

# **Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission**

## **Policies**

### **1.0 Screening and Selection of Eligible Accrediting Agencies for Non-Public Schools**

#### **1.1 New Accrediting Agency Applicants**

##### **1.1.1 Accrediting Agency Application for New Applicants**

##### **1.1.2 Timeline for Accrediting Agency Application Review for New Applicants**

#### **1.2 Approved Accrediting Agency Rescreening**

##### **1.2.1 Approved Accrediting Agency Rescreening Process**

##### **1.2.2 Timeline for Approved Accrediting Agency Rescreening**

#### **1.3 Approved Accrediting Agencies List**

### **2.0 Kentucky Non-Public School Certification**

#### **2.1 Voluntary Non-Public School Certification - New Schools**

#### **2.2 Voluntary Non-Public School Recertification**

### **3.0 Revocation of Certification**

## **1.00 Screening and Selection of Eligible Accrediting Agencies for Non-Public Schools**

The Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission (KYNPSC) shall approve accrediting agencies for the use of non-public school accreditation. Only those accrediting agencies approved by the Commission shall be used by non-public schools voluntarily seeking certification by the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) in accordance with KRS 156.160(3) and 704 KAR 3:315.

### **1.1. New Accrediting Agency Applicants**

Accrediting agencies seeking to be an approved accreditor of the Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission must complete an application and review process, and receive a vote of approval by the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners. To request an application, the accrediting agency must:

- A. Operate with a governing board;
- B. Be in operation for a minimum of five years;
- C. Accredite schools in at least two other states;
- D. Have accredited a minimum of ten schools;
- E. Accredite traditional, in-person schools.

#### **1.1.1. Accrediting Agency Application for New Applicants**

Accrediting agencies seeking to be an approved accreditor by the Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission (KNSPC) must complete the following application and review process:

- A. Application
  - 1. The new accrediting agency contacts the KYNPSC to request an application.
  - 2. The KYNPSC will respond to the accrediting agency's request with a consultation meeting. During the consultation meeting, the application process will be discussed and the application packet will be provided to the applicant.

3. The accrediting agency will complete the application and submit the required fees and documentation to the KYNPSC.
4. Following a review of the agency's application and associated documents, the KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee will make a recommendation to the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners for a vote to advance the applicant to the candidacy phase or to reject the application.
5. Applications that are advanced by the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will be notified that they will move to the candidacy phase of the application process.
6. Applications that are not approved by the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will receive notification and will not advance in the application process. These applicants will be eligible to reapply after two years.

B. Candidacy

1. Applicants in the candidacy phase will be assigned a Commission Coordinator to assist the applicant through the self-study, compliance checklist, and site visits.
2. The KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee will review the self-study documents, compliance checklist, and the site visit report to determine if additional information is needed.
3. The KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee will conduct a hearing to discuss the application and the self-study documents. A representative from the agency applying must be in attendance to answer questions or address concerns of the committee.
4. Following the hearing, the KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee will present its recommendation to the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners.

C. Recommendation

1. The KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will review applications that have been submitted by the KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee. The review will take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

2. The KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will vote to approve or deny the accrediting agency application. The vote of the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will be final and cannot be appealed.

### **1.1.2 Timeline for Accrediting Agency Application Review for New Applicants**

Accrediting agency applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. The KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee may take up to 3 months to review submitted applications. Following the Accreditation and Review Committee's review, a vote by the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will take place at the next regularly scheduled KYNPSC meeting.

Documentation for accrediting agency applicants in the candidacy phase must be received by the KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee by August 1st. The Accreditation and Review Committee will present their recommendations to the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners at the first regularly scheduled meeting after January 1st. Applicants will be notified of their status by March 1st.

## **1.2 Approved Accrediting Agency Rescreening**

Accrediting agencies approved by the Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission (KYNPSC) must complete a rescreening application process every ten years to remain an approved accreditor. The KYNPSC may require an accreditation agency to complete the rescreening process prior to ten years at the discretion of the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners.

### **1.2.1 Approved Accrediting Agency Rescreening Process**

KYNPSC approved accrediting agencies will receive notice at least 12 months in advance of the need for rescreening. The accrediting agency must request the rescreening application and submit the required documentation to the KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee for review. Following the review, the Accreditation and Review Committee will make a recommendation to the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board of Commissioners will vote to reconfirm the agency as an approved accreditor or to remove them from the approved accreditor list. Accrediting agencies removed from the approved accreditor list may reapply through the new applicant process after one year.

### **1.2.2 Timeline for Approved Accrediting Agency Rescreening**

An approved accrediting agency must submit the rescreening application and required documentation to the KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee by October 1st of their tenth year. The Accreditation and Review Committee will present their recommendation to the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners at the first regularly scheduled meeting after January 1st. Rescreening applicants will be notified of their status by March 1st.

### **1.3 List of Approved Accrediting Agencies**

The KYNPSC shall maintain a list of approved accrediting agencies. The listing will be available by request and on the KYNPSC website. The list of currently approved accrediting agencies is as follows:

1. The KYNPSC, Inc.
2. American Association of Christian Schools (AACS)
3. Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
4. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) / AdvancEd
5. Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
6. Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS)
7. North American Division of Seventh Day Adventists
8. International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA)
9. Association Montessori International (AMI)
10. American Montessori Society (AMS)

## **2.0 Kentucky Non-Public School Certification**

Pursuant to KRS 156.160(3), any non-public school may voluntarily comply with curriculum, certification, and textbook standards established by the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) and be certified by the KBE. Kentucky non-public schools seeking voluntary certification from the KBE must apply with the Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission (KTNPSC). Once approved by the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners, the non-public school will be recommended for certification by the KBE.

## **2.1 Voluntary Non-Public School Certification for New Schools**

Kentucky non-public schools seeking voluntary certification from the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) must complete the Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission (KYNPSC) New School Certification application. The Commission will respond to the application request with a consultation meeting to review the process. Prior to certification, non-public schools must be accredited by an approved accrediting agency and demonstrate that they are in compliance with the following state statutory requirements:

- A. Reporting requirements under KRS 159.030;
- B. Record keeping requirements under KRS 159.040;
- C. Course requirements under KRS 158.070; and
- D. Length of school term requirements under KRS 158.080.

## **2.2 Voluntary Non-Public School Recertification**

The Kentucky Non-public Schools Commission (KYNPSC) will notify certified non-public schools at least one year in advance of their recertification renewal. Schools seeking to recertify will complete a Recertification Application and submit all required documentation. The KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will review the application and documentation and vote to recertify the school at its April meeting. Prior to recertification, non-public schools must be accredited by an approved accrediting agency and demonstrate that they are in compliance with the following state statutory requirements:

- A. Reporting requirements under KRS 159.030;
- B. Record keeping requirements under KRS 159.040;
- C. Course requirements under KRS 158.070; and
- D. Length of school term requirements under KRS 158.080.

## **3.0 Revocation of Certification**

The Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission (KYNPSC) may recommend the revocation of a non-public school's certification to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) if the school is found to be non-compliant with accreditation standards or the statutory requirements for

certification. Non-public schools cannot be considered for certification revocation for the failure to pay certification or accreditation fees. This action can be taken at any time during the school year.

Non-public schools found to be non-compliant will be notified of the deficiencies by the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners and placed on probation. The KBE will be notified of any school placed on probation. The KYNPSC Accreditation and Review Committee will consult with the non-public school to determine the length of the probation and establish a deadline to bring the school into compliance.

Non-public schools that have been placed on probation by the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will be assigned a Commission Coordinator who will work with the school to review the areas of deficiency and the school's corrective action plan.

At the conclusion of the probationary period, schools that remain non-compliant will be recommended by the KYNPSC Accreditation and Review committee for a certification review with the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners. The review will be conducted at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will review the deficiencies, the corrective action plan, and the report from the Commission Coordinator. Following the review, the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will vote to end the probationary period, extend the probationary period, or recommend the revocation of the school's certification. The KBE will be notified of the outcome of this decision.

Non-public schools granted a probationary period extension will continue to work with the Commission Coordinator to correct the deficiencies.

Any non-public school that has been recommended by the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners to have their certification revoked will have 30 days to appeal the decision. The non-public school will be required to attend the next regularly scheduled meeting of the KYNPSC to submit evidence and provide testimony. Upon review of the school's appeal evidence, the KYNPSC Board of Commissioners will make a final decision on the revocation of the school's certification.