

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.