

What to expect during an Accreditation review

Process and Timeline

- A. In the spring of each year accreditation officers affirm which schools will be reviewed during the following school year. Accreditation officers contact each district determined for review to notify them and schedule a review date for the following school year.
 - i. All reviews will be scheduled after October 15th of every school year to allow for the completion of the Personnel Record Form (PRF) reporting requirements
- B. Once Districts have agreed to a review date, they may access the online Accreditation Reporting System and begin uploading documents to satisfy component requirements.
 - i. Documentation should reflect the most recent data available for the school year of the review however.
 - ii. Personnel data verification and student information verification should not be completed until the PRF and Infinite campus have been updated in the fall of the review year.
- C. A reminder email is sent to the superintendent of the district six weeks prior to their scheduled review. Instructions for how to upload evidence to the Accreditation Reporting System are provided at this time.
- D. All documentation for the review should be uploaded/verified in the online system by the district at least two weeks prior to a review to allow Department staff time to evaluate and prepare feedback.
 - i. It is recommended that the Online Courses and Teaching to the Content Standards documentation be uploaded one month prior to the review as these components can take a substantial amount of time to evaluate
- E. Once documentation is uploaded/verified, the components are reviewed by respective offices within the Department
- F. Districts then participate in their scheduled virtual review or onsite visit.
- G. Subsequent to a review:
 - i. If a district has satisfied all requirements for accreditation, a confirmation letter is sent along with a certificate of accreditation, via the Accreditation Reporting System.
 - ii. If a district is found to be in violation of any or all of the components required for accreditation at the time of the review, the district will be informed of this verbally and a letter of findings will be issued
 - 1. Districts will have three months* from the date of the letter of findings to remit or correct anything necessary for compliance.
 - 2. All documentation that has been submitted during the three-month window will be reviewed by the respective division **at the end** of the three-month period.
 - 3. Auto-generated reminder and past due notices may be sent at the end of the three-month time period.

4. *Districts may choose to end their three-month window early.
 - a. If a district is confident that it has submitted all additional documentation to satisfactorily correct all deficiencies, they have the option of submitting a three-month waiver prior to the end of their three-month follow up period. This waiver will serve as an agreement that the district will accept the review results of their additional submissions as final as of that date, waiving the remainder of their three month follow-up period, and that if the district is still not in compliance the district may move directly to probationary status.

- H. Districts who have satisfied all requirements for accreditation at the end of the three-month period or upon submitting the early waiver will receive a confirmation letter along with a certificate of accreditation.
- I. Districts who have **NOT** satisfied all requirements for accreditation at the end of the three-month period or upon submitting the early waiver may receive a warning letter from the Department Secretary of Education and the district will be placed “On Probation”. This status will appear on the DOE website, here: <https://doe.sd.gov/oatq/K12acredit.aspx>
- J. The district will have two weeks minimum from the date of the warning letter to submit a detailed plan of action, **that includes a timeline**, to resolve areas in violation. The Department reserves the right to approve, amend or reject the plan of action.
 - i. Districts will remain “On Probation” on the Accreditation website until a plan of action is submitted or violations have been corrected. Removal of this designation will be determined by the Department.
 - ii. Districts who do not respond to the warning letter with an action plan or corrections by the warning letter due date will remain “On Probation” on the Accreditation website. The Department Secretary of Education will determine next steps which may include suspension or revocation of state accredited status.
 - iii. Districts who fail to adhere to the approved plan of action will remain “On Probation” on the Accreditation website. The Department Secretary of Education will determine next steps which may include suspension or revocation of state accredited status.