the self-study ratings. The visiting committee had full access to all Crossroads staff and information while on campus, and we appreciated conversations with parents, students, administrators, faculty, staff, and trustees.

Crossroads Academy is a gem of a school, and the members of the Visiting Committee agreed that it "has great bones." At the core of the experience, the Crossroads' faculty is extraordinary, composed of talented individuals who are fully dedicated to the young people they're educating. The Crossroads administration is also impressive and refreshingly open to opportunities for growth and improvement. There seems to be an air of hopeful optimism among many to build upon this strong foundation, both in terms of program development and in ways that realize the ambitious goals articulated in the School's strategic plan. We hope that Crossroads will use this report to further advance the goals and initiatives it deems most important to fulfilling its dreams. The visiting committee applauds the Crossroads community for its thoughtful and thorough Self-Study Report, for its clear commitment to improvement, and for the honest and earnest manner in which it is already moving ahead to provide the best possible education and experience for its students and their families.

## THE STANDARDS

**Standard 1 (Mission):** There is congruence between the school’s stated mission and core values and its actual program, policies, planning, and decision-making at both the operational and governance levels.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School’s Self-Assessment      P1  

Visiting Team’s Assessment      P1  

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

*Crossroads Academy was founded in 1991 by a group of parents and community members concerned about the direction of American education. It expanded from a small primary school to the present day program, which serves kindergarten through eighth grade with an enrollment of an average of 130 students. The founders hoped to create a school that would combine a rich academic curriculum with a focus on moral development and character formation. As a result of their strong belief in the need for sequenced content, the Core Knowledge curriculum was adopted as a baseline guide for the academic program. Further, the Core Virtues, written by the founder Mary Beth Klee, became the basis for K-8 Character Education.*

*After a decade of expansion and transformation, Crossroads Academy applied for its first accreditation in 2004. This marked a major step forward in its mission and momentum under the Head of School, Jean Behnke. Accreditation was granted and eleven stable years followed under her strong leadership.*

*Although the mission statement is reviewed annually by the staff and every four years by the board, the mission is only clarified to preserve the philosophical underpinnings of the school’s program as envisioned by its founder. A few words have been added to more fully describe our program yet its core values and content remain the same.*

*“Crossroads Academy is an independent, coeducational day school committed to academic excellence and moral integrity. We inspire our students to love learning, act honorably, and contribute actively to intellectual, cultural, and civic life.”*

*Crossroads Academy currently uses both this concise Mission Statement and the more descriptive Mission to convey the philosophy and practices of our school. The school’s program, policies, planning, and decision-making at both the operational and governance levels are congruent with and strongly reflective of the Mission statements.*

*Several years ago, Crossroads Academy also adopted the touchstone: “Strong minds, Kind hearts” which appears in every classroom and on nearly all publications.*

Observations

The visiting committee observed the Crossroads mission statement and touchstone, “Strong minds, Kind hearts,” throughout the school, in just about every public space we visited. Based on several conversations with school

trustees, administrators, faculty, parents and students, it is quite evident that the mission, which includes a description of the Core Knowledge Sequence, Core Virtues Program and the Unity of Academic and Moral Virtues, is foundational to the Crossroads education and experience. Further, many members of the community were articulate and passionate about the guiding concept of “Strong minds, Kind hearts,” which is felt to be central to the Crossroads’ culture and is regarded as a distinguishing characteristic of this community of learners.

Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

Crossroads Academy is a mission-focused community, which has developed the education it offers as a natural outgrowth of its mission. While the visiting committee needed extra time to discuss at some length what differentiated the school’s mission statement and its mission, what is clear is the commitment Crossroads has to living its mission, which includes a process of regular review and assessment, making edits, as necessary, to more clearly and accurately align the mission with the education and experience of its students.

The mission statement is stated clearly, it is embraced by all constituencies, and it serves as the foundation of the Core Knowledge Sequence and Core Virtues Program, which are the cornerstones of the Crossroads education. The school has a process that ensures regular review of the mission, both at the faculty level and by the board of trustees. During our visit, we were provided with work recently completed by a committee of trustees, administrators and faculty, which concluded with proposed edits to the mission. The clear commitment by all involved was to align the mission more accurately with the Crossroads education and experience. We had this insider’s glimpse of the early work of this review process, which will proceed to involve all faculty and eventually the board of trustees.

The climate and culture of the school are well served by the mission and “Strong minds, Kind hearts” touchstone. The longer version of the mission, which includes the Core Knowledge Sequence, Core Virtues Program, and the “Unity of Academic and Moral Virtues” statement, summarizes the school’s philosophic underpinnings upon which every aspect of the Crossroads Academy experience is shaped.

Commendations

1. Crossroads Academy is a mission-focused school, and the culture of the school reflects a commitment to implementing its mission. The School consciously bases its decisions about academic and moral education on the Mission Statement and Mission.

Recommendations

1. The visiting committee supports the school’s recommendation to *review the wording of the Mission, which may lead to an opportunity to more clearly present the mission by integrating the Mission and the Mission Statement. Any effort to streamline the two could also address the importance of the Crossroads emblem and Latin motto featured, but not mentioned, in both the Mission and the Mission Statement.*

**Standard 2 (Governance):** The school has an appropriate system of governance that assures that the school remains true to its mission and that it has the necessary resources to support its present and prospective operations.

Assessment of Standard	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>

P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
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School's Self-Assessment  P2

Visiting Team's Assessment  P1

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

*The governance of the school is clearly defined, though not widely shared within the school community. The administration is a part of the governance of the school. Annually, the Board of Trustees chooses goals to achieve. These are shared with the Head of School. The Head of School then shares these goals with the administration, faculty, and staff. In terms of continuity of mission, the mission is reviewed every fall by the entire staff. Where Board transitions are concerned, we have a stable Board whose Committee on Trustees is always working to recruit new members. The Board regularly conducts a comprehensive multi-year planning process. Institutional advancement is supported through weekly advancement meetings with the Head of School, Director of Enrollment, and Advancement Associate. While the Board of Trustees has the mission of the school at heart, the school community would benefit from greater ongoing communication from the Board.*

Observations

Crossroads Academy has an active and engaged Board of Trustees, consisting of 15 members. The board consists primarily of current parents, as well as parents of alumni and a few members of the local community, who otherwise do not have a direct relationship with the school. From the Self-Study Report and from conversations with trustees, it is evident that the board understands, appreciates, and considers the school's mission during its deliberations and decision-making processes. The board has used a self-evaluation survey that trustees complete to gauge individual performance, although it is acknowledged that this procedure needs to be adhered to more consistently from year to year. There is also a trustee orientation program for new board members. The board is organized appropriately to carry out its work, utilizing a committee structure to ensure policies are established and communicated, and that programmatic and financial support for the goals of the school are achieved.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the board led the process of identifying and hiring Crossroads' next head of school, which is perhaps the single most important responsibility for the Board of Trustees. Working with a firm that specializes in the head-of-school search process, the board implemented a successful experience that was collaborative and inclusive of all community members and constituency groups. The board continues to be supportive of the new head of school in his first year, detailing four goals for him in the 2015-2016 year. These goals have been shared by the head of school with faculty.

The board has developed a strategic plan, which recently was updated through the assistance of an outside facilitator, who helped reaffirm institutional goals, which have been shared with the faculty. The board intentionally "paused" this process so as not to move forward without input from the new head of school. By all accounts, the strategic planning process will be resumed this year in conjunction with major recommendations from this re-accreditation process. Certain areas, such as "enrollment," are receiving immediate attention. In the last two months, an *ad hoc* marketing committee on the board has been established, and there is optimism about the goals and strategies that may emerge from this talented group.

As represented by the self-study and based on conversations that members of the visiting committee had with faculty and staff, there was emphasis on the need for better communication between the board, the administration, and the faculty. Recent decisions affecting personnel and compensation have been made, and there was the sense by some members of the community that there was not enough information provided about



an eventual health care decision prior to the decision being made. It was acknowledged that faculty and staff members were informed of the decision and the reasons for it, although it would have been appreciated if communication had taken place and information shared before the decision was made. In response, the board is making a concerted and proactive effort to communicate more regularly with both the internal Crossroads professional community and the parent community. We applaud the board's recent development of a communications plan, elements of which have already been implemented. For example, the board has hosted a successful wine and cheese social that involved various members of the community and was designed to build relationships and initiate communication between and among these stakeholders. The board recently made a presentation to faculty and staff on the finances of the school, and a similar presentation and opportunity for conversation with the Parents' Association was scheduled for the week of our visit. There are other similar board-led information sessions planned for this year.

*The Board of Trustees is composed of a broad-based and thoughtful group of individuals. Most Trustees are, and typically have been, parents of either current or former Crossroads students. In matters of educational policy, the Board customarily defers to the Head of School but keeps itself informed through frequent communication with the Head, and has provided guidance to the Head on "big picture" issues. In matters of financial management and policy, in particular the school's budget, the Board bears principal responsibility for ensuring that the school has adequate resources to carry out its mission, and that it stewards them prudently and effectively. Its preparation and oversight of the budget is heavily guided by the views and priorities of the Head of School.*

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

Crossroads Academy is fortunate to have the leadership and commitment of a talented and engaged board of trustees. The board is actively involved in support of the school's education, faculty and students. Recently, the board led and supported a thoughtful and inclusive process to hire a new head of school, and the board is clearly supporting the school's new head through goal setting, important committee work, notably through an *ad hoc* marketing committee this year to advance the strategic initiative regarding enrollment, and with contributions of "time, talent, and treasure." The board is well led and well organized, and stays focused on its responsibilities to set policy, engage in strategic planning, ensure adequate financial resources, and to evaluate and support the head of school.

### Commendations

1. The Board of Trustees should be commended for its clear commitment and support of Crossroads Academy, most recently and notably the leadership and skill with which it implemented a successful head-of-school search process.
2. The Board of Trustees should be commended for its recent efforts to develop relationships and provide opportunities for engagement with the greater school community.

### Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee supports the self-study recommendation to find ways to improve communication between the board and the school community, thus fostering a shared understanding of school governance.
2. The Visiting Committee supports the self-study recommendation to develop and implement a *communications plan that would include presentations to all constituencies about the function of our Board* and to possibly include topics of community-wide interest and to *further our exposure in the community and to build networks and support for the school.*

**Standard 3 (Enrollment):** The admissions process assures that those students who enroll are appropriate, given the school’s mission, and are likely to benefit from their experience at the school.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
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School’s Self-Assessment      P1  

Visiting Team’s Assessment      P1  

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

*Crossroads Academy has a clearly defined admissions process. Our new website provides comprehensive information about our facilities, academic program, character education program, and mission to prospective families. Our admissions process strives to enroll students and families who are a good match with our mission. We also endeavor to create a diverse student body that reflects the larger community. To this end, we provide financial aid to those families that have a demonstrated need and actively recruit families that will contribute to the school’s cultural diversity. We also work to transition new students and families into our school community by providing the academic and social support that they need to be successful.*

Observations

The Director of Enrollment and the Head of School are both new to their positions at Crossroads Academy. The school has identified several areas for instituting change in the Admissions Process to enhance the current enrollment of the school. At the time of the visiting committee review, the school is in a position of declining enrollment. The middle school (grades 6, 7, and 8) has large class sizes, but the lower school, particularly in the lowest grades, has considerably lower enrollment than desired. This creates a concern for the school. As these larger classes graduate, it will be a priority to increase elementary class sizes in order to meet full enrollment. The operating budget is predicated on a school enrollment of 130 students. At the point of this visit, the enrollment is 121 students. With large matriculating classes, the challenge of future enrollment to meet the budgeted goals will be greater.

Within the Self-Study Report, Crossroads has identified a secondary desire for the enrollment process. *While we have a formal process in place, there are times when admissions are driven by our need to increase enrollment or balance the class in terms of gender.* For many of the Crossroads community, this seemed more of a cyclical, and therefore isolated, issue. More senior members of the community quickly recalled times when there were “classes that were almost entirely male in make-up.” Yet these same people were quick to note that it has been a trend over the last few enrollment cycles and perhaps worthy of attention.

Discussions with members of the Enrollment Committee (comprised of the Head of School and the Director of Enrollment) indicate that there have been actions taken to begin to address efforts to boost overall admissions numbers and enrollment. Retention is high, and there is confidence in the School’s ability to “sell itself” when families come to campus. The newly appointed Director of Enrollment is a former member of the teaching faculty and provides a trustworthy voice and familiarity with the school’s mission and program, which was a priority for the community. As a result, new initiatives identified for marketing toward admissions include a new

committee of the board, a more active effort to attract visitors to campus through events, an improved website, a new admissions viewbook, and other local outreach experiences. These on-campus events and communications are opportunities to highlight student and faculty engagement, impressive student curricular projects, and outstanding student and parent accolades for the Crossroads experience.

The Self-Study Report also indicates a need for more strategic use of historical data and admissions tracking. This practice has not been used in the past, and current historical data simply does not exist. The Director of Enrollment is currently tracking inquiry, application, admission and matriculation data, as well as developing a survey for questioning parents new to the Crossroads community about the admissions and enrollment process.

Crossroads has also reviewed and changed their admissions process on their website to provide *an accurate description of the school and its mission, staff, programs, and facilities to the public*. This is certainly evident in reviewing the school's admissions and enrollment pages on their website.

Faculty reported to the visiting committee a discrepancy between the two parts of the School's mission when attracting and retaining students. It was suggested that a new position of a learning specialist might improve the enrollment and retention of students who are truly mission-appropriate with regard to the Core Virtues, and simply need support and modifications in order to succeed with the Core Knowledge. It can seem as if one part of the mission is favored over the other when applications are assessed, while a marked focus on the other part of the mission could balance the Crossroads' academic reputation and be a true marketing tool.

The process of working with students and families currently enrolled to manage the retention of students is clear and appropriate. The school has identified their efforts to work with students who might need additional support, academically and socially, and even a process to counsel students to another placement if there is a need to separate a student from Crossroads.

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The current situation with regard to the marketing and enrollment process is a concern at Crossroads Academy. There has been a declining enrollment for the last three years. Possible reasons for this trend are being explored, but there is a palpable concern among the school community for the direction of the enrollment efforts for the current and coming years.

The decision of the Head of School in hiring the new Director of Enrollment was influenced strongly by the need to place a person who is knowledgeable about Crossroads and is recognized among the faculty and parents as a member of their own family.

The School has identified several initiatives to increase the enrollment in a balanced way, to reverse the declining trend in lower school enrollment and balance the enrollment in regards to gender. The initiatives are both short (current year) and long term (3-5 years) efforts that will need to be born out over time.

With the intentional hiring of a new Head of School and Director of Enrollment, Crossroads is making changes to attend to the concerns listed above. New efforts in marketing, communication, materials, and data collection have been implemented and demonstrate an attention to the minor recommendations and issues for reflection.

### Commendations

1. Crossroads has identified and begun to implement a strategic process for utilizing data and communication efforts in the admissions process.
2. The school has made improvements to its website to better explain its mission, community, and academic and character programs.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee supports the school's recommendation *to utilize a new rubric form to help identify students that we serve well, and to also help tighten up the admissions process. Although we*

*have low attrition, this would ensure a better match between the student and his/her family and our school.*

2. *The visiting committee supports the school's recommendation to perform an exit interview for families leaving our school would provide helpful information for the retention of students. This may very well provide an avenue to identify new families and grow enrollment.*
3. *The visiting committee supports the school's recommendation to consider contacting other independent schools to see how they use graduates' information about preparedness to inform the admissions process.*
4. *The visiting committee supports the school's recommendation to create and execute a fully formed marketing plan to increase enrollment.*

**Standard 4 (Program):** The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that is appropriate to support the school’s mission and core values, and is consistent with the needs of the range of students admitted. Program planning is informed by relevant research regarding how students learn and the knowledge and capacities they will need to lead purposeful and constructive lives.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
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School’s Self-Assessment                              P1          

Visiting Team’s Assessment                          P1          

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

*The “Core Knowledge Sequence” provides an ordered list of specific knowledge content and skills to be covered in grades K through 8. The solid content of the curriculum promotes cultural literacy and provides rich opportunities to develop skills in reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking.*

*Grade-level teachers are sensitive to the developmental needs of their age group and plan their methodology accordingly.*

*Lessons are designed so that frequent use of review and application of concepts occurs in each grade, making retention of content more likely.*

*The school’s character education emanates from the Core Virtues program as outlined by school founder Mary Beth Klee. Classroom teachers focus on an agreed upon monthly list of virtues in classrooms K-8. The language of character is consistent across grades, and connections are consistently made between the highlighted virtues and the Core Knowledge content areas. Character development is encouraged by presenting many opportunities for self-reflection and for service to others on campus and in the local community.*

Observations

The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that is appropriate to support the school’s mission and core values.

Students are highly engaged and interact positively with the instructors. The academic ethos of the classroom is readily observed and the student-teacher conversations use the “language” of the discipline as they pursue the content knowledge to be acquired. Examples of the knowledge are provided and reiterated during class time. The big ideas of the Core Knowledge Sequence provide the arbor under which the foundational skills are cultivated. For example, in a fifth grade English class, advice given to Robinson Crusoe segues seamlessly into a discussion on Aristotle’s Golden Mean.

Crossroads Academy reflects the content of the Core Knowledge Sequence and incorporates additional content that is applicable to the developmental levels of the students. Increasingly, the School provides students with experiences and knowledge that reflect the multicultural world in which they live, a world that extends beyond their town, their state, and their country. Seminar-style discussions allow students to reflect on the information

and to connect it to their lives. The pacing and methodology varies from grade to grade reflecting the variation of intellectual and social growth of the class.

To the visitor, the Core Virtues list is visible and ubiquitous, but understanding its application throughout the day calls for an inquisitive review. The Core Virtues program is woven with some subtlety throughout the daily lives of the students. The School seeks to inspire the students to internalize the virtue through discussion of stories, historical observations, and anecdotes. Pre-determined, specific virtues are posted on the bulletin boards in the classrooms; they guide the choice of the morning meeting psalm, quotation or poem. The monthly virtues are posted in the weekly news sent out to parents and the Head of School has a small note reflecting that virtue.

Crossroads Academy has recently implemented two initiatives for providing support and growth in the area of instruction as it relates to the program. Faculty meeting time is utilized once a month for faculty pods to meet and share insights and support one another in developing effective teaching practices. Similarly, time has been made for 'strand meetings' for faculty to ensure that content, skills, and assessments are reviewed and implemented across multiple grades.

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

Crossroads Academy grounds itself in the Core Knowledge Sequence while also adding important literary, historical, and sociological knowledge. The students demonstrate confidence with the coursework and their questions are knowledgeable, demonstrating a deep understanding of the topic or skill in which they are engaged. Teachers respond constructively to student questions and comments. The work assignments are age-appropriate and the length of time devoted to the activities is geared to the students' capacities.

The interaction between teachers and students reflects a trusting, respectful student-mentor relationship. The teachers clearly know their students well, are aware of their interests and capacities, and hold high expectations for each of them.

### Commendations

1. The visiting committee commends the faculty and students of Crossroads who are clearly engaged in an academic journey. The students' questions arise from prior knowledge as they construct new knowledge; their comfort with thinking out loud is laudable and speaks to the scholarly environment promoted from kindergarten through eighth grade.
2. The visiting committee commends the teachers who project deep subject knowledge in the presentation of their classes. Their awareness of the developmental stages of their students guides their interactions and the length of the activities.
3. The visiting committee commends the faculty whose sincere understanding of and caring for students enriches the program they offer.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee recommends that the school continue to implement, monitor, and assess the Core Virtues program and the balance it provides in creating successful students.

**Standard 5 (Experience of the Students):** The school actively considers individual students and has developed plans, policies, programs, and pedagogy to nurture, support, and encourage all students to reach their potential and to participate in the life of the school.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
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School's Self-Assessment      P1  

Visiting Team's Assessment      P1  

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

*Crossroads demonstrates many strengths in this area. The school's mission and low student/teacher ratio combine to create a nurturing and supportive environment for students. Crossroads is committed to modifying instruction in order to meet the needs of students with divergent learning styles. Students are encouraged to develop their personal interests and talents and strive to reach their full potential.*

Observations

*Crossroads works hard to recognize and attend to differences within the student body, although the focus here is inclusivity rather than division. It is a small, close-knit community with a strong commitment to every student. The faculty knows the students well and build strong and supportive relationships with them and with their families. The respectful learning community is enhanced and facilitated by the mission and program focus on the Core Virtues. The School and its policies embrace the potential diversity of the community and recognize and implement ways for that to enrich the students' education.*

*There are strong procedures in place to assess and report on individual students' personal and academic growth through narrative-style grade reports three times per school year and parent-teacher conferences at least twice per school year across the grade levels. There are report-writing guidelines to provide consistency throughout. Additionally, the MS level also uses mid-term reports and a well-documented advisory program to communicate progress.*

The teaching staff at Crossroads has a variety of different kinds of meeting times and collaborative professional groupings: faculty, strand, pod, division and team meetings all help to address professional needs. With some new restructuring and increased input on planning them, each is also helping to create more opportunities for professional growth, building trust and community among the staff, and discussing student needs. MS advisors meet weekly to discuss students, while the LS division has a harder time scheduling such opportunities and must take initiative to meet with relevant colleagues individually to discuss students' needs.

When concerns arise, *modifications to our program to meet the individual needs of our students are the responsibility of the classroom teacher. There is great awareness among our faculty of the need to accommodate learning styles and to provide support as well as enrichment. When in-class adaptations prove to be inadequate in helping a child meet a standard of achievement, the teacher follows documented procedures.* These specific procedures account for students who need support as well as opportunities to accelerate. The process is heavily dependent on the work of the LS and MS Coordinators, and some faculty express a desire for additional

administrative support from a professional learning specialist, school psychologist, and/or guidance counselor, which is lacking at this point due to the departure of a former staff member. This would allow for additional expertise and resources, small group pull-out lessons, and supportive and consistent tracking of accommodations.

The School has implemented a variety of strategies for addressing individual student needs, including support for the small population of male students in the LS; the opportunity to use a stand up desk in the LS; varied kinds of support and extensions in before- and after-school programming; opportunities to meet with teachers at lunch; and strong communication with parents and advisors.

*On rare occasions, we are not able to meet the needs of an individual student, but the school does all that it can, through extra help/tutoring and following the suggestion of outside services, to meet the needs of our student body. The appropriateness of a student's placement in our school is determined through extensive consultation with teachers, parents, and the Head of School. At times, requirements for testing and/or follow-through on recommendations become an addendum to a child's re-enrollment contract. The Head of School has the authority to withhold contracts due to non-compliance of the addendum and makes the final decision regarding re-enrollment.* Faculty reported to the visiting committee a discrepancy between the support or consequences that happen when academic needs can't be met as opposed to social needs. A student who is not keeping up with curricular expectations in the Core Knowledge area might not be re-enrolled, while another who is challenged by the Core Virtues program can be supported while staying enrolled.

*Cultural background has rarely caused difficulty for any Crossroads student. Were we to have a student who needed program modification for any reason, we would work with the family to first assess the student's needs. We would then identify measures that could support the child's ability to function effectively and experience academic success in our school. If we could not effectively meet the child's needs, recommendations would be made in the best interest of the child for alternative school placement options.* The Core Virtues curriculum would also address such issues through the teaching of respect, gratitude, compassion, wonder, and courtesy.

Secondary school placement procedures begin in seventh grade and are overseen by the MS coordinator. There is a spring-time meeting to introduce families to the process. If a student is interested in applying to independent secondary schools, there is a variety of support materials and a specific process in place to help them choose schools. During the 8<sup>th</sup> grade year students keep reflection journals on their Crossroads experience as they prepare to speak at graduation.

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The visiting committee concludes that the self-study was an accurate assessment and that Crossroads Academy is effectively considering and supporting individual students in their participation in school life. The small size of the school community and the mission focus on Core Virtues encourages everyone to recognize, respect, and address individual needs for success. Recent administrative restructuring is helping faculty to communicate and address issues of student experience.

### Commendations

1. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy on creating an obviously positive and supportive educational environment for students, which allows for their learning and development in accordance with the mission.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee supports the recommendation of the School that they continue to use meeting time to discuss and address student needs.
2. The visiting committee supports the recommendation of the School that they consider how to bring more professional expertise into the administrative team that would support students' academic learning.



**Standard 6 (Resources to Support the Program):** Given the school’s mission, there are adequate resources (space, equipment, technology, materials, and community) to support the school’s program.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School’s Self-Assessment                              P1          

Visiting Team’s Assessment                          P1          

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

*Teacher survey results are very positive about the quality, quantity and variety of instructional materials and equipment provided by the school. Teachers have adequate classroom budgets and can make requests to the Head of School for funding of special projects. There is also a high degree of participation by parents in supporting the curriculum. Parents frequently join classes to demonstrate their expertise and support classroom activities in their area of interest, which adds a high quality of academic support to the curriculum.*

*In 2006 the Crossroads Board of Trustees developed a campus building plan to replace the Middle School building. There are architectural and financial plans on file in the Head of School’s Office. That plan was put on hold in 2008 during the recession. Since that time, the board has done research on our needs, and we know that we will need a new building/buildings in the upcoming 5-10 years. It was studied by the board in January and again in June, 2013 and then tabled as there were other more pressing needs.*

Observations

The Self-Study Report clearly identifies areas of need for immediate and long-term facilities improvements and the members of the community all agree with the identified needs, particularly in relation to the administrative office space, nurse’s station, bathroom space and some temporary classroom space (Middle School building and The Barn). There is space available for growth and physical additions to the campus, yet, with the change of leadership, there was also an intentional pause in major efforts to fund-raise and move forward on decisions until the new Head of School was in place.

Many of the faculty spoken to confirm comments in the self-study regarding availability of support from the school to acquire classroom materials and equipment requests. Attendance at conferences and use of webinars and local seminars to supplement both content and pedagogical professional development is rather common, but faculty also explain a pragmatic understanding that, due to the budget and needs of the school, practicing moderation in requests for professional development is wise. Many of the faculty feel a “once a year” approach to professional development is sufficient to their needs.

The self-study indicates that technology use in the classroom and availability of technology are referred to in a technology plan. The committee noted that this plan seemed more of an inventory of technology. In each classroom there were projection units and laptop computers present. The visiting committee did note that during many classroom observations, there seemed to be little use of technology. Inquiries to this point were met with comments relating to the use of technology in many subjects as more of a supplemental tool, rather than a driving source of learning and teaching. Some parents noted that the decision to use iPads in certain grades was not clearly explained prior to initiating this program.

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The visiting committee feels the challenges relating to physical space are valid and are being addressed in preliminary plans. There is a profound sense of ‘coping’ with the current space. This is attributed to a strong focus on providing the students with what they need to learn, share, grow and experience. Faculty are comfortable with the current challenges of facilities, but also have a very practical understanding of how to manage within the immediate state of existing financial and facilities structures.

The School has plans in place for future growth to the physical plant and is, within budgetary boundaries, making annual improvements to physical plant and technology. Teachers do have the support of the parent association to supplement classroom needs, as well as classroom budgets from the School for additional materials and supplies. Faculty is provided with the chance to participate in professional development opportunities on a yearly basis.

The learning and safety of the students are addressed by the school through resources dedicated to support the program. While it is apparent that some significant changes to the physical plant are needed, there is a clear, defined understanding that the needs have been recognized, recorded and will be addressed in the future.

### Commendations

1. As a result of the self-study, Crossroads has implemented a faculty meeting time, once a month, dedicated to ‘in-house’ professional development to provide more immediate, school-specific, growth opportunities for the faculty.
2. There is an obvious positive attitude toward working within the confines of the current facilities and resources to make the most of opportunities available to best support and educate the students.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee endorses the recommendation of the school *to continue to explore the need for a centralized campus with a new K-8 classroom building.*
2. The visiting committee further recommends that the technology plan and commitment to professional development for the use of technology should be expanded.

**Standard 7 (Early Childhood Program):** The early childhood program meets the social, intellectual, and developmental needs of its students by providing appropriate programs, adequate staffing, and sufficient resources and facilities.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment    N/A  
 Visiting Team's Assessment      N/A

**Standard 8 (Residential Program and/or Homestay Program):** The residential program and/or homestay program provide for an intentional curriculum, appropriate facilities, engaging activities, and adequate supervision to meet the needs of each student.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment   N/A  

Visiting Team's Assessment   N/A

**Standard 9 (Faculty):** There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified faculty to carry out the mission of the school and the school follows a comprehensive and defined program of professional development that supports continued enhancement of teachers’ skills.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School’s Self-Assessment      P1    
 Visiting Team’s Assessment      P1  

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

*Crossroads Academy consists of many talented, dedicated, and well-trained faculty and staff members. The School meets standard nine with minor recommendations and issues for reflection. We have clear procedures for recruiting the best faculty and staff available to carry out the mission of our school, and generally we are able to make strong hires for all available positions.*

*The Core Knowledge Sequence is a rigorous program that requires teachers to have significant background knowledge, especially in the areas of science, history, literature, and grammar. Our teachers support one another, take extra course work, and study during the summer months to learn the background knowledge needed to be strong Core Knowledge teachers. Our Core Knowledge Coordinator, Bruce Freeberg, supports all of our teachers by collaborating, identifying areas of need, and providing resource materials.*

Observations

Faculty and staff at Crossroads Academy are well qualified and enjoy sharing their extensive knowledge in an enthusiastic and engaging manner with their students. Professional development is often aligned with individual and larger faculty goals, which are reviewed and discussed yearly. Staff members are encouraged, but not required, to pursue professional development opportunities within their specific field. In order to provide mutual feedback and increased support, peer reviews are being integrated this year into the Crossroads evaluation system. Teachers have been assigned to a pod with the goal to strengthen collaboration among peers, to observe each other’s classroom, to gain perspective and collect ideas, and to strengthen and support the continuity of the school’s overall program.

In the past Crossroads evaluated its teachers on a yearly basis utilizing the Portrait of Professional Excellence. Its goal was to ensure teachers were supporting the mission of the School in their instructional practices and offered an opportunity to reflect on their own strengths and areas of needed growth. Previous goals were reviewed early in the school year and new goals were discussed and set with a supervisor and individual teacher. A Faculty Program Committee, working with the head of school, is currently in the process of creating a new model for teacher evaluations. This model could include peer evaluations, informal and formal observations, and a self-reflection piece. The goal is to not only provide valuable feedback for professional growth, but also to build trust among faculty and between faculty and administration.

Hiring at Crossroads Academy is done by way of a committee that includes the Head of School, Middle School Coordinator and/or the Lower School Coordinator, an administrator and often a faculty member. This provides a

way of ensuring multiple viewpoints on the new hire, and the hiring of someone who will have the strong qualifications, as well as a smooth transition to Crossroads Academy. In addition new hires meet with the Core Knowledge Coordinator on a regular basis for support and guidance and meet with the Character Education Coordinator to help them understand and incorporate the Core Virtues philosophy.

Open positions are posted on the Crossroads website, local newspapers, and School Spring website. Job descriptions are available for an open position, and are detailed with professional responsibilities, as well as the qualifications desired for the position.

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

It is evident the Crossroads Academy faculty is wholeheartedly committed to providing an enriching and nurturing learning environment for their students, keeping the mission and mission statement at the forefront of their teaching. Their intention to enhance their collaborative efforts and teaching skills while providing support for one another is evident in the on-going development of an effective and useful teacher evaluation model. The importance of understanding diversity in a 21<sup>st</sup> century world is a priority and is celebrated in all classrooms.

### Commendations

1. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy for the support of new teachers in transitioning into the school environment.
2. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy for recognizing the need to develop and implement a comprehensive teacher evaluation tool.
3. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy for the promotion of diversity and multiculturalism despite local demographics.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee endorses Crossroads Academy's plans to provide support and feedback, and to build professional collaboration through the pod structure.
2. The visiting committee endorses the school's recommendation to continue to seek ways *to increase compensation packages to attract and retain qualified faculty, staff, and administrators.*

**Standard 10 (Administration):** The administration provides leadership and maintains a structure to facilitate the effective functioning of the school, including the participation of faculty in decision-making.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment      P1  

Visiting Team's Assessment      P2  

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

*The Crossroads Academy administration effectively carries out the program of the school. We have a strong and experienced leadership team. Our administrative structure, with designated coordinators for Core Knowledge and character education, provides on-going attention to each of these key aspects of our educational program.*

*The administration involves and collaborates with the faculty in decision-making through weekly faculty meetings, quarterly in-service meetings, and ad hoc committee meetings.*

Subsequent to the Self-Study report, a new Head of School has been hired and has implemented a new administrative structure.

Observations

Crossroads Academy engaged in a number of transitions in the 2014-15 school year. While working on the Self-Study, the School searched for a new Head of School, and mid-year, the Director of Enrollment resigned. These events demanded time and energy from the entire school community and might have diverted attention away from the usual, ongoing work of the administrative staff.

Despite the above issues, the classroom tone and tenor was top-notch in all of the observed classrooms. The teachers were intellectually present and actively involved with their students in the classroom. The exemplary quality and experience of the teaching staff no doubt provided assurances to the administrative staff that classroom expectations were met.

The choice of the new Head of School to request "state of the school" letters and to provide a forum for the faculty to express their views of the administrative needs of the school demonstrated great leadership and commitment to understand the needs of the school community. His decision to create an Administrative Team that includes faculty was an important primary step. Given that the faculty on the Administrative Team were appointed, there is a concern regarding process. While faculty representation on the Administrative Team is a step in the right direction, in order to rebuild trust, further evaluation of the process to choose faculty participants is essential.

The social gathering of board and faculty and the subsequent meeting at which the board presented the budget provide a strong foundation of support for the school and the faculty.

Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

While the administration and stewardship of some of the policies may have suffered in 2014-15, steps have been taken to resume and to expand the care needed to support the school and faculty. The Faculty Program Committee plans to review the previous teacher assessment tool and to devise a more current document. The direction of the new leadership holds great promise for ensuring the smooth running of the school and maintaining support for the faculty.

#### Commendations

1. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy for maintaining the rigor and depth characteristic of their program despite the challenges facing them in the previous year.
2. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy for responding quickly to the need for greater faculty input by forming the Administration Team that includes faculty.

#### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee agrees with the recommendation to develop *a two year cycle of strand meetings so that each discipline is reviewed and evaluated on a consistent basis.*
2. The visiting committee agrees with the recommendation to *continue to assess the organizational structure* and to consider the process by which faculty are chosen to serve on the Administration Team.
3. The visiting committee recommends the Head of School ensure that there are clear job descriptions for each member of the Administrative Team.



**Standard 11 (Evaluation and Assessment): The school engages in forms of programmatic assessment consistent with fulfilling its mission and core values. This data is used to inform decision-making and planning.**

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment   P1  

Visiting Team's Assessment   P1  

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

*Crossroads Academy provides students with a strong academic foundation guided by the Core Knowledge Sequence, which outlines a structured approach toward content and academic growth across grades, aiming to improve literacy and critical thinking skills. We use different measures of achievement to assess both our students' individual accomplishment and growth, along with their achievement compared to students at other independent schools. Equally important at Crossroads is helping students build strong, honest, and healthy relationships while developing good values and attitudes, which we measure both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Visiting Committee observed a possible need for improvement in clarifying the policies and procedures for assessment of character and for evaluation of faculty and staff.*

Observations

Crossroads' program has two distinct parts: the Core Knowledge academic piece and the Core Virtues character piece. These two parts of the School's program are reviewed and assessed separately, and in different ways between the LS and MS. There is some discrepancy between the description of review procedures in the Self - Study Report and as reported by faculty during the committee's visit, but there is sufficient evidence that it's being done and a sense that attention should continue to be paid as those procedures are more clearly articulated.

Academic longitudinal assessment of students is done through ERB testing (grades 2-8); Core Knowledge testing (grades 2-5); writing portfolios (grades K-8); individual communications between relevant faculty; and tracking alumni success in high school. There is some concern among the faculty that the Core Knowledge tests are not a good fit for the Crossroads program considering the time involved, and their value as an assessment tool should be revisited. The information gathered is used to inform programmatic changes and necessary support for individual students.

Character assessment procedures, both formatively and longitudinally, are less clear. In fact, a lack of assessment procedures had a negative impact on the school's ability to earn full recognition as a School of Character. While a variety of tools have been used (a new computer based EduMetrics survey, the Stepping Stones curriculum, close observation of students, community surveys, assembly conversations, newly revised LS report cards), there does not seem to be a united perspective among faculty about how to assess, track, and communicate student progress in this part of the program.

*We ask parents and students for exit interviews, and we track re-enrollment levels to gauge how well we are delivering what we promise. We also rely on annual parent satisfaction surveys and alumni surveys to evaluate what we are and aren't doing well. Alumni surveys, along with high school placement results, give us*

*information about how well our program has prepared our graduates. We use what we learn to measure our program's success, as well as plan for admissions and program improvements.*

In the past Crossroads evaluated its teachers annually utilizing the Portrait of Professional Excellence to set individual goals in consultation with a supervisor. A Faculty Program Committee is currently working with the head of school to create a new model for teacher evaluations. It was reported to the Visiting Committee that new procedures should carefully consider the need to rebuild trust among the faculty team and to clarify the supervisory and evaluative responsibilities of the LS and MS coordinators. The School is also planning new procedures for the evaluation of the head of school that may include not only input from the board, but faculty colleagues as well.

*Crossroads does not have a diversity plan. However, our Core Virtues program, which aims to inspire students to be their best, creates an environment where all members of the school community celebrate each other's differences. We admit diverse students without regard to financial need, race, sexual orientation or gender. Because our geographic region is not racially diverse, we are limited in our ability to recruit this population. We can, however, be more intentional in creating an economically diverse student body. To this end we actively solicit donations to our financial aid fund.*

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

Crossroads Academy prides itself on academic success and its reputation in the community for outstanding preparation for high school. Faculty has a variety of opportunities to reflect upon and discuss various aspects of their program and potential revisions to it. The key observation is to clarify some of the evaluation procedures.

### Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends Crossroads Academy for their positive reputation in the community, consistent success on standardized tests, and genuine belief among all constituents in the value of their program.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee endorses a recommendation of the school that they *make our survey responses more accessible to the faculty as a whole and to continue improving how we use the ERBs.*
2. To more fully meet the standard the Visiting Committee suggests that the School clarify their policies and procedures for assessment of:
  - Core Virtue
  - Faculty performance and goal setting

**Standard 12 (Health and Safety):** The school is a safe and healthy place for students and faculty.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment                                P2          

Visiting Team's Assessment                                P2          

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

(This summary was copied/abridged/adapted from the school's *Self-Study Report*.)

*Crossroads is a safe and healthy place for students, faculty and our families. We regularly attend to our safety checklists, our emergency plan, as well as policies that relate to the safety of our community. Although there are some site issues related to the age of our buildings, and a need for school counseling, we regularly assess our ability to provide for these needs and accommodate our students as best we can with the professional resources we have on staff and with the buildings we meticulously care for on a daily basis.*

Observations

The Committee observed that the Health Office was a good example of a well-run and managed office, albeit its limitations in space and location. It is well staffed, efficient, fully stocked and meets the needs of the students. Classrooms reflected the thorough maintenance program ensures a safe and clean environment for students, faculty, and staff.

The Crisis Response Plan and School Safety and Security Plan handbooks, updated yearly by the school nurse, are clear, well defined and appear to be highly functional for health and safety procedures. Responsibility for reviewing and updating the safety provisions, for both on and off campus activities, falls under the purview of the school nurse. Staff and students are prepared for emergencies through direct communication of procedures and regular practice in drills. Fully supplied "Go Buckets" are specifically located in each classroom for easy access in case of an emergency. A cart, located outside the nurse's office, is stocked with specific supplies and items needed for emergency situations. Safety plans and procedures are regularly communicated to staff and parents *via* newsletters, hard copy, and on the Crossroads Academy website. Recently a security system with FOBs, pass codes and video was installed throughout the campus, which provides another layer of safety for the students and staff.

Safety audits are conducted on a regular basis by Buildings and Grounds management and evidence of compliance with state, local, and federal regulations was noted in the supplementary materials.

Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

Crossroads Academy is a safe and healthy school as observed by the Visiting Committee. We concur with the School's rating of P2.

Commendations

1. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy for the excellent way in which the facility is maintained by the staff and Buildings and Grounds Department.
2. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy for the well defined and highly functional Crisis Response Plan and School Safety and Security Plan.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee endorses the recommendation of Crossroads Academy to explore the possibility of adding a trained guidance counselor.
2. The visiting committee endorses the recommendation of Crossroads Academy that the health office be updated or moved so that the nurse and students have full and immediate access to a bathroom and sink. It also recommends that the health office be provided with a private space in which to hold meetings with parents and key personnel.
3. The visiting committee endorses the recommendation of the School to move forward when feasible to enhance their overall space, ventilation, bathroom accessibility, handicap accessibility, and privacy needs. Classroom spaces should include areas for small group work and meetings with students, colleagues, and parents. The science room should have a functioning eye wash station.
4. The visiting committee endorses the recommendation of the School to consider the viability of establishing a cafeteria with food services. This would enable the school to provide nutritional and balanced meals, offer a gathering place for the school community and a controlled setting allowing for safe management of food allergies.

**Standard 13 (Communication):** The school maintains effective systems of external and internal communication and record keeping that inform all constituents and facilitate participation where appropriate.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment      P1  

Visiting Team's Assessment      P2  

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

As is the case in any school community, communication between and among various constituencies, and for a wide variety of purposes, is often a central factor in the eventual effectiveness of a given effort or initiative. At Crossroads Academy, there has been much thoughtful attention given to this area and there are high expectations and standards in this community, most of which are met.

Crossroads has implemented appropriate procedures and attendant communications to ensure understanding among various constituencies of information in all areas of school life. For example, parents of Crossroads children are a constituency group for whom certain information is vitally important. Crossroads meets its responsibility to parents in a variety of ways, communicating school policy, enrollment and tuition (and other financial responsibilities), explaining norms and procedures for addressing student issues, and providing regular updates that help bolster its partnership with families, which is well appreciated.

Among members of the Crossroads staff, there are systems and procedures in place that also provide important information, and the school is receptive and interested in ideas for improvement. During our visit, we heard from both staff and parents that recent efforts to provide greater transparency in areas of school life are appreciated. As it relates to the work of the Board of Trustees, there was universal appreciation expressed for recent outreach efforts and the opportunity for stakeholders in the community to learn more about school issues and to participate in conversations about where Crossroads is headed.

Many members of the Crossroads community affirmed an interest and willingness to help tell the Crossroads story. Whether it is through a partnership with the admissions office, as part of the context for the school's plans to celebrate its first 25 years, and/or to share, in appropriate ways, the many outstanding program offerings and remarkable student achievements that distinguish this special school, there is a reservoir of talented and enthusiastic Crossroads Academy champions, who are ready to wave the banner.

Observations

The School makes available, both in hard copy and in digital format, a "Parent and Student Handbook" that provides comprehensive information about the community, a sense of the school's history, processes and procedures for communication and engagement in the life of the school, expectations for parents, including the partnership families will enjoy with Crossroads educators and members of the administration. This handbook is thoughtful and thorough with respect to the content it communicates. *Parents are provided details of financial responsibilities and enrollment within their enrollment contract(s) for each academic year. The contract includes information such as explanations of costs, the cancellation deadline, and the right of the school to terminate the contract.*

The “Employee Handbook,” another important resource at Crossroads, is a well-written and comprehensive reference document. *Numerous faculty and staff workshops are conducted throughout the school year to address all-important policies and implementation procedures such as those pertaining to academics, child abuse and harassment, the evaluation of faculty and staff, health and injury, safety, standardized testing, and wellness. Full-faculty meetings provide faculty and staff opportunities for input on policies regarding personnel, budget, and all operations concerning the school. The administration often meets with small groups or individual faculty for input on a wide variety of school policies and procedures. Similar to the “Parent and Student Handbook,” the “Employment Handbook” is reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Personnel records are stored in hard copy in a locked fireproof file cabinet.*

School records for current and former students are maintained using a database system named PowerSchool®, which holds digital copies on a remote server and on the school server. *Hard printout copies are stored in locked “fire-safe” (FireKing®) file cabinets in the school office, and in the technology area. A hard copy and a digital copy of school policies and procedures are available in the school office and on the school server.*

*Crossroads seeks to create a partnership between faculty and parents for the benefit of our students. Parents are encouraged to keep in close contact with their children’s teachers and advisors through conferences, phone contact, and e-mail. Faculty and staff e-mail addresses are listed in the Directory that is distributed every fall. Faculty may contact parents or parents may contact faculty from time to time to request that a student attend office hours for extra help.*

*If parents have a concern that is not resolved by sending a brief e-mail or by making a phone call, an appointment should be made to meet in person. Thoughtful, respectful, direct communication in person is the best way to communicate and often results in the best collaboration between parents and teachers in support of students. Should direct communication with a teacher fail to resolve an issue, parents are welcome to contact the Head of School.*

Teachers summarize and distribute weekly plans and updates to parents of students in their class; *these plans are also posted on the Crossroads website. Teachers use our website to keep families abreast of what is going on in the classroom. Notices are generally sent electronically and occasionally with the students. Student progress through the curriculum is reported on the school website. Academic progress, including report cards and teacher comments on each student, is provided through an electronic portal for parents. Each Middle School student has an advisor who communicates academic progress to parents on a regular basis. Parents of Lower School students rely on homeroom teachers to obtain academic and personal information about their children. Continual communication throughout the academic year among homeroom teachers, advisors, and parents provides proactive opportunities regarding each student’s academic and personal progress.*

The School creates and disseminates a weekly electronic newsletter to the community, enhancements to which are appreciated by many. The School has also taken steps to communicate proactively and with greater transparency to faculty, staff and its parent community. In recent weeks, Crossroads has hosted a wine and cheese social that included faculty, staff, parents and trustees. This was primarily a social occasion, although there were messages from the board chair, who expressed an interest to improve communication throughout the year. A board-led presentation and conversation on the topic of school finances was provided to faculty, and a similar opportunity is being planned for the Parents’ Association, with other such information sessions and conversations planned throughout the year.

There is consensus in this community that Crossroads can and should do a better job of telling its story, for admissions and student recruitment purposes, to highlight and share the impressive programmatic offerings and student achievements with the larger community, and to honor and celebrate the first 25 years of the school’s existence.

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

Community expectations and standards for thoughtful, proactive, and informative communications are high at Crossroads Academy. On balance, there are very good systems and procedures in place to file and preserve appropriate records, communicate relevant and important information among and between various constituency groups, and to invite interested stakeholders to conversations intended to inform and to engage in the future course of the school.

While communications in certain areas are adequate, and notably strong between the school and its parents, there are critical areas that can be improved and indeed are starting to be addressed, which will lead to a better informed and more trusting community.

As reported in the Self-Study Report and through the visiting committee's many observations, Crossroads has met all indicators for this standard. The visiting committee applauds the foundation for strong communications and endorses additional recommendations to bring those plans to fruition. The visiting committee chose the rating of P2 in order to underscore the importance of the School's commitment to making this standard a priority.

### Commendations

1. Crossroads Academy is to be commended for its excellent communication with parents, which reflects a genuine partnership in support of the education their children.
2. Crossroads is to be commended for its recent efforts and plans to engage with faculty and parents on issues related to governance, decision-making, finance, strategic planning, and other important school topics.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee suggests that Crossroads has an opportunity to highlight its impressive new head of school, who can lead the community effort to tell the Crossroads story for a number of strategic initiatives and to honor and celebrate the first 25 years of the school's existence.
2. Crossroads has taken a fresh look at reorganizing its administrative structure in a way that provides better representation of faculty interests and channels for open and honest dialogue. We recommend that the school maintain this commitment to ensure an effective administrative structure and processes that will allow for ongoing open dialogue throughout the school community.
3. The Crossroads board of trustees is to be commended for its commitment to provide more and better opportunities for engaging interested community stakeholders in conversations about the current state of the school and the future of Crossroads Academy. We recommend that the board of trustees continue providing this type of participation, which community members clearly appreciate.

**Standard 14 (Infrastructure):** There are adequate resources (personnel, finances, facilities, equipment, and materials) to provide for the overall institutional needs of the school.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment   P1  

Visiting Team's Assessment   P1  

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

*Our annual operating and capital budget reflects the school's mission, initiatives, and strategic plan. It includes line items for salaries and benefits, insurance, building and grounds expenses, professional development, professional services/fees, equipment, etc. This budget is reviewed by the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees in the winter of each year for the following fiscal year beginning July 1st.*

*We have adequate resources (faculty/staff, supplies, equipment and facilities) for today to provide for the short-term needs of the school. However, to address long-term needs and move the school forward, we need greater resources to hire development personnel, offer higher faculty salaries, build a new facility, and make more financial aid available.*

Observations

Like many independent schools, Crossroads is largely tuition dependent and relies on donors to fill the expense gap. Financial documents show an operating budget of approximately \$2.3 million; an endowment of \$1.25 million (thanks to a recent endowment gift of \$1 million directed to financial aid); and an annual fund that recently surpassed its goal of \$190,000 with 100% participation from trustees, faculty and staff and nearly 100% participation from parents. Modest summer and after-school programs are generally revenue neutral. It was noted by the visiting committee that the school began the 2015-2016 academic year with a projected operating loss of \$237,000, which is due largely to not meeting budgeted enrollment targets. In recent years, Crossroads has had different experiences with respect to meeting budget goals, resulting in year-end operating surpluses and losses.

The School has appropriate procedures for accounting and for auditing its accounts. The visiting committee was provided with a professional Audit Report from 2014 that concludes Crossroads' policies are "in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

*The School is adequately insured for liability, workers compensation, and maintains an umbrella policy. We also maintain a life insurance policy on our Head of School with the school as beneficiary.*

*The School employs two full-time staff in Buildings & Grounds (B&G) and contracts with an outside cleaning service to take care of our entire campus. Our B&G staff gives attention to health and safety issues along with keeping up the appearance of our buildings and grounds. As well, they schedule safety/other inspections, as needed. The B & G staff maintains a facilities plan that covers future needs, improvements, and additions.*

Although the community agrees that Crossroads is in the process of transitioning its access to and use of technology, the School's technology plan seems incomplete with regard to the future. It includes a statement of



philosophy, an inventory of the equipment, and a list of human resources to support the use of technology, but does not include any curricular goals, professional development goals, or plans for the future of the infrastructure of technology. Faculty seems to vary in their utilization of tech tools. Sixth graders benefit from a technology class taught by the technology integrator as they are introduced to the one-to-one iPad program. Many other teachers are embracing technology tools for word processing, engaging presentation, creative projects, and developing comfort among students with such new tools. It was suggested that appropriate next steps be the development of a leveled technology curriculum and the necessary professional development for faculty. It was also suggested that the parent community, who are responsible for providing iPads at the middle school level, need more open communication about the reasoning behind this part of Crossroads' program and that a policy be written for how to support families who are unable to meet that expense.

Crossroads Academy is very clear, in multiple parts of its Self-Study Report as well as in the voices of various constituents, about its development goals: to increase faculty compensation; to add to the administrative team, to continue to build the endowment for financial aid, and to upgrade facilities. There is still work to be done in prioritizing and strategizing how to meet those goals in conjunction with the intentions to communicate openly between the board, administration, and faculty. The visiting committee would like to consider that distribution of resources as it adds needed expertise to its Administrative Team.

### Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

Crossroads Academy enjoys a solid financial base with ample insurance coverage, well-maintained facilities, and sufficient resources to implement its program. The community of parents, board members, administrators, faculty and students are united in their recognition of long-term improvements to the school. The new Head of School has acknowledged those wishes and is beginning to develop the communication tools and organization of personnel needed to accomplish them.

### Commendations

1. The visiting committee commends the faculty, staff, and board of trustees at Crossroads Academy for its diligent efforts to make the most of its resources and facilities in order to support the student learning experience. Despite clear hopes for improvement, all stakeholders manage and utilize the resources they have in an efficient and productive way.

### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee endorses the School's recommendation that the Head of School continue to *consider redesigning the administrative structure to provide* for a greater focus on development.
2. The visiting committee endorses the School's recommendation to move forward with plans to update facilities to allow for sufficient space for its programs.

**Standard 15 (The Accreditation Process):** The school is fully committed to institutional improvement and to the process of accreditation. The school completed an inclusive self-study, conducted in a spirit of full disclosure and following Association guidelines; responds to Commission recommendations and the requirement to meet all standards; and participates fully in the peer review process, hosting a visiting committee and sending personnel to serve on visiting committees to other institutions.

<b>Assessment of Standard</b>	
<b>Passing</b> <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	<b>Failing</b> <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment P1 \_\_\_\_\_

Visiting Team's Assessment P1\_

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

*Crossroads Academy is fully committed to the process of accreditation. The school completed an inclusive self-study, conducted in a spirit of full disclosure and following Association guidelines. We are committed to having a "growth mindset" in approaching opportunities to improve our school. We look forward to hosting the visiting committee and responding to the Commission's recommendations.*

Observations

The self-study was comprehensive, reflective, and clear. The status of the standards was explained with candor and in a spirit of self-improvement. Several new policies and procedures have already been established as a result of the findings fleshed out during the self-study process, demonstrating an understanding that the study is a tool for self-evaluation and improvement.

Crossroads Academy met the visiting committee with good will and all participants spoke willingly and honestly with the members of the team. The love of the students and the commitment to the mission inspired the dialogues throughout the visit. A cheerful willingness to work with the committee and to use the Self-Study as a teaching document permeated the visit.

While the study included parents in preparing Standard 1: The Mission, it does appear that there was not full participation among the parents. In conversations with parents, there was not residual concern about their lack of participation, and they expressed great satisfaction with the school and its program.

There was little evidence to demonstrate the participation of board members in the self-study process. The cross-over of parents who are also Board members blurs the distinction so that perhaps there were board participants for the evaluation of the mission.

Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The Crossroads Academy community used the self-study process as a tool for self-evaluation and improvement. All aspects of the process were incorporated and constructive responses have already been produced and practiced.

Commendations

1. Crossroads Academy forged ahead with a comprehensive, honest self-study during a time of great transition.
2. The school community embraced the process of the study and used it to develop new policies and structures.

#### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee agrees with the school's recommendation to include more parents and board members in the accreditation process in the future.

## **Self-Study Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion**

### Overview

Crossroads Academy was reminded of the strength of their mission-driven program through its self-study process. *Crossroads Academy was intentionally founded on the principles articulated in the Mission Statement and Mission. Throughout its history it has grounded its decision-making and growth on those principles. Although the wording of our mission statement has changed over time, Crossroads has never wavered in its commitment to an outstanding academic program supported by an explicit character education program.*

The School demonstrated pride in the breadth, depth, and comprehensive nature of its two-pillar program throughout its report and our visit. *Our curriculum plan is based on our dual commitment to Core Knowledge and Core Virtues. The Core Knowledge approach to primary education is unique in its commitment to teaching a broad base of general knowledge in the sciences and humanities as a foundation for literacy and intellectual growth. Crossroads is proud to be the first independent Core Knowledge school in the country as well as the first school to pilot the Core Virtue program developed by the school's founding head, Mary Beth Klee. Our teachers are effective at delivering the broad, rich knowledge content of our curriculum in a way that builds essential skills while motivating and inspiring our students. The school's character education program provides a consistent approach to character development across the grades and is well integrated with academic content.*

Members of the Crossroads community have clearly recognized a need to communicate more effectively between and among constituents. While having a number of systems in place, the School has also identified a need for greater transparency and clarity. *A concerted effort is made to provide a comprehensive, accurate and consistent stream of communication with parents and guardians of Crossroads students. Along with these formal means of communication, the school's size allows for ongoing informal communication, and the emphasis on character and virtues helps to engage all our students, parents, faculty, administrators, and board members as full-share partners. Social gatherings, performance assemblies, and informal conversations at drop off and pick up establish a personal line of communication absent in larger communities. At the same time, the accreditation process highlighted the desire of faculty and parents to receive more information on how the school runs, on how decisions are made, budgets are set, etc. To that end, the Board has developed a communication plan to share info among the constituencies on a regular and established frequency. This communication plan is included as supporting documentation.* In response to the Self-Study Report, improvements have already begun, particularly the writing of a communication plan by the Board of Trustees and the Head of School.

The School writes throughout the Self Study Report in various standard sections about the need to clarify policies, procedures, and positions. There is inconsistent understanding about the Portrait of Professional Excellence, the responsibilities of the Lower School and Middle School coordinators, the policy for selecting members of the Faculty Program Committee, and the intentions of the evolving technology plan.

There is unified agreement in the Crossroads community about long-term goals, most obviously in the Infrastructure standard, but referenced throughout the Self-Study Report and conversations with the visiting committee. *The term, "adequate" is used by NEASC. It comes up in several standards. While we have "adequate" resources for today, as we look to our future, we know that we have significant need for more resources to increase faculty compensation, support an administrative team, fund financial aid, and upgrade our facilities. To this end, new fundraising opportunities and initiatives need to be considered, but the principal means to increased revenue and economic sustainability will be through increased student enrollment. To increase enrollment, Crossroads will need to find many ways to more effectively foster an awareness of our mission and program in the surrounding community.*

### Observations

The visiting committee observed that Crossroads is clearly mission driven; the mission statement and touchstone are presented visually, orally, in documentation, and in practice by all members of the school community. It has developed the education the School offers as a natural outgrowth of its mission. The mission serves as the foundation of the Core Knowledge Sequence and Core Virtues Program, which are the cornerstones of the Crossroads education. The school has a process that ensures regular review of the mission, both at the faculty level and by the board of trustees. The clear commitment by all involved was to align the mission more accurately with the Crossroads education and experience.

The visiting committee consistently experienced the School's pride in the breadth, depth, and comprehensive nature of the two-pillar program. It is palpable and directly influences the positive experience of the students. Students are highly engaged and interact positively with the instructors. The academic ethos of the classroom is readily observed and the student-teacher conversations use the "language" of the discipline as they pursue the content knowledge to be acquired. The Core Virtues program is woven with some subtlety throughout the daily lives of the students. The School seeks to inspire the students to internalize the virtue through discussion of stories, historical observations, and anecdotes. The two pillars of the program, each reinforcing the other, provide a holistic learning and life experience for the students.

The School's need to communicate more effectively between and among constituents was as universally shared through discussion with the visiting committee as it was presented in the Self-Study Report. While communications in certain areas are adequate, and notably strong, there are critical areas that can be improved and indeed are starting to be addressed, which will lead to a better informed and more trusting community. The visiting committee recognizes the beginning steps to improve communication and encourages the school to make such improvements a continuing priority as they were so obviously important to the community members with whom we spoke.

The visiting committee recognizes the expressed need to clarify policies, procedures, and positions. We had conversations to that point and observed documents that were at times unclear or incomplete. As noted in the examples in the Overview section above, there is an overarching concern regarding clarity and documentation.

The visiting committee concurs with the Crossroads community about its unified agreement on long-term goals for additional development needs for 1) a more competitive compensation structure for faculty and staff, 2) the further growth of the endowment for financial aid, 3) additional expertise or restructuring in the Administrative Team, and 4) major improvements to the campus facilities. These four issues felt like a theme throughout the standards and our visit.

### Conclusions

The observations of the visiting committee clearly parallel what the School learned through its self-study process. We believe this lends strong credibility to the value of both its short- and long-term goals. The accreditation process has allowed Crossroads Academy to define a unified course of action for the next phase of its growth. The successful hiring of a new Head of School, who recognizes and appreciates the findings of the Self-Study, is a strong start to this process.

### Commendations

1. Crossroads Academy is a mission-focused school, and the culture of the school reflects a commitment to implementing its mission. The School consciously bases its decisions about academic and moral education on the Mission Statement and Mission.
2. The visiting committee commends the faculty and students of Crossroads, who are clearly engaged in an academic journey. The students' questions arise from prior knowledge as they construct new knowledge; their comfort with thinking out loud is laudable and speaks to the scholarly environment promoted from kindergarten through eighth grade.
3. Crossroads is to be commended for its recent efforts and plans to engage with faculty and parents on issues related to governance, decision-making, finance, strategic planning, and other important school topics.
4. We commend the Board of Trustees for its governance of the school during a time of transition and its leadership throughout the search for and support of a new Head of School.

5. We commend the faculty and staff at Crossroads for its dedication to students and its perseverance through the accreditation process during a challenging period of transition.

#### Recommendations

1. The visiting committee supports the school's recommendation to *review the wording of the Mission, which may lead to an opportunity to more clearly present the mission by integrating the Mission and the Mission Statement. Any effort to streamline the two could also address the importance of the Crossroads emblem and Latin motto featured, but not mentioned, in both the Mission and the Mission Statement.*
2. We recommend that the school maintain its commitment to ensure an effective administrative structure and processes that will allow for ongoing open dialogue throughout the school community, and that the Board of Trustees continue providing venues for participation and communication about issues related to governance and strategic planning.
3. The visiting committee recommends that the School clarify its policies and procedures and clearly identify the responsibilities of faculty and administrators.
4. The visiting committee recommends that the school continue implementing its goals for 1) a more competitive compensation structure for faculty and staff, 2) the further growth of the endowment for financial aid, 3) additional expertise or restructuring in the Administrative Team, and 4) major improvements to the campus facilities.
5. The visiting committee recommends that Crossroads resume the strategic planning process to involve all constituent groups with a goal of detailing plans for future growth, and consider communicating these plans using the context of celebrating the first 25 years of the School's history.
6. The visiting committee recommends that the new marketing committee identify effective communication strategies to highlight the new head of school, honor 25 years of Crossroads history, and celebrate the school's compelling and unique program within the Crossroads community and throughout the Upper Valley.

7.

### **MAJOR COMMENDATIONS**

1. The visiting committee commends Crossroads Academy for the clear alignment between its mission and program and the pride all stakeholders in the community feel for both.
2. Crossroads is to be commended for its recent efforts and plans to engage with faculty and parents on issues related to governance, decision-making, finance, strategic planning, and other important school topics.
3. The visiting committee commends all members of the school community for prioritizing the learning experience of the students throughout a challenging period of transition.

## **MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. We recommend that the School maintain its commitment to ensure an effective administrative structure and processes that will allow for clarification of its policies and procedures, as well as the roles and responsibilities of faculty and administrators, especially those who may have overlapping duties.
2. We recommend that Crossroads Academy resume and complete its strategic planning, detailing initiatives and strategies that advance priority goals to ensure the school's bright future.
3. The visiting committee recognizes a special opportunity for Crossroads Academy with respect to timing and the confluence of important processes (e.g. the hiring of a new head of school, the upcoming 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Crossroads founding, the finalization of the decennial reaccreditation process, and the continuation of the strategic planning process). While preparing to celebrate Crossroads first 25 years, it may be advantageous to facilitate community conversations designed to engage stakeholders in identifying and highlighting the school's distinctive strengths and envisioning a bold and ambitious future for Crossroads Academy, all of which can be captured in a new strategic plan. The visiting committee recommends and encourages Crossroads to move forward with its planning along programmatic lines, professional support for faculty excellence, and with goals of improving campus facilities that are safe and appropriate for student learning. Crossroads has a compelling story to tell, one that honors its history and celebrates school pride in its unique program.



## Report on Standards for Accreditation for Crossroads Academy

The visiting committee must rate the school by placing an X in the appropriate rating box for all applicable standards. For failed ratings (F1 or F2), please also note page references from your report in the *Failed Ratings* column. For any visiting committee's ratings that differ from the school's self-rating, please use the *Differing Ratings* column to note page references.

Standard	Rating				Failed Ratings (List page number)	Differing Ratings (List page number)
	P1	P2	F1	F2		
1 – Mission	x					
2 – Governance	x					Page 4
3 – Enrollment	x					
4 – Program	x					
5 – Experience of the Students	x					
6 – Resources to Support the Program	x					
7 – Early Childhood Program	n/a					
8 – Residential Program and/or Homestay Program	n/a					
9 – Faculty	x					
10 – Administration		x				Page 21
11 – Evaluation and Assessment	x					
12 – Health and Safety		x				
13 – Communication		x				Page 27
14 – Infrastructure	x					
15 – The Accreditation Process	x					