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Walters Rolls Out Sweeping Accreditation Reform Plan *Ties District Accreditation to Academic Outcomes*

Oklahoma City, Okla – State Superintendent Ryan Walters announced sweeping and comprehensive accreditation reform for Oklahoma schools today. The new standards tie school district accreditation to the academic outcomes of its students.

“For too long, Oklahoma schools have functioned without proper accountability as called for in state law,” said Walters. “We have to shake up the status quo and we cannot sit back and not take action when we see kids not learning as they should. We are setting clear, achievable academic goals for our schools while providing necessary supports for schools that need more help. We will do everything possible to ensure that every Oklahoma student receives a quality education, and I look forward to moving this process forward.”

Background on Accreditation:

- According to Oklahoma statute, the State Board of Education must maintain accreditation standards that “equal or exceed nationally recognized accreditation standards to the extent that the standards are consistent with an academic results-oriented approach.” Currently, the state of Oklahoma does not have such an accreditation standard.
- This problem can be solved by creating academically rigorous goals and expectations while maintaining objectivity in the process. The proposed methodology would create a new accreditation system linked to academic performance and growth.

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Academic Performance Criteria:

- If more than 50% of a district's students perform below grade-level expectations by scoring below the "basic" threshold in English Language Arts or Mathematics on state assessments, then the district would receive an academic deficiency.

Growth Criteria:

- Upon receiving an academic deficiency, districts would then be rated on their ability to grow their academic performance in the relevant subjects year-over-year. Districts that succeed at increasing their scores by 5% or more in the relevant subject or subjects year over year would not receive a downgrade in accreditation.
- Those districts who fail to grow year over year by 5% in their relevant subjects would have their academic deficiencies escalated, first to a warning, and then ultimately to a possible probation. Once a district managed to rise above the 50% below basic or above threshold in both subjects, the academic deficiency would be lifted.

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