

## **ACTABS Commissioner's Meeting Proposed Standards Changes and/or Additions**

Motion to Revoke and/or Replace:

### **IX. CURRICULUM**

**REVOKE:** F. The school does not use a programmed curriculum package except as a supplement to material taught by a qualified teacher, using textbooks and other aids.

**REPLACE:** F. Schools that adopt self-contained curriculum developed by an outside entity must ensure these are from regionally accredited organizations. In turn, the school effectively quantifies student learning through the same measures used to validate other modes of instruction and makes appropriate adjustments to ensure comparable learning is taking place. Where such regionally accredited curriculum cannot reasonably be adopted, yet the school determines a self-contained curriculum is the best pedagogical mode of instruction, it must ensure the program is research-based, meets or exceeds all state learning objectives, and is supplemental to an overall curriculum design, taught by a qualified in-class teacher, using other instructional resources.

Motion to Add:

### **X. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS**

Schools that offer distance learning programs must meet the following criteria:

#### **A. Institutional Readiness**

(a) The school must have a plan to implement distance education instruction. At a minimum, the plan should include the rationale, resources, course/program objectives, content, and student assessment. The school must integrate this plan into the School Improvement Plan.

(b) The school must demonstrate adequate qualified personnel to provide leadership, support, and instruction to sustain a quality distance education program.

(c) The delivery method must be appropriate for students and the curriculum.

#### **B. Admissions Requirements and Enrollment**

(a) The school must identify the admission requirements of distance education courses/program/s and how it differs from, if applicable, the resident admission requirements.

(b) If an on-line admissions test is required, it must be administered in a manner which verifies the student's identity. Schools must make it clear in writing at the time of enrollment how the student's identity will be verified throughout the course and program, how the student's privacy will be protected, and if the student will be assessed any additional charges associated with the verification of student identity.

(c) The school must clearly and appropriately state any requirements the students must possess or have access to in order to access this mode of delivery.

(d) The school must provide an on-line orientation program to familiarize the student with the equipment, resources used in the distance education activities, and orient the student to the distance education learning process.

#### **C. Curriculum Content and Instruction and Delivery**

(a) The curriculum guide must show that the distance education course(s) meet TEKS learning objectives.

- (b) The course/program must demonstrate sufficient and appropriate interaction between faculty and students and among students.
- (c) The school must demonstrate that the clock or credit hours required and awarded are appropriate for the credits offered using a thoroughly developed rationale.
- (d) Curriculum must be administered in a way that maintains security of access.
- (e) The school must demonstrate that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The verification method, at the option of the institution, may include a secure login and pass code, proctored examinations, and other appropriate student authentication or verification technology.

#### **D. Faculty and Instructional Support**

- (a) The school must employ academically and experientially credentialed faculty to oversee the instruction, evaluation, and grading requirements of the distance education course/program.
- (b) The faculty must possess the appropriate technical skills and be adequately trained to instruct in a distance education environment.
- (c) The faculty must be supported with the appropriate educational resources and technology to instruct using this method of delivery. Students must also be provided with the appropriate technical and academic support to successfully complete the program/course using this form of instruction.
- (d) The school must provide evidence that there is an appropriate number of faculty for the student population involved. The school must be able to justify their student-teacher ratio(s).
- (e) The school must have a faculty development plan on file that is appropriate for each individual.

#### **E. Resources and Equipment**

- (a) The school must demonstrate that it has adequate financial resources to support the form of delivery.
- (b) Instructional resources, equipment, library resources, and network connectivity, if applicable, must be readily available, accessible, and reliable.

#### **F. Student Evaluation and Program Assessment**

- (a) Requirements for successful completion of distance education courses/programs must be similar to those of residential courses/programs.
- (b) Assessment of student performance and academic success should demonstrate outcomes for distance education courses/programs that are comparable to those of residential courses/programs. The assessment may include a synthesis of portfolios, group work, applied writing, pre- and post-testing, capstone courses, seminars, and on-line presentations (if applicable).
- (c) The institution must document that it conducts course/program evaluations, including assessment of student learning outcomes and satisfaction.

#### **G. Publications**

- (a) The institution must fully disclose what form(s) of instruction it uses in its catalog and web site and, when appropriate, in its advertising and promotional material.

## Report of the ACTABS Convention Committee

Members: Freddie Cullins, Chair; Matt Duston, Linda Merriott, Sandra Phelps, Mike Smith

Feb. 1, 2012

This committee was appointed to make recommendations on how to improve the attendance and quality of the TABS Convention. A survey concerning the convention was sent out to the TABS member schools in December 2011. Twenty three schools responded. The committee members were provided a summary of the survey. The committee also had a conference call to discuss the findings and make a recommendation to the ACTABS president. The following are the recommendations of the committee:

- Alternate years for State and Regional Conventions- 18 of 23 schools wanted to have a State convention one year and a Regional Convention the following year. The recommendation would be that four Regional Conventions would be held: one in the Houston area, one in the Austin/San Antonio area, one in the Dallas/Ft Worth area, and one in the West Texas area. If these are one-day conventions and within driving distance from member schools, it would eliminate the cost for hotels. Hotel costs were a deterrent for 18 of the 23 schools. A school would need to be selected in each area to host the convention. The TABS Executive committee could coordinate the exact locations for State and Regional conventions. It was also recommended that even on years for the State conventions, there would be a North convention and a South convention. This could be optional.
- Date- The committee recommends the date of the convention to be held in mid to late October as the first choice and the end of January as the second choice. The earlier dates allow teachers time to put into practice the ideas and information received at the convention.
- Cost for the convention attendees- The committee recommends that the cost be raised to \$60 each. On the survey report 16 of the 23 schools said they would be willing to pay more for the convention to improve quality.
- Quality Speakers- The recommendation is that guest speakers must be of high quality so the attendees feel they learned valuable information and they want to return the next year. This will most likely require extra money to pay for such speakers.
- The committee also recommends that the TABS membership fees be raised fifty cents each to help provide money for the convention. The maximum fees would be \$2.00 each.

The committee hopes these recommendations will be beneficial for the future success of all TABS member schools.