



Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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June 30, 2016

Mr. Murdock Smith
General Manager
Highlands Community Charter School
PO Box 38924
Sacramento, CA 95838

Dear Mr. Smith:

The Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC) announces the action taken at the Summer 2016 Commission Meeting. The ACS WASC Commissioners have determined Highlands Community Charter School meets the ACS WASC criteria for accreditation. This accreditation status is based on all of the information provided by the school, including the initial visit report, and the satisfactory completion of the on-site initial accreditation visit.

It is the decision of the Commission to grant Highlands Community Charter School (grades Post-Secondary through) Initial Accreditation Status through June 30, 2019.

Prior to the end of this initial accreditation period, schools must complete a self-study assessment and submit a self-study report, including the progress made in meeting the recommendations of the Initial Visit Committee. Self-study training will be provided and schools will be expected to have key staff participate in these training sessions. An ACS WASC Visiting Committee will conduct a site visit to review the school's self-study findings and supporting evidence, conduct classroom observations, and dialogue with all stakeholders. The committee will evaluate the school's programs and operations and the impact on student learning.

Accreditation status is conditioned upon Highlands Community Charter School's continued adherence with the ACS WASC policies, procedures, and criteria for accreditation. One accreditation requirement is the obligation of schools to notify ACS WASC of any changes which might be substantive in nature with an explanation of the change and the anticipated effect on the educational program (see attached).

Another accreditation requirement is that schools and districts annually contribute members to participate on visiting committees. This is particularly helpful to newly accredited schools in order to gain a better understanding of the accreditation process. New members can sign up to serve on a visiting committee on the ACS WASC portal at <https://webportal.acswasc.org>. Failure to maintain compliance with said policies, procedures, and standards is grounds for modification and/or withdrawal of accreditation.

The approval of initial accreditation entitles you to use the following phrase on transcripts or in school advertising: “Fully Accredited by (or) Accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges,” until such time as your accreditation has either lapsed or been denied. If all grade levels operated by the school were included in the initial visit review, the above statement is sufficient. In other cases, the statement must specify the grade levels accredited, i.e., “Fully Accredited for Grades (9–12 for example) by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.”

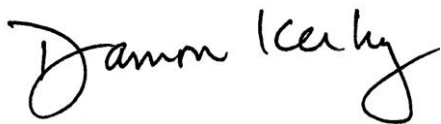
Transcripts of students who are graduating or transferring from grades covered by the accreditation may be stamped or embossed with the ACS WASC accredited seal which can be obtained from the ACS WASC office, or the “Accredited by ...” phrase can be typed on the transcript.

If you choose to disclose your status in any communications with the public, you must specify the programs or grade levels which are covered by the initial status. You must also include the name, address and website of the Accrediting Commission for Schools in the same communication. The information to include is:

Accrediting Commission for Schools
Western Association of Schools and Colleges
533 Airport Blvd., Suite 200, Burlingame, CA 94010
www.acswasc.org

The Commission looks forward to Highlands Community Charter School’s anticipated success and continuing improvement in keeping with ACS WASC’s pursuit of excellence in elementary, secondary, and adult education.

Sincerely,



Damon Kerby
Commission Chairperson

Enclosures: Initial Visit Visiting Committee Report
ACS WASC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures
ACS WASC Accreditation Stamp and Embosser Order Form

cc: Chairperson, Initial Visit Committee