

INITIAL OR DECENNIAL REVIEW PROCESS

The Commission publication, **Evaluation Procedures**, sets forth in detail the various stages of the accreditation process. Schools seeking initial accreditation or continued accreditation must undergo a chronological sequence of events that lead to a final Board of Trustees decision (in the case of candidacy or initial accreditation) or a Commission decision (in the case of decennial review, five-year review, or a review at a specified date by the Commission).

PRELIMINARY STAGE

- A school requests Commission publications to include a complete edition of the **Secondary Accreditation Handbook**, **Non-Degree Postsecondary Accreditation Handbook** (if applicable), and **Self-Study Manual**.
- An application and letter of intent to seek either initial accreditation or continued accreditation is submitted to the Commission office by the superintendent/principal/director of the school at least twelve months prior to the date requested for the on-site visit.
- The date of the decennial review visit should be selected in consultation with the Commission office.
- A Commission representative may visit the school to discuss evaluation procedures.
- If appropriate, authorization and confirmation of the on-site visit will be acknowledged by the Commission office.

PREPARATION FOR THE VISIT

A Self-Study Steering Committee is organized on campus.

Arrangements are made to have a Commission representative spend time on campus visiting with either the entire staff and/or a representative group to discuss school and Commission responsibilities relative to the accreditation review process.

School representatives should plan to attend a self-study workshop conducted by the Commission.

The professional staff and administration (through various subcommittees) use the CTCI Self-Study Manual, which guides the school to assess the consistency of its educational policies and programs in terms of its procedures and learning outcomes and in relation to the Commission's Standards of Membership.

The Director of the Commission nominates a visiting committee chair, subject to approval by the school. After approval, an invitation is extended.

Prior to the chair's pre-evaluation conference at the school (approximately six weeks before the evaluation) the superintendent/principal/director communicates with the visiting committee chair to review the progress of the self-study, draw up a tentative visit schedule, discuss housing and other arrangements for the committee's arrival and the conduct of the site visit.

The chair, in consultation with the superintendent/principal/director, arranges the schedule of the visiting committee in advance.

The host institution is responsible for all lodging, meals, and out-of-pocket expenses for every part of the accreditation review.

Approximately four weeks prior to the visitation date, the institution mails to visiting committee members the materials identified in the Commission publication, **Decennial Evaluation Guide for Superintendent/Principal/Director and Staff**.

THE VISIT

Typically, committee members arrive at the institution on the afternoon of one day (usually Monday) and spend the next three days on campus.

Explicit directions contained in the publications **Guide for Chairs** and **Instructions for Visiting Committee Members** guide on-campus evaluation activities. These documents are included in the Commission's **Handbook for Visiting Committee Chairs**.

The visiting committee develops its evaluation report.

The visiting committee chair, with committee members invited, conducts a wrap-up session.

AFTER THE VISIT

A draft of the evaluation report with its commendations and recommendations is forwarded to the superintendent/principal/director of the school for a review of factual accuracy. No substantive changes to the evaluation report may be made during the factual accuracy review.

A separate and confidential single copy communication is forwarded to the Director of the Commission with the visiting committee recommendation for continued accreditation or other action.

It is the responsibility of the institution to print the final, chair-approved evaluation report. Eighteen (18) copies of the final evaluation report are forwarded to the Commission office and one copy is sent to the visiting committee chair.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

Upon receipt of the report and other supporting documents, the school's application for initial accreditation or continued accreditation is placed on the next Commission agenda, and appropriate documentation is forwarded to Commission members.

In the case of initial accreditation, the school is informed of the recommendation and the proposed date for the Board of Trustees action. Upon receipt of affirmative recommendations, the Board of Trustees takes action at its next scheduled meeting. If the recommendation is of an adverse nature, the superintendent/principal/director will be notified in writing and provided an opportunity for the school (within a time period fixed by the Commission) to show cause why the proposed adverse action should not be taken. The institution may elect to file an appeal if the Commission eventually determines (subsequent to the Show Cause procedure) that the adverse action is to be taken.

The Commission makes the final affirmative decision on continued accreditation. If the decision is of an adverse nature, the superintendent/principal/director will be notified in writing and provided with an opportunity for the school (within a time period fixed by the Commission) to show cause why the proposed adverse action should not be taken. The institution may elect to file an appeal if the Commission eventually determines (subsequent to the Show-Cause procedure) that the adverse action is to be taken. The appeal procedure is implemented and carried through until a final decision is rendered. (See Commission policy, **Appeal of Adverse Action.**)

OPTIONS IN RESPONSE TO APPLICATIONS FOR INITIAL ACCREDITATION

- Grant accreditation
- Denial of accreditation
- Defer action
- Provide definitive statement related to any conditions or suggested review procedures

OPTIONS FOR CONTINUED ACCREDITATION (DECENNIAL CYCLE)

- Continue accreditation
- Denial of continued accreditation
- Defer Action
- Warning procedure to be implemented
- Probation
- Provide definitive statement related to any conditions or suggested review procedures