



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20202

MAY 14 2004

**His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor
of St. Maarten
Franklyn Richards
Government of St. Maarten
Administrative Building
Clem Labega Square
Phillipsburg, St. Maarten
Netherlands Antilles**

Dear Mr. Richards:

On March 8-9, 2004, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) met in Washington, D.C., to review materials from 13 countries, including the information and documentation provided by the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine (Accreditation Commission) on behalf of St. Maarten for the purpose of reassessing the comparability of St. Maarten's medical accreditation standards to those used in the United States. At the meeting, Professor O. Conor Ward, Chair of the Accreditation Commission, provided additional information on behalf of St. Maarten. His testimony was most helpful, and the NCFMEA members wish to thank him for his participation in the meeting.

I am pleased to inform you that the NCFMEA, based on the information and materials submitted and the testimony presented, reaffirmed its prior determination that the standards and processes used by the Accreditation Commission to accredit medical schools in St. Maarten are comparable to those used to accredit medical schools in the United States. This determination of comparability by the NCFMEA has a maximum duration of six years from the date of this letter, unless the Committee withdraws, extends or renews its determination prior to that date. Before expiration of the six-year period, the NCFMEA will seek to confirm that your standards and processes for accrediting medical schools in St. Maarten are still comparable to the accreditation standards applied to medical schools in the United States. If so, its previous determination of comparability will be extended for another period.

As a result of the determination of continued comparability by the NCFMEA, any medical school in St. Maarten that is accredited by the Accreditation Commission may apply to the U.S. Department of Education to participate in the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program. If a medical school's application is approved, students enrolled in the school who are either U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. may receive

FFEL loans to finance their medical education if they meet all other eligibility requirements. Medical schools that wish to participate in the FFEL program may obtain the proper application forms from the Foreign Schools Team by calling (202) 377-3168 or by writing to the following address:

Foreign Schools Team
FSA/Schools Channel/CMO
U.S. Department of Education
Room 73C3
830 First St., N.E.
Washington, DC 20202-5340
USA

Our understanding is that there is only one medical school located in St. Maarten at the present time and that is the American University of the Caribbean (AUC). Please note that it is not necessary for AUC, which is currently participating in the FFEL program, to contact the Foreign Schools Team at this time; the status of that school remains unchanged by the NCFMEA's decision of continued comparability.

At the March meeting, the NCFMEA also requested that St. Maarten provide a report on its accreditation activities involving its medical school(s) for review at the March 2006 meeting. Please see the enclosure for details on the information to be provided in the report.

We would appreciate receiving the requested report by December 1, 2005, so we have sufficient time to review the information prior to the March 2006 NCFMEA meeting. Please send the information to the U.S. Department of Education at the address below.

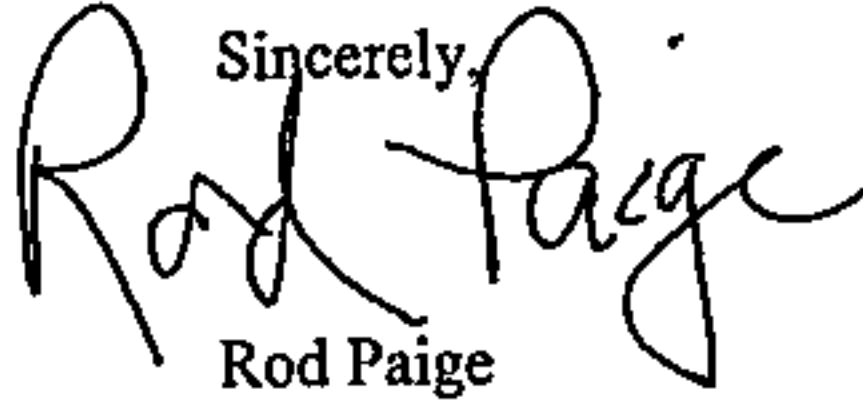
Mr. John Barth
Director, Accreditation and State Liaison Staff
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, N.W.— Room 7105
Washington, DC 20006-8509
USA

If you have any questions regarding the information requested, please feel free to contact Mr. Barth at (202) 219-7011 (telephone), (202) 219-7005 (fax), or john.barth@ed.gov (e-mail).

The Executive Director of the NCFMEA, Bonnie LeBold, will contact you in the autumn of 2005 to provide information regarding the March 2006 NCFMEA meeting. In the interim, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. LeBold at (202) 219-7009 (telephone), (202) 219-7008 (fax), or bonnie.lebold@ed.gov (e-mail).

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Thank you very much for providing information regarding your country's accreditation of its medical schools. The NCFMEA members and the U.S. Department of Education appreciate your ongoing assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Rod Paige

Enclosure

cc: Professor O. Conor Ward, Chairman
Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine

**Report Requested from St. Maarten and the
Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine
by the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education
and Accreditation (NCFMEA)**

Due Date: December 1, 2005

Submit to: John Barth
Director, Accreditation and State Liaison Staff
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, N.W. – Room 7105
Washington, DC 20006-8509
USA

Phone: (202) 219-7011
Fax: (202) 219-7005
E-mail: john.barth@ed.gov

Content: The NCFMEA is requesting information (and any applicable supporting documents) regarding the following:

- ***Current status of medical schools:*** A list of the medical schools currently operating in St. Maarten, indicating whether each school has gone through the accreditation process and what the outcome of that accreditation process has been (whether the school is fully accredited or provisionally accredited, whether accreditation has been terminated, etc.).
- ***Overview of accreditation activities:*** A summary of key activities involving St. Maarten medical school(s) during 2004 and 2005, such as accreditation reviews conducted, meetings held and accreditation decisions reached, and accreditation conferences or training sessions held.
- ***Laws and regulations:*** Any changes in your country's laws or regulations during 2004 and 2005 affecting the accreditation of medical school(s) in St. Maarten or any changes in your government's recognition of the Accreditation Commission to evaluate and accredit medical school(s) in your country.
- ***Standards:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2004 and 2005 in the accreditation standards that the Accreditation Commission uses to evaluate and accredit medical schools, and, if so, what those changes were in the areas listed below:
 - administration,
 - faculty,
 - curriculum,
 - admissions procedures,
 - student services,
 - methods for evaluating student achievement, and
 - facilities.
- ***Processes and procedures:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2004 and 2005 in the accreditation processes or procedures used by the Accreditation Commission for the following:

- conducting site reviews of the medical school campus and clinical clerkship sites,
 - selecting and training individuals who conduct site evaluations or who make accreditation decisions,
 - periodically reevaluating and regularly monitoring medical schools,
 - reviewing substantive changes reported by medical schools,
 - ensuring the Accreditation Commission has effective controls against the conflicts of interest and the inconsistent application of accreditation standards, and
 - ensuring that accreditation decisions are based, in part, on the evaluation of student performance after graduation from medical school.
- *Schedule of upcoming accreditation activities:* A listing of upcoming accreditation meetings and on-site visits to medical schools and clinical clerkship sites planned for 2006.