



RYAN WALTERS

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

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Contact: Dan Isett
405-570-9203

Walters Files Reforms to Accreditation Rules *Standards Tie District Accreditation to Academic Outcomes*

Oklahoma City, Okla – State Superintendent Ryan Walters filed comprehensive revisions to the state’s district accreditation rules today. The new standards tie school district accreditation to the academic outcomes of its students.

“We have tried a system that gave districts a free pass while their students suffered, and the results failed our students and failed their parents,” said Walters. “Just last week, it was revealed that in an international evaluation, US students scored among the lowest ever measured in math. Closer to home, Oklahoma students had the second-greatest NAEP (“the nation’s report card”) score decrease in reading and the greatest NAEP score decrease in math in the nation. The status quo is unacceptable and puts our state at risk for generations to come.

Revamping our accreditation standards is a strong way forward for Oklahoma students. These standards are clear and achievable, and we know that setting high standards will produce the best results. We will not sit back and watch Oklahoma students fall farther behind. Most importantly, setting these standards will ensure every Oklahoma student gets a quality education while providing necessary supports for districts that need more help.”

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.

2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105-4599
PHONE: (405) 521-4885 • SDE.OK.GOV • RYAN.WALTERS@SDE.OK.GOV

- 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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