

June 30, 2017

Dr. Ben Sanders
Executive Director
Reach Institute for School Leadership
1221 Preservation Park Way, Suite 100
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Dr. Sanders:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Reach Institute for School Leadership (RISL) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting on June 21-23, 2017. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Seeking Accreditation Visit 2 to Reach Institute for School Leadership on March 15-17, 2017. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by RISL prior to the Seeking Accreditation Visit 2 and the institution's June 2, 2017 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues: Dr. Liz Baham, Chief Academic Officer and ALO, Mrs. Jonna Justiniano, Associate Director, and Dr. Carolyn James, Board President. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Seeking Accreditation Visit # 2 team report
2. Grant Initial Accreditation for a period of six years
3. Schedule the reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2022 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2023
4. Schedule the Mid-Cycle Review in spring 2020
5. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by March 2, 2019 to address
 - a. The further development of institutional research capacity to inform decision making
 - b. Increased development of assessment and analytic processes that in corporate comparative data on student learning outcomes
 - c. The identification of a dedicated chief financial officer and the implementation of strategies for increased revenue generation and sustained financial viability through systematic enrollment management and strategic planning processes.

Commendations

The Commission commends Reach Institute for School Leadership in particular for the following:

1. Impressive progress made since the initial site visit, especially related to academic program review, student support services, definition and refinement of faculty scholarship aligned with mission, assessment of student learning outcomes, expansion of members and range of expertise of the Board of Directors, and appointment of a chief academic officer;
2. Refinement and expansion of decision-making processes in academic affairs, administrative operations, board functioning, and strategic planning to ensure genuine shared governance and institutional advancement;
3. Dedication of institutional commitment across all constituencies to the mission of the institution and to an innovative applied learning model dedicated to reforming the preparation of teachers and instructional leaders enabling them to address equitable access for K-12 students;
4. Genuine and reciprocal partnerships with local school districts in a mutual commitment to urban schooling characterized by exceptional teachers and leaders.

Recommendations

The Commission identifies the following issues for further development:

1. Advance Reach's institutional research capacity and sophistication in the assessment of institutional effectiveness and use of data in decision making, including evaluation of the most effective institutional research infrastructure to meet the needs of the institution in the long-term. (CFR 4.2)
2. Increase maturation of assessment and analytic processes that incorporate comparative data on student learning outcomes; disaggregation of data for student sub-populations; longitudinal tracking of students' achievement of learning outcomes, with evidence of the impact of interventions on subsequent student performance; and implementation of formal quality assurance processes for periodic assessment of non-academic operations, including student services and administrative effectiveness. (CFR 2.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.6)
3. Implement optimal strategies for increased revenue generation and sustained financial stability, supported through expanded marketing/communications, systematic enrollment management (particularly for master's degrees), and strategic planning processes. (CFR 3.4, 4.6, 4.7)
4. As Reach evolves and builds capacity, develop a dedicated position of chief financial officer to ensure the institution effectively addresses the need for fiscal stability and sustainability. (CFR 3.8)
5. Expand faculty and students' research capacity to disseminate findings aimed at increasing effective teaching and leadership in K-12 schools and districts. (CFR 2.8, 2.9)

6. Focus attention on creating a graduate school culture that fosters a rigorous research-based theoretical framework within the context of applied learning (CFR 2.1, 2.2b)
7. Enhance Board operations by adding members with specialized knowledge and skills, particularly related to marketing and public relations, fundraising, and law. (CFR 3.9)

In taking this action to grant Initial Accreditation, the Commission confirms that Reach Institute for School Leadership has addressed the three Core Commitments and has successfully completed the institutional review process for Initial Accreditation conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. Between this action and the time of the next review for reaffirmation, the institution is encouraged to continue its progress, particularly with respect to student learning and success.

Accreditation status is not granted retroactively. Reach Institute for School Leadership must use the following statement if it wishes to describe its accreditation status publicly:

Reach Institute for School Leadership is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501, 510.748.9001.

The accredited status of a program should not be misrepresented. The accreditation granted by WSCUC refers to the quality of the institution as a whole. Because institutional accreditation does not imply specific accreditation of any particular program at the institution, statements such as “this program is accredited” or “this degree is accredited” are incorrect and misleading. The phrase “fully accredited” is also to be avoided, since no partial accreditation is possible.

The Commission stipulates that this action encompasses the degrees offered by Reach Institute for School Leadership at the time of this action, as listed at the end of this letter as the Consolidated List of Currently Offered Degrees. Any proposed new degree programs, off-campus sites, online offerings, and/or changes in governance or ownership require review and approval through the Substantive Change process. Degree programs that have been reviewed and included under this action may be extended to other currently approved campuses of the institution without prior Substantive Change action. Offerings at new locations may need to go through Substantive Change approval, in accordance with the requirements stated in the Substantive Change manual.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of RISL’s governing board in one week. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the RISL website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission’s action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that the Reach Institute for School Leadership undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Mary Ellen Petrisko
President

MEP/ gc

Cc: Bill Ladusaw, Commission Chair
Liz Baham, ALO
Carolyn James, Board Chair
Members of the Seeking Accreditation Visit team
Geoffrey Chase, Vice President

Consolidated List of Currently Offered Degrees

Master of Education in Instructional Leadership
Master of Education in Teaching