



Middle States Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools  
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## POLICY 8.1

### RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

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8.1.1. Relationship with the United States Department of Education. It shall be the policy of the Commission on Secondary Schools of the Middle States Association (MSA-CSS) to comply with all requirements of the United States Department of Education for recognition as a Nationally Recognized Accrediting Agency.

8.1.1.1. Notice of Commission Accreditation Actions for Postsecondary, Non-Degree Granting Institutions: The U.S. Secretary of Education and postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technical institutions accredited and candidates for accreditation by the Commission on Secondary Schools shall be notified, in writing, at the same time and within 30 days of any of the following Commission actions on postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technical institutions:

- a. the award of initial accreditation or candidacy
- b. the award of continued accreditation
- c. final decisions to withdraw, deny, suspend, or terminate accredited or candidate status or to otherwise take adverse action
- d. decisions to place an institution on probation
- e. decisions by the accredited or candidate institution to voluntarily withdraw from membership
- f. decisions by an accredited or candidate institution to allow its accreditation or candidacy status to lapse

8.1.1.2. The notification to the Secretary, in the case of final decisions to take adverse action or to put an institution on probation, shall include a statement summarizing the Commission's decision, the reasons for it, and the comments, if any, made by the affected institution.

8.1.1.3. Notice of Changes to Commission Accreditation Standards, Policies, or Procedures. The U.S. Secretary of Education shall be notified within 30 days of

any proposed changes in policy, procedures, or Standards for Accreditation that might alter the scope of recognition or compliance with its petition for national recognition.

8.1.1.4. Positive Action on Previously Denied Postsecondary Institutions. In the event that the Commission grants candidacy or accreditation to an institution previously denied accreditation by the Commission or by any other recognized accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Commission shall provide full information to the Secretary within 30 days of the action. This information shall include a thorough explanation, consistent with its Standards for Accreditation, why the previous action by an accrediting agency or state agency does not preclude the Commission from granting of candidacy or accreditation.

8.1.1.5. Additional Reporting to the U.S. Department of Education. The Commission on Secondary Schools shall provide additional reports to the U.S. Department of Education as follows:

- a. a copy of any annual report the Commission prepares
- b. a copy of any printed directory of accredited and candidate institutions or access to the directory on the Commission's website
- c. a summary of major accrediting activities during the previous year, if requested by the Secretary to carry out the Secretary's responsibilities
- d. the name of any institution accredited by the Commission on Secondary Schools that MSA-CSS has reason to believe is failing to meet its Title IV responsibilities or is engaged in fraud or abuse, along with MSA-CSS's reasons for concern about the program or institution.
- e. information that may bear upon an accredited or candidate institution's compliance with Title IV, if the Secretary requests it

8.1.2. Relationships with State Departments of Education, Other State Agencies, and/or Accrediting Agencies

8.1.2.1. The Commission on Secondary Schools shall maintain relationships and cooperate closely with State Departments of Education, other state agencies, and accrediting agencies, as appropriate. The purposes of such cooperation include protecting the integrity of each institution, diminishing or eliminating unnecessary or duplicative reporting, planning, or evaluation, and furthering educational quality in all institutions. As a non-governmental body, the

Commission on Secondary Schools does not, and cannot, assume the statutory responsibilities of any state agency.

8.1.2.2. Notice of Commission Actions for Postsecondary Institutions. The Commission on Secondary Schools shall notify appropriate state departments of education and other relevant state agencies within 30 days of any of the following Commission actions on postsecondary institutions:

- a. the award of initial accreditation or candidate status
- b. final decisions to withdraw, deny, suspend, or terminate accredited or candidate status or to otherwise take adverse action
- c. decisions to place an institution on probation
- d. decisions by the accredited or candidate institution to voluntarily withdraw from membership
- e. decisions by the accredited or candidate institution to allow its accreditation or candidacy status to lapse.

8.1.2.3. The notification to these agencies, in the case of final decisions to take adverse action shall include a statement summarizing the Commission’s decision, the reasons for it, and the comments, if any, made by the affected institution.

Action	Date	Notes
Initial Adoption	April 12, 2003	8.1.1. – 8.1.2.
Revisions	November 25, 2003	By Executive Committee under policy 2.2.11.5
	April 17, 2004	8.1.2.; New policy 8.1.2.1.