

# UPDATE NEWSLETTER

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## *How much state staffing will SARA require?*



**SARA personnel are often asked what the staff workload will be for states joining SARA. The answer will vary somewhat due to the diverse composition of the provider mix operating to and from each state, but the following information may help states answer this question.**

In the initial phase of SARA, states will need the ability to determine whether a college is eligible to participate. Eligibility is generally simple to determine, therefore state workload for the application process is fairly limited. Any accredited degree-granting institution that is either a public institution or a nonpublic institution with an appropriate financial responsibility index score from the U.S. Department of Education is eligible. Institutions with financial responsibility index scores of 1.5 or above are deemed financially responsible for SARA eligibility purposes. However, the state SARA entity must be able to consider and act on appeals for participation from institutions that have financial responsibility index scores between 1.0 and 1.5. Institutions with scores below 1.0 are ineligible to participate in SARA. Note, institutions must be accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and must fill out a standard SARA application form.

States will also need to establish a system to keep track of which institutions from the state are operating under SARA, and whether fees the state may choose to charge those institutions,

if any, have been collected. Future data needs of SARA have not yet been determined, but appear moderate and will utilize existing resources when possible.

Because SARA does not cover activities at physical campuses of chain schools, states will see no change in how those sites are regulated. Distance education offerings from chain schools such as Argosy, South University or Everest will all be under the jurisdiction of the state where the principal accredited campus is located, no matter where the distance education activity originates. Most states do not have many home campuses of chain schools, therefore they will not add workload for those schools.

For these reasons, for most states, staffing FTE needs for SARA will be rather minor unless the state contains the principal campus of a major for-profit provider or a significant number of especially active large, public providers. Those states will assume more responsibility for data and complaints related to those institutions' distance education activities and may need to add staff capacity to accomplish that work.



## Midwestern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement upcoming webinar

### *Navigating State Authorization Amidst Emerging Reciprocity*

In this webinar Jenny Parks, director of the Midwestern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (M-SARA), and other experts in this field will present information for institutions navigating the complex landscape of state authorization. Topics will include: the history and current state of federal involvement in the process, ways to organize institutional data and oversight for state authorization, a discussion of “good faith” efforts, the facets of state authorization that will and will not be addressed by SARA (state authorization reciprocity agreement) and an update on the status of SARA across the nation. Participants are asked, but not required, to complete a preparatory exercise so that they gain the most from the webinar.

Register at <http://www.mhec.org/news/201403/sara-webinar-april-16>

## State Actions Regarding SARA

Visit: <http://www.nc-sara.org/content/sara-state-status> for details on legislation and application status of states in the regional education compacts.



### National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements

*A voluntary, regional approach to state oversight of distance education*

## Upcoming Presentations

**Texas Distance Learning Association (TxDLA) Conference**  
April 3, 2014  
Corpus Christi, Texas

**Distance Education and Training Council (DETC) Annual Conference**  
April 7, 2014  
Hammock Beach, Florida

**Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference**  
April 13, 2014  
Chicago, Illinois

**Western Academic Leadership Forum**  
April 23-25, 2014  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools (NASASPS) Annual Conference**  
April 27-30, 2014  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) Leaders Conference**  
May 7-8, 2014  
Salt Lake City, UT

**Northwest Career Colleges Federation Annual Conference**  
June 5, 2014  
Seattle, Washington

**Council of State Governments: Midwestern Legislative Conference Annual Meeting**  
July 13-16, 2014  
Omaha, Nebraska

**State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) Higher Education Policy Conference**  
August 5-7, 2014  
Denver, Colorado

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