



Middle States Commission on Higher Education

3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 Tel: 267-281-5000 www.msche.org

October 24, 2018

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
United States Senate
U.S. Congress
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate
U.S. Congress
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
United States Senate
U.S. Congress
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
United States Senate
U.S. Congress
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Members of the Senate:

I am writing in response to your letter dated October 18, 2018, requesting information and documentation regarding any formal or informal communication between the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and the Department relating to the Accrediting Council of Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). I am replying to each of the numbered questions you presented below:

1. Between 2016-2018, the MSCHE did not provide verbal or written statements to the U.S. Department of Education or directly to ACICS endorsing ACICS as an accepted accreditor within the higher education community.
2. Between 2016-2018, the MSCHE has had no communication with the U.S. Department of Education or directly with ACICS soliciting endorsement of ACICS.
3. The MSCHE, through verbal communications with the Senior Department Official (SDO) with the U.S. Department of Education, inquired about the reference to MSCHE as one of the accrediting agencies referenced in the report. No written statements were provided to the U.S. Department of Education regarding this matter as the SDO indicated the reference was an editorial error and corrective actions would be taken.
4. The reference to the MSCHE as one of nine accreditors that endorsed ACICS was reported as an editorial error.
5. The MSCHE takes no position on such endorsements as that is beyond the scope of our agency's responsibilities.

Thank you for your interest in this matter. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth H. Sibolski, Ph.D.
President