

Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.



2019-2020
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Bulletin

Website: <http://www.gac.coe.uga.edu>



Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.

Accrediting Georgia Schools Since 1904

TO: Directors of School Programs Accredited by
The Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.

FROM: Office of the Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.

At the bottom of this memo there are printed copies of the official logo of the Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc. The Executive Director has been authorized by the GAC Board of Directors to encourage school programs to use this logo on stationery, official documents, diplomas, etc. To have this logo printed on official school papers, the program director should provide the printing representative a copy of the GAC logo, along with printing instructions.

Electronic versions of this logo may be obtained by requesting a copy by emailing the Executive Director.

Only those school programs currently accredited by the GAC are authorized to display the GAC logo. Contact the GAC office if a digitized image is desired.



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Important Dates to Remember

GAC Fall Board Meeting, Macon	September 15-16, 2019
GAC Consultants Fall, Meeting, Macon	September 16, 2019
Deadline for GAC Fees & Applications	November 30th
Deadline for Consultants' Reports	April 5, 2019
GAC Spring Board Meeting, Macon	April 19-20, 2020
GAC Consultants Spring, Meeting, Macon	April 20, 2020
GAC Fall Board Meeting, Macon	September 20-21, 2020
GAC Consultants Fall, Meeting, Macon	September 21, 2020

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Foreword

On July 1, 1903, Chancellor Walter Hill of the University of Georgia employed Dr. Joseph Stewart to work with the high schools of Georgia to bring about a better relationship between the Georgia high schools and the University of Georgia. In 1904 Dr. Stewart and his committee published the first attempt in Georgia to produce an approved list of accredited high schools. Each year he would encourage high school principals of Georgia to study his manual and to apply for accrediting status with his committee. His efforts were officially sanctioned by the formation of the Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.

Some of the outstanding accomplishments of this Commission are the accreditation of Georgia schools, the organization of the Georgia High School Association, the organization of the Secondary Commission of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and passage of legislation for tax supported high schools. A summary of the long and rich history of the Georgia Accrediting Commission is printed in the back of this *GAC Bulletin*. Listed below are the names of Georgia's first accredited high schools with the names of their principals.

Albany Academy, S. C. Wardlow	Gresham High School, Macon, C. B. Chapman
Furlow High School, Americus, A. G. Miller	Madison High School, M. F. Ramsey
Athens High School, G. O. Bond	Marietta High School, W. T. Sumas
Boy's High School, Atlanta, W. M. Slaton	Moultrie High School, George T. Godard
Richmond Academy, Augusta, Chas. H. Withrow	Richland High School, W. R. Monk
Presbyterian Institute, Blackshear, Thos. G. Wilkinson	Rome High School, M. C. Harris
Blakely High School, L. J. Fowler	Boys' Industrial School, Rome, Robert H. Adams
Boston High School, W. F. Nichols	Sparta High School, E. J. Robeson
Butler Male and Female College, J. M. Richardson	Sandersville High School, John Ribson
Hearn Academy, Cave Springs, R. W. Edenfield	University School for Boys, Stone Mountain, W. B. Griffin
Carrollton High School, C. K. Henderson, Jr.	Savannah High School, Otis Ashmore
Samuel Benedict Memorial H. S., Cedartown, C. E. Benedict	Thomasville High School, A. J. Barwick
Columbus High School, C. B. Gibson	Tallapoosa High School, W. A. Thompson
Commerce High School, J. M. Stephenson	R. E. Lee Institute, Thomaston, F. F. Rowe
Calhoun High School, A. N. Swain	Tifton High School, Jason Scarboro
Cedartown High School, W. T. Garrett	Valdosta High School, R. B. Daniel
Cornelia High School, J. W. Marion	Vienna High School, R. O. Powell
Dallas High School, H. H. Ezzard	Washington High School, T. E. Hollingsworth
Dawson High School, Decatur, G. Holman Gardner	Winder High School, H. R. Hunt
Dublin High School, W. R. Lanier	West Point High School, J. E. Purks
Eatonton High School, W. C. Wright	Waycross High School, E. A. Pound
Elberton High School, P. B. Winn	
Eastman High School, R. C. Barrett	
Griffin High School, J. Henry Walker	
Fitzgerald High School, M. D. Miller	
South Atlantic High School, Guyton, H. B. Bible	
Gainesville High School, J. D. Garner	
Hartwell Institute, M. L. Parker	
LaGrange High School, C. L. Smith	
Locust Grove Institute, Claude Gray	
Lumpkin High School, Ralph Newton	
Meson Academy, Lexington, H. B. Wallace	

Mission of the Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.

The mission of the Georgia Accrediting Commission is twofold: (1) to establish standards promoting instruction of high quality for children in Georgia schools and (2) to encourage schools to meet the established standards. GAC provides an accreditation process designed to establish and uphold standards, to strengthen the quality of education in each school, and to assure its membership and the general public that the established standards are related to the best educational practices.

The GAC serves as a means of ensuring that its membership schools meet certain standards for the operation and support of quality school programs in the State of Georgia. Specifically, GAC establishes standards and procedures to carry out the accreditation process. GAC also determines the accreditation status of the educational program of each school and publishes a list of schools with accredited programs in this *Bulletin* and on the GAC website www.gac.coe.uga.edu. The GAC Executive Director issues certificates for those schools and agencies *Provisionally Accredited*, *Accredited Annually*, *Accredited*, *Accredited Fully* and *Accredited With Quality*.

The GAC, an independent agency, is governed by a board of elected educators who have an interest in education in Georgia. Membership of the governing board represents teachers, instructional supervisors, school administrators, Regional Educational Service Agency personnel, Georgia Department of Education personnel, and college personnel who are responsible for the preparation of teachers and other professional educators.

GAC Appeals Procedure

Any member school may appeal any decision of the Commission. Only the principal or headmaster of the school or the superintendent of the system or both the principal and superintendent can make an appeal. An appeal addressed to the Executive Director of the Commission must be made in writing setting forth the basis on which the appeal is made. The Executive Director will schedule the appeal together with the appellants at the next meeting of the Commission after the appeal has been received. In cases of extreme urgency, the Chairman may schedule a called meeting of the Commission to consider an appeal. The appellants may be asked to defray the expense for a called meeting. The Chairman will make the decision as to whether the school will bear this expense or not. After an appeal has been made, the decision of the Commission is final.

Endorsement

The Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) serves as an advocate between accredited member high schools of record and institutions of higher education. GAC recognizes the value of well-prepared Enrollment Professionals and encourages in-service practitioners to seek additional training beyond traditional academic credentials. As a result, GAC recognizes GISEM, the GACRAO Institute for Strategic Enrollment Management and its mission to promote expertise in enrollment management strategies. We welcome a collaborative relationship as we meet the educational goal of educating Georgia's youth.

Experimental Programs

Schools accredited by the GAC are required to file in advance with the Executive Director an outline of any experimental or innovative programs that deviate from the general requirements governing accredited schools. The Commission must approve the program in advance.

Georgia Accrediting Commission Consultants

Dr. Edie Baxley

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Baxley, Georgia 31513

912-367-5261

912-278-0471

ediebaxley@hotmail.com

Qualifications: Bachelor Degree in Psychology/Biology and a Master Degree in Behavioral Science Education from Georgia Southwestern College. She completed her Specialist in Curriculum and Instruction, Education Leadership, and Doctor of Education from Valdosta State University and Argosy University. Taught students in grades seven through twelve at Taylor County High School (2.5 yrs.), Deerfield Windsor Academy (10 yrs.), and Appling County Middle School (18 yrs.). Assistant Principal and Instructional Supervisor at Appling County High School for 3 years and Principal of Altamaha Elementary School for 6 years.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies With Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Dr. John Bembry

28 Meadow Lane, PO Box 494
Hawkinsville, Georgia 31036

478-892-3210

jbembry1@cstel.net

Qualifications: Doctorate Degree in Educational Leadership from University of Georgia with further studies at Hampton Institute and Mercer University; 37 years of public school experience as a history and math teacher, P.E.C.E. Coordinator, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent of schools and superintendent of schools. In addition, Dr. Bembry has also served as Adjunct Professor of Administration & Supervision at Albany State University and Adjunct Professor of Mathematics at Middle Georgia College.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies With Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Mr. Robert J. (Bob) Boyd

384 Pandemar Trail
Lawrenceville, Georgia 33043

770-682-8667

678-230-6447

boyd297@bellsouth.net

Qualifications: 30 years experience in Fulton County Schools. Service included 6 years as teacher, 2 years as assistant principal, and 22 years as high school principal.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies With Special Purposes and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Mr. J. Robert (Bob) Chambers

1041 Wild Azalea Court
Athens, GA 30606

706-255-9632

jrchambers@athensacademy.org

Qualifications: BS and MEd degrees from the University of Georgia; 50 years of experience in independent schools, including positions in teaching, coaching, principal, assistant headmaster during his 20 years at Pace Academy and headmaster for 30 years of Athens Academy. He has served as President of the Georgia Independent School Association; member of the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees of the Georgia High School Association; member of the Executive Council and the Independent School Representative on the State of Georgia Committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; member of the Board of Trustees and Chairman of the Accreditation Committee of the Southern Association of Independent Schools; member of the Board of Directors and member of the Commission for Accreditation for the National Association of Independent Schools.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies With Special Purposes and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Georgia Accrediting Commission Consultants

Dr. John DeCotis

770-461-0924

185 Ridge Way
Fayetteville, GA 30215

john.decotis@gmail.com

Qualifications: Middle school teacher, college graduate teaching assistant, coach, assistant high school principal, elementary school principal, system director of elementary education, executive director of k-12 curriculum and instruction, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction and superintendent of schools for 11 years. During his years in education, he participated in numerous SACS committees, was Chairman of the SACS State Committee, led an elementary school to be chosen as one of 36 Georgia Schools of Excellence, served on the initial AdvancEd Board of Directors and was honored as “Educator of the Year” by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders. Doctorate Degree in Education, University of Georgia. Dr. DeCotis is currently working as the School Improvement Coordinator at Griffin RESA.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies with Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Mr. Rufus C. Green, II

478-862-3854

P. O. Box 596
Reynolds, Georgia 31076
rufuscgreen

Qualifications: B.S., Fort Valley State University; M.Ed., University of Georgia; further studies, Brown University. Classroom teacher, high school principal, associate superintendent of Taylor County Schools (20) years. Chairman of Taylor County Board of Commissioners (11) years. Coordinator of Special Education and Title I Programs for Taylor County School System (20) years.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies With Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Dr. E. H. Harris

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Barnesville, Georgia 30204
eehharris@aol.com

770-468-1560

Qualifications: 40 years in public education as assistant superintendent, interim superintendent, principal at the elementary, middle, and high school levels; classroom teacher in Laurens, Pike, and Lamar Counties; coordinator of SACS self study for 14 years and past member of the Griffin RESA Board.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies with Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Dr. Charles Hawk

404-797-7882

4600 Heatherwood Drive SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30331
hawkcharles@att.net

404-349-2362

Qualifications: 38 years experience in public education, including principalships at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Of the 38 years experience, 35 were in Atlanta Public Schools where service also included Instructor at Atlanta University.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies with Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Georgia Accrediting Commission Consultants

Dr. Josephine Jackson

484 Ivey Court
Mableton, GA 30126
jjack@bellsouth.net

770-739-8869

678-524-8177

Qualifications: Serving in a variety of roles Dr Jackson has devoted more than 40 years to education. She has served as teacher, instructional coordinator, alternative school administrator, principal of an elementary school in Atlanta Public Schools, chairperson of the student support team, and new teacher monitor. She has received honors and awards for youth motivation, innovative school partnerships, and outstanding contributions to special education. She earned a B.S. in French, a M. Ed. in Reading education, and the Education Specialist in Leadership and the Doctorate in Leadership.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies with Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Ms. Candace Kindberg

7014 Dovefield Way
Columbus, GA 31904
cak_worldwide@yahoo.com

706-322-1025

706-888-3945

Qualifications: High School Physical Education and Biology teacher for 21 years and Facilitator of the Gifted Child for 12 years for a total of more than 30 years of service to the children of Muscogee County School District in Columbus, GA. Exercised leadership by leading and serving on a variety of efforts of the MCSD, including service on the Leadership Committee from 1997 – 2003; co-chairing the Committee for six years. Member of the District Discipline Committee, Technology Committee, Teacher Advisory Committee. Chaired the School Safety Committee, School Improvement Instructional Materials Target Team, and Section V of the SACS 10 Year evaluation. Recipient of the Muscogee Educational Excellence Foundation Grant.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies with Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Mr. Dewey W. Moye

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Dahlonega, GA 30533
dewey.moye@yahoo.com

706-864-6200

706-429-7310

Qualifications: 46 years as an educator in both public and private schools. Service included 12 years as superintendent of Lumpkin County schools, 17 years as a public school principal, 3 years as private school headmaster, 10 years as assistant principal and 3 years as a classroom teacher. Many awards and activities including; chair of SACS accreditation teams, Superintendent's Professional Development Program, Governor's School Leadership Institute, Lumpkin County Citizen of the Year (1984, 1989).

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies with Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Mr. Dock Sisk

P. O. Box 308
Homer, Georgia 30547
DockNan@aol.com

770-535-5204

Qualifications: High school mathematics and science teacher and coach, 7 years; primary school principal, 5½ years; and superintendent of schools in Banks County, 15 years. Served on numerous SACS Committees.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies With Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Georgia Accrediting Commission Consultants

Mr. Johnny N. Smith

706-476-9620

191 Amelia Drive
Monticello, Georgia 31064
johnnyneilsmith@att.net

Qualifications: School administration for 33 years, serving as headmaster. With 43 years experience in education service includes bandmaster, head football coach, basketball coach, track coach, and guidance counselor in public and private schools.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies with Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.

Mr. Phil Thomas

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Qualifications: 34 years experience in public education. 31 years in Fulton County Schools. Service included: 7 years as teacher, 8 years as assistant principal, 12 years as high school principal, 4 years district Director of Instructional Technology. 3 years Georgia DOE, Director of Instructional Technology.

Approved for: Pre-kindergartens, Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High/Middle Schools, High Schools, Educational Agencies with Special Purposes, and Non-Traditional Educational Centers.



Consultant Visitation Program

Revised March 9, 2015

The GAC Board of Directors approves a list of former school personnel to serve as consultants.

1. All schools, centers and agencies seeking initial GAC accreditation are required to host three consultant visits:

All schools, centers and agencies except Educational Agencies With Special Purposes (EASP)

A. Year One: Select a consultant to work with the school, agency or center during the application, initial visitation and recommendation phase and the first year of accreditation. The consultant will serve as a guide to assist in the process of becoming fully accredited. If the consultant does not recommend accreditation, the school, center or agency will not be accredited by the GAC.

B. Year Two: The school, center or agency must host a visit consisting of two consultants including the initial consultant. If application is for Pre-K, a Pre-K director must visit instead of the second consultant. A GAC board member may visit in place of a consultant. The visiting committee may recommend any accreditation status other than Provisional. If the visiting committee does not recommend accreditation, the school, center or agency will no longer be accredited by the GAC.

C. Year Three: The school, center or agency must host a visit by the original consultant from year one of accreditation. The consultant may recommend the school, center or agency for any accreditation status other than Provisional for a period of three years for Non-Traditional Educational Centers or five years for all other schools and agencies.

Educational Agencies With Special Purposes (EASP)

A. Year One: Select a consultant to work with the agency during the application, initial visitation and recommendation phase and the first year of accreditation. The consultant will serve as a guide to assist in the process of becoming fully accredited. The agency will host a visit consisting of the consultant and a director of a GAC accredited Educational Agency With Special Purposes. If the consultant does not recommend accreditation, the school, center or agency will not be accredited by the GAC.

B. Year Two: The school, center or agency must host a visit consisting of the consultant. The consultant may recommend any accreditation status other than Provisional. If the consultant does not recommend accreditation, agency will no longer be accredited by the GAC.

C. Year Three: The school, center or agency must host a visit by the consultant. The consultant may recommend the school, center or agency for any accreditation status other than Provisional for a period of five years for all other schools and agencies.

2. Consultants may visit at any time during the school year; however, consultant reports must be received prior to February 14 in order for the school to be accredited during the current school year and the next school year. Reports of visits made after the spring meeting of the GAC may be presented at the fall meeting of the Commission. Reports to be considered at the fall meeting must be received by August 15.

3. Schools failing to have the consultant visit in the year scheduled will be dropped one level in status.

4. All schools are expected to have the services of a consultant at least once every three to five years. Systems with a large number of schools may arrange with the GAC Executive Director for the services of more than one consultant.

5. The consultant's fee is \$250 per day plus travel expenses. Travel expenses include mileage at the State rate and personal costs (lodging and meals), if any. Note: The school may hire one or more GAC-approved consultants to help the school begin the process.

Accreditation Requirements for All Schools, Agencies and Centers

Organization

1. The Board of Commissioners may issue a waiver of any kind to a school for no more than one year. A request for continuing the waiver for another year must be presented and approved by the Board each year.
2. The school schedules 180 full school days for students each year. During times of economic stress - The Board of Commissioners will declare such times - the school may schedule less than 180 days of school per year. However, the school must schedule the same amount of time for annual instructional activities that would occur in a 180-day school year. A written request to the Executive Director must be submitted not later than July 1st. Member schools may hold the hourly equivalent of 180 days of school each year without actually having school for 180 days; however, the minimum number of days a school may request and be approved for is 160 days.. The following shows the total number of hours of instruction each school must provide in a school year.

<u>School Level</u>	<u>Number of Hours of Instruction per Year</u>
Kindergarten	540 hours per school year
Elementary	1080 hours per school year
Middle/Junior High	1080 hours per school year
High School	1080 hours per school year

A school may elect not to complete, as make-up days, up to four days which are the result of days missed when school was closed due to emergency, disaster, act of God, or civil disturbance.

3. As part of the accrediting process, GAC requires that schools seeking initial accreditation status pay \$50 for the application fee.

Effective July 1, 2014 the Board adopted a new fee structure.

Traditional Schools will pay an annual renewal fee of \$50 per grade level.

Pre-K	\$50	Junior High/Middle 6-8	\$50
Elementary K-5	\$50	High School 9-12	\$50
EASP and NTEC schools	\$50		

Effective July 1, 2015 EASP and NTEC schools will pay a flat rate of \$100.

Effective July 1, 2016 “stand alone” Pre-Kindergartens will pay \$100.

All GAC-accredited schools seeking continuing accreditation should complete application forms and pay annual membership fees after they receive their new certificates and renewal applications.

- Annual fees paid not later than November 30th are \$50.00 per year per grade level for traditional schools and \$100 per year for “stand alone” Pre-K, NTEC and EASP schools.
 - Fees received between December 1st and December 15th will be assessed a \$10 late fee.
 - Fees received between December 16th and April 30th will be assessed a \$25 late fee.
 - Fees received after May 1st will not be accepted and the accreditation of the school will be revoked. If the school seeks reaccreditation after their accreditation has been revoked for non-payment of fees, the school must make application, pay any outstanding fees and late charges, and be visited by a consultant.
 - Schools may be approved for simultaneous accreditation in different programs, but may not receive dual accreditation for the same program. For example, a school with grades K through 5 may receive accreditation as a Non-Traditional Educational Center for grades 1 through 5 and may receive accreditation as a private school for Kindergarten.
4. After-school programs are considered integral functions of the overall school’s educational program and are included in the accreditation of the school. A consultant’s visit during the time the after-school program is operating is required. The visit may be combined with any consultant visit.

Personnel

1. A principal, headmaster or manager may serve in such capacity at only one school, agency or center at the same time. So long as the principal, headmaster or manager does not serve two or more schools simultaneously, then one school leader can serve more than one school.
2. Whenever the person designated as the principal, headmaster or manager of the school leaves the position, the Executive Director of the Georgia Accrediting Commission must be notified within 3 months.
3. When the school is relocated a consultant visit is required.
4. The governing board delegates to the superintendent or headmaster all executive and administrative functions, including the nomination of staff personnel.
5. Teachers and all other staff personnel of an individual school are employed only upon the recommendation of the principal to the superintendent or headmaster. The school superintendent or The Head of School is the only employee of the Board that is selected solely by the Board.
6. All college and university coursework and degrees must be from member institutions of higher learning approved by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.
7. All college and university coursework and degrees must be from institutions of higher learning accredited by an institutional or accrediting organization approved by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.
8. The director and all teachers or caregivers report suspected child abuse or neglect to the DFCS office in the county where the child lives.
9. The governing board of a school or school system publishes policies that will assure the observance of professional ethics by all concerned and will promote the professional development of competent school personnel.

Program of Studies

1. Elementary, Junior High/Middle, High School and Educational Agencies with Special Purposes may accept home-schooled students only in the status of "transient students." This restriction does not apply to Non-Traditional Educational Centers.
2. Student records are protected against fire, theft, and damage by being located in a fire-resistant vault or fire-resistant cabinet, or a second, duplicate set of records is located in another area.
3. The school, agency or center must administer a nationally standardized testing program every three years for each student enrolled by the center. The PSAT, SAT or ACT given in grades 10 through 12 are acceptable to meet this requirement
4. When students transfer to other schools, the school will assist the receiving school in making the transition to the new school. Such assistance will include, but not be limited to, evaluation of work completed, credits earned, tests completed, attendance, records transfer and other pertinent information. However, the school has the right to withhold records until all obligations, such as financial, have been met.
5. Complete and accurate permanent records are maintained for all students. All student records must be kept for a period of not less than seven years. After that time only transcripts must be kept.

Finances

1. All schools, centers and agencies must be fiscally sound and possess the financial resources to meet all of their financial obligations.
2. All schools, centers and agencies must fulfill all of their financial obligations in a timely manner
- 3 All financial activities relating to inter-school contests and all other school sponsored activities are under the direct control of the principal or headmaster.

4. At least \$6.00 per student enrolled is spent for library books, software subscriptions such as online encyclopedias and reference databases, and other library media, exclusive of equipment, each school year.
5. The school has a system of internal accounting records showing all receipts and disbursements. These records are reviewed annually by a qualified individual who is not a member of the administrative staff of the school.

The following standards apply to Schools, Agencies and Non-Traditional Educational Centers that offer Classes for 15 or more Students, but not to Pre-Kindergartens and Kindergartens.

Pre-Kindergarten Standards may be found on p. 23; Kindergarten on p. 29.

(For Accredited status 24 affirmative answers are required, including standards 1 through 22).

Physical Plant

1. A safety preparedness plan has been developed for the school
2. Fire drills are conducted monthly
3. A natural disaster plan has been developed and drills are conducted yearly.
4. Panic hardware is installed and operational on all outside doors except classrooms that open directly to an outside area.
5. Electrical and gas outlets and lighting fixtures are in safe condition.
6. There is a minimum of 20 square feet of floor space per student in each instructional area.
7. Commodes, lavatories, and urinals are clean and operational.
8. Fire extinguishers are available and have current inspection labels attached.
9. Exit lights are operating.
10. All storage spaces are free of fire hazards.
11. Equipment on the school grounds is in safe condition.
12. Building appears to be structurally sound.
13. Drinking fountains are available and operational.
14. All exits are free of obstruction.
15. In schools with kitchens, equipment is safe and operational.
16. An exhaust system is installed in science laboratories and functions when hazardous fumes are present.
17. There is adequate lighting throughout the school plant.
18. Science laboratory equipment and furnishings are in safe and operational condition.
19. All buildings have a Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Georgia State Fire Marshall. Those buildings not eligible to be issued a Certificate of Occupancy by the State Fire Marshall have an acceptable inspection report by an appropriate local, State, or federal fire official on file.
20. Protective eyewear is used in appropriate laboratories.
21. Emergency eyewash equipment is provided in labs where chemicals are used.
22. Schools of 300 students or less have a school site of at least 4 acres. Schools of more than 300 students have a school site of at least 4 acres plus an additional acre for each 100 students above 300. Schools that do not meet this requirement must provide a plan showing how the needs of students are met including physical education and recess”
23. Outside lighting is sufficient to avoid hazards at night.
24. Where lockers are present, they are operable.
25. Adequate teacher workspace is available.
26. Shelving in the Media Center is adequate for materials and equipment.
27. In schools with lunchroom workers, separate restroom facilities are available for lunchroom workers.
28. Automatic door closers are present in areas where food is prepared or consumed.

Governance and Leadership of Private Schools

Note: Effective October 1, 2013

The independent school operates within an organizational framework that includes separate entities that carry out distinct functions of governance and day-to-day management. Generally, governance and leadership are manifest in a Board of Trustees and a Head of School. Governance is a function of the Board of Trustees and leadership is a responsibility of the Head of School. The school promotes governance, leadership, and organizational structure that augment and enhance each student's experience and provide for comprehensive institutional management.

In the broadest terms, the role of the Board of Trustees is to adopt a clear statement of the school's mission, vision, and strategic goals, then develop and establish policies and plans consistent with this statement. The Head of School's role is to execute policy. Independent schools are required to have a Board of Trustees that operates much in the same manner as any other organizational Board with some differences. The Board is an integral component to non-profit institutions and fully represents all facets of the organization itself and its mission. It is responsible for holding in trust the independent school in its entirety and preserving its unique core values.

The board develops policy and ensures that the government structure provides for the continuation of the mission. The Board is responsible for handling all general fiduciary matters of the school such as overseeing financial accounts, buying and selling property, and entering into contractual agreements. Trustees actively work in collaboration with all stakeholders of the school to develop the school's mission, vision, values, and purpose. The Board seeks to understand all bylaws as well as its fiduciary responsibilities. All members are charged with acting as an effective participant in Board deliberations while keeping Board discussions at policy level. This further implies that the Board as a collective group must communicate and support decisions widely, while keeping deliberations confidential. Trustees are responsible for understanding, supporting, and articulating the school's mission and values, using them as a guidepost for collective board decisions and ensuring a hallmark of integrity.

The Head of the independent school is responsible for providing leadership across all facets of the school community. He/she must actively manage and lead the day-to-day operations of the school, ensuring that effectiveness and efficiency prevail. As the sole employee of the Board of Trustees, the Head of School executes the Board's vision. He/she allocates and aligns the human, institutional, financial, and physical resources in support of the vision, mission, and beliefs of the school.

Standards for Governance

The Board of Trustees:

- develops a formal strategic long-range plan complete with annual goals based on the school's clear mission and purpose, focusing on those issues that ensure the school will thrive in the future;
- establishes in collaboration with its stakeholders a mission that guides all planning and decision making;
- develops, approves, monitors, evaluates, and revises policy;
- reviews and maintains appropriate bylaws that conform to legal requirements, assuring that the school operates in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, thus minimizing exposure to legal action;
- maintains access to legal counsel who can advise or obtain necessary information about the legal requirements and obligations in the state, federal, or other jurisdiction in which the school operates;
- appoints, nurtures, supports, evaluates, and if necessary, terminates its only employee, the Head of School;
- establishes policy and protocol that recognize and preserve the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the Head of School;

- develops policy to ensure that the Board and its members have a governance structure in place that does not interfere with the daily operations of the school;
- conducts annual Board self-assessment and commits to a program of professional development that includes annual new trustee orientation, ongoing trustee education and evaluation, and Board leadership succession planning;
- assures that the governance structure clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the Head of School, providing an outline of procedures for Head of School evaluation;
- assures that the government structure supports and models inclusive decision making methods;
- assures that the debt service or lines of credit are managed in such ways as to ensure that the fiscal responsibility remains under control of the Board;
- assures that the school is financially stable and is not moving into financial reorganization under the protection of bankruptcy;
- establishes risk management policies and maintains vigilance in assessing potential risks, providing ample insurance to protect the school's financial stability and making thorough plans for a financial reserve;
- accepts accountability for both the financial stability and the financial future of the institution. This includes approving an annual budget, setting tuition and fees annually, engaging in strategic financial planning, and assuming primary responsibility for the preservation of capital assets and endowments. The Board offers oversight of the school's operational budget and actively participates in seeking philanthropic support of the school;
- establishes policy to ensure that no conflict of interest exists including business, professional, or parental roles and/or any other duties to the school, and signs this conflict of interest policy annually.

Standards for Management (Leadership)

The Head of School:

- serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the school, acting as the leader in curriculum, instruction, planning, evaluation, and any and all other areas of school operations;
- works with the Board and staff to implement Board policy;
- retains full responsibility for faculty, staff, and student selection, evaluation, and dismissal, keeping the Board informed of decisions in all of these areas;
- develops and proposes policy questions for the Board's consideration;
- maintains responsibility with the school's financial officer (should one be in place) for the development and monitoring of all school resources and any and all areas of school operation.

Standards for Collaboration Between the Board Chair and the Head of School

The Board Chairman and Head of School:

- follow rules of order, maintaining decorum;
- maintain regular and open communication with each other;
- provide leadership for the School and the Board of Trustees;
- create current job descriptions for the Head of School, the Board Chair, and the Board members;
- orient new Board members;
- develop and maintain Board policy manuals;

- work collaboratively with the Board to provide leadership within the realm of ongoing self-assessment that includes the following questions:
 - Where is our school today?
 - Where does our school want to go?
 - How do we plan to get there?
 - How will our school know when it has successfully arrived at its plan?

Procedures

The governing Board of Trustees will annually affirm its compliance with the above GAC standards. In addition, the Board of Trustees will conduct an annual self-evaluation as well as an annual evaluation of the Head of School's performance. Copies of both evaluations will be archived by the Head of School and readily available to the Georgia Accrediting Commission at any time upon request.



GAC Response to Allegations of Misconduct

Other than during initial and continuing re-accreditation visits, the GAC serves in a passive role, trusting the integrity of the Board and the Head of School to ensure standards are met. However, in the event the GAC receives written notification from a parent, teacher, staff member, Head of School, Board member or other stakeholder alleging an individual Board member, the Board Chair, The Board, the Head of School, or a combination of any of these has violated one or more of the standards, the GAC reserves the right to conduct an onsite investigation. The investigation team may consist of up to two GAC consultants and a member of the GAC Board. The investigation may focus only upon alleged violations of GAC standards. The team will write a report within 10 days and forward a copy to the school's Board Chair, a copy to the GAC Board Chair, and a copy to the GAC executive director. The GAC Board will determine whether to impose sanctions, accreditation level reduction or revocation of accreditation.

Costs:

If the investigation team finds violations have occurred, the school will be responsible for reimbursing the GAC for the cost of the investigation. The cost of the investigation is limited to \$250 per day per team member (not to exceed 3 days) for onsite service and expenses for transportation, meals and lodging. If the investigation team finds there are no violations, the school will be free from the obligation to pay for the investigation. GAC will pay the visiting team for the conduction of the investigation.

Accreditation Procedures for Pre-Kindergarten Programs

The following sequence of procedures must be followed by individuals seeking accreditation for the educational programs in their centers.

1. The educational director informs the Executive Director of the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) that he or she would like to apply for Preparation, Provisional, Accredited, or Accredited With Quality status for their program.
2. The educational director of the center downloads an initial application for Pre-Kindergarten from the GAC website: www.gac.coe.uga.edu. A list of approved consultants is also on the website. (Those centers already listed with the GAC will be mailed an application form each year).
3. The educational director of the center sends the Executive Director of the GAC a completed application, including the name of a preferred consultant and a check for \$50.00 payable to the Georgia Accrediting Commission to cover the application fee. The educational director works with the consultant to secure the services of an educational director of a pre-kindergarten center who serves as a second consultant. The visiting educational director is expected to be from a center having a program accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission. However, under special circumstances, the Executive Director of the GAC may approve other educational directors. An on-site visit by the two consultants is required before Accredited or Accredited with Quality status may be granted. Provisional accreditation or Preparation statuses do not require a visit by an educational director. They do, however, require a visit by the consultant.
4. The educational director of the center contracts with the approved consultant and the visiting Pre-K director for services at the rate of \$250 per day each plus reimbursement of expenses for meals, lodging, and mileage at the rate paid to State employees.
5. The consultant and the visiting Pre-K director visit the program site and verify that all applicable standards are met.
6. The consultant and the visiting Pre-K director recommend to the Executive Director of the GAC the appropriate accreditation level.
7. The Executive Director of the GAC recommends appropriate action to the GAC Board of Directors. (The Executive Director of GAC has the authority to grant Preparation status).
8. If the GAC Board of Directors approves Provisional, Accredited, or Accredited With Quality status for the center's program, the Executive Director will mail the educational director a certificate suitable for display. If the center is approved for Preparation status, the Executive Director of the GAC will communicate this information to the educational director in the form of a letter.
9. It is widely recognized that the owner of a company or business establishes the goals and working conditions for the unit. When ownership changes, these goals and working conditions also frequently change. Because of this reason a center may be eligible for reaccreditation for only one year after a change in ownership without another on-site visit by the consultant.

Accreditation Procedures For Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle/Junior High, and High Schools

A school official seeking information regarding accrediting procedures should study the following policies in order to determine which procedures to follow. The Executive Director is available for those administrators needing clarification or additional instruction. (912-632-3783 or filmurf@accessatc.net).

1. Initial Accreditation Status. To establish eligibility for Preparation, Provisional, Accredited, or Accredited With Quality status, a school official must obtain an application from the GAC Website: www.gac.coe.uga.edu or from the Executive Director. The application and the GAC Website contain instructions for those schools that intend to seek GAC accreditation. School officials who desire a hardcopy of procedures and standards may request *The GAC Bulletin* from the consultant or the Executive Director. Application forms are available also from Executive Director, Phil Murphy (912-632-3783 or filmurf@accessatc.net). An on-site visit and a written recommendation by an approved GAC consultant are required every five years for a school to remain at a renewable level of accreditation. The application fee per school seeking initial accreditation status is \$50.00. The consultant's fee is \$250 per day, plus travel expenses. Travel expenses include mileage at the State rate and personal costs (motel and meals), if any. The consultant's fee and expenses are paid directly to the consultant by the school or school system.

2. Continuing Accreditation. During the years when an on-site visit is not required, each school or school system seeking Continuing Accreditation status must complete a continuing application form. The application form along with a certificate of accreditation will be mailed to each school or school system during the month of August. The application for Continuing Accreditation status and a check to cover the membership fee must reach the GAC office before November 30. A change in status from Preparation to Provisional, from Provisional to Accredited, or from Accredited to Accredited with Quality requires a consultant visit and positive recommendation, except when the school has been dropped in status because of deficiencies. For those dropped in status because of deficiencies, the previous level of accreditation may be restored by removing the deficiencies.

3. Fifth Year Report and On-Site Visit by a GAC Consultant. After five years of continuous accreditation, GAC requires an on-site visit by a consultant. Those schools requiring an on-site visit will receive an application from the Executive Director during the month of August. Before the on-site visit, a school official will send to the Executive Director the completed application form and a check to cover the membership fee. The payment and the application are due in the GAC office before November 30. A penalty fee will be charged for applications received after November 30. The consultant's fee for the on-site visit is \$250 per day plus travel expenses. Travel expenses include mileage at the State rate and personal costs (motel and meals), if any. The consultant's fee and expenses are paid by the school or school system directly to the consultant.

4. Accreditation for Kindergarten. The school official has the option of requesting that the kindergarten be accredited as part of the elementary school or accredited as a separate unit. The school official chooses the accreditation status that would best reflect the quality of his or her school program. Regardless of the option chosen by the school official, an application form is required from the school requesting accreditation status for the kindergarten. A school official may choose to exclude the kindergarten from the elementary school accreditation report. If the kindergarten is not included with the accreditation report of the elementary school, the reference to the kindergarten will be excluded from the GAC report. If the kindergarten is accredited separately, a \$100.00 membership fee is required for the kindergarten program for the individual school.

5. GAC Board Action on the Accreditation Process. The Executive Director makes a recommendation regarding the accrediting of the school to the full membership of the GAC Board. The decision reached on each application applies to the current school year. Schools dropped one step in status for deficiencies may be restored to original status the next year by removing the deficiencies for which the school was dropped in status.

Glossary of Accrediting Levels for K-12 Public and Private Schools

The GAC has four levels of classification for Georgia schools seeking accreditation status. Educational Agencies with Special Purposes and Non-Traditional Educational Centers are classified differently. The accreditation status of each school must be approved by the GAC Board of Directors.

Preparation Status. Preparation status is a classification for a school that has involved its faculty and staff in applying the GAC standards and procedures and is moving toward Accredited status. Preparation status does not convey benefits of accreditation such as transfer of credit to other GAC accredited schools or public schools in Georgia, eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship, or University System colleges' and universities' acceptance of transcripts, or Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (SB10) funding. A school may be in the Preparation status a maximum of two years. Although GAC certificates will not be issued to schools in Preparation status, the schools in Preparation status will be listed in the official GAC *Bulletin*.

Provisional Status. Provisional status is a classification for a school that has involved its faculty and staff in applying the GAC standards and procedures and is moving toward Accredited status. The school has also met (1) all standards in the section of finances, and (2) all the standards pertaining to the qualifications of the headmaster, principal, and/or superintendent. A school may be in the Provisional status a maximum of two years. Provisional or higher accreditation status provides for transfer of credit to other GAC accredited schools or public schools in Georgia, eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship, University System colleges' and universities' acceptance of transcripts and acceptance of transcripts by the Technical College System of Georgia.

Accredited Status. Accredited status is a classification for a school that has involved its faculty and staff in applying the GAC standards and procedures. The school has also met (1) all the standards in the section on finances, (2) all the standards pertaining to the qualifications of the headmaster, principal, and/or the superintendent, and (3) has met the number of standards listed at the beginning of each major section of the standards. An on-site visit and a written recommendation by an approved GAC consultant are required every five years for a school to remain at this level of accreditation.

Accredited With Quality. Accredited With Quality is a classification for a school that has involved its faculty and staff in applying the GAC standards and procedures. The school has also met all standards in all the sections listed in the GAC *Bulletin*. An on-site visit and a written recommendation by an approved GAC consultant are required every five years for a school to remain at this level of accreditation.

Standards for Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Programs in two types of centers may be eligible for accreditation: (1) those which are in centers licensed or commissioned by the State or private centers which are not eligible for licensing by the State, and (2) those operated by public school systems. Programs of either type may be eligible for accreditation as *Accredited, Pre-kindergarten Educational Programs*.

Organization

The following standards apply to pre-kindergarten programs for children of all ages. Documents verifying compliance with the standards must be provided to the consultant.

1. There is a minimum of two teachers or caregivers present when children are at the center.
2. At least one teacher or caregiver (or the educational director) who has successfully completed a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training program and a first-aid program focusing on emergency care for infants or children within the past two years is present when children are at the center. NAMES
3. Records are maintained for each child who has been enrolled in the center for six weeks or more showing the child's current status in each area addressed in the center's educational program. Each child's current status in all aspects of the educational program criteria of the Georgia Accrediting Commission must be recorded.
4. Whenever the person designated as the principal or headmaster of the school leaves the position, the Executive Director of the Georgia Accrediting Commission must be notified within 3 months.
5. The policies and practices of the center indicate consistent efforts to develop and maintain positive self-concepts for the children attending the center.
6. The policies and practices of the center indicate a strong emphasis on maintaining a psychologically secure and nurturing environment for the children attending the center.
7. Learning center activities are offered at least 60 minutes daily.
8. There is a balance of active and quiet periods for children.
9. Children play outside daily (except in inclement weather) in an adequate and pleasant space with appropriate equipment.
10. The policies and practices of the center reflect a concern for securing feedback from parents.
11. All student records must be kept for a period of not less than seven years. After that time only transcripts must be kept.
12. When students transfer to other schools, the school will assist the receiving school in making the transition to the new school. Such assistance will include, but not be limited to, evaluation of work completed, credits earned, tests completed, attendance, records transfer and other pertinent information. However, the school has the right to withhold records until all obligations, such as financial, have been met.
13. If children of less than four years of age are served by the center the program consists of not less than six hours per week at the center. If children of four or five years of age are served by the center the program consists of not less than nine hours per week at the center.
14. The staffing ratios of the center do not exceed the following:
 - 1 caregiver for each 6 children under the age of one and one-half years with a maximum group size of 12
 - 1 caregiver for each 8 children under the age of two who are walking with a maximum group size of 16
 - 1 caregiver for each 10 children who are two years old with a maximum group size of 20
 - 1 caregiver for each 15 children who are three years old with a maximum group size of 30
 - 1 caregiver for each 18 children who are four years old with a maximum group size of 36
 - 1 caregiver for each 20 children who are five years old with a maximum group size of 40

Personnel

The following standards apply to pre-kindergarten programs for children of all ages.

1. The educational director of the center:
 - (a) holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, child development, or closely related fields or
 - (b) holds a high school diploma and has completed a minimum of nine quarter hours of academic coursework or 60 clock hours of instruction in early childhood education or child development. The training must have been sponsored by an institution, agency, organization, or provided by an individual approved by the Georgia Department of Human Resources *or* by an individual with at least a master's degree in the area in which the training focuses.
2. The educational director and all teachers and caregivers have completed four clock hours of instruction in child care practices related to health and safety and two clock hours of instruction related to identifying, caring for, and reporting abused, neglected, or deprived children within the first six months of initial employment in a pre-kindergarten center. The training must have been sponsored by an institution, agency, organization, or provided by an individual approved by the Georgia Department of Human Resources *or* by an organization or individual with specialized training in the area such as Red Cross officials, law enforcement officers, and employees of the Department of Family and Children Services.
3. The educational director and all teachers and caregivers have completed 20 clock hours of instruction in developmentally appropriate educational practices within the past 18 months. The training must have been sponsored by an institution, agency, organization or provided by an individual approved by the Georgia Department of Human Resources *or* by an individual with at least a master's degree in the area in which the training focuses. A major portion of the activities must focus on developmentally appropriate educational practices. An exception to this standard is granted for individuals holding a current professional teaching certificate issued by the state of Georgia in the area of early childhood education or home economics. Those holding current professional certificates in early childhood education or home economics must have 10 clock hours of instruction in developmentally appropriate educational practices each 12 months.
4. All teachers or caregivers with sole responsibility for children are 18 years old or older.
5. The educational director of the center publishes policies that will assure the observance of professional ethics by all concerned and will promote the professional development of competent personnel.

Educational Program

Please note that these standards include skills that might be labeled pre-reading and pre-writing skills. Generally, children at this age are not developmentally ready to read or write and centers should reject external pressures to teach specific reading or writing skills.

Children develop at different rates and all should not be expected to be at the same developmental stage at the same age. The following standards are to be interpreted as being appropriate for individual children and specific groups of children only when they are appropriate for the particular developmental stages of the children - not when the children reach a particular age. However, the individual standards may be considered to be "Not Applicable" only when they are developmentally inappropriate for all children in the center.

1. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children's development of self-esteem.
 - A. Children are comforted when they are sad, lonely, frightened, or hurt.
 - B. The negative behaviors of children are dealt with in a positive, firm, and supportive way.
 - C. Children's efforts and contributions are acknowledged and praised.
 - D. The writings and other creations of children are respected and valued.

2. The center has implemented planned activities for children to develop self-awareness by learning to recognize parts of their bodies including, but not limited to, the following:
 - A. face
 - B. arms
 - C. legs
 - D. hands
 - E. feet
 - F. mouth
 - G. nose
 - H. eyes
 - I. fingers
 - J. toes

3. The center has implemented a variety of planned activities for children to develop socially including, but not limited to, engaging in solitary (individual) play, parallel (playing beside another child) play, and cooperative (playing with other children) play.

4. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children's abilities to act independently.
 - A. Children are encouraged and assisted in developing specific self-help skills including, but not limited to the following:
 - i. feeding themselves
 - ii. washing their hands
 - iii. taking off and putting on clothing
 - iv. manipulating fasteners (buttons, zippers, snaps, etc.)
 - i. appropriate toilet activities
 - B. Children are encouraged to make decisions. For example, children are allowed to choose activities in which they participate.

5. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate the development of gross motor skills of children. These activities include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - A. shaking a rattle
 - B. clapping their hands
 - C. waving (as in bye-bye)
 - D. feeding finger foods to themselves
 - E. pushing and pulling toys
 - F. stacking blocks
 - G. working puzzles with large pieces
 - H. standing while holding on to a support
 - I. bending over while they are sitting
 - J. turning around while they are crawling
 - K. walking while holding on to a support
 - L. crawling up and down steps
 - M. walking sideways and backwards
 - N. standing on one foot
 - O. jumping
 - P. running
 - Q. rolling, throwing, kicking, and catching a large, soft, ball

6. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate the development of coordination and fine motor skills of children. These activities include, but are not limited to the following:
 - A. tracing and drawing various shapes and figures such as circles and squares
 - B. cutting paper with scissors
 - C. turning the pages of a book
7. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children's language development.
 - A. Children are sung to or encouraged to sing each day.
 - B. Teachers and caregivers find numerous opportunities to have conversations with children.
 - C. Children are encouraged to retell stories they have been told or read, tell about a picture, and to tell about events in their lives.
 - D. Children are encouraged to converse with each other.
 - E. Unit theme activities, songs, finger plays and literature that are read to children are used to expand children's vocabulary.
8. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children's interest in books.
 - A. Children are read to individually or in small groups daily.
 - B. Books are available to children for independent use.
9. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children's ability to create and compose.
 - A. Children are encouraged to put their thoughts on paper with paintbrushes, crayons, and pencils and by using scissors, glue, and tape
 - B. Children are encouraged to be creative at learning centers such as a manipulative center, woodworking center, cooking center, invention center, block center, dramatic play center, etc.
 - C. Children are encouraged to create or respond to the medium of music by responding to rhythms with body movements, singing simple songs and composing tunes or verses.
10. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children learning to mark from left to right and from top to bottom on a sheet of paper.
11. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children learning the concept of permanence including, but not limited to, the following:
 - A. playing "peek-a-boo"
 - B. "finding" partially hidden objects
 - C. "finding" objects they have seen hidden
12. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children learning the following time concepts:
 - A. before
 - B. after
 - C. yesterday
 - D. tomorrow
 - E. morning
 - F. afternoon
 - G. night
 - H. day

13. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children learning the following spatial orientation concepts:
 - A. in
 - B. out
 - C. over
 - D. under
 - E. behind
 - F. in front of
 - G. on top of
 - H. beside
 - I. up
 - J. down
 - K. through
 - L. "right side up"

14. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children learning to recognize the colors blue, red, and yellow and to make new colors from combinations of these three colors.

15. The center has implemented planned activities that foster the development of children's thinking skills.
 - A. Children have opportunities to solve problems and predict outcomes. For example - deciding which blocks will be the right length to complete a bridge.
 - B. Children have opportunities to classify objects, shapes, or ideas.
 - C. Children have opportunities to create patterns.
 - D. Children have opportunities to compare weights and dimensions of solids and liquids.

16. The center has implemented planned activities for children to listen and follow directions, including following one-, two-, and three-step instructions.

17. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children learning mathematical concepts including, but not limited to, the following:
 - A. identifying all of a set of objects
 - B. identifying some of a set of objects
 - C. identifying sets of objects that are equal in number
 - D. identifying a set of objects that contains more than another set of objects
 - E. identifying a set of objects that contains less than another set of objects
 - F. counting up to 10 objects
 - G. identification of place in sequences such as first, second, third, etc.

18. The center has implemented planned activities to facilitate children's understanding of the world around them.
 - A. Daily activities are organized around unit themes for the group as a whole or around the special interests and developmental needs of each child. This means that if daily group activities are not organized around unit themes for the group then special daily activities are organized for each child based on his or her special interests and developmental needs.
 - B. Learning centers include props that assist in stimulating children to play out unit themes.
 - C. The learning environment is extended beyond the classroom through field trips or through special activities designed to bring outside events or activities into the classroom.

19. The center has implemented planned activities that demonstrate a respect for each child's cultural background.
 - A. Parents are invited to share their cultural heritages with the children.
 - B. Some unit themes, stories, and activities are chosen because they relate to the children's life styles and cultural backgrounds.
 - C. Demonstrations of life styles and cultural backgrounds that appear in children's language, paintings, and other creations are respected and valued.

20. The center has referred parents or guardians of children with severe developmental problems to the CHILDFIND official in the local public school system(s).

Physical Plant

Programs in centers must meet all of the standards in this section to be eligible for Provisional, Accredited or Accredited With Quality status.

1. The location and construction of the building, the lighting, heating and ventilation of the rooms, the nature of the lavatories, corridors, water supply, furniture, and apparatus assure a safe physical environment for children and adults in the center.
2. Twenty-five square feet of instructional floor space is provided for each student enrolled for each instructional area.
3. Sanitary practices and conditions exist in the center.
4. All buildings have a Certificate of Occupancy issued by the State Fire Marshall. Those buildings not eligible to be issued a Certificate of Occupancy have an acceptable inspection report by an appropriate local, state or federal fire official on file.
5. Monthly fire drills are conducted.
6. A safety preparedness plan has been developed for the center.

Accredited With Quality

In addition to meeting all standards for Accredited status, a pre-kindergarten program may be Accredited With Quality by meeting each of the following standards.

1. Each caregiver who has been employed for one calendar year or longer has received at least 60 clock hours of instruction in developmentally appropriate education practices. The training must have been sponsored by an institution, agency, organization, or provided by an individual approved by the Georgia Department of Human Resources or by an individual with at least a master's degree in the area that the training focused.
2. The caregiver/child ratios of the center do not exceed the following:
 - 1 caregiver for each 5 children under the age of one and one-half years with a maximum group size of 10.
 - 1 caregiver for each 7 children under the age of two who are walking with a maximum group size of 14.
 - 1 caregiver for each 8 children who are two years old with a maximum group size of 16.
 - 1 caregiver for each 12 children who are three years old with a maximum group size of 24.
 - 1 caregiver for each 13 children who are four years old with a maximum group size of 26.
 - 1 caregiver for each 14 children who are five years old with a maximum group size of 28.
3. Thirty square feet of instructional floor space is provided for each student enrolled for each instructional area.

(Accredited programs may be upgraded to Accredited With Quality without site visits when certification is provided to the Executive Director that each of these standards has been met.)

Standards for Kindergarten Programs

A kindergarten may be accredited as a part of an elementary school, in conjunction with a pre-kindergarten program, or as a separate entity. The following standards for kindergarten programs are to be used by school officials who are making application for *Provisional*, *Accredited*, or *Accredited With Quality* status for programs in their schools. The number of standards required to be answered affirmatively in order to meet the 85% required by the Commission for Accredited status is given at the beginning of each section of standards. Documents verifying compliance with the following standards must be provided to the consultant.

Schools that are operating under an approved Georgia Department of Education flexibility model (charter system or strategic waiver) have the opportunity to achieve the status of Accredited With Quality.

I. Organization

(For Accredited status all 5 standards are required.)

1. The number of students enrolled in each class is not fewer than five or more than 28 students with a system wide average of 24.2 or less with an aide or 18.2 or less without an aide.
2. A teacher's aide is provided for each class with more than 21 students enrolled.
3. Complete and accurate permanent records are maintained for all students.
4. The kindergarten program has a current collection of media materials appropriate for the kindergarten student.
5. Each teacher has at least one 30-minute period per day, or a total of 150 minutes per week, during the class day for planning.

II. Personnel

(For Accredited status all 4 standards are required)

1. All teachers hold a bachelor's degree and have at least 18 semester hours credit in early childhood education. This standard may also be met by teachers with bachelor's degrees completing 6 semester hours per year of appropriate professional education until 18 semester hours of credit are obtained. Equivalent staff development units (PLU) may be substituted for semester hours. The kindergarten unit has an individual designated as principal or headmaster. See Appendix A for PLU hour conversion chart.
2. When a kindergarten program is accredited as part of an elementary school, teachers and all other staff personnel are employed only upon the recommendation of the principal to the superintendent or headmaster.
3. All persons employed as paraprofessionals, auxiliary helpers, or teachers' aides are under the supervision of a professionally qualified person.

III. Program of Studies

(For Accredited status all 3 standards are required)

1. The kindergarten curriculum includes objectives that facilitate the development of proficiency in listening, expressing ideas, speaking clearly, observing clearly, participating in groups, keeping healthy, enjoying aesthetic experiences, and living in a pluralistic society.
2. The objectives of the curriculum facilitate the development of behavior based upon values of honesty and integrity, responsibility for one's own actions, respect and concern for others, and understanding and acceptance of self.
3. The kindergarten curriculum is adequate in scope to provide for balanced experiences in the development of basic skills, recreation, health, social living, and aesthetic activities.

IV. School Plant

(For Accredited status all 6 standards are required.)

1. A safety preparedness plan has been developed for the school.
2. The location and construction of the building, the lighting, heating and ventilation of the rooms, the nature of the lavatories, corridors, water supply, furniture, apparatus, and methods of cleaning assure hygienic conditions for students and teachers.
3. Thirty square feet of instructional floor space are provided for each student enrolled for each instructional area constructed after 1974.
4. Sanitary conditions exist in the school.
5. All buildings have a Certificate of Occupancy issued by the State Fire Marshall. Those buildings not eligible to be issued a Certificate of Occupancy by the State Fire Marshall have an acceptable inspection report by an appropriate local, State, or federal fire official on file.
6. Fire drills are conducted monthly. Fire and Tornado Drill Schedule

Standards for Elementary School Programs

Any school containing grades one (1) through five (5) must apply as an elementary school. The following standards for elementary school programs are to be used by principals of schools who are making application for *Provisional*, *Accredited*, or *Accredited With Quality* status for programs in their schools. The number of standards required to be answered affirmatively in order for the school to meet the 85% required by the Commission for *Accredited* status is given at the beginning of each section of standards.

Documents verifying compliance with the following standards must be provided to the consultant.

Schools that are operating under an approved Georgia Department of Education flexibility model (charter system or strategic waiver) have the opportunity to achieve the status of Accredited With Quality.

I. Organization

(For Accredited status, 7 affirmative answers are required, including standards 1 through 6)

1. A school day consists of at least six hours, exclusive of lunch and recess periods. (A minimum of a school day of four-and-one-half hours is acceptable for grades one through three. Schools may operate on shortened schedules up to one day for each grading period for teacher-parent conferences.)
2. In grades one through three, classes have a maximum of 25 students, or 33 students if the teacher has a full-time aide. The system-wide average class size in grades one through three is 21.5 or less, or 28.6 or less if teachers have full-time aides. In grades four and five, classes have a maximum of 33 students. The school-wide average class size in grades four and five is 28.6 or less. Remedial classes have a maximum of 18 students or 24 students if the teacher has a full-time aide. (This standard is interpreted as meaning that an aide is required whenever the maximum class size for classes without an aide is exceeded. This means that in grades one through three an aide is required whenever there are 26 or more students in a class and that an aide is also required whenever there are 19 or more students in a remedial class). Mixed-model classes have a maximum of 28 students, including no more than eight remedial students per class.
3. Principals of schools with 7 through 13 teachers have at least one-half time free from teaching responsibilities for administration and supervision. Principals of schools with 14 or more teachers have full time for administration and supervision.
4. A combination school (that is, an elementary, middle/junior high school and high school under one administration) of 30 or more teachers must have an assistant principal. Either the principal or the assistant principal must have major responsibility in the elementary area.
5. All inter-school contests and school-sponsored activities are under the direct and complete control of the school administration. Responsibilities related to school-sponsored activities are not delegated to any person or persons other than school or school system employees.
6. The Media Center has a minimum of 10 books per student or a minimum of 7 books per student and an annual expenditure of \$2.00 or more per student for computer disks, video cassettes, video disks, film strips and other non-print media.
7. The school provides each student a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch.
8. The organization of the Media Center collection and the school schedule facilitate maximum use of the collection by pupils during all school hours.
9. Each teacher has at least one 30-minute period per day or a total of 150 minutes per week during the class day for planning.
10. Student activities include access to health and psychological counseling services.
11. When offered by the school, the weekly meals provide one-third of the recommended weekly dietary allowance of nutrients and include meat or a meat alternate, bread, milk, and fruits and/or vegetables.

II. Personnel

(For Accredited status standards 1 through 7 are required)

1. A school with an enrollment of 750 or more students has a full-time assistant principal or an additional qualified person designated as an assistant to the principal on a full-time basis.
2. The staff of an elementary school consists of not less than one full-time teacher per grade. There is a minimum staff of six teachers. One of the staff members must be a qualified principal.
3. All teachers employed on a full-time or part-time basis as instructors in the school hold, as a minimum, a Georgia professional certificate or a bachelor's degree with a minimum of 18 semester hours of professional education. An exception may be granted for those teachers issued permits by the Georgia Department of Education. This standard may also be met by teachers with bachelor's degrees completing 6 semester hours per year of appropriate professional education until 18 semester hours of credit are obtained. Equivalent staff development units (PLU) may be substituted for semester hours. See Appendix A for PLU hour conversion chart.
4. The principal holds a Georgia state administrator's professional certificate. In nonpublic schools, the principal or headmaster may hold a master's degree with a minimum of 15 semester hours in school administration and supervision.
5. The superintendent or headmaster must hold a Georgia five-year administrator's certificate in order for any school in the system to be accredited. In non-public schools the superintendent or headmaster may hold, as a minimum, a master's degree with a minimum of 15 semester hours in school administration and supervision.
6. Schools with seven through nine teachers have 1/4-time secretarial service, 10 through 13 teachers have 1/2-time secretarial service, 14 through 16 teachers have 3/4-time secretarial service, and with 17 or more teachers have full-time secretarial service. An elementary school that is a part of a combination school has secretarial service allocated on the basis of the total number of teachers of the combination school.
7. Schools with between 201 and 250 students have one person assigned at least one-half time to media services.

IV. Media Center

A written plan is provided to address the provisions below. This plan may be excerpted from school improvement plans, strategic waiver plans, etc

- 1 At least \$6.00 per student enrolled is spent for library books, software subscriptions such as online encyclopedias and reference databases, and other library media, exclusive of equipment, each school year.
- 2 The school media center has a collection management policy. The school media specialist works with school administrators and teachers in order to develop a collection management policy. Such a policy statement is based upon the curriculum and particular needs and interest of the school community and must reflect the diversity of society outside the school and extends the school library function from providing for consumers of information to creators of information.
- 3 The media center has appropriate number of staff who are certified, licensed or have specialized training or experience.
- 4 The media center includes a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum.
- 5 The media center is available for students and staff before, during, and after school
- 6 The media center is responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
- 7 The media center includes a physical setting that encourages collaboration among students, opportunities for inquiry, and authentic learning.

III. Program of Studies

(For Accredited status, all 3 standards are required.)

1. The elementary school curriculum includes objectives that facilitate the development of proficiency in:
 - a. listening,
 - b. expressing ideas effectively and creatively,
 - c. reading well,
 - d. writing legibly,
 - e. spelling accurately,
 - f. speaking clearly,
 - g. thinking critically,
 - h. figuring accurately,
 - i. observing carefully,
 - j. solving problems,
 - k. participating in groups,
 - l. keeping healthy,
 - m. enjoying aesthetic experiences, and
 - n. living in a pluralistic society.

2. The objectives of the curriculum facilitate the development of behavior based upon
 - a. values of honesty and integrity,
 - b. loyalty to democratic ideals and processes,
 - c. responsibility for one's own actions,
 - d. appreciation and desire for the best in our culture, willingness to accept and detect desirable changes, and respect and concern for others
 - e. wise use of time, money, and natural resources, and understanding and accepting self.

3. The curriculum is broad in scope and provides for balanced experiences designed for development of basic skills, recreation, health, social living, and aesthetic activities.

Standards for Junior High/Middle School Programs

A junior high/middle school may be any combination of grades four (4) through nine (9). The following standards for junior high/middle school programs are to be used by principals of schools who are making application for *Provisional*, *Accredited*, or *Accredited With Quality* status for programs in their schools. The number of standards required to be answered affirmatively in order to meet the 85% required by the Commission for *Accredited* status is given at the beginning of each section of standards.

Documents verifying compliance with the following standards must be provided to the consultant.

Schools that are operating under an approved Georgia Department of Education flexibility model (charter system or strategic waiver) have the opportunity to achieve the status of Accredited With Quality.

I. Organization

(For Accredited status, 6 affirmative answers are required, including standards 1 through 5)

1. A school day consists of at least six hours exclusive of lunch and break periods. (Normal class changing time will count as being part of the six hour school day. Schools may operate on shortened schedules up to one day for each grading period for teacher parent conferences.)
2. The maximum individual class size is 33 students or less, and the school-wide average class size is 28.6 or less with the following exceptions:
3. Remedial classes without aides do not exceed 18 students.
 - a. Remedial classes with aides do not exceed 24 students.
 - b. Instrumental music classes do not exceed 100 students.
 - c. Choral music classes do not exceed 80 students.
 - d. Physical education classes without aides do not exceed 40 students.
 - e. Physical education classes with aides do not exceed 53 students.
4. The principal of any junior high/middle school must have at least one-half of his or her time free from classroom responsibilities to supervise instruction. Principals of schools with 14 or more teachers have full time for administration and supervision.
5. All inter-school contests and all other school-sponsored activities are under the direct and complete control of the school administration. Responsibilities related to school-sponsored activities are not delegated to any person or persons other than employees of the school system.
6. The Media Center has a minimum of 10 books per student or a minimum of 7 books per student and an annual expenditure of \$2.00 or more per student for computer disks, video cassettes, video disks, filmstrips and other non-print media.
7. Each teacher has at least one 30-minute period during the class day for planning and preparation for instruction.
8. Student records are protected against fire, theft, and damage by being located in a fire-resistant cabinet or a second, duplicate set of records is located in another area.
9. At least 60% of students entering the school enter from accredited feeder schools.
10. The school provides each student a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch.
11. The organization of the Media Center collection and the school schedule facilitate use of the collection by the students during all school hours.
12. Student activities include access to health and psychological counseling services.
13. When offered by the school, the weekly meals provide one-third of the recommended weekly dietary allowance of nutrients and include meat or a meat alternate, bread, milk, and fruits and/or vegetables.

II. Summer School

(For Accredited status all 5 standards are required.)

1. The summer school program, if offered, is operated in accordance with a normal instructional program. The school system also handles all funds involved in the summer program. In addition, all conditions of Provisional accreditation are met.

2. There are at least 120 clock hours of instruction for each 15 quarter hours of credit or each Carnegie Unit awarded.
3. A school does not grant students more than 25 quarter hours of credit or 1 and 1/2 Carnegie Units in a summer school of 30 days or less. Nor does it grant more than 30 quarter hours of credit or two Carnegie Units during any summer school period.
4. No teacher teaches more than two subjects in the same period.
5. Credit is not granted to any student in more than three subject areas during any summer school period.

III. Personnel

(For Accredited status, 9 affirmative answers are required, including standards 1 through 8.)

1. In addition to the principal, the teaching staff includes five or more full-time, qualified teachers in the middle school.
2. A school with an enrollment of 750 or more must have a full-time assistant principal. A combination school of 30 or more classroom teachers must have an assistant principal. Either the principal or the assistant principal must have responsibility in the middle grades area.
3. All teachers employed on a full-time or part-time basis as instructors in the school hold a Georgia State professional certificate or a bachelor's degree with a minimum of 18 semester hours of professional education. An exception may be granted for those teachers issued permits by the Georgia Department of Education. This standard may also be met by teachers with bachelor's degrees completing 6 semester hours per year of appropriate professional education until 18 semester hours of credit are obtained. Equivalent staff development units (PLU) may be substituted for semester hours. See Appendix A for PLU hour conversion chart.
4. All teachers employed in the school hold
 - (a) a Georgia certificate in field when assigned to teach in grades 6, 7, 8, or 9 or
 - (b) a bachelor's degree and 27 semester credit hours in elementary or middle grades education and have at least 6 semester hours credit in any field in which they teach.
5. The principal holds a Georgia state administrator's professional certificate. In non-public schools, the principal may hold a master's degree with 15 semester hours in school administration and supervision.
6. The superintendent or headmaster holds a five-year Georgia administrator's certificate in order for any school in the system to be accredited. In non-public schools, the superintendent or headmaster holds, as a minimum, a master's degree with a minimum of 15 semester hours in school administration and supervision.
7. Schools with seven through nine teachers have 1/4-time secretarial service, 10 through 13 teachers have 1/2-time secretarial service, 14 through 16 teachers have 3/4-time secretarial service, and with 17 or more teachers have full-time secretarial service.
8. Schools with between 201 and 250 students have one person assigned at least one-half time to media services.
9. A junior high or middle school that is part of a combination school has media service allocated on the basis of the total enrollment of the combination school.
10. All persons employed as paraprofessionals, auxiliary helpers, or teachers' aides are under the direct supervision of a professionally qualified person.
10. A school counselor with at least a master's degree and 18 semester hours credit in guidance and counseling or SC-5 certificate is assigned for guidance and testing equivalent to one period per day for each 100 students
11. Assistant principals have preparation leading toward a Georgia state administrator's professional certificate or a master's degree with a minimum of 15 semester hours in administration and supervision. Assistant principals who do not meet these requirements may earn 6 semester hours in administration and supervision each year until the requirements are met.
12. All teachers who do not hold current Georgia teaching certificates and who have been employed by the school or school system for five years or more, have received at least 6 semester hours or 10 quarter hours of college credit, or 10 Continuing Education Units, or 100 contact hours in locally approved professional development activities within the past five years.

IV. Media Center

A written plan is provided to address the provisions below. This plan may be excerpted from school improvement plans, strategic waiver plans, etc

- 1 At least \$6.00 per student enrolled is spent for library books, software subscriptions such as online encyclopedias and reference databases, and other library media, exclusive of equipment, each school year.
- 2 The school media center has a collection management policy. The school media specialist works with school administrators and teachers in order to develop a collection management policy. Such a policy statement is based upon the curriculum and particular needs and interest of the school community and must reflect the diversity of society outside the school and extends the school library function from providing for consumers of information to creators of information.
- 3 The media center has appropriate number of staff who are certified, licensed or have specialized training or experience.
- 4 The media center includes a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum.
- 5 The media center is available for students and staff before, during, and after school
- 6 The media center is responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
- 7 The media center includes a physical setting that encourages collaboration among students, opportunities for inquiry, and authentic learning.

V. Program of Studies

(For Accredited status, 4 affirmative answers are required, including standards 1 through 3.)

1. The following subject matter areas are included in a program of studies for junior high/middle schools: language arts, social studies, science and mathematics.
2. Opportunities for exploration include at least four of the following areas:
 - a. Visual Arts
 - b. Computer literacy
 - c. Foreign Language
 - d. Laboratories in reading and mathematics
 - e. Home Economics
 - f. Industrial Arts/Technology
 - g. Program of Education and Career Exploration (PECE)
 - h. Speech and Drama
 - i. Group Guidance
 - j. Music (general), vocal, and/or instrumental
 - k. Business Exploration
 - l. Agri-horticulture
3. The academic requirements in grade nine (if the school houses grade nine) insure that students take one unit in language arts and
4. One unit in mathematics or science.
5. Evidence exists of a functioning physical education and health program.
6. All transfer credit that is not from a GAC or SACS accredited school is validated. Acceptance of work endorsed by other accrediting groups is the prerogative of local schools. To validate credit, a school may give examinations or may certify satisfactory performance.

Standards for High School Programs

Schools containing grades 10 through 12 or any combination of grades 10 through 12 must apply as high schools. Schools containing grades 7 through 12 or any combination thereof may apply as high schools. The following standards for high school programs are to be used by principals of schools who are making application for *Provisional*, *Accredited*, or *Accredited With Quality* status for programs in their schools. The number of standards required to be answered affirmatively in order to meet the 85% required by the Commission for *Accredited* status is given at the beginning of each section of standards.

Documents verifying compliance with the following standards must be provided to the consultant.

Schools that are operating under an approved Georgia Department of Education flexibility model (charter system or strategic waiver) have the opportunity to achieve the status of Accredited with Quality.

I. Organization

(For Accredited status, 9 affirmative answers are required, including standards 1 through 8.)

1. The school day consists of at least six hours exclusive of lunch and break periods. (Normal class changing time will count as being part of the six hour school day. Schools may operate on shortened schedules for up to one day per grading period for teacher-parent conferences.)
2. The length of each instructional period is at least 55 minutes gross and 50 minutes net. (Schools which have developed flexible schedules or block schedules will not be in violation of this standard providing at least 135 hours of instruction are provided for each Carnegie Unit granted.) The seat time requirement may be waived for up to one Carnegie Unit of Credit per student per school year for independent study and/or distance learning courses without being in violation of this standard when they successfully complete the exit exams approved by the school for the courses.
3. The maximum individual class size is 35 and the maximum system-wide average class size is 30.8 or less, with the following exceptions:
 - (a) Remedial classes without aides do not exceed 18 students.
 - (b) Remedial classes with aides do not exceed 24 students
 - (c) Instrumental music classes do not exceed 100 students.
 - (d) Choral music classes do not exceed 80 students.
 - (e) Physical education classes without aides do not exceed 40 students.
 - (f) Physical education classes with aides do not exceed 53 students.
 - (g) Co-Op-Supervision class loads do not exceed 56 students.
4. The maximum number of students per teacher per week does not exceed the following:
 - (a) Physical education - 265 students with aides, 200 students without aides.
 - (b) Instrumental music - 500 students.
 - (c) Choral music - 400 students.
 - (d) Military training - 500 students.
 - (e) Typing or Keyboarding - 175 students.
 - (f) All other classes - 150 students.
5. (Schools on block schedules where individual classes meet only two or three times per week will be considered as meeting this standard if the average class sizes, based on a five day week, are not exceeded.)
6. The principal of the school has at least one-half of his or her time free from teaching responsibilities for supervision of the instructional program. Principals of schools with 14 or more teachers have full time for administration and supervision.
7. All inter-school contests and all other school-sponsored activities are under direct and complete control of the school administration. Responsibilities related to school-sponsored activities are not delegated to any person or persons other than employees of the school or system.

8. The Media Center has a minimum of 10 books per student or a minimum of 7 books per student and an annual expenditure of \$2.00 or more per student for computer disks, video cassettes, video disks, filmstrips and other non-print media.
9. Each teacher has at least one 30-minute period during the class day for planning and preparation for instruction with the following exception. Teachers who are on extended day programs may have planning periods outside the regular class day.
10. The school requires the completion of a four-year course of study above the eighth grade for graduation.
11. At least 60% of the students enter from accredited feeder schools.
12. The school provides each student a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch.
13. The organization of the Media Center collection and the school schedule facilitates use of the collection by students during all school hours.
14. Student personnel services include access to health and psychological counseling services.
15. When offered by the school, the weekly meals provide one-third of the recommended weekly dietary allowance of nutrients and include meat or a meat alternate, bread, milk, and fruits and/or vegetables.

II. Summer School

(For Accredited status all 5 standards are required.)

1. The summer school program is operated in such a manner that needed supportive services are available to students. The school system also handles all funds involved in the summer program. In addition, all conditions of Provisional accreditation are met.
2. There are at least 120 clock hours of instruction for each 15 quarter hours of credit or each Carnegie Unit awarded.
3. The school does not grant students more than 25 quarter hours of credit or 1-1/2 Carnegie Units in a summer school of 30 days or less. Nor does it grant more than 30 quarter hours of credit or two Carnegie Units during any summer school period.
4. No teacher teaches more than two subjects in the same period.
5. Credit is not granted to any student in more than three subject areas during any summer school period.

III. Personnel

(For Accredited status, 10 affirmative answers are required, including standards 1 through 9.)

1. In addition to the principal, the teaching staff includes five or more full-time, qualified teachers in the high school.
2. A school with an enrollment of 750 or more must have a full-time assistant principal. A combination school (that is, an elementary and high school under one administration) of 30 or more teachers must have an assistant principal. Either the principal or the assistant principal must have responsibility in the elementary area.
3. All teachers employed on a full-time or part-time basis as instructors in the school hold a Georgia professional certificate or a Bachelor's degree with a minimum of 18 semester hours of professional education. An exception may be granted for those teachers issued permits by the Georgia Department of Education. This standard may also be met by teachers with bachelor's degrees completing 6 semester hours per year of appropriate professional education until 18 semester hours of credit are obtained. Equivalent staff development units (PLU) may be substituted for semester hours. See Appendix A for PLU hour conversion chart.
4. All teachers employed on a full-time or part-time basis as instructors in the school hold an in-field Georgia certificate or a minimum of 27 semester hours in the field in which the major part of their teaching lies. All teachers also have a minimum of 6 semester hours in any field in which they teach. An exception may be granted for those teachers issued permits by the Georgia Department of Education.

5. The principal holds a Georgia state administrator's professional certificate. In non-public schools, the principal may hold a master's degree with a minimum of 15 semester hours in school administration and supervision.
6. The superintendent or headmaster holds a five-year Georgia administrator's certificate in order for any school in the system to be accredited. In non-public schools, the superintendent or headmaster holds, as a minimum, a master's degree with a minimum of 15 semester hours in school administration and supervision.
7. Schools with 7 through 9 teachers have 1/4-time secretarial service, 10 through 13 teachers have 1/2-time secretarial service, 14 through 16 teachers have 3/4-time secretarial service, and with 17 or more teachers have full-time secretarial service.
8. Schools with between 201 and 250 students have one person assigned at least one-half time to media services. All persons employed as paraprofessionals, auxiliary helpers or teachers' aides are under the direct supervision of a professionally qualified person.
9. A high school that is part of a combination school has media service allocated on the basis of the total enrollment of the combination school.
10. A school counselor with at least a master's degree and 18 semester hours credit in guidance and counseling or SC-5 certificate is assigned for guidance and testing equivalent to one period per day for each 100 students. For each additional 500 students or major fraction, an additional full-time counselor is employed.
11. Assistant principals have preparation leading toward a Georgia state administrator's professional certificate or a master's degree with 15 semester hours in administration and supervision. Assistant principals who do not meet these requirements may earn 6 semester hours in administration and supervision each year until the requirements are met.
12. All teachers who do not hold current Georgia teaching certificates and who have been employed by the school or school system for five years or more have received at least 6 semester hours or 10 quarter hours of college credit, or 10 continuing education units, or 100 contact hours in locally approved professional development activities within the past 5 years.

IV. Media Center

A written plan is provided to address the provisions below. This plan may be excerpted from school improvement plans, strategic waiver plans, etc

- 1 At least \$6.00 per student enrolled is spent for library books, software subscriptions such as online encyclopedias and reference databases, and other library media, exclusive of equipment, each school year.
- 2 The school media center has a collection management policy. The school media specialist works with school administrators and teachers in order to develop a collection management policy. Such a policy statement is based upon the curriculum and particular needs and interest of the school community and must reflect the diversity of society outside the school and extends the school library function from providing for consumers of information to creators of information.
- 3 The media center has appropriate number of staff who are certified, licensed or have specialized training or experience.
- 4 The media center includes a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum.
- 5 The media center is available for students and staff before, during, and after school
- 6 The media center is responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
- 7 The media center includes a physical setting that encourages collaboration among students, opportunities for inquiry, and authentic learning.

V. Programs of Study

(For Accredited status, 4 affirmative answers are required, including standards 1 through 4.)

Twenty-one Carnegie Units of credit in grades 9 through 12 are required for graduation.

1. At least 27 unit courses are taught for credit each year. Each of these 27 units constitutes a full year's work. A school may meet this requirement by alternating foreign language I and II or chemistry and physics.
2. All graduating students meet the following requirements:

English	4 Units
Mathematics	4 Units
American History-Government	1 Unit
Other Social Sciences	2 Units
Physical and Natural Sciences	4 Units
Health	½ Unit
Physical Education	½ Unit
<u>Electives</u>	<u>5 Units</u>
TOTAL	21 Units

3. All academic work transferred from a school accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission is accepted with the following exception. A student may not be granted credit for more than 30 quarter hours or two Carnegie Units during any summer school period, including transfer credit.
4. Evidence exists that a program of health and physical education is conducted in accordance with accepted practice.
5. All transfer credit that is not from a GAC or SACS accredited school is validated. Acceptance of work endorsed by other accrediting groups is the prerogative of local schools. To validate credit, a school may give examinations or may certify satisfactory performance.

Standards for Online Schools

Online schools carry out teaching and learning remotely. Teachers and technology (including computers, CDs, MP3 recordings, DVDs and network-enabled delivery of content) are located generally at one central location while students study at home or other places outside the central site. Instruction is received using computer-based learning, audio and video tapes, and satellite television, study packets, textbooks and other study materials. Some delivery systems enable students to communicate with the teachers via telephone or the internet.

Design and delivery systems include asynchronous instruction where teachers make assignments and give tests that are due at a specified date. Students are allowed to work at their own pace and take open book tests online or use the more traditional route of paper and pencil.

Synchronous instruction is more akin to the traditional classroom. Teachers and students must go online together at designated times. Students log in and watch a presentation by the teacher. Some systems permit students to communicate with the teacher by typing their questions and sending them to the teacher via the internet.

Online schools may be made up of any combination of grades Kindergarten through 12. Applications from the chief administrator must satisfy the requirements of one or more of the following categories of accreditation. The application will identify the category chosen.

- Kindergarten
- Elementary School
- Junior High/Middle School
- High School
- Non-Traditional Educational Center

The chief administrator of the school will work with the consultant and will provide the consultant and the Commission with a **written operational plan** that demonstrates the school functions in accordance with each standard of the category of accreditation selected. The **written operational plan** also must demonstrate:

- The school is associated with a GAC accredited school.
- The school meets the standards for the category and accreditation status selected.
- The school is physically located in the State of Georgia.
- The location where teachers teach is in the State of Georgia.
- Each teacher possesses a valid Georgia Teaching Certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- The students are Georgia residents. GAC accreditation does not extend to students outside the State of Georgia.
- A minimum of 120 clock hours of class activity is required to earn a Carnegie unit.

The plan also addresses each of the questions below.

1. What is the instruction design and delivery system? Please identify and provide the rationale for selecting the plan to be used.
2. Has the curriculum for each course been selected?
3. Is there a minimum amount of time required of a student to study before credit can be granted? For example, would a student be allowed to take the end-of-course test after one-month of study? Two months? Three months? What is the maximum time allowed for earning of a diploma? Two years? Three years? Seven years?
4. What happens if a student needs help while studying course content?
5. Are teachers available to help students? When are they available? How are they available?
6. What grade levels will be accepted for initial admission? 5th, 7th, 9th, or only 10th and above? For example, if an 18 year-old student who had completed only the seventh grade wanted to enroll, would this student be accepted?
7. What method(s) of accounting are used for the time the student spends studying before an end-of-course test could be taken? How is attendance accounted for?

8. Does the school have a governing board? If so, what role(s) does the board play?
9. Does each course have an end-of-course test that covers the entire course?
10. What makes the end-of-course tests valid?
11. Where will end-of-course tests be administered? For example, is there a testing room located at some central place?
12. Who will administer end-of-course tests? What are the qualifications of this person? Will there be oversight of the administration of the tests by an educator other than the one administering the tests?
13. Where are end-of-course tests stored?
14. What happens if a student fails the end-of-course test?
15. How will the school deal with students who have successfully completed all of their high school Carnegie unit credit requirements, but did not pass one or more of the Georgia High School Graduation Tests?

The plan must be forwarded to the consultant and to the Executive Director of GAC prior to the consultant's visit. School leaders are encouraged to make the plans as concise as practical with additional documentation made available to the consultant during the on-site accreditation review.

Standards for Educational Agencies With Special Purposes

Educational Agencies With Special Purposes are defined as those agencies serving groups of students whose learning needs are so sufficiently different from those of a heterogeneous population that specialized instructional methods and/or facilities are needed. The learning needs of the individual students served by these agencies must be sufficiently similar that they can best be met by grouping these students together in a specialized setting.

Accreditation of a Pre-Kindergarten program located at the same site as an Educational Agency with Special Purposes is a separate category of accreditation. The Pre-Kindergarten program must meet the standards of Pre-Kindergartens as defined in the section of this document dealing with the accreditation of Pre-Kindergartens.

The process of accrediting Educational Agencies With Special Purposes begins with an examination of the agency's written statement of its educational goals. This focus allows the agency's program to be uniquely specialized to meet the learning needs of the students served and to be responsive to the interests and general welfare of the groups and students they serve.

Because Educational Agencies With Special Purposes vary widely in the kinds of students they serve, the kinds of programs provided also vary. For this reason, the Commission has developed specific principles that these agencies must meet. However, because of the specialized nature of the programs, it is essential that there is sufficient stability in leadership positions to ensure program continuity. Therefore, all Educational Agencies With Special Purposes are required to meet the following conditions in order to be Provisionally accredited or Accredited with the Georgia Accrediting Commission.

1. The educational agency must employ three or more full-time equivalent professional educators. The teaching staff must have academic preparation in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Other part-time or full-time teachers should be employed as the need arises.
2. The agency must be visited by a committee, appointed by the Executive Director of the Georgia Accrediting Commission, composed of at least one member of the Board of Directors or the Executive Director and one other person who may be a member of the Board of Directors or an approved consultant prior to approval for Provisionally Accredited or Accredited status. The agency will pay both the consultant and the other member of the committee at the rate of \$250 per day and travel expenses.
3. Whenever the person designated as the educational director of the agency leaves the position, the Executive Director of the Georgia Accrediting Commission must be notified. A visiting committee will be appointed to visit the agency within 18 months of the change to verify the continuity of the educational program.

Accreditation Classifications

The Board of Directors has approved three levels of classifications for Educational Agencies With Special Purposes seeking Accredited status with the Georgia Accrediting Commission.

Preparation Status. Classification for an agency that has involved its faculty and staff in a study of the GAC principles and is moving toward Accredited status. An agency may be in *Preparation* status a maximum of two years.

Provisional Status. Classification for an agency that has involved its faculty and staff in a study of the GAC principles and has provided the Commission with satisfactory documentation that Principles Two, Four, and Six have been met. An agency may be in *Provisional* status a maximum of two years.

Accredited Status. Classification for an agency that has involved its faculty and staff in a study of the GAC principles and has provided the Commission with satisfactory documentation that the operation of the agency is in agreement with each principle.

Application Procedures for Educational Agencies with Special Purposes

Preparation Status:

1. The chief administrative officer of the agency will notify in writing the GAC Executive Director of the agency's desire to obtain Accredited status with the GAC. A fee of \$50.00 will be paid for each year of membership in *Preparation* status.
2. A visiting committee will be named by the Executive Director to work with the agency. The committee will consist of a consultant and member of the board of directors. The agency will pay the consultant and board member at the rate of \$250 per day each plus travel expenses.
3. The visiting committee will assist the educational director in understanding the overall concept of accreditation. The committee and the agency director will verify to the Executive Director that the faculty is engaged in examining the *Bulletin* and that they are preparing the materials required in this document.
4. An agency may be approved for *Preparation* status for the current year at the first meeting of the Commission following the receipt of the agency's report, provided it has been visited by the committee and a recommendation by the committee has been received in the office of the Executive Director. The agency may make application and be approved for both *Preparation* and initial *Provisional* status during the same year provided the recommendation of the committee indicates that the agency meets standards required for *Provisional* status.

Provisional Status:

1. The chief administrative officer of the agency will notify the GAC Executive Director of its desire to move to *Provisional* status. A fee of \$100.00 will be paid for each year of membership in *Provisional* status.
2. A visiting committee will be named by the Executive Director to work with the agency. The committee will consist of a consultant and member of the board of directors. The agency will pay the consultant and board member at the rate of \$250 per day each plus travel expenses.
3. The chief administrator of the agency will have worked with the committee and will provide the Commission with satisfactory documentation that the operation of the agency is in agreement with principles two, four, and six. A written operational plan should directly address how the agency meets principles two, four, and six. Agency personnel are encouraged to make the applications as concise as practical with additional documentation made available to the visiting committee on the site.
4. The visiting committee will review the agency's written application and visit the agency.
5. An agency may remain in Provisional Status for a maximum of two years. After the second year, the agency must attain Accredited Status or lose its accreditation.
6. When students transfer to other schools, the school will assist the receiving school in making the transition to the new school. Such assistance will include, but not be limited to, evaluation of work completed, credits earned, tests completed, attendance, records transfer and other pertinent information. However, the school has the right to withhold records until all obligations, such as financial, have been met.
7. The agency maintains attendance records for all students. Student records are protected against fire, theft, and damage by being located in a fire-resistant cabinet or a second, duplicate set of records is located in another area.
8. All student records must be kept for a period of not less than seven years. After that time only transcripts must be kept.

Accredited Status:

1. The chief administrative officer of the agency will notify the GAC Executive Director of the agency's desire to move to *Accredited* status. A fee of \$100.00 will be paid for each year of membership.
2. A visiting committee will be named by the Executive Director to work with the agency. The committee will consist of a consultant and a member of the board of directors. The agency will pay the consultant and board member at the rate of \$250 per day each plus travel expenses.
3. The chief administrator of the agency will have worked with the committee and will provide the Commission with satisfactory documentation that the operation of the agency is in agreement with each principle. The written application should directly address how the agency meets each principle. Agency personnel are encouraged to make the applications as concise as practical with additional documentation made available to the visiting committee on the site.
4. A written operational plan should directly address how the agency meets each principle. The visiting committee will review the agency's plan and visit the agency.
5. After the agency has been awarded *Accredited* status, the agency will apply for *Continuing Accreditation* status on or before November 30 of each year. After the fourth year in *Accredited* status, the agency is required to have an on-site visit by a consultant appointed by the GAC Executive Director. A written application for *Accredited* status will also be required in which changes since the last application are described.
6. When students transfer to other schools, the school will assist the receiving school in making the transition to the new school. Such assistance will include, but not be limited to, evaluation of work completed, credits earned, tests completed, attendance, records transfer and other pertinent information. However, the school has the right to withhold records until all obligations, such as financial, have been met.
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8. All student records must be kept for a period of not less than seven years. After that time only transcripts must be kept.

Principles of Accreditation for Educational Agencies With Special Purposes (EASP)

The chief administrator of the agency will work with the consultant and will provide the consultant, a member of the board of directors and the executive director with a **written operational plan** that demonstrates the center functions in compliance with each principle. The **written operational plan** must be forwarded to the consultant, a member of the board of directors and the executive director of GAC prior to the visit of the committee consisting of a consultant and a member of the board of directors.

Principle Number One:

The structure of the agency and the organization for basic responsibility should be clear. The agency and related administrative units must meet the following standards:

- A. The educational program is under the administration of a person with a Master's degree.
- B. The governing board of the agency publishes policies that will assure the observance of professional ethics by all concerned and will promote the professional development of competent personnel.
- C. The governing board delegates to the administrator executive and administrative functions, including the nomination of staff personnel.

Principle Number Two:

The agency's philosophy and objectives are recorded in a statement of purpose and a written account identifies the way the purpose is reflected in admissions and in the program of operation, administration, organization, instruction, and student activities.

- A. The students served are so sufficiently different from those of a heterogeneous population that specialized instructional methods and/or facilities are needed.
- B. The learning needs of the individual students served are so sufficiently similar that they can best be met by grouping these students together in a specialized setting. The students served during any summer session include only those who would be eligible to be served by the agency during the normal school year. (All standards for high school summer school programs also apply to summer school programs provided by the agency.)
- C. Teachers of mathematics, science, language arts, or social studies to students at any grade level have bachelor degrees and at least 6 semester hours credit in education courses.
- D. Students who receive high school diplomas, other than GEDs or special education diplomas, have been taught high school mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies by teachers who have Georgia professional certificates in their teaching fields or bachelor degrees and at least 18 semester hours credit in their teaching fields.
- E. Student records are protected against fire, theft, and damage by being located in a fire resistant cabinet or a second, duplicate set of records is located in another area.
- F. The governing board of a school or school system publishes policies that will assure the observance of professional ethics by all concerned and will promote the professional development of competent school personnel.
- G. When students transfer to other schools, the school will assist the receiving school in making the transition to the new school. Such assistance will include, but not be limited to, evaluation of work completed, credits earned, tests completed, attendance, records transfer and other pertinent information. However, the school has the right to withhold records until all obligations, such as financial, have been met.

Principle Number Three:

The application shows that the program provides opportunities for learning based upon knowledge of the learning process and the abilities and interests of all the students.

- A. The application shows why each course offered is needed to achieve the purpose of the agency's educational program.
- B. The application shows that the agency's educational program emphasizes evaluation as a major factor in demonstrating achievement of the agency's purpose.
- C. Students who receive high school diplomas, other than GEDs or special education diplomas, meet the same course work requirements as required by the Georgia Accrediting Commission of students who graduate from public or private high schools.

Principle Number Four:

The quality of personnel determines, in large measure, the success of the program in meeting its goals and objectives.

- A. The application shows, for each staff member, how the transcript of credits, experience, and professional activities especially fit that person to perform the tasks assigned.
- B. The application shows how the number of personnel proves to be adequate to the program's distinctive purpose.
- C. The agency employs three or more full-time equivalent professional educators.

- D. Teachers of mathematics, science, language arts, or social studies to students at any grade level have bachelor degrees and at least 6 semester hours credit in education courses. Equivalent staff development units may be substituted for semester hours in professional education.
- E. The application shows salary increases for each staff member for the past year and the staff members' supplementary benefits are documented.

Principle Number Five:

The school plant and site provide an adequate physical environment for the school's educational program. The school is designed, operated, and maintained in a way in which the school's purpose and objectives are implemented.

- A. The application shows that the size and design of buildings and grounds are suitable to the school's purpose in size and in design.
- B. The application shows that available teaching materials and equipment are of acceptable quality, quantity and variety.
- C. The agency has a minimum of 10 library books per student or a minimum of 7 library books per student and an annual expenditure of \$2.00 or more per student for computer disks, video cassettes, video disks, filmstrips or other non-print media.
- D. The agency meets all applicable School Plant standards required for accreditation of High School programs. (Educational directors are encouraged to request waivers of specific standards that are inappropriate for the students they serve.)

Principle Number Six:

The governing board of the agency shall provide a system of financial support, budgeting and educational fund accounting that insures the operation of a quality program which is in keeping with the educational purpose of the agency.

- A. The application shows how the funds are adequate for the educational program.
- B. The educational administrator is provided with an annual budget allocation that is adequate for the educational program.
- C. Finances relating to all inter-school contests and all other school-sponsored activities are under the direct control of the educational administrator.
- D. The monthly and annual salary of the educational administrator is greater than that of any other member of the educational staff with the same level of preparation and experience.
- E. Each agency has a satisfactory system of internal accounting with records kept on all funds by the administrator or his or her appointed personnel. These records are audited annually and a financial statement is available.

Principle Number Seven:

The environment of the agency promotes ethical relationships, professional growth, and personal welfare for the faculty and staff. The agency's educational program also provides for the mental, physical, and emotional health and safety of the students.

- A. The application shows that the agency has a plan to follow the progress of those students who have left the agency.
- B. The application explains the professional growth experiences of the staff for the past year.

Standards for Non-Traditional Educational Centers

Non-Traditional Educational Centers are defined as those centers serving groups of students engaged in independent study/homeschool activities and are members of a center for non-traditional learning. A student enrolled in a Non-Traditional Educational Center (NTEC) may spend a maximum of 60% of instructional time at the Center.

The process of accrediting NTEC's begins with an examination of the center's **written statement of educational goals and written operational plan**. This focus allows the center's program to be uniquely specialized to meet the learning needs of the students they serve. The **written statement of educational goals, written operational plan** and a list of the center's governing board members must be sent to the consultant and to the Executive Director of the GAC prior to the consultant's visit to the center for review.

The process of initial accreditation is as follows:

1. The director of the Center will contact the Executive Director of GAC to make application, pay the \$250 application fee and identify a consultant. Upon GAC Board approval, the initial application fee includes the first year's membership.
2. The director of the Center will submit the written Statement of Educational Goals, Operational Plan, and list of the center's governing board members to the consultant and the Executive Director of GAC.
3. The Center pays the consultant \$250 and travel expenses per day.
4. The director of the Center shall receive a copy of the consultant's report upon payment to the consultant.
5. The Center must enroll a minimum of 10 students to be eligible to apply for accreditation through GAC.
6. A consultant visit is required each year for the first three years of initial accreditation.

ACCREDITATION STATUSES

Accredited Annually:

The director of the Center and the consultant will follow the guidelines as described in the Consultant Visitation Program.

A **Written Operational Plan** must contain descriptions of the following:

1. The Center must meet all standards in Standard Requirements for All Schools, Agencies and Centers.
2. The Center will inform parents of their responsibility to comply with DOE requirements.
3. The Center maintains instructional accountability for all students. All student records must be kept for a period of not less than seven years. After that time, only transcripts must be kept.
4. The Center administers, scores and records a content test at the end of each course.
5. The Center maintains an academic transcript of the courses completed, the clock hours devoted to each, and the end-of-course test grades.
6. Students must take a nationally standardized test every three years. The PSAT, SAT or ACT are acceptable to meet this requirement. The Center must maintain a record of this testing.
7. The Center provides opportunity for frequent educational and social activities in the community.
8. When students transfer to other schools, the school will assist the receiving school in making the transition to the new school. Such assistance will include, but not be limited to, evaluation of work completed, credits earned, tests completed, attendance, records transfer and other pertinent information. However, the Center has the right to withhold records until all obligations, such as financial, have been met.
9. Coursework is designed to require 4 ½ hours of instructional activity for 180 equivalent days.
10. One person who is assigned to leadership in academic planning for the agency must possess at least a bachelor's degree

11. A faculty member with a bachelor's degree will be present for centers offering group classes, and for each period, with a ratio of one bachelor-degreed teacher for 40 students (Commission Consultant will make calculations by dividing the total number of students enrolled, each period, by 40).
12. Instructors of mathematics, science, language arts, or social studies to students at any grade level have bachelor degrees and at least 6 semester hours credit in education courses. Equivalent staff development units (PLU's) may be substituted for semester hours of professional education. See Appendix A for PLU hour conversion chart.
13. The Center will certify the completion of at least 22 units for graduation (a minimum of 120 clock hours of instructional activity equals one unit). See Graduation Requirements for NTEC Schools.
14. The summer school program follows the standards for High School Summer School.
15. When the school is relocated the GAC Executive Director will be notified within three months and a consultant site visit is required.
16. The Center requires a student to complete an academic year of study through the accredited center program before verifying independent study completed prior to entry into the Center.
17. The center provides space and opportunity for patrons to examine and/or review curriculum materials and books that may be utilized in independent study.
18. Each student has an advisor who will assist in the development of an Instructional Plan.
19. The Center has an annual budget allocation that is adequate for the educational program.
20. Each Center has a satisfactory system of internal accounting with records kept on all funds by the administrator or his/her appointed personnel. A financial statement is available and subject to an annual, external review.
21. The governing group of the Center publishes policies of professional ethics for staff.
22. The governing group delegates to the administrator executive and administrative functions, including the appointment of staff personnel.
23. The Center will document that the student has access to appropriate research materials.

Accredited Fully:

After three years in the **Accredited Annually** status, a Center may apply to be Accredited Fully. Upon the GAC Board's approval of the consultant's recommendation for Accredited Fully, a consultant visit will be required every three years for renewal of accreditation.

NTEC Graduation requirements on next page.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR NTEC SCHOOLS

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History of Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.

Chancellor Walter B. Hill of the University of Georgia employed Dr. Joseph S. Stewart as Professor of Secondary Education on July 1, 1903. He was employed to work with the high schools of Georgia to bring about a better relationship between the high schools and the University of Georgia. This was the beginning of the present Georgia Accrediting Commission. Professor Stewart published a manual for high schools during the 1903-1904 school year and accepted applications from high schools during that year. He published the first list of accredited schools in 1904.

Dr. Stewart's work was first financed by George Foster Peabody, then the General Education Board, and later by the University of Georgia. When Dr. Stewart started his work, he found four four-year public high schools in the state and seven four-year private high schools in the state. Literally, the development of high schools in the state of Georgia and the Georgia Accrediting Commission parallel each other at every step of the way.

The development of the modern public high school in Georgia began with the employment of Dr. Stewart by the University of Georgia and parallels his continuous and distinguished service in this area from 1903 to his death in 1934. Some of his outstanding accomplishments are the accrediting process for Georgia high schools, the organization of the Georgia High School Association, (then known as District High School Associations), leadership in the organization of the Secondary Commission of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the organizing and editing of the Georgia High School Quarterly, leadership in the fight for legislation for tax-supported high schools, and the long-time leadership for improved curriculum and organization of high schools.

In 1920 Chancellor Barrow of the University of Georgia increased the size and representation of the Accrediting Committee. In 1921 consisted of Dr. Joseph S. Stewart, Chairman, University of Georgia; W. D. Hooper, University of Georgia; J. R. Fain, State College of Agriculture, Athens; T. H. Jack, College Association, Emory; W. E. Farrar, College Association, Mercer; H. H. Caldwell, College Association, Georgia Tech and E. A. Pound, Georgia Department of Education. For a number of years Professor Stewart and Mr. Pound cooperated in visiting schools. Prior to this time, Professor Stewart had been the only visitor and had come to be called the High School Inspector. For 30 years (1904 to his death in 1934), Dr. Stewart was Chairman of the Committee and served as Professor of Secondary Education at the University of Georgia. In 1934 the group organized as the Georgia High School Accrediting Commission with a constitution. The constitution stated that four members were to be from the Georgia College Association, four members from the Georgia High School Association, and the High School Supervisor from the State Department of Education was to serve as an ex-officio member.

After the death of Dr. Stewart, the office remained in Athens until 1941. For three years Mr. T. J. Dempsey, Jr., State High School Supervisor in the State Department of Education, was the Secretary of the Georgia High School Accrediting Commission. In 1937 Mr. J. Harold Saxon became the University High School Inspector, the title held by Dr. Stewart, and Secretary of the Georgia High School Accrediting Commission. In 1941 the office was moved to the Georgia Department of Education in Atlanta with Mr. W. E. Pafford serving as Executive Director of the Georgia High School Accrediting Commission. Mr. Pafford was the Executive Secretary until his retirement from the State Department of Education in 1964. Dr. H. S. Shearouse, staff member of the State Department of Education, then became Executive Secretary until his retirement in 1967. Mr. J. A. Mize, a staff member of the State Department of Education, became Executive Secretary in 1967 and continued in that position until the office was moved from the State Department of Education in 1969. Dr. H. S. Shearouse again became Executive Secretary in 1969 with the office being located at Springfield. Dr. Shearouse served until July 1977, at which time Mr. J. A. Mize became Executive Secretary and the office was moved to Metter. On July 1, 1985 Dr. John Hulsey, Jr., School of Education, Georgia Southern College, succeeded Mr. J. A. Mize, and the office was moved to the campus of Georgia Southern College, Statesboro.

On July 1, 1989 Dr. Kenneth M. Matthews, College of Education, the University of Georgia, was appointed as Executive Director and the office was moved to Athens.

From the beginning until 1941, the Bulletin, setting forth the rules, regulations, and standards, together with the approved list of accredited schools, was a bulletin of the University of Georgia. In 1941 it became the Official Bulletin of the Georgia High School Accrediting Commission without relationship to any institution. In 1944 the organization changed its name to the Georgia Accrediting Commission and expanded the membership on the Board of Directors to include two representatives from elementary schools, to be selected by the Elementary School Principals Association. A list of standard elementary schools was published for the next two years. In 1947 the elementary schools were listed as accredited schools. In 1974 the Commission began accrediting kindergartens. The membership of the Commission has been changed several times, always to make broader representation from the professional elements within the state.

In 1986, the Commission accredited Educational Agencies With Special Purposes for the first time. In September of 1989 the Board of Directors authorized Dr. Kenneth M. Matthews to explore the possibility of accrediting pre-kindergarten educational programs. During the 1989-1990 school year standards were developed. The standards were field-tested during the 1990-1991 school year. In September of 1991 the standards were approved and the first five pre-kindergarten programs were accredited by the Commission. In response to the growing number of students involved in home schooling and other forms of independent study the Commission began accrediting Non-Traditional Educational Centers in 2005 to serve students who engage part or full-time in independent study.

After successfully leading the Commission through 13 years of growth and change Dr. Kenneth M. Matthews chose to retire in June of 2002. On July 1, 2002 Dr. Carvin L. Brown, Professor Emeritus, University of Georgia assumed the role of Executive Director.

Beginning in August of 2005 the Commission accredited Non-Traditional Educational Centers. Among other requirements, students must spend at least 40 percent of their learning time in independent study at home or at a place designated by their parents other than the center. The centers were formerly members of the Accrediting Commission for Independent Study, an accrediting agency initiated by Dr. Starr Miller, President Emeritus of Brewton-Parker College.

After twelve years leading the GAC as executive director, Dr. Brown, decided to retire. Phillip K. Murphy, retired superintendent, former high school principal and NASA Aerospace Education Services Project Assistant Director was selected by the GAC Directors to succeed Dr. Brown.

The Georgia Accrediting Commission has provided and continues to provide leadership for education in Georgia. The accrediting process stimulates local schools and school districts to provide better and safer physical facilities and to improve the qualifications of staff members, teaching conditions, and curriculum. It also provides a valid means of judging the quality of schools. As a result, the academic credits of students who transfer between accredited schools can be accepted without special examination. Accreditation by the Georgia Accrediting Commission has always been a way of recognizing schools with good educational programs. Its standards continue to serve as guides for those who want to develop good programs.

BYLAWS

The Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.

Article I

Purposes

The purposes of the Commission are to provide better education for the youth of Georgia by permitting this independent Commission of educators to stimulate the schools to achieve and maintain a high level of professional integrity and competence. The Commission shall have such powers as are now granted to nonprofit organizations incorporated under laws of the State of Georgia not inconsistent with purposes set forth in the Charter of the Commission.

Article II

Name and Seal

Section 2.01 - Name

The name of the Commission is the Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc.

Section 2.02 - Seal

The seal of the Commission shall be circular in form and shall bear on the upper portion of the outer circle the words "The Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc." The Board may change the form of the seal or the inscription thereon at its pleasure.

Article III

Geographical Location

The geographical territory shall be within the confines of the State of Georgia.

Article IV

Membership

Section 4.01 - Active Membership

Active membership shall be open to qualifying public and non-public pre-kindergartens, kindergartens, elementary schools, junior high/middle schools, senior high schools, and educational agencies with special purposes.

Section 4.02 - Officers

Persons engaged in the work of teaching or administration of education shall have the right to hold office and participate in the activities of the Commission.

Article V

The Board of Directors

Section 5.01 - The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of the Georgia Accrediting Commission, Inc. shall be composed of both public and non-public educators with twelve members representing elementary, middle grades, and high schools, two representing education beyond high schools, one representing educational agencies with special purposes, one representing pre-kindergarten programs, one representing Non-Traditional Educational Centers and one ex officio member representing the Georgia Department of Education.

Section 5.02 – Election of Members of Board of Directors

At any election of directors, nominations will be brought before the Board by the Board for a vote. The nominee shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors. The person nominated must have been contacted prior to their nomination and must understand the term and responsibilities of a director and must have expressed a willingness to serve if elected.

Section 5.03 - Term of Office of Members of Board of Directors

The term of office shall be for five years with each member serving until his/her successor has been elected. A member's office shall be considered vacant when the member is absent from three regular meetings during the member's elected term. A member may not be represented by a substitute at a Board meeting. The term of the ex officio members shall be four years. Any ex officio member shall be reappointed by virtue of his/her office.

Section 5.04 - Vacancy on Board of Directors

In the event of a vacancy in the term for which a person has been elected, the Board of Directors will elect a person to fill the unexpired term at the next regular election.

Section 5.05 - General Duties

The Board of Directors shall prescribe procedures, policies, classification, fees, and standards for the accreditation of pre-kindergartens, kindergartens, elementary schools, junior high/middle schools, senior high schools, educational agencies with special purposes, non-traditional educational centers, and on-line schools.

**Article VI
Officers and Committees**

Section 6.01- Officers

The officers of the Board shall be Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Board of Directors shall elect these officers at the end of the Spring meeting each year.

Section 6.02 -Executive Director

The Executive Director shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors. The compensation of the Executive Director shall be set annually by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall be the executive officer of the Board of Directors, but shall not have a vote.

Section 6.03 - Committees

A Nominating Committee to consist of at least three and not more than five members shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board at its Fall meeting. The Committee shall present, for approval, at the Spring meeting of the Board, a slate of nominations for officers of the Board and for all vacancies on the Board.

The Executive Committee to consist of at least three members shall be appointed by the Chairman to review the financial records to report its findings to the Board at its Fall meeting. The books shall be reviewed by a certified public accountant annually.

Other committees may be appointed with authority to transact appropriate business as the Chairman and/or the Board may direct.

Section 6.04 - Duties of Officers

The Chairman shall preside at the meetings of the Board of Directors. In his absence the Vice Chairman shall preside.

The Vice Chairman shall perform the duties usually devolving upon such officers.

The Executive Director shall receive the correspondence, applications, and fees. He shall coordinate the work of the Commission representatives who may visit the schools for the purpose of inspections. He shall be custodian of the minutes of the Commission and keep minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors. He shall have the authority and responsibility for the safekeeping of the funds and securities of the Commission. He shall be bonded in the amount determined by the Board of Directors at the expense of the Commission.

Article VII

Meetings of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall hold two meetings annually, one in the Fall for the primary purpose of reviewing standards, and one in the Spring to pass upon applications of the schools that are filed each year; to make up a list of accredited senior high schools, junior high/middle schools, elementary schools, kindergartens, pre-kindergartens, and educational agencies with special purposes for the next school year; and to transact such other business as pertains to the accrediting of Georgia schools by the Georgia Accrediting Commission. An annual meeting may be recessed until such time as the Chairman or majority of the members deems it advisable for the Board of Directors to be reconvened. A meeting of the Board of Directors may be called by the Chairman or a majority of the Board of Directors.

Article VIII

Sale or Transfer of Any Stock, Bond, Security or Other Property

Any sale or transfer of any stock, bond, security, or any other property standing in the name of the corporation shall be valid only if signed by the Executive Director and one officer. Any sale or transfer signed in this manner, having affixed thereon the seal of the corporation, shall in all respects bind the corporation as fully and completely as if each transaction had been authorized by a specific vote of the Directors, and any person, firm or corporation to whom a copy of this Article VIII shall have been certified by the Executive Director shall be entitled to rely thereon until notified of its repeal.

Article IX

Quorum

A quorum for the transaction of any business shall be a majority of the Board of Directors then in office.

Article X

Reimbursement of Expenses for Board Members

The members of the Board of Directors shall serve without compensation. They shall be reimbursed for expenses for attendance at meetings authorized by the Board of Directors.

Article XI

Amend Bylaws

The Board of Directors shall have the power to alter, amend, or repeal bylaws or adopt new bylaws, provided that the bylaws shall not contain any provision inconsistent with the Charter.

Suggested Guidelines for Board of Directors Membership

- 1 Superintendent
 - 2 Central Office Representatives
 - 3 Principals: 1 Elementary, 1 Middle/Junior High 1 High School
 - 3 Classroom Teachers:
 - 1 Assistant Principal
 - 1 University Admissions Officer
 - 1 Technical College System of Georgia Admissions Officer
 - 1 University Teacher Education/Leader Education
 - 1 Representative from Georgia Department of Education
 - 1 Representative from Directors of Regional Educational Service Agencies
 - 1 Representative from Educational Agencies With Special Purposes
 - 2 Private School Headmasters
 - 1 Pre-kindergarten Representative
 - 1 Non-Traditional Educational Center Educator
 - 1 Charter School Representative
- 21 TOTAL

APPENDIX A

GAC follows the state in defining PLU:

"A PLU is a unit of credit based on 10 contact hours of formal instruction or its equivalent and on verification that the intent of the formal instruction has been implemented on the job or on mastery verification conducted during formal instruction.

The minimum contact time for one PLU activity shall be 10 contact hours. Training activities for more than one PLU shall be in multiples of 10 contact hours. Partial PLUs or fractions of PLUs may not be awarded. No more than eight contact hours of instruction shall be conducted per day with a maximum of four PLUs earned per week."

This all means that a school could set up a program - maybe even a collaborative program with a sister school or two – and secure qualified instructors (master's degree or higher with specialization in a content area or professional education area) to teach at times and locations convenient for all. There are lots of possibilities for gaining PLUs without having to take college courses.

Converting Hours and PLUs (CEUs or SDUs) to Semester Hours

Hours or Units	Contact Hours		Result
10 Contact Hours	10	=	1 PLU (CEU or SDU)
30 Contact Hours	30	=	1 Semester Hour
3 PLUs (CEUs or SDUs)	30	=	1 Semester Hour
6 PLUs (CEUs or SDUs)	60	=	2 Semester Hours
9 PLUs (CEUs or SDUs)	90	=	3 Semester Hours
12 PLUs (CEUs or SDUs)	120	=	4 Semester Hours
15 PLUs (CEUs or SDUs)	150	=	5 Semester Hours
18 PLUs (CEUs or SDUs)	180	=	6 Semester Hours

For teachers seeking to earn the 18 semester hours of professional education required, 6 semester hours are required each year until the teacher has earned the equivalent of 18 semester hours.

Example: Six Semester hours are the equivalent of 18 CEUs, or 180 Contact Hours, or a Combination of CEUs, Contact Hours, and Semester Hours.