

# NC-SARA Board Actions from the May 2021 Meeting

Countdown to Start:

10:00

mins:  secs:  type:

 Breaktime for PowerPoint by Flow Simulation Ltd.

May 18, 2021



National Council for  
State Authorization  
Reciprocity Agreements

MHEC • NEBHE • SREB • WICHE

# WELCOME!

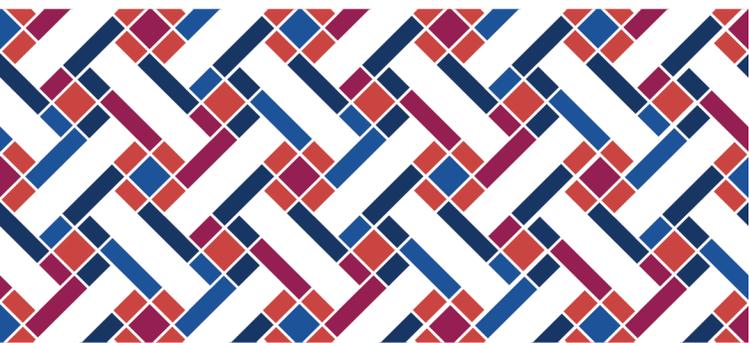
- Please use the **Question and Answer** feature for questions.
- The **Closed Caption** option is available.
- The webinar will be recorded.
- This presentation and other resources referenced will be available on the NC-SARA website soon.

# PRESENTERS

- Lori Williams, President and CEO, NC-SARA
- Jeannie Yockey-Fine, General Counsel, NC-SARA
- Rachael Stachowiak, Associate Director, N-SARA, NEBHE
- Emily Jacobson, Associate Director, M-SARA, MHEC
- Melanie Booth, Director of Educational Programs and Communications, NC-SARA

# AGENDA

- NC-SARA Board Meeting Overview
- Policy Change Modifications (3)
- Policy Clarification Modifications (7)
- Policy Revision Cycle and Next Steps
- Questions and Discussion



# NC-SARA Board Meeting Overview

# NC-SARA Board Meeting Overview



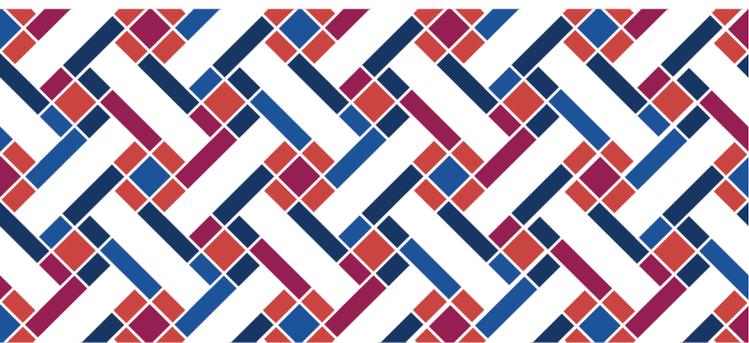
# Policy Proposals and Comments

NC-SARA received proposals for and comments about SARA policy from many constituents, and shared all of them with the Board for their consideration and review in advance of the meeting:

- Institutions
- State members through regional compacts: MHEC, NEBHE, SREB, and WICHE
- Public comments from The Institute for College Access and Success, New America, The Century Foundation, and National Consumer Law Center

# NC-SARA Board Meeting – Tabled Proposals

- Section 8.3 to combine with Section 8.2 to ensure all policy modifications are treated the same.
- Changes to policy Sections 2.5, 2.5(p), 4.3(h), 4.7, 8.1, the addition of the definition of the 21st Century Distance Education Guidelines, and an adjustment to the definition of C-RAC Guidelines.



# Policy Change Modifications (3)

## -- Provisional Status Overview



National Council for  
State Authorization  
Reciprocity Agreements

MHEC • NEBHE • SREB • WICHE

# Board Actions – Policy Change Modifications (1)

Approved Section 3.2(a)(8) policy change to extend provisional status period under certain circumstances.

## 3.2 Provisional admission or renewal of an Institution

a. A state, at its discretion, may approve an institution applying for initial or renewal participation in SARA to participate on Provisional Status in any of the following circumstances:

8. The Institution has a change of ownership as determined by the Home State. **Additional changes of ownership of the same institution constitute a separate basis for a state's determination of provisional status. Each such determination begins a new period of provisional status under Section 3.2(e).**

# Board Actions – Policy Change Modifications (2)

Approved Section 3.2(e) policy change to extend provisional status specific to change of ownership, for ongoing investigation, or for an extension of an accreditation probationary period.

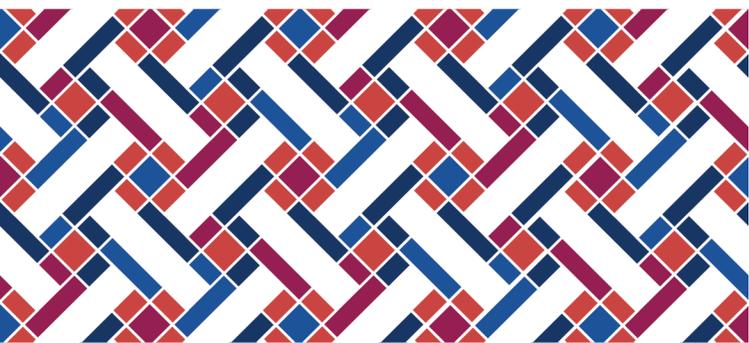
Section 3.2(e). ~~In no event shall such an extension of Provisional Status exceed one additional year.~~ An extension of Provisional Status shall not exceed one additional year unless a change of ownership has occurred during the current period of provisional status and additional time is needed to demonstrate compliance with federal requirements, or the institution is on provisional or probationary status or the equivalent with its institutional Accrediting Agency, or there is an ongoing investigation as described in Section 3.2(4) and (5).

# Board Actions – Policy Change Modifications (3)

Approved Section 3.2(g)(2) policy language to align with changes in Section 3.2(e).

Section 3.2(g): If an Institution on SARA Provisional Status is found by its home state to not meet the requirements of SARA, the home state shall disallow any further enrollments under SARA, shall notify its Regional Compact and NC-SARA, and:

1. Remove the institution from SARA participation, or
2. Allow the institution a period of time not to exceed 12 months in which to come into compliance with SARA policies under state supervision. Only one such time period is allowed in any three-year period, **unless the extension is due to an ongoing investigation or as a result of a change of ownership during the current period of provisional status and additional time is needed to demonstrate compliance with federal requirements.**



# Policy Clarification Modifications (7)

# Board Actions – Policy Clarification Modifications (1)

Approved Section 2.2(b) policy clarification to update the appeals language to reflect the implementation of the policy by the passed deadline.

Section 2.2(b)

2.2 Application

b. ~~By July 1, 2020~~ Each regional compact shall ~~develop and implement a means to~~ hear and themselves resolve appeals from states for which the compact denies membership or renewal of membership in SARA. During any such appeal the state's status as a SARA Member (or non-Member) state remains unchanged.

# Board Actions – Policy Clarification Modifications (2)

Approved Section 2.5(d) policy clarification to update the appeals language to reflect the current implementation of the policy and to clarify notifications of appeals.

2.5 Functional responsibilities of SARA states

d. ~~By January 1, 2021~~ SARA Member states shall ~~develop and implement a means to~~ hear and internally resolve appeals from Institutions for which they deny initial participation or renewal of participation in SARA. During any such appeal the Institution's status as a SARA participating (or non-participating) Institution remains unchanged. **States shall notify their regional compacts within 5 business days of the initial appeal. Regional compacts shall notify NC-SARA within 5 business days of notification by the state.** States must ensure that the agency designated with the responsibility for hearing appeals ensures consistent application of its process to all institutions.

# Board Actions – Policy Clarification Modifications (3)

Approved Section 2.6(c) policy clarification to update the appeals language to reflect the current implementation of the policy and to clarify notification of appeals.

## 2.6 State Renewal

c. ~~By July 1, 2020~~ Each regional compact shall ~~develop and implement a means to~~ hear and themselves resolve appeals from states for which the compact denies membership or renewal of membership in SARA. **Regional compacts shall notify NC-SARA within 5 business days of the initial appeal.** During any such appeal the state's status as a SARA Member (or non-Member) state remains unchanged.

# Board Actions – Policy Clarification Modifications (4)

**Approved Section 3.8(c) policy language to align with the now implemented appeals process.**

Section 3.8(c) Loss of institutional eligibility or withdrawal under SARA.

c. An institution can also be removed at any time by its home state for violation of, or noncompliance with SARA policies.

~~Until in-state appeal processes proposed in Version 19.2 are approved, developed and implemented (no later than July 1, 2020), there is no "appeal of such a decision made by the home state, though an institution can always present new information and request reconsideration. An aggrieved institution has the option of asking its regional compact through the Compact's normal procedures to determine whether the institution's home state continues to meet the requirements of SARA, but the regional compact cannot direct the state to make a different determination regarding the specific case.~~

# Board Actions – Policy Clarification Modifications (5)

**Approved Section 2.5(c) policy clarification to update the language related to the federal financial responsibility composite score (FRCS) pertaining to institutions and parent companies.**

2.5 Functional responsibilities of SARA states

c. For independent institutions, the state accepts an institutional federal Financial Responsibility Composite Score of 1.5 as indicative of sufficient minimum financial stability to qualify for participation in SARA. **An Institution's financial status must be evaluated using the most recent Composite Score provided in writing by the U. S. Department of Education (ED) whether published online or provided in written form to the Institution by a responsible Department of Education official.** For Institutions with a Composite Score between 1.0 and 1.5, the state shall consider additional information regarding financial stability provided by the institution. The state may, at its discretion, determine if there is sufficient evidence of financial stability to justify the institution's participation in SARA. The state shall not permit an Institution with a Composite Score below 1.0 to participate in SARA.

# Board Actions – Policy Clarification Modifications (Cont.)

**Approved Section 2.5(c) policy clarification to update the language related to the federal financial responsibility composite score (FRCS) pertaining to institutions and parent companies.**

For Institutions owned or controlled by another entity (i.e., a parent entity), relevant Composite Score will be the Composite Score of the parent entity, **as identified by the U.S. Department of Education. ~~as published at <https://studentaid.gov/data-center/school/composite-scores>, in accord with current U.S. Department of Education (ED) practice. An Institution's financial status must be evaluated using the most recent Composite Score provided in writing by the Department of Education, whether published online or provided in written form to the Institution by a responsible Department of Education official.~~**

SARA states are to monitor the U.S. Department of Education's periodic publication of Composite Scores, review the scores assigned to the institutions they have approved to participate in SARA, determine whether those scores meet SARA requirements, and within 90 days of notification take appropriate action regarding the SARA participation of those institutions. Implementation date of January 1, 2021.

# Board Actions – Policy Clarification Modifications (6)

Approved Section 5.10(b)(5) policy clarification to remove the word “academic.”

## Section 5.10 Physical Presence

b(5) Having faculty, adjunct faculty, mentors, tutors, recruiters or other ~~academic~~ personnel residing in a member state and working from their homes or another private, non-institutional site, provided that such staff is not engaged in activities that would otherwise constitute Physical Presence as defined by SARA policies;

# Board Actions – Policy Clarification Modifications (7)

Approved Section 6.2 policy clarification to remove screen shots associated with the process of submitting institutional enrollment data.

## 6.2 Data use by NC-SARA

a. NC-SARA on its website will report **distance education** enrollment data, by institution. ~~In a manner similar to the following format~~

b. NC-SARA on its website will report **out of state** learning placement data by institution. ~~, in similar format.~~

# POLICY REVISION CYCLE & NEXT STEPS

A call and process for collecting comments on policy items will be announced soon on the NC-SARA website and by email to SARA states, institutions, and individuals on our general email subscription list.

Future Board Meetings:

October 2021

May 2022



The screenshot shows the footer of the NC-SARA website. It is divided into three main sections: 'Contact Us', 'Stay Informed', and 'Follow Us'. The 'Stay Informed' section contains a 'SIGN UP' button, which is circled in red. The 'Contact Us' section provides the organization's address and contact information. The 'Follow Us' section includes social media icons for LinkedIn and Twitter.

**NC SARA**

**Contact Us**

3005 Center Green Drive  
Suite 130  
Boulder, Colorado 80301  
(720) 680-1600

**Email:** [info@nc-sara.org](mailto:info@nc-sara.org)  
**Media Inquiries:** [media@nc-sara.org](mailto:media@nc-sara.org)

**Stay Informed**

**SIGN UP**

**Follow Us**

[in](#) [t](#)

# Questions and Discussion



# Thank You!



For questions please email:

[Info@nc-sara.org](mailto:Info@nc-sara.org)

NC-SARA Website: [www.nc-sara.org](http://www.nc-sara.org)

Twitter: @NCSARA\_News