

SAMPLE NEWS STORY  
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## **Montrose County School District Loses Accreditation**

*Nearly 53,000 students have been affected by the SACS findings.*

The Montrose County School District on Monday lost its accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools after not fixing ongoing problems with its school board.

According to SACS, the national organization that accredits schools and colleges, the district was warned during its accreditation review last year that the school system fell short in some review categories. The organization said that if the problems were not resolved, the district's accreditation would be revoked. The biggest deficiency noted was lack of leadership by the school board.

The school board, which oversees 148 schools, has been having problems for several years, with members infighting, accusing each other of micromanaging, misusing funds, bid tampering and conflicts of interest. Board meetings often turned into screaming matches and occasional fist fights.

Residents have attended open meetings carrying signs asking for board members to resign. At least 50 families have moved from the county because of school board issues.

“Montrose County schools are fatally flawed,” said Glenn Brock, an attorney hired by the school board last year to address the SACS findings. “If the district wants to regain its accreditation, board members need to resign or adhere to stricter ethical guidelines.”

The loss of accreditation will affect the districts' nearly 53,000 students. Seniors graduating from high school will not be eligible for the state-sponsored scholarship program and will have difficulty getting into colleges that require graduation from an accredited school.

Montrose County is the first district in the state and third in the nation in the past 20 years to lose its accreditation.

The school board said it will appeal the SACS ruling.