



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Indiana State Board of Education
FROM: Brian Murphy, Chief of Staff
RE: Freeway Accreditation – Repairer of the Breach
DATE: August 1, 2018

Recommendation: SBOE staff recommends denying Repairer of the Breach’s petition for freeway accreditation. The school was under one year of observation by the Department in 2017-18. After the one-year observation period, the Department expressed concerns contained in the attached notice (which was sent to the school); SBOE staff joins in these concerns. Notwithstanding, the school wishes to make its case to the SBOE.

If accreditation is denied, Repairer can continue to operate unaccredited indefinitely, or operate for another year under the observation of the Department and make a request for accreditation at a later date.

June 4, 2018

Dr. Mildred Ewing
Repairer of the Breach Ministries, Inc.
3220 West Ridge Road
Gary, IN 46408

Re: Freeway Accreditation Petition

Dear Dr. Ewing:

As you are aware, Repairer of the Breach Ministries, Inc. (Repairer of the Breach) sought state accreditation by the Indiana State Board of Education (Board) pursuant to IC 20-26-15 et seq for the 2017-2018 school year. In response to the request, the Indiana Department of Education (Department) instituted a “seeking accreditation” year to ensure a school’s ability to comply with Indiana law as to educational requirements and other health and safety standards.

On April 7, 2018, Repairer of the Breach submitted its petition for freeway accreditation to the Department for review. Both Department and Board staff reviewed the petition, as well as Repairer of the Breach’s performance during the “seeking accreditation” year. Based on the review, both the Department and the Board determined that the Repairer of the Breach would not be recommended as a candidate for freeway accreditation for the following reasons:

- Repairer of the Breach failed to submit required data collections to the Department during the 2017-2018 “seeking accreditation” year.
- Repairer of the Breach failed to provide evidence that a licensed teacher was available to administer statewide assessments. A review of licensure status indicated that the Indiana Professional Education License held by Dr. Ewing, the sole teacher, expired June 30, 1995.
- Pursuant to information provided by Dr. Ewing during a phone call on May 21, 2018, there were nine (9) students enrolled and consistently attending during the 2017-2018 “seeking accreditation” period (Pre-K=3, K=2, Grade 1=2; Grade 2=2); two (2) students that enrolled in late spring 2018 (grade 6=1, grade 7=1); and one (1) student who enrolled at the beginning of the year, unenrolled, and then returned at the end of the school year. 410 IAC 6-5.1 outlines the health and safety requirements for school buildings and school sites, and defines a “school” as any place, or structure in which systematic instruction of any kind or grade is carried on for more than ten (10) persons for five (5) years or more per week or two and one-half (2 ½) hours or more per day. Given the fluctuating enrollment at Repairer of the Breach during the “seeking accreditation” period, it may not be required or compelled to comply with health and safety requirements for school buildings and school sites because it does not meet the definition of a “school” for purposes of Title 410.
- The petition indicated that Repairer of the Breach serves exclusively “at-risk” students. At-risk students are traditionally referred to as those students in grades 6 through 12. The majority of students enrolled at Repairer of the Breach during the “seeking accreditation” period were enrolled in pre-kindergarten through grade 2. The petition indicated that Repairer of the Breach followed the alternative education standards for at-risk students; however, the alternative education programming in Indiana does not address students in pre-kindergarten through grade 2. Therefore, it is unclear whether Repairer of the Breach is equipped to comply with educational requirements

as it pertains to curriculum and standards. Further, the petition indicated that Repairer of the Breach follows Indiana state standards and alternative education program principals, but did not provide any curriculum outlines or sequences to demonstrate how these standards are implemented in the classroom.

- No discipline plan was provided by Repairer of the Breach, which is crucial when dealing with at-risk students. The lack of evidence of such discipline plan raised concerns regarding preparedness to provide services to at-risk students.
- The criminal background check policy outlined in the petition made no reference to an expanded criminal history check or an expanded child protection index check for each applicant as required by Ind. Code §§ 20-26-5-10 and 10.5.

Such denial of recommendation for freeway accreditation does not preclude Repairer of the Breach to seek Indiana state accreditation at a later time. Consistent with IC 20-26-15 et. seq, Repair of the Breach may request freeway accreditation for consideration at a later date.

Sincerely,

cc: Maggie Paino, Director of School Accountability, Indiana Department of Education