

Freeway Accreditation Information & Notice of Intent:

What is Freeway?

Indiana Code § 20-26-15 establishes the freeway accreditation program for public and non-public schools and corporations in Indiana. Freeway accreditation permits approved schools and corporations to elect suspension of certain state statutes and regulations, and to take certain actions regarding budgets and funds in exchange for high student achievement. Statutes and regulations that may be suspended focus on curriculum requirements and curricular materials and textbooks.

Freeway-accredited schools are held accountable through a contract entered into between the school and the Indiana State Board of Education (Board) that complies with the requirements of Ind. Code § 20-26-15. The contract is entered into for a five-year term of freeway accreditation, and must include at least the following information:

- List of elected statutes and regulations to suspend from operation.
- Description of privileges selected regarding budgets and funds.
- Description of the minimum educational benefits the school agrees to achieve by the end of the five-year contract period, and a plan for the school to achieve the minimum educational benefits.
- School strategy, including curriculum, in which character education is demonstrated to be a priority.
- School plan to offer courses that allow for a student to become eligible to receive an academic honors diploma.
- School plan to maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment for students and teachers.

What are the high performance requirements needed to be Freeway?

The minimum educational benefits that must be achieved at the end of the contract term are defined in the statute, and focus on attendance, statewide assessment performance and graduation rates.

Specifically:

- A freeway school must achieve at least an 85% average attendance rate with an ultimate goal of a 90% average attendance rate
- At least an 85% pass rate on the statewide assessments with an ultimate goal of a 90% pass rate
- At least an 85% four-year graduation rate with an ultimate goal of a 90% four-year graduation rate.

How are requirements of freeway monitored?

Contract compliance must be reviewed annually during the term of the contract. This review must evaluate whether a school has achieved the scheduled improvement in educational benefits that the freeway school agreed to achieve. Pursuant to Ind. Code § 20-26-15-11, if a freeway school does not meet its scheduled improvements in any given year under the contract then the State Board of Education must review the school's plan and modify if necessary.

If a school's plan has already been modified and the freeway school subsequently fails to meet two or more of the scheduled improvements or fails to achieve the minimum educational benefits at the end of

the contract term then the contract is void and the school's freeway accreditation status immediately ceases.

CURRENT FREEWAY ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Indiana Code § 20-26-15-4 outlines the process for attaining freeway accreditation for public schools and corporations.

Specifically:

- The school or corporation must petition the Indiana Department of Education for designation as a freeway school or corporation and must agree to comply with Ind. Code § 20-26-15 by entering into a contract with the Board.
- A school or corporation receives freeway accreditation once a majority of the corporation's governing body votes in favor of freeway accreditation for the school or corporation and the contract entered into between the governing body and the Indiana State Board of Education is signed by the state superintendent of public instruction (SPI).

Freeway Accreditation Application Process:

When a school or corporation wishes to attain freeway accreditation, first it must submit a notice of intent to the Indiana Department of Education (Department), by July 31.

- Upon receiving this notice of intent by July 31, the Department identifies the school as "seeking accreditation" and begins an observational year of the school.
- During this observational year, the school submits required data collections to the Department, administers the statewide assessment to its students and prepares its petition to the Board.
- The petition includes the school's plans in compliance with the statutory requirements of Ind. Code § 20-26-15.

Upon completion of the observational year and submission of the school's petition, which the Department will work with each "seeking accreditation" school, the Department then submits a recommendation of accreditation to the Board. Upon Indiana State Board of Education approval, the superintendent of public instruction and the school's governing body enter into the freeway school contract for a five-year term.

Please Note:

Schools are not considered accredited during the one year seeking accreditation period. Accreditation at the conclusion of the trial period is not guaranteed.

Schools are not eligible to accept Indiana's Choice Scholarship student applications during the seeking accreditation period.



Notice of Intent to Seek Freeway Accreditation

Once the Indiana Department of Education receives this notice, the department will begin a monitoring year during the first full school year after receiving the notice of intent. During that monitoring year, the school will complete and submit a petition.

This notice must be sent to SchoolAccountability@doe.in.gov by July 31.

Name of School:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

School Website:

Public School District of location:

Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment:

School Year	Grade Levels	Total Student Population	# Free & Reduced Student
2017-18			
2018-19			
2019-20			

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Schools are not eligible to accept Indiana’s Choice Scholarship student applications during the seeking accreditation period.

Applicants Authorized Representative:

Signature and Date Submitted:

Signature

Date