

INTERRUPTION TO EDUCATIONAL OPERATIONS

The Middle States Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools are aware that accredited and candidate schools¹ might experience an event that is beyond their control and is so severe that it causes an institution to suspend its operation as an educational institution temporarily.

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the procedures the Commissions will follow when they are notified that an accredited or candidate school has had to suspend operating temporarily.

Section 1: Notice of Interruption to Educational Operations.

When an accredited or candidate school experiences an event that is beyond their control and is so severe that it causes a school to suspend operating temporarily, the head of the school or his/her designee should notify the President of the Commissions as soon as practicable. The notification should include as much information about the precipitating event and other information available regarding the suspension of operations.

Section 2: Procedures for Accredited Schools. The following will apply when a school notifies the President of the Commissions that it has had to interrupt its operations as an educational institution temporarily:

- a. The school's accreditation status will continue as the last status granted by the Commissions on Elementary Schools and Secondary Schools.
- b. The date on which the school's term of accreditation is set to expire as reported in the most recent Official Notification of Accreditation letter will be suspended during the period in which the school has interrupted its operations as an educational institution;
- c. The accreditation status of the school will be reported publicly on the Commissions' website as one of the following, based on the school's current status—
 - 1) Accredited (Operations Interrupted Temporarily)
 - 2) Accredited with Stipulations (Operations Interrupted Temporarily)
 - 3) Probation (Operations Interrupted Temporarily)
- d. The requirement to pay annual dues and appropriate fees will be suspended.
- e. The following will apply when the school has resumed or will resume operations as an educational institution:
 - 1) The school shall notify the President of the Commissions in writing;
 - 2) The school's term of accreditation will be extended for the length of time the school's operations as an educational institution were interrupted;

¹ The term "school" is used in this policy but applies to all categories of members including schools, systems, learning services providers, and career and technical institutions.

- 3) The school will resume paying all applicable dues and fees owed from the date on which the school resumed operating as an educational institution; and
- 4) The school will meet all expectations for accredited institutions as prescribed in MSA-CESS Policy: Expectations for Accredited Institutions.
- 5) If the school that resumes operations is significantly different than the school was at the time of its most recent accreditation/reaccreditation, the President may direct the school to conduct a comprehensive self-study, host an onsite team visit, and be granted accreditation/reaccreditation.

Section 3: Procedures for Candidate Schools. The following will apply when a candidate school notifies the President of the Commissions that it has had to interrupt its operations as an educational institution temporarily:

- a. The school's status as a Candidate for Accreditation will continue until the President of the Commissions determines otherwise;
- b. The date on which the school's term as a Candidate for Accreditation is set to expire as reported in the Offer of Candidacy letter will be suspended during the period in which the school has interrupted its operations as an educational institution;
- c. The school's status as a Candidate for Accreditation will be reported publicly on the Commissions' website as Candidate for Accreditation (Operations Interrupted Temporarily); and
- d. The requirement to pay annual dues and appropriate fees will be suspended.
- e. The following will apply when the school notifies the President of the Commissions of the date on which it has resumed or will resume operations as an educational institution:
 - 1) The school shall notify the President of the Commissions in writing;
 - 2) The school's term as a Candidate for Accreditation as noted in the Offer of Candidacy letter will be extended for the length of time the school's operations as an educational institution were interrupted;
 - 3) The school will resume paying all applicable dues and fees owed from the date on which the school resumed operating as an educational institution; and
 - 4) The school will conduct a comprehensive self-study, host an onsite team visit, and be granted accreditation.