



Michael Williams  
Commissioner

**IMPORTANT  
ACCREDITATION  
INFORMATION-  
ACTION REQUIRED**

073-903  
2015-2016

September 23, 2015

Mr. Michael Seabolt, Superintendent  
Mr. Roger Nutt, President, Board of Trustees  
Marlin Independent School District  
130 Coleman Street  
Marlin, TX 76661-2899

Dear Mr. Seabolt and Mr. Nutt:

The purpose of this letter is to provide official notice to Marlin Independent School District (ISD) regarding the status of the district and its campuses. The accountability ratings assigned by the Texas Education Agency (TEA or agency), as discussed in further detail below, require me to assign Marlin ISD a 2015-2016 accreditation status of **Not Accredited-Revoked** and to close the district effective July 1, 2016.

### **Background Information**

Marlin ISD was last assigned an accreditation status of Accredited-Probation for 2014-2015 pursuant to 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §97.1055(c)(1)(C) because the district had received an academic accountability rating of *Academically Unacceptable* for 2011, and an academic accountability rating of *Improvement Required* for 2013 and 2014. The district did not request a review related to its 2014-2015 accreditation status assignment. In correspondence dated May 7, 2015, I, as Commissioner of Education notified the district that Jamie Morris, who was already serving as the TEA monitor, would continue in her role as monitor to Marlin ISD to address the deficiencies identified for the district.

In August 2015, the TEA released preliminary accountability ratings, which indicated that Marlin ISD received an academic accountability rating of *Improvement Required*. The district did not appeal its 2015 academic accountability rating determination, and the rating is now final and no longer subject to appeal. Texas Education Code (TEC) §39.151(e).

### **Revocation of Accreditation**

A school district must be assigned an accreditation status of **Not Accredited-Revoked** if it is assigned a financial accountability rating of *Substandard Achievement*, an academic

accountability rating of *Academically Unacceptable* or *Improvement Required*, or any combination of the ratings for four consecutive school years. 19 TAC §97.1055(d). For purposes of determining multiple years of academically unacceptable or insufficient performance, the academic accountability ratings issued for the 2010-2011 school year and the 2012-2013 school year are considered consecutive.<sup>1</sup> 19 TAC §97.1055(a)(8).

Pursuant to TEC §§39.051-39.052 and 19 TAC §97.1055(d)(1)(B), Marlin ISD's accreditation status of **Not Accredited-Revoked** for 2015-2016 is based on the assignment of a 2011 academic accountability rating of *Academically Unacceptable*, and an academic accountability rating of *Improvement Required* for 2013, 2014 and 2015. All rights to appeal the ratings identified above have been waived or exhausted, and these ratings are now final and no longer subject to appeal. TEC §39.151(e).

In light of Marlin ISD's accountability ratings, I find that I must assign Marlin ISD a 2015-2016 accreditation status of **Not Accredited-Revoked** and order closure of the district effective July 1, 2016. The procedures available to the district to request a review of the accreditation status assignment are discussed below. The order of closure will result in annexation of the Marlin ISD.

### **Monitor Appointment**

The current appointment of Jamie Morris as the TEA monitor will remain in effect and will not be impacted at this time.

### **Public Notification: Accreditation Status**

Districts that are assigned a status of **Not Accredited-Revoked** must take specific actions to notify the parents of students enrolled in the district and property owners in the district. The requirements for public notification are specified in 19 TAC §97.1055(f), and a template that reflects the TEA-required format and language for the public notice is posted at <http://tea.texas.gov/accredstatus/>. Marlin ISD must complete the notification requirement **no later than October 23, 2015**. Marlin ISD also must send the TEA by certified mail, return receipt requested, documentation showing compliance with the notification requirement. This documentation may be addressed as follows:

Division of Accreditation  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 North Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701  
Fax: (512) 936-6474

Districts with an accreditation status below Accredited may be subject to additional accreditation sanctions as referenced in 19 TAC Chapter 97, Planning and Accountability, Subchapter EE. Questions related to the public notification requirements may be addressed to [accred@tea.texas.gov](mailto:accred@tea.texas.gov) or (512) 463-5899.

---

<sup>1</sup> Academic accountability ratings were not issued for the 2011-2012 school year.

## **Informal Review**

In accordance with 19 TAC §157.1123, the district may request an informal review related to the assignment of a 2015-2016 accreditation status of **Not Accredited-Revoked**. However, an informal review shall be provided only if the ISD submits a written request for informal review **not later than September 30, 2015**. 19 TAC §157.1123(b). Written information may be submitted by the required deadline for requesting an informal review. 19 TAC §157.1123(c). I may make a final decision based solely on the written correspondence sent by the ISD. The request for informal review must be in writing and received by TEA no later than **September 30, 2015**, and addressed as follows:

Division of Enforcement Coordination  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 North Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701  
Fax: (512) 475-3665  
[EnforcementCoordination@tea.texas.gov](mailto:EnforcementCoordination@tea.texas.gov)

If no informal review is requested by the deadline, a final decision may be issued without review. 19 TAC §157.1123(d).

If you submit a timely request for review of the 2015-2016 accreditation status of **Not Accredited-Revoked** and I do not change my decision regarding the accreditation status during the informal review, you will have an opportunity to file a petition for review with the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) for a hearing pursuant to TEC §39.152, if you first satisfy the requirements of 19 TAC §157.1155. Any hearing provided shall be limited to the specific findings and/or recommendations detailed in this correspondence. Under TEC §39.152(b), the administrative law judge must uphold my decision unless the administrative law judge finds the decision is not supported by substantial evidence. The decision of the administrative law judge is final and may not be appealed.

## **Compliance and Cooperation**

Given the expectations of state law regarding accreditation status and my concern for the long-term education of the students served by the Marlin ISD, I am compelled to move forward with this process. It is my sincere desire that the agency, the district, and the community work together in a cooperative and productive manner.

Any questions you may have regarding accreditation may be addressed to the Division of Accreditation at (512) 463-5899 or by email at [accred@tea.texas.gov](mailto:accred@tea.texas.gov).

Any questions you may have regarding the informal review process may be addressed to the Division of Enforcement Coordination at (512) 463-3544 or [EnforcementCoordination@tea.texas.gov](mailto:EnforcementCoordination@tea.texas.gov).

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Williams".

Michael Williams  
Commissioner of Education

MW/cc

cc: Dr. Jerry Maze, Executive Director, Region 12 ESC  
Lizzette Gonzalez Reynolds, Chief Deputy Commissioner, TEA  
Michael Berry, Deputy Commissioner, Policy and Programs, TEA  
Sally Partridge, Associate Commissioner, Accreditation and School Improvement, TEA  
Lisa Dawn-Fisher, Associate Commissioner, Chief School Finance Officer, TEA  
Nora Hancock, Associate Commissioner, Grants and Federal Fiscal Compliance, TEA  
Criss Cloudt, Associate Commissioner, Assessment and Accountability, TEA  
Alice McAfee, Associate Commissioner, Complaints, Investigations and Enforcement, TEA  
Von Byer, General Counsel, TEA  
Nichole Bunker-Henderson, Deputy General Counsel, TEA  
Christopher Jones, Senior Legal Counsel, TEA  
Eric Marin, Legal Counsel, TEA  
Chris Cowan, Director, Enforcement, TEA  
Michael Greenwalt, Director, Program Monitoring and Interventions, TEA  
Leah Martin, Director, Accreditation, TEA  
Ron Rowell, Director, Governance, TEA  
Jamie Morris, Monitor