

June 30, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Tyrone Jackson
President
Southeast Arkansas College
1900 Hazel St.
Pine Bluff, AR 71603-3900

Dear President Jackson:

This letter is formal notification of action taken by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) concerning Southeast Arkansas College (“the Institution”). This action is effective as of the date the Board acted, June 25, 2026. In taking this action, the Board considered materials from the most recent comprehensive evaluation, including, but not limited to: the Assurance Filing the Institution submitted, the report from the comprehensive evaluation team, the report of the Institutional Actions Council (IAC) Hearing Committee, and the institutional responses to these reports.

Summary of the Action: The Board determined that the Institution is no longer out of compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and removed the Institution from Probation and assigned interim monitoring. This action also resulted in the Board continuing and reaffirming the Institution’s accreditation. The Institution meets Core Component 3.E with concerns. The Institution is required to submit an interim report, as outlined below, no later than March 1, 2027.

Substantive Change: HLC policy¹ states an institution removed from Probation shall be subject to additional requirements for substantive change for three (3) years following the removal of Probation.²

Notification Program: HLC policy³ states that the Institution remains ineligible for the Notification Program for Additional Locations until it has completed three (3) years in good standing as required for access.

¹ INST.E.20.010, Probation.

² INST.G.10.010, Substantive Change.

³ INST.E.20.010, Probation.

Board Rationale

The Board based its action on the following findings made with regard to the Institution as well as the entire record before the Board:

Southeast Arkansas College (“the Institution”) continues to meet with concerns Criterion Three, Core Component 3.E, “the institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution made swift improvements to address previous gaps in its data collection and assessment strategies following the complete reengineering of its approach to assessment of student learning, but data from additional assessment cycles are needed to ensure that the institution’s new processes are effective and sustainable.

The Institution now meets without concerns Criterion Three, Core Component 3.F, “the institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution implemented an improved program review process that guides the Institution’s internal reviews and includes feedback mechanisms, advisory board input, curriculum committee governance, and programmatic accreditation activities.
- The Institution formalized its program review process in a new guidelines document for all educational programs that addresses a variety of relevant standards, such as academic rigor, financial sustainability, graduation rates, and community and workforce needs.
- The Institution also established a Program Evaluation and Assessment Committee to provide oversight and guidance of program review activities.

The Institution now meets Criterion Three, Core Component 3.G, “the institution’s student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution’s student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, using benchmarks that take into account the Institution’s student populations.
- The Institution’s student success-focused mission informs its strategic plan, including the plan’s key performance indicators, and the Institution has taken steps to improve student success outcomes based on these indicators.

The Institution now meets Criterion Four, Core Component 4.A “the institution’s administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution refocused its faculty senate so that it functions as a true faculty governance body with appropriate responsibilities and authority.
- The Institution’s faculty senate engages with decision-makers to support collaborative and effective administrative structures, including through a new role for the faculty senate president on the Institution's executive leadership team.

The Institution now meets Criterion Four, Core Component 4.C, “the institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations, and the external environment,” for the following reasons:

- The Institution has made demonstrable progress in meeting some of the key performance indicators that are part of its 2025 – 2030 strategic plan, including that it has made meaningful operational changes as a result of such planning activities.
- The Institution identifies and embraces continuous improvement opportunities to adjust its trajectory based on the analysis of new data, including having added several new important elements to its strategic plan that were identified after the plan was launched.

The Board of Trustees of the Higher Learning Commission has determined based on the preceding findings and evidence in the record the Institution is otherwise in compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and Federal Compliance Requirements.

Next Steps in the HLC Review Process

Interim Report: The Board required that the Institution submit an interim report no later than March 1, 2027, regarding Core Component 3.E.

Comprehensive Evaluation: The Institution has been placed on the Standard Pathway with its next comprehensive evaluation for reaffirmation of accreditation in 2029-30.

HLC Disclosure Obligations

The Board action resulted in changes that will be reflected in the Institution’s Statement of Accreditation Status as well as the Institutional Status and Requirements Report. The Statement of Accreditation Status, including the dates of the last and next comprehensive evaluation visits, will be posted to the HLC website.

In accordance with HLC policy,⁴ information about this action is provided to members of the public and to other constituents in several ways. This Action Letter and the enclosed Public Disclosure Notice will be posted to HLC’s website not more than one business day after this letter is sent to the Institution. Additionally, a summary of Board actions will be sent to appropriate state and federal agencies and accrediting associations. This summary also will be published on HLC’s website. The summary will include this HLC action regarding the Institution.

⁴ COMM.A.10.010, Notice of Accreditation Actions, HLC Public Notices and Public Statements

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact your HLC Staff Liaison, Dr. Andrew Lootens-White.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Gellman-Danley". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Barbara" being the most prominent.

Barbara Gellman-Danley
President

Enc: Public Disclosure Notice

Cc: Chair of the Board of Trustees, Southeast Arkansas College
Donna Hunnicutt, Vice President of Instruction, Southeast Arkansas College
Evaluation Team Chair
IAC Hearing Committee Chair
Andrew Lootens-White, Vice President of Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning
Commission
Marla Morgen, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Higher Learning
Commission
Ken Warden, Commissioner, Arkansas Division of Higher Education