

**Title of Regulation:**

**Regulation No.:** 43-300

**ACCREDITATION CRITERIA**

**Effective Date:** 06/27/14

**Constitutional and Statutory Provisions:**

Section(s):

59-5-60(1).

General powers of [State] Board.

59-25-110.

System for examination and certification of teachers.

59-26-10, *et seq.*

Training, Certification and Evaluation of Public Educators

Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976.

20 U.S.C. 6301 *et seq.*

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

US Code of Laws

**State Board Regulation:**

43-300. Accreditation Criteria.

I. Each school district shall provide the defined program approved by the State Board of Education that complies with standards prescribed for the boards of trustees; district operations; elementary grades; middle grades; secondary grades; career and technology education centers; summer school programs; and adult education. If a school district's defined program is evaluated as failing to comply with prescribed standards, it shall be considered as offering a program that is deficient in meeting local educational needs and such failure shall be indicated in the status of the accreditation classification.

II. State Board of Education Approval Procedures: To be accredited by the State Board of Education, a school district or school shall obtain approval for the school district's or school's educational program by one of the following procedures.

A. Option 1. Accreditation through the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). Meet the standards in the defined program and all current statutes and regulations as prescribed by the State Board of Education and General Assembly determined by the SCDE through the procedures described below. With regard to special schools, the following documents contain the full text of accreditation standards adopted by the State Board of Education. The documents are on file in the Offices of the South Carolina Department of Education and the South Carolina Legislative Council:

Defined Minimum Program for the John de la Howe School

Defined Minimum Program for the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind

Defined Minimum Program for the South Carolina Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School

Defined Minimum Program for the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice

B. Option 2. Accreditation through an Accrediting Entity Accepted by Higher Education. Submit documentation to the State Board of Education that the district and schools meet all accreditation standards and are considered fully accredited by an accrediting entity accepted by higher education (i.e., AdvancED/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)). Use of an accrediting entity other than AdvancED will require approval by the State Board of Education. All deficiencies identified through desk or on-site monitoring must be resolved prior to the district or school utilizing Option 2. If district's or school's accreditation rating becomes less than fully accredited when utilizing Option 2, the district or school will automatically be reviewed by the South Carolina Department of Education's Option 1 procedures. A list of schools and/or districts selecting Option 2 for accreditation will be included in the

SCDE's Annual Report of the Accreditation of School Districts in South Carolina to the State Board of Education.

III. Option 1 accreditation procedures for each school district or school not submitting documentation of Option 2 accreditation:

A. On or before October 15, data assurances documenting the compliance of standards for boards of trustees; district operations; elementary grades; middle grades; secondary grades; career and technology education; summer school programs; and adult education will be submitted to the South Carolina Department of Education.

B. The South Carolina Department of Education will process the accreditation data and identify existing deficiencies for the following educational units: (1) Boards of Trustees, (2) District Operations, (3) Elementary Grades, (4) Middle Grades, (5) Secondary Grades, (6) Summer School Programs, (7) Career and Technology Education, and (8) Adult Education. Accreditation data will also be collected annually through desk and on-site monitoring of selected schools and districts. The listings of deficiencies will be reviewed by South Carolina Department of Education staff and results of the preliminary analysis indicating existing deficiencies will be provided to districts and schools for verification.

C. The preliminary analysis data shall result in the SCDE assigning one of the following accreditation preliminary classifications no later than February 1:

Accredited/All Clear indicates that a district or school is in compliance with the standards for a defined program and with all current statutes and regulations as prescribed by the State Board of Education and General Assembly.

Accredited/Advised indicates that a district or school is not in compliance with the standards for a defined program and with all current statutes and regulations as prescribed by the State Board of Education and General Assembly, but the deficiencies may be easily corrected and/or substantial progress can be made in removing existing deficiencies.

Accredited/Warned indicates that a district or school is not in compliance with the standards for a defined program and with all current statutes and regulations as prescribed by the State Board of Education and General Assembly for a second year. Districts that have a Warned accreditation classification are required to make substantial progress toward removal of deficiencies before submitting accreditation data the subsequent school year or the district's accreditation will be placed on Probation.

Accredited/Probation indicates that a district or school is not in compliance with the standards for a defined program and with all current statutes and regulations as prescribed by the State Board of Education and General Assembly for a third year. Serious deficiencies exist and the district, school, or program will lose its accreditation unless satisfactory progress is made toward the removal of the deficiencies before the next school year.

Accreditation Denied indicates that the district or school is not in compliance with the standards for a defined program and with all current statutes and regulations as prescribed by the State Board of Education and General Assembly for a fourth year and does not merit accreditation. If the accreditation of a high school is denied, that school cannot issue State high school diplomas subsequent to the school year in which the accreditation is denied. Schools which have been classified as Accreditation Denied by the defined program accreditation procedures shall not be eligible for funding in the following fiscal year until an acceptable plan to eliminate the deficiencies is submitted and approved by the State Board of Education.

D. Each district and school is required to reply to the preliminary accreditation classification in writing to the South Carolina Department of Education, no later than February 22 and to provide written documentation to request removal of deficiencies prior to the South Carolina Department of Education assigning a final accreditation classification.

E. A copy of the final accreditation classification report for all Option 1 schools and districts will be provided to district superintendents, school principals, directors of career and technology education, directors of adult education, and members of the boards of trustees. The State Board of Education will receive the accreditation classification of all districts and schools utilizing Option 1 in the SCDE's Annual Report of the Accreditation of School Districts in South Carolina.

#### IV. Additional Requirement for Career and Technical Education:

In addition to the policies of the State Board of Education, programs under the jurisdiction of other state accrediting, certifying, or licensing boards shall meet requirements established by these boards.

#### V. On-Site Verification Visits by State Accountability Team

In addition to annual recommendation of a district's or school's accreditation classification, the SCDE's state accountability team will conduct desk audits and on-site verification visits on all districts and schools following a five-year cycle and yearly on those which have an accreditation status of accredited/ warned, accredited/probation, or those districts and schools whose previous visit violations are still unresolved for the current year. The state accountability team will facilitate and conduct on-site verification visits within thirty days to districts and schools as directed by the State Board of Education or the State Superintendent of Education. The results of the verification visit will be reported to the State Board of Education.