

# Approval, Accreditation, and Accountability

## DRAFT REGULATIONS - APRIL 2021

The mission of the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) is to lead and support all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living. As part of this mission, the NDE serves as a regulator through the promulgation of rules and regulations. From a system perspective, there are two important changes to be aware of:

- Current Rules 10 and 14 will be replaced with three new Rules: (1) Approval, (2) Accreditation, and (3) Accountability
- Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow (AQuESTT) serves as the framework for the Approval, Accreditation and Accountability Rules

**The purpose of this document is to outline key changes to current rules governing the approval, accreditation and accountability of public and non-public schools.**

### APPROVAL RULE

#### Minimum requirements for the operation of approved schools

The minimum requirements found in the approval rule are organized by the three AQuESTT domains: (1) Leadership, (2) Success, Access, and Support, and (3) Teaching, Learning, and Serving.

Below are many of the key changes found in the approval rule:

#### Leadership Domain:

- Eliminate verbatim statutory requirements repeated in rule to provide clarity regarding regulatory authority and reduce redundancy.
- Ensure the related regulations section (001.05) of the rule is a comprehensive list of related minimum standards, appropriately connecting previously disparate regulations to better frame a singular minimum standard of approval.
- Update Safe and Healthy Schools (003.01A2) section to help ensure student safety.
- Require (003.01C) all schools have a properly endorsed principal to ensure proper administration of the school and evaluation of certificated staff.
- Simplify the rule and reduce administrative burden (allowing administrators to focus more time and attention on students) by framing instructional time in measurements of instructional hours and credit; eliminate instructional units as a measurement of instructional time.
- Restructure loss of approval requirements to help encourage self-reporting, creating a more cooperative problem solving approach to compliance. (008)

#### Success, Access, and Support Domain:

- Strengthen existing multicultural education regulations (004.01A3c) to ensure all Nebraska students have a fundamental understanding of a global society.
- Provide equity to highly mobile students by ensuring the transferability of credits earned at an approved Nebraska school. (004.01A6)
- Ensure elementary and middle schools have computer science and technology instruction; and middle schools have world language instruction to help prepare students for a changing world. (004.01C1h/004.01D1i/004.01D1h)
- Maintain high expectations for school systems to have properly endorsed teachers in the content area they are teaching. (004.01C2/004.01D3/004.01E4)
- Align graduation requirements to ensure common minimum standards for all schools (004.01E2)
- Eliminate barriers related to multi-site and distance learning options to allow more opportunities for students

## Teaching, Learning, and Serving Domain:

- Ensure all schools have appropriate policies for the support, development, and evaluation of certified employees; aligned to the Nebraska Teacher Principal Performance Standards. (005.01A)
- Adjust school library requirements to ensure all school libraries are appropriately staffed, while providing schools the flexibility to best utilize their school librarian. (005.01C)

## ACCREDITATION

Required of all public school systems, optional for nonpublic schools

Below are many of the key changes found in the accreditation rule:

- Development of an accreditation system that relies on an ongoing continuous improvement process.
- Incorporate regulations that focus on the key steps of goal development, data based decision making, and teamwork. (Section 004.03)
- Build a more robust on-site evaluation process that focuses on a peer review model, while also providing a statewide consistent approach to continuous improvement.
- Structure accreditation cycles based upon transparency and growth to focus resources on school systems that want or need additional support, without the fear of an additional label. (Section 007)

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability of Public and Nonpublic Schools

Below are many of the key changes found in the accountability rule:

- Clarify requirements for the collection and reporting of student achievement data for specific school systems in Nebraska. All school systems are accountable to stakeholders regarding student outcomes. (Section 004)
- Organize accountability regulations pertaining to the classification and designation of public schools and districts needing additional supports to improve. (Section 005)
- Connect the accountability rule to key provisions within the Approval and Accreditation Rules to ensure schools engage in data-informed decision making for improvement.



**Brad Dirksen**  
Office Administrator  
[brad.dirksen@nebraska.gov](mailto:brad.dirksen@nebraska.gov)

**Don Loseke**  
Director of Accreditation  
[don.loseke@nebraska.gov](mailto:don.loseke@nebraska.gov)

**Lane Carr**  
Director of Accountability  
[lane.carr@nebraska.gov](mailto:lane.carr@nebraska.gov)



AQUESTT