2014–15 Accreditation Process Overview

Based on the amended State Board of Education (SBE) Regulation 43-300 effective June 27, 2014, districts and individual schools that received a status for accreditation and monitoring of **All Clear** now have two options for accreditation.

OPTION 1: Districts and schools may be accredited through South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE).

OR

OPTION 2: Districts and schools may be accredited by AdvancED/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS***) only if*** the school district or individual school has met all accreditation standards and has no deficiencies **(**ALL CLEAR**)** identified through the SCDE accreditation process or desk/on-site monitoring during the 2013–14 school year.

If the district or an individual school has deficiencies identified through the 2013–14 State accreditation process or monitoring, the district or individual school MUST remain under Option 1.

Under the provisions of the State Board of Education (SBE) Regulation 43-300, districts and schools shall obtain Accreditation approval for educational programs from the SBE. Every district and school must meet all applicable State Board of Education (SBE) Regulations and South Carolina Code of Laws. Annually as part of the accreditation process, Accreditation Standards, SBE Regulations, and statues in the SC Code of Law should be reviewed and may be found by accessing the following sites:

- State Accreditation Standards http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/112/
- SBE Regulations http://ed.sc.gov/agency/stateboard/TOC_Regulations.cfm.
- South Carolina Code of Laws http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/title59.php.

District and school administrators must annually apply for Option 1 or Option 2 by completing the requisite sections of the online Accreditation Compliance Form by October 15, 2014.

For accreditation purposes, districts and schools are defined as boards of trustees and district operations, elementary schools, middle schools, secondary schools, and career and technology education (CATE) centers.

Desk Audit/On-Site Monitoring of Districts and Schools
SCDE will utilize a desk audit and on-site monitoring to verify compliance with Accreditation Standards, SBE Regulations, and SC Code of Laws for the 2014–15 school year. District superintendents and school principals will receive notification if selected to be monitored. When on-site visits are to be made, the district will be notified.

SCDE Documents
Documents and Forms related to the Accreditation process are accessible online through the links on the Web page titled "Accreditation of Schools and Districts," at http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/112/.

SCDE Contacts
Accreditation education associates are available throughout the year to respond to accreditation questions and to provide technical assistance. The list of education associates, along with their contact information, can be found at: http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/112/.

For all communication, please include the district and school name and School Identification Number (SIDN, formerly known as a BEDS code). The SIDN is located on the Accreditation Compliance Form application and the Preliminary Analysis Report.

NOTE: DO NOT include Social Security, certificate, or license numbers in any e-mail.

Annually Applying for Accreditation (Option 1 and 2)
The superintendent or principal must verify the district or school is in compliance with the Accreditation Standards by completing and submitting the online Accreditation Compliance Form by **October 15, 2014**.

Preliminary Analysis Report (Option 1 only)
In January, the SCDE will provide the district and school with a Preliminary Analysis Report. The districts and schools must respond to the Preliminary Analysis Report **by February 15, 2015.** If deficiencies exist, the response document shall contain the proposed plans to correct any deficiencies, including the SIDN and then be uploaded to the online Accreditation Compliance Form.

SCDE Data Used to Produce the Preliminary Analysis Report
The following SCDE data collections are integrated into a computer program that identifies noncompliance issues/deficiencies for each district and school on the Preliminary Analysis Report. The district and/or school must report data specifically and accurately to prevent unnecessary deficiencies from being identified.

- **The Professional Certified Staff (PCS) application -** This data collection is based upon the position codes that are assigned to professional instructional staff. The districts update the application annually by November 1. (See "Explanations of Selected Noncompliance Issues/Deficiencies" below, for a suggested use of the field "Staff Notes" in the PCS.)

- **The SCDE Pupil Accounting System -** The number of students enrolled and the number of professional instructional staff employed are prorated to determine if the ratio required by SBE Regulation 43-205 is met. For flexibility proviso for the 2014-15 school year, please review the 2014-15 Appropriation Bill 4705, Part IB at http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess120_2013-2014/appropriations2014/tab14ndx.php

- **Certification Files for Professional, Instructional Staff -** These files are downloaded from the Office of Educator Services and are used to determine whether a professional, instructional staff member holds a South Carolina certification, the staff member is properly certified for the position he or she currently holds, and if the staff member's certification has expired.

- **Required Credentials -**The required credentials, including proper certification and required attendant training for all professional staff members, are set forth in the *Required Credentials for Professional Staff Members in the Instructional Programs of South Carolina's Public Schools*. This document is updated annually and may be found on the SCDE Web site at http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/112/ .

- **First quarter (45-day) PowerSchool data collection -** This collection of data is generated from the first quarter (45-day) PowerSchool data collection. The data is used to identify staff members who teach core-content subject areas and are not highly qualified.

Explanations of Selected Noncompliance Issues/Deficiencies
The following examples are commons errors which lead to noncompliance issues/deficiencies on a Preliminary Analysis Report.

- **Other professional instruction-oriented (Position Code 12)** will always appear as a non-compliance issue/deficiency as "The following position requires individual evaluation. Please provide a job description." There are many position titles unique to a district and/or school for which a specific code will not apply. There are two ways to handle this position code issue:

  - The preferred method is to place the staff member's job title in "Staff Notes" in PCS before the Preliminary Analysis Report is generated in December/January so the SCDE staff can review the job title as part of the preliminary analysis evaluation.

  - The second option is to provide the person's job title and to attach a copy of his or her certificate and job description in response to the noncompliance issue/deficiency on the Preliminary Analysis Report.

- **Miscoded position codes in PCS** often are the cause of a deficiency. The most frequently miscoded positions are provided below. Please review the complete list of PCS position codes at: http://ed.sc.gov/agency/cfo/finance/Financial-Services/PCSInformation.cfm. Questions concerning PCS position codes should be directed to Ann Castro, State PCS Coordinator, at 803-734-8147.

Professional Certified Staff Position Codes, Short List	
Position	**Code**
Assistant Principal, Co-principal	02
Special Education (Itinerant)	03
Special Education (Self-contained)	06
Special Education (Resource)	07
Speech Therapist	17
Classroom Teacher	08
Prekindergarten Teacher (Child Development)	04
Kindergarten Teacher	05
Retired Teachers	09
Temporary Instruction-Oriented Personnel (long-term subs)	19
Library Media Specialist	10
Guidance Counselor	11
Career Specialist	23
Instructional Coach, including Literacy Coaches and Math/Science Coaches	97
Teacher Specialist	44
Reading Coach	87
Other Professional Instruction-Oriented	12
Child Development Aide	91

Professional Certified Staff Position Codes, Short List	
Position	**Code**
Kindergarten Aide	92
Special Education Aide	93
Instructional Aide	94
Title I Instructional Paraprofessional	89

- **Not all professional staff members are required to hold administrative or teaching certificate.** The following are examples of positions which do not need certification: Technology/IT Personnel (27), Personnel Director (28), Other Personnel Positions (29), Transportation Director (34), Attendance Director (42), Parenting/Family Literacy Coordinator (83). **Please place these job titles in the Staff Notes in the PCS file.** If a noncompliance issue/deficiency arises for one of these positions, respond by naming the staff member, specifying his or her position and the corresponding position code, and state that the position does not require a professional certificate.

- **Special education teachers must be coded in PCS according to the service delivery model** in which they teach, i.e., *self-contained, resource, or itinerant*. Refer to the position code chart above.

- **Acceptable certification for a teacher of a *self-contained, resource, or itinerant* special education class** is determined by the area of disability in which all or the majority of the students in each class (not caseload) are classified. If the staff member teaches in a PK–12 program and is appropriately certified (as specified in the *Required Credentials* document), the response should be structured like the following: "Jane Doe is certified in the Multi-categorical (2I) special education area and teaches five resource classes. Each individual class, along with the student disability, is listed below:

  8:20 to 9:20 class: 5 LD, 1 OHI, and 1 ID
  9:30 to 10:30 class: 10 LD
  10:50 to 11:50 class: 6 LD, 1 AU, 2DD
  1:00 to 2:00 class: 4 LD, 2 ID, 1 AU
  2:10 to 3:10 class 8 LD, 1 DD

Other Examples of Noncompliance Issues/Deficiencies

Noncompliance Issue/Deficiency as Stated on the Preliminary Analysis Report	Possible Circumstance Generating the Noncompliance Issue/Deficiency	Appropriate Administrator Response
"The services of the assistant principal or curriculum coordinator are inadequate for a school of this size."	The assistant principal is miscoded. (The assistant principal was not coded as 02.)	Declare the assistant principal miscoded and submit the name of the assistant principal or the curriculum coordinator and the identification number of his or her certificate. Request that the district change the assistant principal's position code.

Noncompliance Issue/Deficiency as Stated on the Preliminary Analysis Report	Possible Circumstance Generating the Noncompliance Issue/Deficiency	Appropriate Administrator Response
	No assistant principal was employed at the time of the preliminary analysis.	Provide the name of the new assistant principal or the new curriculum coordinator and the identification number of his or her certificate.
	The ratio of assistant principal(s) to student enrollment does not meet the standard.	Verify that the assistant principal is correctly coded on the school profile. Describe how the required ratio (stated in SBE Regulation 43-205) will be met.
"The services of a guidance counselor are not provided."	The guidance counselor serves two schools. The preliminary analysis report recognizes one school for each staff member.	Provide the name of the guidance counselor the identification number of his or her certificate, and the name of the other school the counselor serves.
	The guidance counselor is not coded 11.	Declare the counselor miscoded. Provide the name of the guidance counselor and the identification number of his or her certificate. Request that the district change the counselor's position code.
"The following staff member is not properly certified for the position held: John Doe Special Education (self-contained)."	John Doe is teaching in a resource setting, not a self-contained setting.	Declare John Doe miscoded and provide documentation of his teaching assignment and certificate. Request that the district change John Doe's position code from 06 to 07.

- Some noncompliance issues/deficiencies cannot be resolved. In that case, simply state "The deficiency has not been resolved."