



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT

September 20, 2017

Dr. Henry Cram
President
Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools
3624 Market Street, 2 West
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680

Dear Dr. Cram,

I am writing to inform you of my decision on the renewal of recognition of the Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools (MSA CSS). U.S. Department of Education (Department) staff and the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) have each made recommendations to me. These recommendations were made under Sections 114 and 496 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, and pursuant to relevant statutory and regulatory provisions.

Both the Department staff and the NACIQI recommended that I continue MSA CSS's recognition as a nationally recognized accrediting agency at this time, require the agency to come into compliance within either 12 months (recommended by Department Staff) or 6 months (recommended by the NACIQI) from the date of this letter, and to submit a compliance report due 30 days thereafter that demonstrates MSA CSS's compliance with the following sections of the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition:

The agency needs to provide CV's/or resumes for each of its entire senior and administrative staff to evidence their qualification. 34 C.F.R. §602.15(a)(1).

The agency needs to provide CV's/or resumes to evidence the competency of their representatives. The agency also needs to provide documentation to demonstrate training of its Commissioners, Appeal Panel, and Site Team representatives. §602.15(a)(2).

I concur with the recommendations of the Department staff and of the NACIQI to continue MSA CSS's recognition as a nationally recognized accrediting agency, with the scope of recognition detailed below. To afford MSA CSS more flexibility, I agree with Department staff's recommendations that MSA CSS be given 12 months from the date of this letter to achieve compliance. I also concur that MSA CSS shall submit a compliance report within 30 days following the 12-month period and for the Department to review and make a final recognition decision upon receipt of the compliance report under the procedures set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 602, Subpart C.

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of institutions with postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technology programs in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands to include the accreditation of postsecondary, non-degree granting institutions that offer all or part of their educational programs via distance education modalities.

Please convey my best wishes to the members of MSA CSS. We appreciate the work that MSA CSS does to improve the quality and success of U.S. postsecondary education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Holly L. Ham".

Holly L. Ham
Assistant Secretary
Office of Management