

OFFICE OF CHIEF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
April 16-17, 2015

OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

08. Approval to revise Accreditation Policy 3.1.3 of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2014* – Internal Review of Preliminary Accountability Results and establish Accreditation Policy 3.1.4 – Review or Appeal of Final Accountability Results

(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process with public comments)

The Office of Accreditation and Accountability is proposing revisions to Accreditation Policy 3.1.3 of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2014*. The proposed revisions will establish the procedure and timeline for districts seeking to appeal the preliminary accountability results.


The Office of Accreditation and Accountability is also proposing the establishment of Accreditation Policy 3.1.4 – Review or Appeal of the Final Accountability Results. This policy will outline the procedure for districts to appeal the final accountability results approved by the Commission on School Accreditation and/or the State Board of Education.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

MEMORANDUM

To: School District Superintendents
School District Principals
Other Interested Parties

From: Paula A. Vanderford, Ph.D.
Executive Director 

Date: March 20, 2015

Subject: **Proposed Revisions to Accreditation Policy 3.1.3 and Establishment of Accreditation Policy 3.1.4**

Today, March 20, 2015, the State Board of Education (SBE) granted approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Process to revise Accreditation Policy 3.1.3-*Internal Review of Preliminary Accountability Results* and to establish Accreditation Policy 3.1.4-*Review or Appeal of Final Accountability Results*, of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2014*. Policy 3.1.3 is being revised to provide clarification that requests for an internal review of preliminary results will not be considered after the deadline for submission. Proposed Policy 3.1.4 is being established to allow districts an opportunity to request a review or appeal of the final accountability results following the approval by the State Board of Education. This proposed policy also addresses the process districts must follow to file an appeal of the final accountability results. The proposed policies are attached for your review.

Please submit written comments to Paula A. Vanderford, Executive Director, Office of Accreditation and Accountability, Post Office Box 771, Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0771. You may also submit comments in writing by e-mail (accountability@mde.k12.ms.us), or they may be faxed to (601) 359-1979 and received in the Office of Accreditation and Accountability no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14, 2015. All written comments will be compiled and presented to the SBE Thursday, April 16, 2015.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Accreditation and Accountability at (601) 359-3764, or e-mail pvanderford@mde.k12.ms.us.

Enclosure

c: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
Pat Ross

OFFICE OF ACCREDITATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY
PROPOSED REVISIONS ACCREDITATION POLICY 3.1.3
MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS, 2014

3.1.3 Internal Review of Preliminary Accountability Results

If the school district has reason to believe the preliminary results of the state or federal accountability system applied to a district or school are incorrect due to a calculation or data error or other substantive reasons, the school district may submit written evidence to the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of School Performance/ Accreditation and Accountability, to support the position of the school district. All requests for review must be submitted in writing based on the timeline published each year by the Office of Accreditation and Accountability. Any requests not submitted based upon the timeline published by the Office of Accreditation and Accountability will not be considered after the deadline for submission.

The Office of Accreditation and Accountability will review these requests and present them to an Internal Review Committee for consideration. The Internal Review Committee will consist of, at a minimum, one (1) external chairperson and four (4) Mississippi Department of Education representatives.

The Office of Accreditation and Accountability will present the decisions of the Internal Review Committee to the Commission on School Accreditation.

3.1.4 Review or Appeal of Final Accountability Results

The school district must submit written evidence to appeal the final results of the statewide accountability system approved by the Commission on School Accreditation and the State Board of Education. The appeal must be submitted to the Office of Accreditation and Accountability within ten (10) calendar days of the State Board of Education's approval.

Any appeal to the final results will follow the same process as a request for review (i.e., Internal Review Committee, Commission on School Accreditation, and State Board of Education); however, during the appeal of the final results, school districts will receive notification of the Internal Review Committee's decision prior to presentation to the Commission on School Accreditation. The district superintendent may request to address the Commission regarding the appeal of the final results. The Commission on School Accreditation will recommend a final decision to the State Board of Education for approval. The State Board of Education makes the final determination of the appeal's disposition.

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Proposed Revisions Policy 3.1.3, Establish Policy 3.1.4**

3.0 PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATION POLICY

The State Board of Education, acting through the Commission on School Accreditation, is required to establish and implement a process for accountability at the individual public school level and district level. Individual schools and districts are held accountable for 1) student achievement, 2) student growth, and 3) graduation, if applicable, and receive an annual School Performance Classification and District Performance Classification. (See Glossary for definitions of an attendance center and school.)

When the district establishes a new school and/or the district reconfigures the specific grades or students assigned to an existing school(s) within the district, the student achievement data used to assign school performance classifications will follow the guidelines established in the School Performance Standards and School Performance Model.

3.1 ASSIGNMENT OF PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATIONS

3.1.1 School Performance Classification

Information concerning school performance is reported to the Commission on an annual basis, and annual performance classifications will be assigned in the fall of each school year. Each public school that has both achievement and growth data will be assigned an annual performance classification. In addition, the Graduation Rate will be included in determining the performance classification of schools with a Grade 12. An alternative school will not be assigned a school performance classification. (See State Board Policy 901 and 902 and the Glossary for definition of alternative school.)

3.1.2 District Performance Classification

Information concerning district performance is reported to the Commission on an annual basis, and annual performance classifications will be assigned in the fall of each school year. Each public school district will be assigned an annual performance classification based on achievement, growth, and graduation rate. A district performance level is assigned based on the performance of all students in the district [i.e., the district will be treated as one (1) K-12 school].

3.1.3 Internal Review of Preliminary Accountability Results

If the school district has reason to believe the **preliminary** results of the state or federal accountability system applied to a district or school are incorrect due to a calculation or data error or other substantive reasons, the school district may submit written evidence to the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of ~~Education Accountability~~ **School Performance/Accreditation and Accountability**, to support the position of the school district. All requests must be submitted in writing based on the timeline published each year by the Office of Accreditation **and Accountability**. **Any requests not submitted based upon the timeline published by the Office of Accreditation and Accountability will not be considered after the deadline for submission.**

The Office of Accreditation **and Accountability** will review these requests and present them to an Internal Review Committee for consideration. The Internal Review Committee will consist of, at a minimum, one (1) external chairperson and four (4) Mississippi Department of Education representatives.

The Office of Accreditation and Accountability will present the decisions of the Internal Review Committee to the Commission on School Accreditation.

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3.1.4 Review or Appeal of Final Accountability Results

The school district must submit written evidence to appeal the final results of the statewide accountability system approved by the Commission on School Accreditation and the State Board of Education. The appeal must be submitted to the Office of Accreditation and Accountability within ten (10) calendar days of the State Board of Education's approval.

Any appeal to the final results will follow the same process as a request for review (i.e., Internal Review Committee, Commission on School Accreditation, and State Board of Education); however, during the appeal of the final results, school districts will receive notification of the Internal Review Committee's decision prior to presentation to the Commission on School Accreditation. The district superintendent may request to address the Commission regarding the appeal of the final results. The Commission on School Accreditation will recommend a final decision to the State Board of Education for approval. The State Board of Education makes the final determination of the appeal's disposition.

3.2 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Performance (output or product) standards address selected components of the statewide testing program and other outcome measures related to the performance of a school. (See Performance Standards.) The State Board of Education may also take into account such factors as graduation rates, dropout rates, completion rates, College and Career Readiness and Acceleration, the extent to which the school or district employs qualified teachers in every classroom, and any other factors deemed appropriate by the State Board of Education.

3.3 PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATIONS

The performance classification assigned to a school or district will be determined by (a) the percentage of students who are performing at criterion levels (minimum, basic, proficient, and advanced) and (b) the degree to which student performance has improved over time (based on an expected growth value for the school). The results from the Achievement Model and the Growth Model are combined to assign performance classifications of **A, B, C, D, and F**.

(See State Accountability Rating System and Performance Classification Models.)

A school will not receive a school performance classification if the test data have been invalidated, and the school performance classification will be noted as Test Data Invalidated. (See Appendix F.)

3.4 SCHOOLS AT-RISK

Following an analysis of school data each year, the Mississippi Department of Education shall identify those schools that are deficient in educating students and are in need of improvement in accordance with Section 37-18-3 and Section 37-18-5, *Mississippi Code of 1972*, as amended. This analysis shall indicate individual school performance in two (2) areas: (a) meeting its assigned yearly growth expectation and (b) percentage of the students in the school that are proficient.

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3.4.1 Designation

A school shall be identified as a School At-Risk and in need of assistance if the school:

- (a) Does not meet its growth expectation and has a percentage of students functioning below grade level or
- (b) Is identified as an F School as designated by the State Board of Education.

3.4.2 Notification

Within fifteen (15) days after a School At-Risk has been identified, written notice shall be sent by the State Board of Education by certified mail to the school principal, and the local board of education.

3.4.3 Evaluation Teams and Evaluation Report

Within fifteen (15) days after notification, the State Board of Education shall assign an evaluation team to the school, subject to the availability of funding. The evaluation team shall be independent of the school being evaluated and may include employees of the State Department of Education. The team may include retired educators who have met certain standards and have completed all necessary training.

The evaluation team shall analyze the School At-Risk's data to determine probable areas of weakness before conducting an on-site audit. After completing the evaluation of the School At-Risk, the team shall prepare and adopt its school evaluation report, which shall be submitted to the State Superintendent of Education for approval within ninety (90) calendar days. The evaluation report shall identify any personnel who were found by the evaluation team to be in need of improvement and need to participate in a professional development plan.

Following the State Superintendent's approval of the report, a representative of the State Superintendent and the evaluation team leader shall present the report to the principal of the School At-Risk, the school district superintendent, and school board members of the local school district. Following this presentation, the evaluation report shall be presented to the community served by the School At-Risk at an advertised public meeting.

3.4.4 School Improvement Plan

Based on the findings of the evaluation report and the results of the public meeting, the Mississippi Department of Education and evaluation team leader shall assist the school principal and other local school officials in the development of a school improvement action plan.

The school improvement action plan shall be developed and approved by the principal of the School At-Risk, the superintendent of the local school district, the local school board, and a majority of the teachers of the school. If the plan is not approved, the State Board of Education may approve and implement the plan in the school.

The State Department of Education shall provide technical assistance and shall assist in identifying funding to the School At-Risk in the implementation of the school improvement action plan, including the implementation of any recommended professional development plan, and the department may contract with the Institutions of Higher Learning to provide such technical assistance. The assistance team shall collaborate with school and school district employees in the implementation and monitoring

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of the school improvement action plan and the State Department of Education shall ensure that a report is issued monthly to the local school board and the local community-based advisory council.

A school district that has been designated as an F as defined by the State Board of Education or a district and/or a school designated below a C, shall establish a community-based pre-kindergarten through higher education (P-16) council comprised of a broad spectrum of the community, including economic developers, elected officials, civic leaders, business leaders, faith-based leaders, social services, nonprofit organizations, school attendance officers, law enforcement officials, health department officials, day care providers, librarians, parents, and others with the knowledge and resources that can be leveraged to build strong communities. The State Board of Education shall develop procedures for appointments to the council, which shall not be appointed solely by the school board. The council will serve as a community-led group that is inclusive, accountable, and required to publicly report progress to the community as a whole.

3.4.5 Professional Development Plan for Educators

As part of the school improvement action plan for a School At-Risk, a professional development plan shall be prepared for those school administrators, teachers, or other employees who are identified by the evaluation team as needing improvement.

**Revision of Accreditation Policy 3.1.3
and Establishment of Accreditation
Policy 3.1.4**

APA COMMENTS

March 20 – April 14, 2015

APA Comments Summary Chart

Rule	Narrative of Rule	Topic	Comments		
			Supporting	Concerns	Total
Accred. Policy 3.1.3 and 3.1.4	Policy 3.1.3 is being revised to provide clarification that requests for an internal review of preliminary results will not be considered after the deadline for submission. Proposed Policy 3.1.4 is being established to allow districts an opportunity to request a review or appeal of the final accountability results following the approval by the State Board of Education.	Revision of Policy 3.1.3 and Addition of Policy 3.1.4		1	
	TOTAL COMMENTS			1	

Revision of Accreditation Policy 3.1.3 and Establishment of Accreditation Policy 3.1.4

APA Comments Summary Chart

Role	Number of Commenters
Superintendents/Conservators	
Assistant Superintendents	1
District School Board Members	
Teachers	
Librarians/Media Specialists	
Federal Programs Directors	
Curriculum Directors	
Special Education Directors	
Principals	
Assistant Principals	
Vocational School Directors	
Other District Personnel	
Instructional Specialists/Academic Coaches	
Advocacy Groups	
MDE Offices	
Citizens (Parents)	
Unknown	
State Organizations	
TOTAL	1

One (1) school district were represented through the APA comments received.

From: Tony Cook [mailto:tcook@amory.k12.ms.us]

Sent: Monday, March 23, 2015 12:07 PM

To: Paula Vanderford

Subject: Re: [ms_superintendents] APA Process: Accreditation Policies 3.1.3 and 3.1.4

Dr. Vanderford,

Parents in Amory have somehow gotten a copy of Dr. Wright's letter to superintendents concerning the "opt out" issue. We have received several requests and I expect more as there is widespread discussion about the PARCC assessments on social media in our community. We have no control over this situation and, as parents have said, they don't care if we lose a letter grade because we miss our participation requirements. MDE needs to address this problem ASAP or we are going to have a big problem.

Thank you for your help and guidance.

Sincerely,
Tony Cook
Superintendent
Amory School District