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## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Members, Utah State Board of Education

**FROM:** Martell Menlove, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

**DATE:** March 7, 2014

**ACTION:** R277-410-5 *Accreditation of Schools - Accreditation Procedures*  
(Amendment)

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### **Background:**

Board Rule R277-410-5 *Accreditation Procedures* is amended to reinstate provisional status for new schools requesting accreditation through AdvancED.

### **Key Points:**

New secondary charter schools are currently required to complete the accreditation process in their first year of operation, including an accrediting team visit, as they have a new governing board. Schools that open in their first year of operation under the governance of an existing board of education enter the process in their first year, but do not have an accreditation visit until year three. New charter schools have expressed concerns about equitable practices in this regard. Update to rule will bring back a provisional status for charters and district schools in their first two years of existence.

### **Anticipated Action:**

It is proposed that the Law and Licensing Committee consider approving R277-410-5, as amended, on first reading, and if approved by the Committee, the Board consider approving R277-410-5, as amended, on second reading.

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1 **R277. Education, Administration.**

2 **R277-410. Accreditation of Schools.**

3 **R277-410-5. Accreditation Procedures.**

4 A. The evaluation of secondary schools for the purpose  
5 of accreditation is a cooperative activity in which the  
6 school, the school district, the USOE, and AdvancED Northwest  
7 share responsibilities. A school's internal review,  
8 development, and implementation of a school improvement plan  
9 are crucial steps toward accreditation.

10 B. A school seeking AdvancED Northwest accreditation for  
11 the first time shall submit a membership application to  
12 AdvancED. The accepted application shall be forwarded to the  
13 AdvancED State Director.

14 (1) If a school's application for membership is accepted,  
15 the school is granted provisional accreditation status for no  
16 more than two years and shall have an accreditation visit in  
17 year three of the school's operation.

18 ([±]2) Following a visit by at least two qualified  
19 educators verifying a school's compliance with accreditation  
20 standards and approval by the AdvancED Commission, the school  
21 shall then receive accreditation.

22 C. AdvancED Northwest accredited schools shall be subject  
23 to:

24 (1) compliance with AdvancED Northwest membership  
25 requirements;

26 (2) satisfactory review by the State Council, AdvancED  
27 Northwest Commission and Board approval;

28 (3) a site visit at least every five years by an external  
29 review team to review the internal review materials, visit  
30 classes, and talk with staff and students as follows:

31 (a) The external review team shall present its finding  
32 in the form of a written report in a timely manner. The  
33 report shall be provided to the school, school district  
34 superintendent or local charter board chair, and other  
35 appropriate parties.

36 (b) AdvancED staff shall review the external review team  
37 report, consult with the State Council and the AdvancED

38 Commission shall grant accreditation status if appropriate.

39 D. Following review and acceptance, accreditation  
40 external review team reports are public information and are  
41 available upon request.

42 **KEY: accreditation, public schools, nonpublic schools**

43 **Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: [~~October 8,~~**  
44 **2013]2014**

45 **Notice of Continuation: August 1, 2012**

46 **Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3;**  
47 **53A-1-402(1)(c); 53A-1-401(3)**