



DUES & FEES

The Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools will establish a schedule of dues and fees annually under the recommendation of the MSA-CESS Finance Committee. Dues and fees shall be set to assure that the Commissions are able to meet their operational expenses and under adequate financial reserves.

Section 1: Annual Dues.

- a. Payment of annual dues entitles MSA-CESS accredited schools¹ to all of the rights, privileges, and services outlined in the Commissions' policies.
- b. A school that has been offered and accepts the status of Candidate for Accreditation is assessed membership dues annually in the same manner and according to the same dues schedule applicable to MSA-CESS accredited schools.
- c. Annual dues are billed on a fiscal year basis (July 1—June 30).
- d. Schools that accept an offer of Candidacy for Accreditation status between July 1 and October 31 shall be charged a full year's dues. Schools that are offered candidacy between November 1 and March 31 shall be charged a half-year's dues. Dues billing for schools that are offered candidacy between April 1 and June 30 will be deferred until the following fiscal year.

Notification to Member Institutions of Dues Increases. Institutions shall be notified in advance of increases in dues typically with six months notice..

Section 2: Fees.

- a. Candidacy Fee. Schools that register to express formally their interest in seeking accreditation by the Commission(s) will be billed a Candidacy Fee after successful completion of the Application for Candidacy. The Candidacy Fee must be paid prior to the Candidacy Visit.
 - 1) The Fee is for the costs of training Candidacy Visitors, developing candidacy materials, developing materials for candidacy visits, processing candidacy reports, and the administrative costs for processing the candidacy report.
 - 2) Travel costs associated with the candidacy visit are assessed separately.
 - 3) Payment of the Candidacy Fee does not guarantee that a school will be offered the status of a Candidate for Accreditation.
- b. Visiting Team Fee. A visit for the purpose of accreditation or reaccreditation will be charged a Visiting Team Fee.
 - 1) The Visiting Team Fee will be invoiced when the school is invited to submit date options for an accreditation/reaccreditation visit.
 - 2) Dates for an onsite team visit will not be established and no action on developing a team for a visit will occur until the Visiting Team Fee is paid. This Fee does not include the costs associated with hosting the visiting team (e.g., housing, meals, and travel). Such costs are paid directly by the school.

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) If an onsite visit is postponed at the request of a school after a visiting team has been developed, the fee will not be refunded, and the school may be charged a separate Visiting Team Fee when it has requested a new visit.
- c. Other fees: Additional fees may be charged as necessary.
 - d. Specific Services for a Fee. A wide range of school improvement services may be provided by the Commissions to member and non-member schools. The amount of the Fee depends on the services to be rendered and is agreed to prior to the delivery of the service.
 - e. Establishing Fees for Services Provided. To ensure fairness and equity, the Commissions shall approve a standard fee schedule that outlines services and fees.
 - f. Reporting of Income from Services for a Fee. On income and expenditure statements, income and expenses for services for a fee shall be reported separately from statements of dues and fees.

Section 3: Scope of Services Provided as a Part of Dues and Required Fees.

Scope of Services Provided by Dues: The following services shall be provided to accredited and candidate schools as a part of their annual dues and required fees:

- a. Listing of the school's name and pertinent information in all Commissions' directories and on the Commissions' website as an accredited or candidate member;
- b. Official notice of accreditation letter and a personalized accreditation certificate;
- c. Unlimited attendance at workshops offered for the accreditation process (although attendance at each session may be limited due to space);
- d. Attendance at team chair training workshops (by invitation only);
- e. Technical assistance from the Commission's staff
- f. Consultations with the Commissions' staff on accreditation and the phases of continuous school improvement journey;
- g. A maximum of one onsite visit and/or presentation on accreditation-related topics once every three years by the MSA-CESS staff or representative;
- h. All necessary technical reviews of objectives required for accreditation;
- i. Use of MSA-CESS-developed self-study and accreditation protocols and accompanying materials;
- j. Research and development necessary to develop and maintain current, useful, and relevant Standards for Accreditation and self-study and accreditation protocols and accompanying materials;
- k. Use of the MSA-CESS logo
- l. Official letters, upon request of the school, verifying accreditation/candidacy status to other individuals and organizations (e.g. College Board, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, state education and certification departments, armed services recruiters, etc.);
- m. Provision of print and online newsletters and articles about accreditation;
- n. Opportunity to participate in the work of the Commissions by election to a Commission (by invitation only), membership on an advisory committee (by invitation only), and responding to input/needs assessment surveys; proposed changes to the Standards for Accreditation;
- o. Processing of accreditation maintenance reports and visits;
- p. Opportunities for professional development and enrichment by serving on visiting teams;
- q. Opportunity to gain continuing education units for required teacher/administrator certification mandates;
- r. Maintenance of historical records of school accreditation;
- s. The opportunity to register the institution with The College Board as an Advanced Placement and SAT test site;
- t. For postsecondary institutions, the opportunity to register the institution's website as a ".edu" domain; and

- u. For postsecondary institutions, maintenance of recognition by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a Title IV gatekeeper for postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technical institutions and compliance with all of the regulations and the Secretary's criteria for maintaining such recognition.

Scope of Services Provided for a Fee: The following services may be provided for a fee to all schools, school systems, and other education institutions:

- a. Attendance at workshops offered on topics related to school improvement but not required for successful completion of the accreditation/reaccreditation process;
- b. Onsite visits and presentations by members of the Commissions' staff that exceed those outlined in services covered by annual dues and required fees;
- c. Facilitation of strategic planning and other school improvement efforts not required as part of the accreditation/reaccreditation process;
- d. Design and development of assessment tools;
- e. Design, development, and interpretation of satisfaction and perception surveys;
- f. Conducting training for governing bodies; and
- g. Other school improvement services, as appropriate.

Limitations on Providing Services for a Fee to Accredited and Candidate Schools. The Commission may provide additional services for a fee to accredited and candidate schools if the following conditions are met:

- a. All such services shall be approved in advance by the President. In cases in which the President is the service-provider, the President shall report on such activities to the Commissions at their next regularly scheduled meetings.
- b. Members of the Commissions' staff providing the service shall not serve as the school's accreditation liaison.
- c. The service provided is clearly beyond the scope of typical accreditation services.
- d. Members of the Commissions' staff are prohibited from providing any service for a fee that could be construed as actually writing segments of the school's self-study. Members of the staff shall take extra care to ensure that schools with which MSA-CESS has a services-for-a-fee relationship follow the typical "checks and balances" review process with review by the appropriate advisory committee, the appropriate Membership and Accreditation Committee, and the full Commissions before any accreditation action is taken.
- e. During accreditation discussions regarding the school, the service-provider (staff member who is currently providing or already provided the service) shall abstain from making any comments about the school and shall not engage in efforts to influence the Commissions' accreditation decision.
- f. Members of the Commissions' staff are prohibited from providing consultative services of any kind to accredited and candidate schools for personal profit or gain. Staff members may not provide such services during vacation time and are prohibited from using MSA-CESS property, either real or intellectual, for private consulting purposes.

Section 4: Other General Guidelines

Refunds of Dues and Fees for Member Schools. All dues and fees are non-refundable.

Dues and Fees for Member Schools in Cooperative Accreditation Relationships. All dues and fees are established separately and paid directly to each accreditation agency when a school seeks MSA-CESS accreditation as well as the accreditation of one of the Commissions' cooperative partners. There shall be no commingling of funds between agencies.

Nonpayment of Dues and Fees. Schools with unpaid dues and fees shall be considered delinquent and subject to removal of the school's accreditation or status as a Candidate for Accreditation in accordance with the Accreditation Actions Policy.

Denial of Access to Member Services. The Commissions reserve the right to deny access to services for a fee if a school is in arrears for the payment of dues and fees or is otherwise in breach of accreditation maintenance requirements.