



**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**MOLLY M. SPEARMAN**  
*STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION*

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District Superintendents  
School Principals  
Board of Trustees, Chairs

**FROM:** Sarah C. Longshore  
Director, Office of Federal and State Accountability

**DATE:** October 3, 2019

**RE:** Accreditation and Monitoring of Districts and Schools in 2019–20

The purpose of this memo is twofold, to provide guidance regarding South Carolina's accreditation system and to explain the procedures that will be used for monitoring in 2019–20. Pursuant to State Board of Education (SBE) Regulation [43-300](#), two accreditation options are available.

**Option 1:** Schools and districts may be accredited through the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). Any school or district with identified deficiencies for the 2018–19 school year is required to select Option 1.

- District administrators and school principals must verify that all applicable SBE Regulations, South Carolina Code of Laws, and Accreditation Standards are met by completing the online Accreditation Compliance Form found in the Member Center at <https://ed.sc.gov>. This verification must be completed no later than October 15, 2019.
- Each district and school falling under Option 1 will receive a Preliminary Analysis Report from the SCDE in January 2020. These preliminary reports will give an initial accreditation status. A SCDE Education Associate will then advise districts and schools in working towards a resolution before the final accreditation status is published.

**Option 2:** Schools and districts may also be accredited through AdvancED. It is important to note that all deficiencies identified through desk or on-site monitoring must be resolved prior to

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the district or school utilizing Option 2. If an accreditation rating becomes less than fully accredited when utilizing Option 2, the district or school will automatically be reviewed by the SCDE's Option 1 procedures. Please note that if your school/district is utilizing Option 2, you are no longer required to complete the Accreditation Compliance Form in the Member Center.

Additional accreditation resources and information, including the list of district accreditation SCDE contacts, can be found on the SCDE webpage by following this [link](#).

SBE Regulation [43-300](#) also requires the SCDE to monitor every South Carolina school and district at least once every five years for state accountability purposes. The list of districts and schools that will be monitored in 2019–20 are posted on the SCDE [webpage](#). Districts will also be notified by their accreditation SCDE contacts and will be provided with instructions for submitting documentation by November 15, 2019. The monitoring process may include a desk audit and/or an on-site visit.

The SCDE believes that accreditation and monitoring should be used to not only ensure quality, but also to foster a culture of continuous improvement, working to identify and prioritize the best drivers of student achievement. This process can also highlight problems early and can lead to targeted interventions. Please reach out to me or to your accreditation SCDE contact person for assistance or with questions. My email is [sclongshore@ed.sc.gov](mailto:sclongshore@ed.sc.gov), and my phone number is 803-734-8118.