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## **DUES AND FEES**

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### **7.1. DUES AND FEES**

#### **7.1.1. Establishment of Dues and Fees for Member Institutions.**

A dues and fees schedule shall be established annually by the Commission on Secondary Schools on the recommendation of the Finance Committee. Dues and fees shall be set based on anticipated needs of the Commission and anticipated institutional membership. They shall be set to assure that the Commission can meet budgetary needs and to provide for the maintenance of a reserve fund.

#### **7.1.2. Notification to Member Institutions of Dues Increases.**

Institutions shall be notified a minimum of one year in advance of increases in dues.

#### **7.1.3. Purposes for Dues and Fees of Member Institutions.**

Dues and fees are assessed for the following purposes:

7.1.3.1. Annual Dues: Payment of Annual Dues entitles member institutions to all of the rights, privileges, and services outlined in the Commission's policies. A candidate school is assessed membership dues annually in the same manner and according to the same dues schedule applicable to accredited member schools. The following services are provided from the annual dues to accredited and candidate member institutions as part of the annual dues:

- Listing of the institution's name and pertinent information in all Commission directories and on the Commission's website as an accredited or candidate member;
- Official notice of accreditation and a personalized accreditation certificate for display;
- Unlimited attendance at workshops offered on overview and awareness of accreditation protocols and other required aspects of the accreditation process (although attendance at each session may be limited due to space);
- Attendance at chair training workshops (by invitation only);
- Technical assistance from staff via phone, mail, and email;
- Consultation with schools preparing for accreditation and the phases of continuous school improvement;
- A maximum of one onsite visit and/or presentation on accreditation-related topics once every three years by CSS staff or Commission representative;
- All necessary technical reviews of objectives required by strategic planning accreditation protocols;
- Provision of CSS-developed accreditation self-study and planning materials (up to two copies per institution) and permission to make additional copies as needed for accreditation purposes;
- Research and development necessary to develop and maintain current, useful, and relevant accreditation self-study and planning materials;
- Use of both the CSS and the MSA logo;
- Official letters, upon request of the institution, verifying membership status to other individuals and organizations. (e.g. College Board, National Board for Professional

- Teaching Standards, state education and certification departments, armed services recruiters, etc.);
- Provision of evaluation teams to evaluate the institution on behalf of CSS; training of team chairs;
  - Provision of print and online newsletters and articles about accreditation;
  - Opportunity to participate in Commission on Secondary Schools governance by electing Commission representation, responding to Commission input/needs assessment surveys, and participation on advisory committees;
  - Opportunity for professional development and enrichment by serving on evaluation teams;
  - Processing of accreditation maintenance reports and visits;
  - A voice in establishing the Standards for Accreditation;
  - Opportunity to gain continuing education units for required teacher/administrator certification mandates;
  - Maintenance of historical records of institutional accreditation;
  - For postsecondary institutions, the opportunity to register your website as a “.edu” domain;
  - The opportunity to register your institution with The College Board as an Advanced Placement test site.

7.1.3.2. Candidacy Fee: Payment of the Candidacy Fee pays for the cost of an on-site visit by the CSS Executive Director or her/his designee. The Fee also pays for the costs of developing and mailing a written candidacy report by the onsite visitor(s), as well as the administrative costs for processing the candidacy report. Travel costs associated with the candidacy visit are assessed separately. Payment of the Candidacy Fee does not guarantee that the institution will be admitted into candidacy. However, when candidacy is offered, the institution is not admitted into candidacy until all applicable dues and fees are paid.

7.1.3.3. Evaluation Preparation Fee: Payment of the Evaluation Preparation Fee pays for the administrative costs of identifying and inviting team members for the institution’s evaluation team. The Fee also pays for the cost of training team chairs and developing and providing manuals to team chairs. The Evaluation Preparation Fee also pays for the costs of providing written self-study materials, in limited quantities, to member institutions and of offering self-study workshops on the accreditation protocols at no extra charge.

7.1.3.4. Other fees: Additional fees may be charged as necessary

7.1.3.5. Specific Services for a Fee: A wide range of institutional improvement services are provided by the Commission to member and non-member schools. Depending upon the service, the fee covers different types of costs. (See MSCSS Policy 1.4, Institutional Improvement Services.)

7.1.4. Billing of Dues and Fees to Member Institutions.  
Dues and fees are billed as follows:

7.1.4.1. Annual Dues: Annual dues shall be billed on a fiscal year basis (July 1—June 30) and are payable upon receipt. A 2% discount is available to institutions whose annual dues are received in the Association’s office prior to October 1 of the year for which the

dues are charged. A 5% penalty is charged to institutions whose annual dues are received in the Association's office on October 1 or after.

7.1.4.2. Candidacy Fee: Candidacy fees shall be billed immediately following the completion of the onsite candidacy visit and are payable upon receipt. Any travel expenses incurred by the candidacy visitor are included in the billing to the institution.

7.1.4.3. Evaluation Preparation Fee: The Evaluation Preparation Fee shall be billed at the time of mailing the Application for Evaluation (approximately September of the year in which the institution should be conducting its self-study). Dates for the team visit will not be established and no action on planning for the team visit will occur until the Evaluation Preparation Fee is paid. This Fee does not include the costs associated with hosting the visiting team (e.g., housing, meals, travel). Such costs are paid directly by the institution.

7.1.4.4. Services for a Fee: Such services will be provided on a contractual basis. The contract will outline the billing and payment schedule.

7.1.5. Early Payment Discounts and Late Payment Penalties for Dues by Member Institutions.

The Commission shall maintain a 2% early payment incentive for institutions that pay dues prior to August 1. The Commission shall maintain a 5% late penalty for institutions that pay dues after October 1.

7.1.6. Pro-Rated Dues for Member Institutions.

Institutions that are offered candidacy between July 1 and December 31 shall be charged a full year's dues. Institutions that are offered candidacy between January 1 and April 30 shall be charged a half-year's dues. Dues billing for institutions that are offered candidacy between May 1 and June 30 will be deferred until the following fiscal year.

7.1.7. Refunds of Dues and Fees for Member Institutions.

All dues and fees are non-refundable.

7.1.8. Dues and Fees for Member Institutions in Cooperative Accreditation Relationships.

All dues and fees are established separately and paid directly to each accreditation agency when an institution seeks accreditation with one of the Commission's cooperative partners. There shall be no commingling of funds between agencies.

7.1.9. Nonpayment of Dues and Fees by Member Institutions.

Institutions with unpaid dues and fees shall be considered delinquent and subject to removal of accreditation and from the list of member schools.

7.1.10. Dues for Affiliate Members.

7.1.10.1. A dues schedule for Affiliate Members shall be established annually by the Commission on Secondary Schools on recommendation of the Finance Committee.

7.1.10.2. Affiliate Members shall be notified of changes to the dues schedule following the Commission's decision to change the dues schedule.

7.1.10.3. Dues for Affiliate Members shall be billed within 30 days of the date on which the written agreement with MSCSS is signed by both parties and payable within 30 calendar days of the billing.

7.1.10.4. All dues are non-refundable, except in the event MSCSS fails to comply with the provisions of the written agreement and the Affiliate Member chooses to terminate the agreement for this cause. Termination for this reason within the first six months of the one-year contract shall result in a 75% refund. Termination for this reason in the second six months of the one-year contract shall result in a 50% refund.

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