Preparing for Accreditation Audits

METIS Conference

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MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Ensuring a bright future for every child

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VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community

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State Board of Education Goals FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2016-2020

1. All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas

2. Every Student Graduates From High School and is Ready for College and Career

3. Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

4. Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

5. Every Community Effectively Using a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

6. Every School and District is Rated "C" or Higher

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Accreditation Monitoring

The Office of Accreditation fulfills the objectives and duties through a number of processes:

- Conducting public school audits;
    - Comprehensive on-site audits
    - Investigative, unannounced audits
    - Test security audits
- Analyzing annual reports submitted to the MDE; and
- Reviewing reports from other state or federal program offices.

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Consistent Findings

- Accreditation Policy 2.1 – Reporting Information (Personnel)
- School Board Policies
- Number of Issues Regarding Superintendent/School Board Relations
- Process Standards
  - Process Standard 6 – Enrollment requirements
  - Process Standard 8 – Student Records
  - Process Standard 14 – Graduation Requirements
  - Process Standard 18 – Libraries
  - Process Standard 20 – Instructional Management
  - Process Standard 29 – Pupil Transportation
  - Process Standard 30 – Facilities
  - Process Standard 31 – School Safety

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Overview of Topics

- Accreditation Policy 2.1 – Reporting Information (Personnel)

- Process Standards

    - Process Standard 6 – Enrollment requirements

    - Process Standard 8 – Student Records

    - Process Standard 14 – Graduation Requirements

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Resources

- Miss. Code Ann. § 37-17-6

- *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2019*

- Accountability Resource Manual
  https://districtaccess.mde.k12.ms.us/Accreditation/Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx

- *MS Cumulative Folders and Permanent Records Manual*
  https://www.mdek12.org/OA/Accred

- *How to Complete the Mississippi Cumulative Folder and Permanent Record Tutorials* https://www.mdek12.org/OA/Accred

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MS Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2019

- Federal Laws

- State Laws

- State Board of Education Policies

- Commission on School Accreditation Policies and Standards

- https://www.mdek12.org/Accred/AAS

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Accreditation Policy 2.0

The State Board of Education, acting through the Commission on School Accreditation, is required to establish and implement a process for accountability at the public school district level. School districts are held accountable for Accreditation Policies and Process Standards and receive an annual accreditation status. Standards of the performance-based accreditation system recommended by the Commission and adopted by the State Board of Education are contained in the current edition of *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*.

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2.1 Assignment of District Accreditation Statuses

The Commission on School Accreditation determines the annual accreditation status of all public school districts in the fall of each school year based on verified accreditation data from the previous school year. An annual district accreditation status is assigned based on compliance with Process Standards. Information concerning district compliance with Process Standards is reported to the Commission on an annual basis. (See Policy 2.2.)

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Policy 2.1 (con't)

The district superintendent and school principals are responsible for ensuring that all data reported to the Mississippi Department of Education are true and accurate as verified by supporting documentation on file in the school district. Reporting false information is a violation of the accreditation requirements set forth by the State Board of Education and is one of the violations that may result in the immediate downgrading of the district's accreditation status.

Note: Documents reviewed by auditors may include, but are not limited to, contracts, master schedules, lists of staff members, and MSIS personnel reports.

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Examples of Noncompliance - Policy 2.1

- The District provided contracts for three (3) employees not reported in MSIS. None of the three (3) employees are listed on the Master Schedule or the List of Staff.

- The District failed to provide a contract for one (1) employee reported in MSIS.

- The District provided two (2) contracts for one (1) employee and three (3) contracts for one (1) employee reported in MSIS.

- Thirteen (13) employees have salaries on contracts that do not match salaries reported in MSIS.

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Examples (Con't)

- Twenty-seven (27) employees have years of experience on contract that do not match years of experience reported in MSIS.

- Four (4) employees have number of days employed on contract that does not match number of days employed reported in MSIS.

- Five (5) employees reported in MSIS do not appear on the Master Schedule.

- Six (6) employees reported in MSIS do not appear on the List of Staff.

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Examples (Con't)

- Seven (7) employees are listed on the Master Schedule but are not reported in MSIS.

- Seven (7) employees are listed on the Master Schedule but not on the List of Staff.

- Two (2) employees on the List of Staff are not reported in MSIS.

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Process Standards 6, 8 & 14

Licensed Professional Staff

Process Standard 2. All district professional positions requiring licensed staff are filled by staff who are properly licensed and endorsed as required by state law and federal requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
{Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-7} (7 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3, Ch. 80, R. 80.1, R. 80.2, and ESEA, and Federal Code)

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-7: It is unlawful for the district to employ any professional staff, including contractual staff, unless they are properly licensed and endorsed.

Principal

Process Standard 2.1. The school district employs an appropriately licensed full-time principal at each school. The principal may not have any other job duties assigned in areas that require a specific work area code unless a waiver is granted by the Commission on School Accreditation.

5% FTE Out-of-Field

Process Standard 2.2. With the exception of academic core subjects, the professional staff in each school is comprised of no more than 5% of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) units working outside the area or areas of endorsement. Assistant principals and administrative interns who are not properly endorsed may be included in the 5% FTE working outside their area of endorsement, provided that they do not act in the place of the principal. An appropriate license is required for superintendents, principals, librarians, and guidance counselors.

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5% FTE Out-of-Field (con't)

Assistant principals and administrative interns who are not properly endorsed may be included in the 5% FTE working outside their area of endorsement, **provided that they do not act in the place of the principal**.

Note: It would be a liability for the district to assign staff to supervise employees or serve in place of the principal at any time without an administrative license to perform such duties.

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Licensed Librarian

Process Standard 2.3. The school district employs in each school a licensed librarian or media specialist who devotes no more than one-fourth (¼) of the workday to library/media administrative activities. {Miss. Code Ann. § 37-17-6(3)(a-e)}

- **Process Standard 2.3.1** If the student enrollment is 499 or less, a half-time licensed librarian or media specialist is required.
- **Process Standard 2.3.2** If the student enrollment is 500 or more, a full-time licensed librarian or media specialist is required.

Student Support Services

Process Standard 2.4. Student support services (appraisal, academic, and/or personal advisement, and educational, and/or career planning and referral) are provided in each school by qualified student support personnel. Student support personnel may only provide those services and activities in the area(s) that each individual is specifically qualified to provide and will use only job titles that reflect same. {Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-79}

School Business Officer

Process Standard 2.5. The school district employs a school business officer/administrator whose qualifications meet the criteria established by the Mississippi Department of Education and whose primary job responsibilities are conducting, supervising, and/or directing the financial affairs and operations of the school district. (Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 71.1 and 71.2, State Board Policy Chapter 71, Rules 71.1 and 71.2)

Process Standard 6

The school district complies with state law and State Board of Education policy on enrollment requirements.

6.1 **Residency requirements** (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-15-29, Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 68.1, State Board Policy Chapter 68, Rule 68.1)

6.2 **Immunization requirements** (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-301(i), § 37-15-1, and § 41-23-37)

6.3 **Age of entry requirements** (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-15-9)

Process Standard 6.1

Examples of Noncompliance:

- The MDE reviewed 79 of 529 records. Twelve (12) of the 79 records reviewed lacked valid proofs of residency.

Examples of Corrective Action:

- The District shall review documentation on file for each student currently enrolled to ensure that two (2) appropriate proofs of residency are on file and verified by the signature of the designated school district official.

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Process Standard 6.1 (Con't)

- All enrollment forms, including those used to verify residency shall be completely filled out, and a District official's signature on these forms is required to validate the information. These forms shall be maintained at the school where the student is enrolled.

- After residency has been obtained each year, the documents from previous years shall be removed from the student records and will no longer be acceptable.

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Process Standard 6.2

Examples of Noncompliance:

- The MDE reviewed 74 of 492 records. Nine (9) of the 74 records reviewed failed to include the required immunization documentation.

- Based on the report from the Office of Elementary Education and Reading, the school failed to produce immunization forms (Form 121) for all Kindergarten students. (*See also* Standard 17.1)

- Based on the report from the Office of Elementary Education and Reading, the school failed to produce immunization forms (Form 121) for all Pre-Kindergarten students. (*See also* Standard 17.2)

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Process Standard 6.2

Examples of Corrective Action:

- The District shall implement approved local board policy for verification of immunization requirements that complies with state law and State Board of Education Policy.

- All records shall be reviewed to ensure that every student has current and proper immunization documented on the form designated by the Mississippi State Board of Health.

- Establish a procedure to ensure students who are enrolled with a temporary immunization form complete all immunization requirements within the timelines indicated on the temporary form.

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Process Standard 6.3

Examples of Noncompliance:

- The District does not have a current policy regarding age of entry requirements.

Example of Corrective Actions:

- The District shall implement approved local board policy for verification of age of entry requirements that complies with state law and State Board of Education Policy.

Process Standard 8

Permanent records and cumulative folders for individual students contain all required data and are collected, maintained, and disseminated in compliance with state law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and the Confidentiality Section of the *Individuals with Disabilities Act, 1997 Amendments*.

Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-15-1 through 3, § 37-15-6, § 37-15-10, Appendix E of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2019*, and the *Mississippi Cumulative Folders and Permanent Records Manual of Directions*

Process Standard 8

Examples of Noncompliance:

- The MDE reviewed 74 of 492 records. Five (5) of the 74 records reviewed lacked verification of the student's date-of-birth.

- Two (2) of the 74 records reviewed failed to include the father's name as recorded on the student's birth certificate.

- Five (5) of the 74 records reviewed lacked required enrollment and/or withdrawal information.

Process Standard 8 (Con't)

- Four (4) of the 74 records reviewed did not contain the student's attendance data.

- Ten (10) of the 74 records reviewed lacked the required course grade information.

- Five (5) of the 74 records reviewed did not contain a permanent record.

Process Standard 8

Examples of Corrective Action:

- Staff shall accurately track graduation requirements for all students in Grades 7-12 and ensure cumulative folders and permanent records for all students include complete documentation regarding all courses in which Carnegie units have been earned.

- In addition, records shall document all assessments taken by the students, including ACT scores and subject area test scores, using the labels provided to the District. These labels shall be affixed in the appropriate places on the student records.

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Process Standard 14 – Graduation Requirements

Examples of Noncompliance:

- Forty-nine (49) of the 224 graduates lacked required Carnegie units to meet graduation requirements.

- Four (4) of the 224 graduates lacked required passing scores on each of the required high school exit exams.

- Fifty-three (53) of the 224 graduates failed to meet graduation requirements, but the District permitted them to participate in graduation exercises.

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Dates to remember

- August: Submit any final evidence/documentation to clear any current violations.

- Fall: CSA determines the annual accreditation statuses

- December: Deadline to submit CAP to Office of Accreditation for review

- December-January: Program offices will review before submission to the State Board of Education for approval.*

*Note: Incomplete CAPs and late submissions are subject to denial by the MDE program office(s) or the State Board of Education.

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