

GACS Accreditation Process

The school accreditation process involves a number of steps to be undertaken by a school.

A. Initial Step:

1. [Request accreditation materials](#) from the GACS office. The GACS accreditation manual cost is \$60.00.
2. Study the manual to determine what the school needs to do to complete the self-study phase.

B. Formal Application:

1. File a formal application for accreditation to the GACS with the **appropriate fee**. At this point the school receives *Candidate Status* for accreditation which is good for up to one year.
2. The administrator should establish goals for completion of the various aspects of the accreditation sequence.
3. The administrator should contact the GACS office to schedule a pre-consultative visit.

C. Pre-Consultative Visit:

1. During the visit to the school, the school administration and the GACS representative will discuss the key components of the accreditation process.
2. The GACS representative will give counsel with respect to the accrediting process.
3. The GACS representative will make a preliminary appraisal of the school's program.

D. Self Study:

1. The accreditation self-study process involves narrative responses from the school to the 12 Standards and the subpoints of each standard. This is a very important part of the process.
2. Subjective standards are measured by a narrative section which shows uniqueness of operation.
3. The time frame involved in responding to and completing the self-study will range from three to six months.

E. Consultative Visit:

1. After examining the materials and judging the school's readiness, the school administrator should request a consultative visit by a GACS representative.

2. Prior to a consultative visit, a school should have work accomplished on the required manuals, self-study, and teacher certification. These are considered drafts that will be revised after the consultant reviews the material and visits the school. These should be sent to the GACS consultant for review prior to the consultative visit.
3. The school is responsible for the expenses of the consultative visit.
4. The GACS consultant will review with the school administrator the material previously sent by the school and corrections and additions.
5. Assuming that the school is making satisfactory progress with the self-study, the required manuals, and teacher certification levels, the school then receives *Provisional Accreditation* which is good for up to two years. Over the next two years the school must finalize all materials for the accreditation team visit.

F. Accreditation Team Visit:

1. The school notifies the Executive Director that they are ready to schedule the team visit and a date is set.
2. The Executive Director selects the team members.
3. The size of the team is determined by the size of the school. Usually 3-5 team members make up the team.
3. The team spends from 3 days at the school verifying the self-study.
4. The team makes its recommendations to the GACS Executive Director.
5. The school is responsible for the expenses of the team visit (travel, lodging, meals, and honorarium).

G. Accreditation Commission Review:

1. The school is granted full approval for a term of five years for accreditation.
2. Deficiencies may delay accreditation for a specified time period.
3. Accreditation may be denied if severe deficiencies exist.
4. A complete written report is given to the school.

H. Annual Report:

1. Accredited schools must file an annual maintenance fee and report which are due June 30 of each year of accredited status. This report should share how the school is addressing the requirements of the most recent accreditation visit.
2. The teacher certification report must be updated as part of the annual report. The 80% certification requirement must also be satisfied annually. Note the details of certification in the Accreditation Manual.
3. Administrators lacking a master's degree in educational leader or administration must be **consistently be working** on the degree and **provide official transcripts with each June report as verification.**

I. Renewal:

An accredited school must apply for re-accreditation at least twelve months prior to the expiration date, so that the school's accreditation does not lapse.

ALL ACCREDITATION MATERIALS MUST BE IN THE HANDS OF THE ACCREDITATION TEAM AT LEAST 30 DAYS BEFORE THE VISIT. FAILURE TO MEET THIS DEADLINE MAY JEOPORDIZE THE ACCREDITATION.

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