

Standards for Accreditation Policy

Accreditation has as its purpose quality assurance and school improvement. As a tool to assure quality, the Commission on Independent Schools maintains Standards for Accreditation against which a school is measured. These Standards are reviewed and updated on a regular basis through a participatory process with accredited schools and adopted by the Commission.

The voluntary accreditation process provides the opportunity for a school, through its self-study, to demonstrate that it meets the accreditation standards of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and also demonstrate that it carries out its mission in an appropriate fashion.

The Commission on Independent Schools in its decisions regarding accreditation has the expectation that each accredited school will meet all Standards for Accreditation. If a school seeking continued accreditation does not meet all standards at the time of the accreditation visit, it is expected that all standards will be met within one year. If a school seeking initial accreditation does not meet all standards at the time of the evaluation visit, action by the Commission will be tabled and the school will be asked to report on the status of compliance with all standards within one year.

A school that has failed a Standard with a rating of 4, 5, or 6 should notify the Commission office within one year when it believes it has taken necessary action to warrant a passing rating of at least 3. At that time:

1. A staff visit to the school will be made to assess whether the Standard(s) is passed with at least a 3. If the staff member finds that the school is clearly in compliance, the staff member will recommend to the Commission that the Standard is passed and propose any further recommendations related to the standard to which the school should be asked to respond and a date for the response. The Commission may accept the recommendation of the staff member or may direct a focused visit by a visiting team of two or three, possibly including a Commission member.
2. If the staff member finds that the school is still not in compliance, the school will be notified of the outstanding issues and asked to submit a further report when ready. The Commission will be informed. If the school disagrees with the finding of the staff member it may request that a visiting team of two or three conduct a focused visit to assess compliance with the Standard(s).

Adopted by unanimous vote of the Commission on Independent Schools, June 26, 2007.