

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. Self Study:

1. The emphasis is on “School Improvement.”
2. Subjective standards are measured by narrative sections which show uniqueness of operation.
3. The time frame involved in responding to and completing the self-study will range from three to six months.

D. 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 make corrections and additions.
5. Assuming that the school is making satisfactory progress with the self-study, the required manuals, and teacher certification, 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.

E. 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 4-6 team members make up the team.
4. The team spends from 2-3 days at the school verifying the self-study.
5. The team makes its recommendations to the GACS Accreditation Commission.
6. The school is responsible for the expenses of the team visit (travel, lodging, meals, and honorarium).

F. 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.

G. Annual Report:

1. Accredited schools must file an annual maintenance fee and report which are due June 30 of each year of accredited status.
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.

H. 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.