

## **School District Accreditation**

Consistent with the Board of Education's authority to control instruction in the schools of the district and the power vested in the State Board of Education to exercise general supervision over the public schools of the State, an accreditation process has been initiated by state law to foster greater accountability and enhance improvement in student achievement in the district.

The following is a summary of the important provisions of the Educational Accreditation Act of 1998, Colorado Revised Statutes 22-11-101 *et seq.*

### **Accreditation Contract**

The contract shall contain at a minimum, the following:

1. provisions relating to the term of the contract which shall be for 6 years
2. adoption of content standards for student learning
3. adoption of achievement performance levels
4. systems for measuring student achievement, including methods for improving the achievement of students who score below proficient in statewide assessments
5. provisions for allowing annual comparisons between the district assessment results and the statewide assessment results

The contract shall bind the district to administer the following policy and management functions:

1. community involvement, including processes for involving parents, the business community and other interested citizens
2. public disclosure of nonidentifying student achievement results for each student in the district
3. recognition for schools that meet or exceed accreditation indicators and assistance for schools that fail to meet such indicators

The contract shall bind the school board to improve each school's performance relating to the following:

1. parental and familial involvement
2. attainment of local achievement goals that meet or exceed the accreditation indicators
3. implementation of district content standards for student learning
4. attainment of achievement and proficiency levels
5. implementation of systems of measuring student achievement, including methods for improving the scores of students who score below proficient in the statewide assessments
6. reduction of consistent patterns of academic achievement discrepancies in student performance related to ethnicity, gender, disability and limited English proficiency

The accreditation contract may be renegotiated at any time by the parties if circumstances upon which the original terms and conditions of the contract were based change significantly.

### **Accreditation Indicators**

Indicators for assessing the quality of education and learning in the public schools and school districts shall be established by the State Board of Education. These accreditation indicators shall include, but may not be limited to, the following:

1. results on statewide assessments
2. dropout rates
3. student attendance rates, including the numbers of expelled and suspended students
4. graduation rates
5. percentage of students taking advanced placement courses
6. percentage of students taking statewide assessments

7. percentage of students who are exempt from the assessment program
8. results of district assessments administered pursuant to district content standards

The district shall submit information demonstrating achievement of the accreditation indicators to the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall prepare annual reports on achievement of the accreditation indicators by schools and school districts. The reports shall be disseminated to members of the public.

### **Accreditation Ratings**

The State Board of Education shall rate schools and school districts for the purpose of accreditation categories. The ratings shall be based upon student achievement on district content standards, shall be consistent with the ratings for student achievement on the state assessments and shall indicate the schools' and district's performance on the accreditation indicators.

### **Monitoring the Contract**

The State Board of Education shall monitor the accreditation contract and provide technical assistance to the district in order to improve its performance on the accreditation indicators.

### **Sanctions and Corrective Actions**

Failure to achieve the standards, goals and requirements set forth in the accreditation contract may result in sanctions and corrective actions, including:

- Level One: Notice

If the district fails to comply with any provision of the accreditation contract, the Department of Education shall notify the district and the district shall submit a plan to remedy the lack of compliance. The plan shall be approved or denied by the Department. The Department shall provide technical assistance to the district in connection with areas in which the district is out of compliance.

- Level Two: Probation

If the district fails to implement the approved plan, the State Board of Education shall, after holding a hearing, place the district on probationary status. The Department shall provide technical assistance to the district upon request.

- Level Three: Nonaccreditation

If the district fails to remedy its lack of compliance, the State Board of Education may, after holding a hearing, remove the district's accreditation. A school organization planning committee shall be appointed upon removal of accreditation.

Adopted: October 15, 1998