

Guidelines for Substantive Change in Accredited Schools

This page addresses the conditions which constitute a “substantive change” in an accredited school as well as the processes for communicating a substantive change to the Regional Office. A substantive change in an ACSI accredited school must be approved before a school may include it under its accredited status.

Dually accredited schools should contact the ACSI Regional Office in order to learn and follow the process for their regional accrediting body since the timeframes and processes differ.

ACSI-only schools should follow the process outlined below based on the type of change.

- 1) The following items require a *Substantive Change Notification Form* to be submitted to the Regional Office and may require a follow-up visit.
 - a. Change in the school name
 - b. Change in legal status (e.g., from nonprofit to for profit, bankruptcy, church sponsored to independent, etc.)
 - c. Change of location or adding a location that is under the accreditation status
 - d. The merger of two schools, whether only one or both are currently accredited
 - e. Addition of a new school division that is not yet accredited (e.g., High School) or a grade that opens up a new division (e.g. grade 9)
 - f. Change of curricular identity (e.g. International Baccalaureate, Classical, ACE, etc.)
 - g. Change or significant addition(s) to program delivery (e.g., percentage of online courses)
 - h. Any change that impacts the meeting of a condition of eligibility, an accreditation standard, or a critical indicator
 - i. When a substantive change report is required by a partner agency and ACSI is the lead agency, a report will be completed and submitted to ACSI and the partner agency
- 2) The following items do not require a separate form; however, they must be reported on the *Annual Report*:
 - a. Change of school administrator
 - b. Adding a grade level to an existing division (Ex. adding grade 8 when grades 6-7 are already accredited)
 - c. Adding online, credit recovery courses that stays below the threshold
- 3) Substantive change reports include a brief narrative about the nature of the change, the decision making process including reference to the strategic plan and CSIP, any impact on the standards or critical indicators, and the anticipated benefits of the change.
- 4) If a substantive change is not approved mid-cycle, the school may add those components (added grade levels, new campuses, etc.) the next time the school goes through its full accreditation cycle (self-study and visit).

Note: The *Substantive Change Notification Form* can be found on ACSI’s website at www.acsi.org/schoolaccreditationdocuments.