



Administrator's Manual

2011-2012 EDITION



National Lutheran School Accreditation

Mission Statement

National Lutheran School Accreditation encourages, assists, and recognizes schools that provide quality Christian education and engage in continuous improvement.

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This manual is designed to help the school leader (administrator, headmaster, principal or director) lead the school through its NLSA process, including the development of its Self-Study Report. It also addresses the preparation necessary for the accreditation team's visit to the school.

A School Leader's Role in Accreditation

Lutheran schools share Jesus with the children we serve and their families. We also strive to operate with the highest standards of academic quality. NLSA provides a tool to evaluate our overall effectiveness in the areas that validate our mission and demonstrate our quality. No other accreditation process is able to accomplish that task so effectively for our schools.

A meaningful accreditation process requires exceptional leadership. That leadership begins at the school's administrative level. It starts with the head administrator's perception and attitude about accreditation. NLSA is an ongoing process that evaluates a school based upon national standards and the school's unique mission. It results in ongoing school improvement that does not end with the team visit. NLSA is an impetus for positive, directive change. Effective leadership is critical with the implementation of changes that often result from a successful NLSA process.

The purpose of this manual is to provide a detailed overview of the NLSA process for the school leader, from beginning to end. But the work does not end with the team visit. NLSA is a process that affects a school throughout its five-year accreditation cycle. Therefore accreditation becomes a strategic tool to help a Lutheran school become a school of choice in its community. An appropriate attitude about, knowledge of, support for and encouragement by the school leader provides the backdrop for success with accreditation.

There are three broadly defined steps in an NLSA accreditation process:

- STEP ONE** A self-study is conducted by the administration, faculty, pastor (single congregation schools), board members, parents, and other constituents of the school. This step usually requires nine to 12 months. The procedure is described in detail in the section, "Conducting the Self-Study." To help the school in this step, a consultant is assigned at the time of application.
- STEP TWO** A team of outside observers visits the school to validate the self-study and to make recommendations for further improvement. This step is explained further in the section, "The Visiting Team." The team will be recruited by the school administrator, recommended by the district, and appointed by the NLSA Director.
- STEP THREE** The school works toward continued improvement with the help of the school's developed School Improvement Plan and visiting team's recommendations. This step is explained in the section, "Expectations for Continuing Improvement." The District Accreditation Commission shall help the school with this part of the process.

Every Lutheran school is unique based upon the implementation of its philosophy, mission and vision. No two Lutheran schools are identical. Therefore, it is likely that schools that are quite different may be equally good. This belief dictates the basic principle that a Lutheran school should be evaluated based on standards of quality which are generally accepted, in terms of what it is striving to accomplish, and the school's own community, beliefs, and constituents. For this reason it is essential that those involved in an NLSA accreditation process carefully evaluate the school's educational program on the basis of its unique mission and vision, using nationally accepted standards for Lutheran schools. The implementation of a school's philosophy, mission and vision become important indicators, along with its with national standards, to determine if a school is worthy of accreditation.

National Lutheran School Accreditation is available for schools operated by congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and The Lutheran Church—Canada. A school that chooses to participate in the process must be able to demonstrate in a self-study report and to a visiting team that its program meets standards required by NLSA and accomplishes the stated mission and vision of the school.

Schools completing an NLSA process for the first time must use the Standards Based Process if they have not been accredited by another legitimate accrediting agency. Schools that are re-accrediting through NLSA have these options:

- 1) They may repeat the process using the new Standards Based process requiring standards compliance.
- 2) They may use the Ongoing Improvement process.
- 3) They may choose to use another secular accrediting process as their primary accreditation process and complete the appropriate *NLSA Guide for Evaluating the Christian Mission* document in conjunction with an acceptable national or regional accrediting process. The school will then have dual accreditation.

The school may choose, and the LCMS District Accreditation Commission may designate, which of these processes the school will use. Your district can provide you with valuable information to understand the difference between the processes so the most helpful process for the school is selected.

NLSA accreditation is a whole school evaluation/improvement process. All programs and levels of a school can be evaluated using a single NLSA process. However, schools containing more than one level may request the use of separate accreditation processes (early childhood, elementary, or high school). This can be accomplished by completed separate applications for each level of the school and paying a single application fee. Many schools that incorporate a variety of levels have found separate but related processes to be both relevant and appropriate when conducting the self-study process. Consult with district accreditation officials to determine what process would best serve your school.

A. Preparing for a Self-Study Process

Introductory materials explaining the NLSA process may be obtained from your LCMS district office or directly from NLSA. These materials include a sheet called, "Getting Ready for Accreditation." It is strongly suggested that a school making its first application for accreditation have most of the things from the list prepared before beginning a self-study process. This greatly reduces the workload and stress associated with conducting a self-study process.

It is an expectation that schools beginning a second or third phase of accreditation should already be in compliance with required standards and indicators of success. For these schools a careful review of the standards should be conducted before applying and compliance should be assured at the time of the site visit.

Before completing an application form, it may be helpful to discuss accreditation process options with your LCMS District Education Executive or District NLSA Commissioner. Once the application and initial fee have been submitted, the NLSA Director will appoint a consultant to assist during the selected self-study process. The faculty and governing board should be fully informed and aware of what is involved before the decision is made to undertake the accreditation process.

Your school's assigned accreditation consultant is a key player in your school's self-study process and is committed to your success. The consultant is an expert with knowledge and experience related to NLSA. The consultant will ensure that you have completed each section of the self-study process acceptably. Your consultant will make suggestions that will bring about improvement in your school over the entire course of your accreditation cycle. Since the consultant is committed to your success, it is critical that you send the consultant materials as they are prepared and consult with your assigned consultant regularly through your process. Your work with your consultant is essential to the success of your self-study process.

The first steps of the accreditation process involve the appointment of committees that will be responsible for conducting the self-study process. These committees include a steering committee and various subcommittees.

B. Conducting a Self-Study Process

■ The Steering Committee

The school's steering committee guides and directs all the work associated with the self-study process. Ultimately, the steering committee is responsible for the contents of the school's self-study report. A steering committee (usually five to eight people) should be appointed by the principal (director) or the governing board immediately after the decision has been made to seek accreditation. The school administrator should be a member of the steering committee.

A sample steering committee would include:

(For Elementary Schools)

1. School administrator
2. PTL officer
3. Board member
4. Pastor
5. Congregational trustee or officer
6. Three active parents (member and non-member) representative of the entire school population and other church staff members.

(For High Schools)

1. School administrator(s)
2. PTL or Booster officer
3. Board member
4. Two active parents (member and non-member) representative of the entire school population and other church staff members.
5. Faculty representative
6. Student Council president

The steering committee will have the primary responsibility for planning and guiding the entire accreditation process including:

- Naming the members of all subcommittees.
- Establishing a schedule for the self-study.
- Establishing a method and a schedule for subcommittees to report to the faculty and the steering committee.
- Securing materials and supplies for subcommittees.
- Editing and approving the final written work of all subcommittees.
- Submitting written reports to the assigned consultant as soon as they are completed.
- Assuring that the school complies with all Required Standards and Required Indicators of Success. During the self-study process the school can and should take many actions that bring the school into compliance before the self-study process is completed.
- Determining the school's readiness for an accreditation visit based upon compliance with required NLSA standards and indicators of success.

■ Work of Subcommittees

Every staff member should serve on at least one subcommittee. In small schools or because of special interests, some faculty members may need to serve on more than one subcommittee. Consideration should also be given to the role that the pastor(s), board members, parents and students can take throughout the study. The school administrator and members of the steering committee should determine how the interests of the school community can best be served as it selects subcommittee members. The names of each subcommittee member should be listed with each report.

In the Self-Study process, subcommittees are given the specific responsibility for studying one or more sections of the NLSA standards. By following the directions and responding to the items in the assigned section of the Self-Study Report Form, each subcommittee prepares the written portion of the self-study for that section. The written portion of the self-study for that section is submitted to the steering committee for final editing and approval.

It is the job of each subcommittee to determine if the school complies with Required Standard and Required Indicators of Success in its assigned area. If the subcommittee determines that the point total for general indicators of success does not meet the requirements that indicate compliance with required standards, it should be reported to the steering committee immediately so that corrective action may be taken.

All 11 sections of the self-study process flow from and are directed by Section I of the standards, "Mission and Vision." Involving the entire faculty in this section of the self-study results in a better understanding of the mission of your school and how the process is conducted. Be certain to involve every staff member at every level of your school in the assessment of your "Mission and Vision" section. The subcommittee responsible for the "Mission and Vision" section should prepare that section and share it with the entire faculty before it is considered by the steering committee.

Section II, "Relationships," also provides information that is important to the entire evaluation. The subcommittee responsible for this section of the self-study should begin to work on its report as soon as the "Mission and Vision" section is completed. This report should also be presented to the entire faculty before work begins on the other sections.

With the foundation laid for the report by completing work on Sections I and II, the other subcommittees should begin their tasks. Examples of completed segments of a Self-Study Report can be found in this manual.

■ The NLSA Self-Study and Required Documentation

An NLSA self-study provides an opportunity for a school to honestly and objectively reflect upon its quality through a careful and honest evaluation of nationally accepted standards for Lutheran schools. The process helps the school identify its greatest strengths and areas of concern needing attention. An NLSA self-study process usually can be successfully conducted within nine months to one year. The NLSA application process allows the school up to three years to complete its self-study process.

Faculty members, pastor(s) [Elementary], board members, parents and students are all included and actively involved in the self-evaluation process using a committee format. Normally the bulk of the work is carried out by the teachers and school administrator, but the involvement of a wide variety of school constituents is essential to the self-study process.

Regardless of the type of process (Standards or OI), an accreditation self-study calls for a careful review of the school's compliance with national standards established by NLSA.

The Self-Study Report Form is to be used as a tool for self-evaluation and improvement. Each of the 11 standards is considered a separate section. For each section, the report requires:

1. Responses to selected questions and statements. ("Respond to . . .")
2. Specific required exhibits (identified by an asterisk).
3. A rating of implementation for each indicator of success.
4. Comments explaining the rating given each indicator of success not "met in full."
5. Comments about the strengths, needs for improvement, and plans for improvement for each standard. ("Comment on . . .")

Each SECTION begins with the STANDARD, followed by an opening narrative. This narrative is followed by "Respond to" statements or questions that serve as starting points for discussion and study. The statements and questions are written not only for the purpose of clarifying and explaining, but also to stimulate thought, reflection and self-evaluation.

Supporting data and information should be categorically labeled and attached to the self-study report. Items marked with an asterisk (*) should be appended to the report.

After the "Respond to" statements or questions are REQUIRED Indicator(s) of Success and GENERAL Indicators of Success indicating a level of meeting the STANDARD.

1. Review the REQUIRED Indicator(s) of Success. Discuss each and determine how well you have implemented it. REQUIRED Indicator(s) of Success (marked with an *) are answered with either a YES or a NO. These indicators are required. If one of those indicators is not met, take immediate action to meet that REQUIRED indicator before completing the self-study and requesting a site visit. Evidence that the REQUIRED indicator(s) is met must either be attached to the self-study or be observable at the time of the site visit.
2. The GENERAL Indicators of Success are to be evaluated as to the degree to which that standard is met, using the scale provided. After you have determined your level of implementation of the GENERAL Indicators of Success, explain why any are not being met in full.
3. If all REQUIRED Indicator(s) of Success are met and the GENERAL Indicators of Success average two, you will have met the minimum for accreditation for that Standard and Section. However, expectations for the long term are higher than meeting the minimum. Therefore, for each Section and Standard, you will be asked to identify specific strengths and identify specific plans for improvement for that section. The plans for improvement must address both 1) items identified as needing improvement in the "Respond to" questions and statements; and 2) the GENERAL Indicators of Success that were not "met in full."

No one section of standards is designed to be independent of another section. All the standards are correlated so that comprehensive self-evaluation can be made. Therefore, participants in the self-study process need to keep in mind that the total evaluation and decision related to accreditation do not rest solely on one particular Section, Standard, or Indicator of Success, but on the quality of the school as a whole.

This Self-Study Report Form is not intended to be the actual report, with blank spaces filled in. The actual report should be typed and printed by a good quality computer printer, using the format provided in this booklet, but leaving adequate space for your responses. This Self-Study Report Form is produced in PDF and Rich Text Format. To save time, it is appropriate to "cut and paste" portions of this document to your report, inserting your responses appropriately.

The required thoroughness of this report is designed to stimulate thought and to assist in a thorough self-study and self-improvement process. It is also designed to give enough evidence to the visiting team and NLSA officials to determine whether or not your school is worthy of NLSA accreditation.

The term of NLSA accreditation is five years. Therefore, this Standards-Based process must be replicated at least every five years, or the Ongoing Improvement process used, to secure continuing accreditation.

C. The Team Visit

National Lutheran School Accreditation requires a visit by a team of qualified outside observers. The school's accreditation leader must ensure that the visiting team is selected following required NLSA procedures. Advanced communication and planning with district officials and the team captain is essential so the visiting team can complete its work efficiently and effectively.

The purpose of the visiting team is to validate the school's compliance with required standards and indicators of success, and provide an unbiased response to the school's self-study report. The visiting team shall also use its expertise to make recommendations for further improvement.

Standards Based Team Visit

■ Selecting Team Members

The captain and the visiting team members are recruited by the school administrator, recommended by the District Accreditation Commission, and appointed by the NLSA Director. Soon after the tentative date has been selected for the team visit, the school's accreditation leader should discuss the selection of a team captain with appropriate district accreditation leaders. The selection of a trained team captain should take place at least six months before the visit. After the captain has been selected and confirmed, team members may be recruited by the school, recommended by the District Accreditation Commission and appointed by the NLSA Director. A request for the appointment of a visiting team can be made via e-mail by contacting the NLSA director: Terry.Schmidt@lcms.org. The official appointment of team members must be completed at least one month (four weeks) before the team visit.

Visiting teams are structured differently depending upon the type of accreditation process used by the school.

■ Preparing Your School for the Visit

School leadership for accreditation can be provided by the school administrator and/or the accreditation steering committee. Before and during the self-study process and team visit, leadership must be consistent and professional. The leader must encourage each member of the faculty and accreditation committee throughout the self-study process. Leadership is also expected to:

1. Provide suggestions for the team captain and visiting team members to the NLSA consultant and/or District Education Executive.
2. Work with the NLSA consultant to establish a schedule for deadlines for completion of sections of the self-study. Submit all written work to the consultant for approval.
3. Arrange for specific visiting team needs. (See Addendum B.)
4. Distribute materials about the school to every team member as soon as convenient, but at least one month before the visit. (If the self-study report is not received one month before the planned visit, the visit must be postponed.) These materials should include: copies of the self-study report, directions for reaching the school, parking arrangements, and other printed booklets or materials about the school that would be useful in giving the visitor a more complete picture.
5. Within 10 calendar days of receiving the final copy of the Visiting Team Report, mail the required number of copies to your district accreditation commission at your district office, and a copy to each team member.
6. Using the Visiting Team Report, develop, prioritize, schedule and implement a plan for ongoing school improvement. (Please note: All major deficiencies must be satisfactorily addressed within the stated time frame.)
7. Provide for Cumulative Annual Reports, as required for continued accreditation, and continue to lead the school improvement process. Annual reports are to be sent to the district accreditation commission at your district office.

■ Standards Based Site Visitation Team

Serving as a member of a visiting team is a highly professional undertaking. The school accreditation leader should take care to recommend team members who will exhibit attitudes that are professional, cooperative, helpful, and constructive. Members will observe, visit, and inquire for the purpose of getting as comprehensive a view of the ministry of the school as is possible in the time available.

At least two members of the visiting team shall have previous experience with National Lutheran School Accreditation, either as a member of a visiting team or as a faculty member of a school that has completed or is currently involved in the accreditation process. The selection of team members from Lutheran schools that have not completed the NLSA process is encouraged.

Team members shall be selected using the following criteria:

- A. The captain (selected from the district approved list of trained potential captains).
- B. A teacher or administrator from a non-LCMS Christian school.
- C. A teacher or administrator from another LCMS school.
- D. A public school teacher or administrator. (Whenever practical, this person may be an LCMS congregation member.)
- E. A pastor of another LCMS congregation with a school.
- F. A specialist, college professor, or staff person from district or national LCMS offices.

The number of visiting team members is determined by the size of the school to be visited:

Students	Minimum Team	Types of Members
1-100	4	A, B, C, D
101-250	5	A, B, C, C, D
251-350	6	A, B, C, C, D, E
351 or more	7	A, B, C, C, D, E, F

The work of team is intense during the visit. During a short period of time, team members will be called upon to observe, visit, and inquire for the purpose of getting as comprehensive a view of the ministry of the school as possible. They will be called upon to write sections of the report that reflect their findings. As a result, additional members from any of the categories above may be selected and added to the team to lighten their load. Careful attention should be given to the selection of visiting team members in order to have competency and balance. Members of the visiting team should know the characteristics of a good school program and represent the level of the school being visited.

■ The Visiting Team's Oral Report

The final task of the visiting team as a whole is to provide a brief exit (oral) report to the faculty and others invited by the school. All members of the visiting team are expected to be present at the exit report. The team captain will lead this report and, ordinarily, the team members will participate in the presentation. This report will be general in nature, pointing to the forthcoming written report.

Before the exit report, the team will prepare a written "Report Summary." The report summary will be shared during the exit report. The only specific recommendation to be given at the exit report is the overall recommendation for or against accreditation. Outstanding strengths of the school are shared. If the team has decided that the school has any "major deficiencies" which have a severe effect on the quality of education, the ministry of the school and/or endanger the health and safety of the school population, these should be listed. This "Report Summary" is to be the last page of the visiting team's written report.

The team's verbal report usually takes no longer than 45 minutes. After that time, a brief question-and-answer period may be held. If questions relate to specific recommendations or concerns, ask them to wait for the fully documented, carefully edited final written report that they will receive within two weeks.

Ongoing Improvement Site Visitation Team

■ Selecting Team Members

As with the Standards Based Process, the captain and visiting team members for a school involved with an Ongoing Improvement process (OI) are recruited by the school administrator, recommended by the District Accreditation Commission, and appointed by the NLSA Director. Soon after the tentative date has been selected for the team visit, the school's accreditation leader should discuss the selection of a team captain with appropriate district accreditation leaders. The selection of a trained team captain should take place at least six months before the visit. After the captain has been selected and confirmed, team members may be recruited by the school, recommended by the District Accreditation Commission and appointed by the NLSA Director. A request for the appointment of a visiting team can be made via e-mail by contacting the NLSA director: Terry.Schmidt@lcms.org. The official appointment of team members must be completed at least four weeks before the team visit.

■ Ongoing Improvement Visitation Team

The Ongoing Improvement Initial Visit Team shall consist of at least three members:

- A. The Captain (selected from the district approved list of trained potential Ongoing Improvement Team Captains).
- B. The NLSA School Consultant (NLSA trained and experienced).
- C. A resource person selected by the school to help the school in specific field/areas that is addressed by the School Improvement Plan. This person need not have experience with NLSA.

To facilitate the timely completion of the work, additional team members from any of the classifications listed above may be recruited and added to the team following NLSA procedures.

■ Ongoing Improvement Site Visit Process

The school is visited for one or more days by a team of three or more people who will offer them assistance and guidance in validating their standards checklist and narrative statements, and in refining their School Improvement Plan (SIP). No site visit shall commence later than three weeks before the end of the school year for that school.

The visiting team will review the standards checklist, the accompanying explanations, and materials. Together they will evaluate whether or not the school meets the expected level of achievement for National Lutheran School Accreditation.

■ The Visiting Team's Oral Report

The final task of the visiting team as a whole is to provide a brief exit (oral) report to the faculty and others invited by the school. All members of the visiting team are expected to be present at the exit report. The team captain will lead this report and, ordinarily, the team members will participate in the presentation. This report will be general in nature, pointing to the forthcoming written report.

Prior to the exit report, the team will prepare the "Report Summary." This report summary will be shared during the exit report. The only specific recommendation to be given at the exit report is the overall recommendation for or against accreditation. Any outstanding strengths of the school are shared. If the team has decided that the school has any "major deficiencies" which have a severe effect on the quality of education, the ministry of the school, and/or endanger the health and safety of the school population, these should be listed. This "Report Summary" is to be the last page of the visiting team's written report.

The team's verbal report usually takes no longer than 45 minutes. After that time, a brief question-and-answer period may be held. If questions relate to specific recommendations or concerns, you will be asked to wait for the fully documented, carefully edited final written report that will be received within two weeks.

Expectations for Continuing Improvement

Accreditation is an ongoing process that does not end with the team visit. Evaluation is a stimulating force that leads to school improvement for the benefit of its students and community. In work that follows the team visit, a school should establish and implement a blueprint for ongoing improvement (Standards Based Process) that results from the recommendations of the visiting team. The Ongoing Improvement process requires the thorough implementation of the School Improvement Plan (Ongoing Improvement). Continued improvement is an expectation of accreditation. Therefore after the visiting team's written report has been published and distributed, the following steps should be taken by the school:

1. The administrator, staff and board members should read and become familiar with the written report of the visiting team.
2. The school may wish to retain the same committee structure for a program of follow-up and continued improvement as for the initial self-study process. A "rest period" for the committee is usually desirable. Each school will have to decide when committees should be reactivated.
3. For schools using the standards based process, after a careful review and evaluation of the recommendations of the visiting team, they should be organized into a follow-up school action plan. The school action plan should include a tentative calendar of action planned for recommendations stated in the visiting team report. It may be helpful to place each recommendation in one of the following categories:
 - a. Recommendations that can be carried out immediately.
 - b. Recommendations that can be carried out in the near future.
 - c. Recommendations that require long-term planning.
 - d. Recommendations that are judged to be inappropriate or invalid.
4. For schools using the Ongoing Improvement process, the school improvement plan should be fully implemented following targeted dates and assigned responsibilities. Evaluation tools should be used to determine how goals are accomplished. The visiting team report recommendations should be integrated into the school improvement plan whenever possible.
5. Continuous follow-up by the faculty is necessary to ensure the implementation of the recommendations for the purpose of continuing school improvement. Cumulative annual report forms must be submitted to the District Accreditation Commission each year to document continuous improvement at the school.
6. It is important that the school staff communicate to the team captain any errors or misinterpretations of facts that appear in the report. This should not be done in a defensive manner, but in a studied, professional way. Both the DAC and the National Accreditation Commission (NAC) are interested in avoiding errors and welcome the interest that is evident when explanations are forwarded that will improve the accuracy and completeness of the report.
7. In a successful NLSA process members of the school community have invested much time, energy and effort. As a result, the findings of the visiting team should be presented to the faculty, school board, and members of the school community. NLSA is a process that does not end when the certificate is awarded. In order to maintain momentum for continuous change and improvement it is critical that the school community is aware of the recommendations made by the visiting team and how the school plans to address them. The extent to which the school's publics are made aware of the complete report is the responsibility of the school.

Leadership Specific to the Standards Based Process

Every accredited Lutheran school must be able to present a scriptural rationale for its existence, define the reason it exists, and state the preferred future condition of its organization. The documents that define the school's rationale and purpose must be presented clearly and concisely and must not conflict with the mission statement of the sponsoring congregation or organization. For our purposes, we define these essential elements as the school's mission and vision.

The Mission Statement

The mission statement is a brief purpose statement that reflects the reasons for the school's existence. It is developed by the leadership team after receiving input from those invested in the future of the organization.

A mission statement should:

1. Be brief (20 words or less).
2. Be clear, concise and memorable.
3. Separate but compatible with the congregational or supporting organization's mission.
4. Clearly define the operation of the school.
5. Balance Law and Gospel when applicable.
6. State how it positively impacts children, families and communities it serves.

Start with Your Mission/School Vision

Vision is the stated preferred future condition of the school. It states what the school will become in the next three years, five years, 10 years. The vision becomes the mission that is accomplished over time. The School Improvement Plan (OI process) outlines the school's vision for its preferred future condition and illustrates its plan for accomplishing the vision. When vision and actions are properly aligned, a school is assured of implementing and living its mission.

In evaluating the relevance of a school's philosophy, mission and vision, the consultant must determine how the statements are reflected in the overall operation of the school, including administration, instruction, co-curricular activities, and learner outcomes. Since these concepts guide and direct all of the programs and activities in place at the school they must be well defined and clearly understood by everyone.

Determining Compliance with Required Standards

It is important that faculty, pastor, board members, parents, and students understand that the purpose of this process is to improve the quality of the school program through the process of planning self-evaluation, introspection, and comprehensive examination of what is happening to children in the school environment by comparing it to national standards for Lutheran schools.

During the NLSA process, it may become obvious that some facets of the school should be changed. Those desirable changes that can be done quickly should be done as part of the process, not just planned for the future. School improvement should occur, not just be discussed, as part of the NLSA process.

Steps in School Curriculum Development

A written curriculum is a Required Standard by NLSA. Typically this is one of the most difficult parts of the accreditation process for many schools. Leaders frequently ask for assistance in this area. It is therefore critical that NLSA consultants be prepared to offer assistance in the development of curriculum so the accreditation process will be successful. Samples of acceptable curriculum work may be viewed on the NLSA page of the Lutheran School Portal. Concordia Publishing House has also developed extensive curriculum guides for every subject area that integrate the faith, are easy to use and instructive.

You may also wish to use the following 10 Steps to School Curriculum Development. These steps are designed to provide an acceptable response to NLSA standards related to curriculum. It is not a comprehensive curriculum study document.

*** Indicates individual teacher activities**

1. Review the school mission/vision statement.
2. Put legs on it (extract main points of emphasis).
3. Select one academic area (subject or theme).
- *4. Identify key learning (outcomes) for each grade/age in that area.
5. Agree on sequence.
- *6. Assemble sources for objectives: (what students will know, believe and be able to do)
 - Teachers
 - Teacher materials
 - Texts
 - Curriculum guides
 - National standards
 - Lists of objectives
 - State and local requirements for licensing (i.e. childcare)
- *7. Select (write) 20-30 objectives for each age/grade level.
8. Review to ensure:
 - * agreement across levels (sequence, needed repetition across levels, consistency of direction)
 - * adequate depth (scope)
 - * consistency with philosophy
 - * religious nature of the school (integration of faith across the curriculum)
 - * age appropriateness
9. Select exit outcomes.
("By the time a child leaves our school's highest level/grade, he or she will . . .")
Some schools may choose to select exit outcomes before Step 4 in this sequence.
10. Select another academic area and repeat steps 4-9.

Leadership Specific to the Ongoing Improvement Process

Determining Compliance with Standards

For each of the Standards sections, the school is expected to:

- A. Comment on any significant changes that were made by the school in the area during the previous accreditation cycle.
- B. Indicate whether the school meets the REQUIRED Indicators of Success for each Standard.
- C. Evaluate the level of implementation for each GENERAL Indicator of Success according to the following scale.
- D. Provide an explanation or proposed improvement actions for any of the GENERAL Indicators of Success that are not “met in full.”
- E. Meet a minimum average of two for the GENERAL Indicators of Success for each of the standards.

GENERAL Indicators of Success help the school quantify its compliance with the Standard. Evaluate the school’s compliance with each GENERAL Indicator of Success using the criterion defined below. In the “Comments” section related to that indicator, specify how your school falls short of full compliance for any indicator marked less than “Met in Full.” Include the proposed improvement plans or actions to bring the school in compliance with the indicator.

Met in Full—The indicator of success has been completely accomplished by the school. It is verifiable through evidence and documentation.

Mostly Met—The indicator of success has been partially accomplished by the school. Documentation and evidence regularly indicate that the school is well on the way toward full accomplishment of the indicator.

Rarely Met—Infrequent implementation of an indicator of success. This indicator rarely occurs in the school and evidence and documentation for compliance are minimally present.

Not Presently Met—There has been no progress by the school toward the accomplishment of this indicator of success.

It is important that faculty, pastor, board members, parents and students understand that the purpose of this process is to improve the quality of the school program through the process of planning, self-evaluation, introspection, and comprehensive examination of what is happening to children in the school environment by comparing it to national standards for Lutheran schools.

During the NLSA process, it may become obvious that some facets of the school should be changed. Those desirable changes that can be done quickly should be done as part of the process, not just planned for the future. School improvement should occur, not just be discussed, as part of the NLSA process.

What is the School Improvement Plan

For schools using the Ongoing Improvement Process, the school improvement plan is one of the most important portions of the accreditation process. It will be carefully scrutinized by the visiting team and will chart the course for school improvement over your entire accreditation cycle.

1. Needs Assessment

Needs assessment is a process of using objective and subjective means to identify needs which, when filled, will benefit students at your school. A needs assessment answers the question, “What needs improvement at your school for your students?”

2. School Improvement Plan (SIP)

A plan developed by the school to improve ministry, programs, facilities and/or services for the benefit of all students. The plan should include the following:

- two to five goals consistent with the school’s mission and based on the needs assessments.
- a continuous improvement process that focuses on enhanced learning for all students.
- a representative group to be responsible for initiating, planning and coordinating the school’s SIP.
- a method of evaluation that determines and documents, in a variety of ways, that goals are met by assessing the success of that goal’s objectives and strategies.

3. Goals

- a. Goals are statements of desired future conditions consistent with the school’s mission and NLSA standards based on the identified needs of the students.
- b. Short-range goals are accomplished in two years or less. Long-range goals are accomplished in three or more years.
- c. Goals are written in the present tense to describe a preferred future condition.

4. Objectives

Objectives are necessary achievements or prerequisites for accomplishing a goal. Objectives require strategies which must be listed so that the SIP describes fully how each goal is to be achieved. Objectives are “organizers” or major headings for each goal’s SIP. Objectives are measurable.

5. Strategies

Strategies are ideas, plans, action steps that lead to reaching the stated objectives and goals by stated deadlines. Strategies are specific enough to be measurable.

Needs Assessment

The purpose of a needs assessment is to identify needs and goals for your school community. It answers the question, “What needs improvement at your school for your students?”

Use the needs assessment process and the NLSA standards to identify goals.

The needs assessment process begins with a review of the school’s mission statement and the school’s philosophy of education. Then local educators develop a school profile. Note the General Information/School Profile section of the Ongoing Improvement Report Form.

Look for more than one source of information for supporting the identification of a particular need. Data about the school and/or student performance must be clearly documented. Final selection of needs is based on data specific to that need.

Instruments used for collecting data may include, but are not restricted to:

- Standardized tests (norm referenced)
- Criterion referenced tests
- Surveys (NLSA or locally developed)
- Teacher interviews/opinions
- Schedules
- Effective teaching strategies
- Portfolios
- Projects/displays
- Developmental assessments

Data that is collected ordinarily is tabled and/or graphed with accompanying interpretation and explanation of the data. After needs, goals, objectives, and strategies are identified, use the same or similar instruments as tools to determine if goals have been met.

Suggested steps to follow in your needs assessment process:

1. Listen—to parents, educators, students, members of your community.
2. Interpret and evaluate standardized test data to determine curricular needs.
3. Gather and analyze data from surveys: students, parents, educators, staff members.
4. Carefully review any responses identified as less than “Fully Met” in the Standards Checklist. Address these responses as a part of the School Improvement Plan.
5. List all needs suggested by the first four steps and other needs assessment activities.
6. Lead the Steering Committee through a prioritization process of the needs.
7. Select three to seven needs that have the highest priority and are possible to accomplish.
8. Rewrite the needs as goals and select two to five significant goals for your SIP.

Developing Important Goals

- Involve faculty, staff, parents, other school constituents, and outside resource people.
- Work with your NLSA consultant.
- Review thoroughly your school's mission statement and philosophy, your Standards Checklist responses, Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, and any other resources or needs assessment results to develop your long and short term goals. Make certain that your goals address any responses not identified as "met in full" in the Standards Checklist.
- Review standardized test (such as achievement) results to identify achievement and/or curricular weaknesses.
- Review accreditation visiting team reports and the school Self-Study Report or last Ongoing Improvement Report to identify weaknesses or recommendations that need attention.
- Conduct surveys in print or by computer to get options from various groups of your constituents.
- Get input or evaluation from a professional consultant.
- Review the list of sample school improvement goals and consider those that match your needs assessments. Adapt or create as needed.
- Create your own broad goals for school improvement, ensuring that they are consistent with the school's mission and NLSA standards and based on the identified needs of the students.

Developing Your School Improvement Plan (SIP)

- Involve faculty, staff, parents, other school constituents, and outside resource people.
- Work with your NLSA consultant.
- Review thoroughly your school's mission statement and philosophy, your Standards Checklist responses, Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, and any other resources or needs assessment results to develop your long and short term goals. Make certain that your goals address any responses not identified as "met in full" in the Standards Checklist.
- Prioritize identified goals.
- Once school goals have been identified, select specific objectives for each goal and strategies to accomplish each objective. (See sample.) Impact/improve as many aspects of student development and learning as possible. Depending on the complexity, cost, or difficulty of reaching these goals, you may wish to limit their number to somewhere between two and five. Provide justification for each goal, indicating how meeting the goal will help achieve your mission and enhance student learning. Correlate each goal with the NLSA standards to which it relates.
- Develop a process to accomplish each goal and evaluate its success.
- Once the proposed method of accomplishing each goal has been outlined in detail, identify the materials, resources and timetables you expect to follow to accomplish each goal. It may be helpful when doing this to outline each goal and its objectives, according to projected timetables.
- After determining the process of meeting each goal, review them to evaluate the combined effect of their demands on school resources to insure that overall school performance is helped, not harmed.
- Organize your SIP into a logical narrative with an accompanying flow chart.
- On the basis of your Site Visitors' Report, revise your SIP.
- Develop a plan (methodology and committee construction) for continuing progress toward goal achievement and redefinition (as necessary) of the SIP. Include this plan in your SIP.

Preparing the Self-Study Document

Your completed self-study document is your school's introduction to the members of the visiting team. It provides documentation and evidence that your school is worthy of the status of accreditation. The self-study document and visiting team report are the documents reviewed at district and national levels to determine your school's eligibility for accreditation. Therefore, it is critical that your document and required attachments exhibit the professionalism that is expected of an accredited school. In order to ensure success, the contents of the self-study binder should be submitted to the NLSA consultant for approval before it is distributed to the members of the visiting team.

All of the documentation required for accreditation in the self-study report should be contained within a three-ring binder. The binder should be assembled to include the following sections:

Standards Based SSR Form

1. General Information and School Profile
2. Standards
3. Required Exhibits and Attachments

Ongoing Improvement SSR Form

1. General Information and School Profile
2. Standards Compliance Section
3. School Improvement Plan
4. Required Exhibits and Attachments

The contents of the self-study binder should be paginated and sectioned for easy use by visiting team members. When assembling the binder, make certain to consider how it will be reviewed and used by the members of the visiting team.

Required exhibits and demonstrations can be inserted into the self-study document whenever possible. Large documents or exhibits that do not fit appropriately into the binder can be displayed for team member's review at the time of the visit.

Items contained within a self-study document have been prepared by a number of different committees. In the interest of professionalism and for ease of use by team members, it is essential that your self-study document is professionally presented using a consistent format. It is suggested that a single project editor review all sections of the self-study report to provide consistency for the project. Once the self-study document has been completed, the contents should be shared with faculty members and others closely involved with the process. It is important that all involved with the process are familiar with the contents of the self-study report.

After the self-study report has been approved for use by the NLSA consultant, it should be distributed to every member of the visiting team. Team members must receive the completed report at least four weeks before the site visit takes place. The team visit will be postponed if this requirement does not take place.

Sample Timeline for the School NLSA Process

Month 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receive an NLSA Introductory Packet.2. Discuss NLSA with faculty. Decide which process to use.3. Apply (get funding, board approval, and a tentative completion date).4. Contact your consultant (confer, discuss steering committee.)5. Begin preparing exhibits (evidences).6. Read and note all NLSA materials (especially Administrator's Manual).
Month 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none">7. Appoint a Steering Committee.8. Order additional NLSA materials as needed.9. Set a tentative timeline.10. Appoint subcommittees (get materials to each committee) (subcommittees submit to faculty, faculty to Steering Committee).
Month 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none">11. Recruit volunteer data entry person and editor.12. Prepare Section I (Mission and Vision).13. Ask the consultant to visit (Steering Committee, Section subcommittee heads, faculty, administrator); share materials prepared with consultant.
Months 4-6	<ol style="list-style-type: none">14. Begin work on curriculum section, using NLSA standards.15. Encourage subcommittees (keep on schedule, monitor progress).
Months 7-9	<ol style="list-style-type: none">16. Maintain consultant contact and have first draft of section reports reviewed.17. Begin recruiting Visiting Team Members (input from consultant and district executive).18. Review all first draft reports before faculty review.19. E-mail request for Visiting Team Members appointed to the NLSA Director (Terry.Schmidt@lcms.org).20. Begin arrangements for the visiting team.21. Faculty and Steering Committee review modify and adopt Self-Study Report.
Month 10	<ol style="list-style-type: none">22. Assemble first copy of whole Self-Study Report.23. Print finished copy and assemble.25. Send Self-Study Report to Visiting Team Members, NLSA office, district, and Steering Committee members.
Month 11	<ol style="list-style-type: none">25. Have Visiting Team Captain visit.26. Make final arrangements for visiting team.
Month 12	<ol style="list-style-type: none">27. Have the site visit no later than three weeks before the end of the school year.28. Receive, print, and distribute Visiting Team Report to Visiting Team Members, NLSA (two copies), district, consultant, Steering Committee, and Board of Education.29. Present school board with School Improvement Plan.

Maintaining Your Accreditation Status

Accreditation is an on-going process of school improvement that does not end with the presentation of your certificate. In addition to the areas you identified and targeted for action in your self-study report, your school is also responsible to address all of the concerns that were identified by the visiting team. Your actions must be documented and submitted annually to your district accreditation commission.

The school is responsible to develop an action plan that addresses all of the concerns identified in the visiting team report. In addition School Improvement Plan goals (as addressed for schools using the Ongoing Improvement Process) must be addressed in a sequential manner. Your cumulative annual report form documents your school's progress in addresses goals and concerns.

The school accreditation leader (administrator) is responsible to complete and submit the cumulative annual report form. This form documents all of the concerns that were identified by your visiting team, and targets them with dates for completion. It becomes a strategic document that is used to engage your school in a continuous improvement process. As actions are taken they are added to your cumulative annual report form each year. The form must be submitted to the district accreditation commission every spring for the commission is responsible to confirm your ongoing progress to the national accreditation commission. This allows your school to maintain its status as an accredited school.

The format for the cumulative annual form is located in **Section G: Forms and Reports** on the NLSA CD. Keep an electronic copy of the form and update it annually. Highlight the actions taken by your school during the current school term. The form is your complete record of actions your school has taken during your accreditation cycle.

Every accredited school is also responsible to submit an annual fee. The fee is due and payable to the national accreditation office in St. Louis by October 1 each year. Invoices are mailed to every accredited school in September.

The completion and submission of the cumulative annual report form that documents your school's ongoing improvement and the annual fee are both required for maintaining your school's accreditation status. Failure to comply will result in the revocation of your accreditation status.

Standards Based Visit Schedule I

FIRST DAY: 1 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

- 1:00 - 1:30 Brief orientation
- 1:30 - 3:00 Initial classroom observations
- 3:00 - 3:30 Coffee with faculty
- 3:45 - 5:00 Team meeting
- 5:30 - 6:30 Reception with board members and steering committee
- 6:30 - 8:30 Dinner together

SECOND DAY: 8 a.m. – evening

- 8:00 - 9:00 Team meeting (review report on mission/vision)
- 9:00 - 11:30 Classroom observations and committee meetings
- 11:30 - 12:30 Lunch with students and faculty
- 12:30 - 1:30 Team meeting
- 1:30 - 3:00 Classroom observations and committee meetings
- 3:00 - 3:45 Faculty interviews
- 3:45 - 5:00 Team meeting
- 5:00 - Initial report writing

THIRD DAY: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

- 8:00 - 9:00 Team meeting
- 9:00 - 11:00 Verify concerns and legitimacy of recommendations
- 11:00 - 12:00 Write reports
- 12:00 - 3:00 Catered lunch to team. Write and share reports
- 3:00 - 4:00 Exit report to faculty, staff, and invited persons

Standards Based Visit Schedule II

FIRST DAY: Monday

- 7:40 - 8:00 Faculty devotion with visiting team
- 8:30 - 9:00 Briefing with administrator
- 9:00 - 12:00 Initial classroom observations and interviews
- 12:00 - 1:00 Working lunch in the “team room”
- 1:00 - 3:30 Observations, interviews, note taking. (Writing of mission/vision report.)
- 3:30 - 4:00 “Mixer” with teachers—fellowship and social time
- 4:00 - 5:00 Scheduled meetings with individuals, groups, committees, departments, etc.
- 6:00 - 7:00 Dinner with board members and steering committee
- 7:30 - 10:00 Initial report writing

SECOND DAY: Tuesday

- 7:40 - 8:00 Faculty devotion
- 8:00 - 9:00 Team meeting (review report on mission/vision)
- 9:00 - 12:00 Observations, interview, writing
- 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch with students and faculty
- 1:00 - 1:30 Team meeting—check process
- 1:30 - 3:00 Classroom observations and committee meetings
- 3:00 - 3:45 Faculty, staff, committee interviews
- 3:45 - 4:30 Mixer with faculty
- 4:30 - 5:15 Team meeting
- 5:15 - 6:00 Break
- 6:00 - 7:30 Eat out
- 7:30 - 9:00 Combined team work session—writing and rewriting

THIRD DAY: Wednesday

- 7:40 - 8:15 Faculty devotion
- 8:15 - 9:00 Team meeting
- 9:00 - 10:00 Final observation, interviews, writing
- 10:00 - 12:00 Combined team work session—complete writing
- 12:00 - 2:00 Working lunch in team room—finalize report—glean major recommendations.
- 2:00 - 2:30 Break
- 2:30 - 3:00 Preparation of verbal exit report. Team members fill out expense vouchers and give to captain. Team has time of praise and prayer.
- 3:15 - 4:00 Team captain leads the exit report with faculty. At the conclusion of the report, the visiting team departs.

OI Visit Schedule I

FIRST DAY: 1 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

- 1:00 - 1:30 Brief orientation
- 1:30 - 3:00 Classroom observations and interviews
- 3:00 - 3:30 Coffee with faculty
- 3:45 - 5:00 Team meeting to review tentative reports and plan to verify conclusions in the reports
- 5:30 - 6:30 Reception with board members and steering committee
- 6:30 - 8:30 Dinner together, followed by individual writing

SECOND DAY: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

- 8:00 - 8:15 Faculty devotions
- 8:15 - 9:15 Verify report conclusions
- 9:15 - 10:30 Team meeting to approve report revisions
- 10:30 - 12:00 Final writing and plan for the exit report
- 12:00 - 1:00 Exit report

OI Visit Schedule II

FIRST DAY: Monday

- 7:40 - 8:00 Faculty devotion with visiting team
- 8:00 - 9:00 Briefing with administrator and pastor
- 9:00 - 12:00 Initial classroom observations and interviews
- 12:00 - 1:00 Working lunch in the “team room” to review initial observations and tentative team reports
- 1:00 - 3:30 Observations, interviews, note taking.
- 3:30 - 4:00 “Mixer” with teachers—fellowship and social time
- 4:00 - 5:00 Scheduled meetings with individuals, groups, committees, departments, etc.
- 6:00 - 7:00 Dinner with board members and steering committee
- 7:30 - 10:00 Initial report writing

SECOND DAY: Tuesday

- 7:40 - 8:00 Faculty devotion
- 8:00 - 9:00 Team meeting to review individual reports
- 9:00 - 10:00 Verify report conclusions
- 10:00 - 11:00 Team meeting to accept final reports, rewrite as needed, and plan for the exit report
- 12:00 – 1:00 Exit reports

It will be greatly appreciated if the administrator of the school to be visited will:

- ___1. Arrange for hospitality for the visiting team.
- ___2. Provide for team meals and coffee breaks.
- ___3. Introduce the team to the pastor and other staff people.
- ___4. Provide a building floor plan illustrating classroom locations.
- ___5. Provide a private conference room for the team with adequate workspace.
- ___6. Provide the following equipment and supplies in the conference room:

correction tape	paper clips	tables and chairs
dictionary	pencils	computers and related materials
erasers	pens	wastebasket
"legal pads"	Scotch tape	sticky notes
name tags	staplers	
- ___7. In addition to required exhibits, make the following materials available to the team:
 - faculty newsletters
 - parent newsletters
 - school newspapers, programs for plays, programs, and musicals
 - textbook lists and copies of learning materials currently being used
 - complete school inventory of technology and audio-visual materials and equipment
 - personnel data sheets
 - descriptions of special projects and programs current in the school (remedial, gifted, library, childcare, etc.)
 - follow-up materials relative to previous students
 - any questionnaires completed by parents, clergy, students, custodians, secretaries, and food services
 - student government constitution, if applicable
 - exhibits of student work
 - samples of school forms
 - multiple copies of Appendix F
- ___8. Offer to arrange assistance with word processing needs.
- ___9. Plan for a staff meeting with the visiting team at the time indicated in the selected schedule.

ADDENDUM C

Costs to the School

1. Initial Fee	\$300.00	
Optional District Fee		\$_____
\$		
2. Annual Fee (required one year after accreditation is granted)		\$300.00
Optional District Fee		\$_____
3. Duplication Costs	\$_____	
4. Secretary/Postage Costs	\$_____	
5. Consultant Costs		
A. Travel	\$_____	
B. Lodging	\$_____	
C. Meals and snacks	\$_____	
D. Phone	\$_____	
E. Postage	\$_____	
	Total Consultant Costs	\$_____
6. Team Captain and Team Member Costs		
A. Travel	\$_____	
B. Lodging	\$_____	
C. Meals	\$_____	
D. Phone	\$_____	
E. Postage	\$_____	
F. Supplies	\$_____	
G. Substitute teachers (may be required)	\$_____	
	Total Team Costs	\$_____
	TOTAL COST	\$_____

ADDENDUM D

Expense Voucher

Consultant • Captain • Team Members

Visited School _____

Address _____

By _____

Visitor _____

Address _____

- Consultant
- Team Captain
- Team Member

TRAVEL EXPENSES					
	Date	Date	Date	Date	LINE TOTAL
Transportation _____					
Meals _____					
Lodging _____					
Phone _____					
Postage _____					
Other (explain below) _____					
GRAND TOTAL \$ _____					

Explain other:

Signed by _____

**SUBMIT THIS VOUCHER TO THE ADMINISTRATOR
OF THE VISITED SCHOOL WITH RECEIPTS ATTACHED.**

Section II: Relationships

Standard 2:

The School Demonstrates its Christian Mission Through Relationships with Congregation, Community, Staff, Students, and Families.

Note: Section II: Relationships category is divided into three categories: congregation, community, and climate. There will be introductory comments and necessary responses for each section, in addition to the responses to the indicators.

Section II-A: School and Congregation

OVERVIEW:

The Lutheran school has a special relationship with its operating congregation(s). The school concerns itself with the ministry of the whole church in order to fulfill its purpose as a Christian school. To do this the school seeks opportunities to strengthen relationships with the local congregation(s) and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING:

A. Describe the relationship between the school and the congregation.

The school is the lifeblood of this congregation. It provides an opportunity for the development of relationships that is unparalleled in this community. All called teachers are actively involved in worship and service opportunities in the congregation. Teachers voice support for the pastor and the ministry of the church in this community and throughout the world. Pastor is fully supportive of the school in word and deed. His four children are enrolled in the school. Ninety percent of the congregation's eligible school age children are enrolled in the school. Ninety percent of the students are members of the congregation. Therefore the school is actively involved in the church and the church is actively involved in the school.

B. In what ways does the school's student body participate in the life of the congregation? Indicate involvement of the student body as a whole and of individual students and their families.

School choirs are regularly scheduled to participate in worship services. Seventh and eighth grade student acolytes and communion assistants are recruited. Talented student instrumentalists have assisted with congregational music at worship services.

Many families worship regularly with their children. The attendance and participation of many young families is a hallmark of this congregation.

Parents of schools students serve on congregational boards and committees. Parents are represented on the Executive Council (Treasurer) of the congregation as well as the Board of Christian Education and Trustees.

Indicate whether or not the school meets the required indicator of success by circling YES or NO.

REQUIRED INDICATOR OF SUCCESS:

YES NO *2:01 The school is operated by one or more congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or maintains an active RSO status with the Synod.

GENERAL INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:

General Indicators of Success helps the school quantify its compliance with the Required Standard. Evaluate your school's compliance with each General Indicator of Success using the criterion defined below. In the "Comments" section related to that indicator, specify how your school falls short of full compliance for any indicator marked less than "Met in Full."

Met in Full—The indicator of success has been completely accomplished by the school. It is verifiable through evidence and documentation.

Mostly Met—The indicator of success has been partially accomplished by the school. Documentation and evidence regularly indicate that the school is well on the way toward full accomplishment of the indicator.

Rarely Met—Infrequent implementation of an indicator of success. This indicator rarely occurs in the school and evidence and documentation for compliance are minimally present.

Not Presently Met—There has been no progress by the school toward the accomplishment of this indicator of success.

2:02 The pastor(s) is acknowledged as the spiritual leader of the whole congregation, including the school.

3 Met in Full (3) ___ Mostly Met (2) ___ Rarely Met (1) ___ Not Presently Met (0)

Comments:

2:03 The professional staff is actively involved in worship, activities, and ministries of the operating congregation(s). (Professional staff persons include faculty and all other persons employed at the school.)

3 Met in Full (3) ___ Mostly Met (2) ___ Rarely Met (1) ___ Not Presently Met (0)

Comments:

2:04 The congregation has a written plan for and effective implementation of an evangelism program for families with children in the school who do not attend church regularly.

___ Met in Full (3) ___ Mostly Met (2) ___ Rarely Met (1) 0 Not Presently Met (0)

Comments: 90 percent of our students are members of our congregation. Nine percent of our school's current population attend other Christian churches in the community. It is an unwritten rule that we will not "sheep steal" those families. Two families do not currently claim church membership and pastor has attempted to follow-up with discussions and invitations to church. We have not yet developed a written evangelism plan but it will be developed as a part of our ongoing improvement process.

Add up the total points in the General Indicators of Success

Total 6

COMMENT ON THE WHOLE SECTION ON MISSION AND VISION:

A. Are the Required Indicators of Success met? *YES*

B. Is the total for the General Indicators of Success a minimum of six points? *YES*

C. Based on this portion of the self-study, what are the strengths of your school?

The pastor is very supportive of the school and involved in school activities.

The pastor and teaching staff understand their roles and are actively involved in appropriate ministry opportunities within the school and congregation

D. From the comments in the General Indicators of Success section above, identify every item marked as less than "Met in Full" with specific plans for school improvement over the next cycle of accreditation. Any areas identified as needing improvement in the "Respond to:" component must also be included in the proposed school action plan and addressed in the cumulative annual report.

A formal written plan for evangelism has not been developed. Pastor has been very involved with following up intentionally with school families who do not have a church home. It is agreed that a formal written plan would enhance our outreach capability. It will be developed during the next accreditation cycle.

25 Acceptable Goals for School Improvement

1. Financial support for the school exceeds needs.
2. Physical facilities provide a safe academic environment that is conducive to student learning.
3. Foreign language is an integral part of the school's curriculum.
4. Technology is fully integrated into the learning environment of our students.
5. The school administers its programs effectively by using a comprehensive strategy and calendar of administrative responsibilities.
6. The curriculum meets or exceeds state standards as it enables teachers to prepare students for their future.
7. The school clearly defines, owns and carries out its mission to the church and community.
8. All staff members are involved in professional growth activities designed to increase their effectiveness with the students they serve.
9. The school communicates effectively with its public.
10. The school's student population reflects the cultural diversity of its surrounding community.
11. Parents are strong school partners in the learning environment of their children.
12. There is unity of purpose between church and school.
13. School administrators are dedicated to visionary leadership and empowering management.
14. All students can learn challenging academic material.
15. The school's core values are ingrained and essential characteristics of the school community and its standards for operations and relationships.
16. The school exhibits trusting, sustainable and engaging relationships among and between all school communities.
17. Student learning reflects superior instruction in the classroom.
18. Creative teaching ideas are manifesting in engaging classroom learning.
19. Students are prepared to be leaders as they meet the challenges faced in continuing their education, careers, and community.
20. The school provides students with the opportunity to put their faith and knowledge into practice.
21. The school ensures that teachers are provided with adequate and appropriate resources to engage student learning.
22. The school's business plan assures its financial viability for the future.
23. The school provides opportunity for its students to serve others within and beyond their school community.
24. All students succeed in an engaging learning environment.
25. The school enjoys full enrollment and a waiting list has been developed.

GOAL:

A five-year plan of action for Trinity Lutheran School's increased visibility in our church and community is implemented.

OB1 A Public Relations committee is established consisting of a teacher, board of education member, board of evangelism member, one parent, one member at large and the vicar. This committee is responsible for carrying out the objectives below.

OB2 The name of Trinity Lutheran Church and School is publicized in various types of media within the community. (July 2002)

Sa: A Web site for the church and school is developed (July 2002).

A1: The committee looks at other church Web sites and uses the expertise of our current vicar.

A2: Trinity Lutheran School and Church Web site is developed (July 2002).

Sb: Newspaper articles are published at least four times per year (beginning August 2002).

Sc: Church and school are advertised on radio and television (beginning 2004).

A1: The committee is checking with LCMS for advertising material.

A2: The committee is checking with other sources for material.

Sd: A format is designed for printed advertisements in such target areas as the Shopper Stopper, telephone directory, motel brochure, churches within circuit 19 (beginning March 2003).

Se: Displays are set up to promote Trinity Lutheran School during Lutheran Schools Week (beginning February 2003).

A1: Contact Charlotte Davis at the community center.

A2: Contact Pearl Obrien at the municipal building.

Sf: Investigate joining the Visitors Bureau (July 2005).

Sg: Investigate the potential for becoming a weather spotter for television station at Trinity Lutheran School and arrange a visit from a meteorologist (2005).

Sh: If funds are necessary for the above strategies, the committee will present a proposed budget to the Board of Education in November of the preceding year.

OB3 Trinity Lutheran School is promoted with Trinity Lutheran Church through written material.

Sa: Trinity Lutheran School activities are summarized in the Sunday bulletins at the end of each month (beginning September 2002).

Sb: A student of the week is highlighted each Sunday in a bulletin insert using a standardized interview form (starting November 2002).

Sc: Significant upcoming events of Trinity Lutheran School are promoted through bulletin inserts (starting Fall 2002).

OB4 Students of Trinity Lutheran School are making a prominent representation throughout the community.

Sa: Trinity Lutheran School is represented in the Memorial Day parade (starting May 2004).

A1: Trinity students march in parade.

A2: A Lutheran schools week or other banner is carried in the parade.

Sb: Students bring a friend to school when the public school has off and Trinity does not (starting 2005).

Sc: Students are more actively involved in the community nursing home (starting 2005).

A1: Contact nursing home for permission to create a monthly bulletin board.

A2: Students sing and meet their shut-in pen pals.

Sd: A career day is established to bring community members into the school facility (starting 2006).

A1: List names of various leaders in the community.

A2: Contact these leaders.

A3: Set up an in-school visit by two leaders per year.

Se: Investigate potential community service opportunities on a yearly basis.

Sf: If funds are necessary for the above strategies, the committee will present a proposed budget to the Board of Education in November of the preceding year.

OB5 Students of Trinity are taking a noticeable part within Trinity Lutheran Church.

Sa: During the school year, one grade per month will be responsible for aiding in church services as assigned by the classroom teachers. Their responsibility includes but is not limited to the following: greeting members, acolyting, handing out children's bulletins, ushering and making displays telling why they go to Trinity (beginning 2006).

Sb: A hobby or mini-course day using congregational members' interests is considered for the Trinity students (beginning 2006).

Sc: A Student/Congregation member buddy system is established (starting 2007).

Sd: The public relation committee will help set up a safety/health fair open house for congregation members; where students will help (starting 2008).

OB6 Accomplishments of this goal are recorded through an ongoing scrapbook containing copies of articles and pictures of activities that have been completed.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

Each member of the instructional staff should complete this questionnaire. Rate each item:

1–Excellent, 2–Good, 3–Adequate, 4–Unsatisfactory, 5–Very unsatisfactory

1. The buildings that house classrooms are:

- a. suitable to the organization of the school and the type of program
- b. attractive
- c. in good condition
- d. properly illuminated
- e. properly ventilated (air-conditioned, if needed)
- f. adequately heated

2. Classroom space is adequate to meet the needs of the age and level of the child to support the achievement of learner outcomes.

3. Bathrooms are:

- a. readily available
- b. suitable in size and number and comply with state regulations
- c. equipped with water, soap, and paper towels
- d. kept clean and sanitary

4. Drinking fountains are:

- a. sufficient in number
- b. conveniently located

5. Furniture is:

- a. sufficient in amount
- b. appropriate in size
- c. of good type and quality
- d. in good repair

6. Supplies and equipment are:

- a. appropriate to the needs of the educational program
- b. easily accessible
- c. adequately stored

7. Physical education facilities are:

- a. Located suitably
 - 1. outdoors
 - 2. indoors
- b. In good condition (drainage and surfacing)
 - 1. outdoors
 - 2. indoors
- c. Of adequate size to support developmentally appropriate activities.
 - 1. outdoors
 - 2. indoors
- d. Adequately equipped
 - 1. outdoors
 - 2. indoors

8. The school complies with all local, state, and federal regulations with regard to:
- a. fire
 - b. safety
 - c. sanitation
 - d. health
9. The atmosphere of the school is conducive to the physical, mental, and emotional health of:
- a. children
 - b. staff
10. The school plant promotes the health and safety of the children and staff by:
- a. accessibility for all
 - b. freedom from exterior auditory disturbances
 - c. secure construction
 - d. care of buildings
 - e. care of grounds
11. First aid services provide:
- a. a well stocked first aid kit
 - b. at least one staff member competent to administer first aid
12. The preschool and kindergarten areas include:
- a. musical instruments
 - b. shelves and storage space
 - c. learning center space
 - d. large muscle manipulatives (blocks, tools, toys)
13. Outdoor facilities include:
- a. ball field
 - b. playground equipment (swings, slides, climbing apparatus, basketball hoops)
 - c. lined hard surfaces for games
 - d. boundaries (fences, gates, safety precautions)

Please comment on all items rated 4 or 5. Additional comments may be added for any other items.

PHYSICAL FACILITIES CUSTODIAL STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

Each member of the custodial staff should evaluate the physical facilities using a scale from 1 to 5 on the form below.

1–Excellent, 2–Good, 3–Adequate, 4–Unsatisfactory, 5–Very unsatisfactory

- a. Maintenance of buildings
- b. Painted surfaces
- c. Floor surfaces
- d. Stairways; handrails
- e. Work space and storerooms
- f. Restroom sanitation
- g. Plumbing
- h. Fire equipment
- i. Electrical outlets
- j. Window maintenance
- k. Sidewalks
- l. The heating plant
- m. The ventilation system
- n. Maintenance of lawns and shrubs
- o. Trash cans
- p. Cleaning supplies and equipment
- q. Playground equipment
- r. Hazard barriers (such as fences)

Please comment on all items rated 4 or 5. Additional comments may be added for any other item.

PHYSICAL FACILITIES CLERICAL STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

Each office staff person should evaluate the physical facilities using a scale from 1 to 5 on the form below.

1–Excellent, 2–Good, 3–Adequate, 4–Unsatisfactory, 5–Very unsatisfactory

- a. Offices, general
- b. Office lighting
- c. Acoustics, ventilation, heating, and cooling system in office
- d. Convenience of outlets
- e. Storage space
- f. Custodial service
- g. Filing space
- h. Neatness of offices
- i. Cafeteria service
- j. Lounge facilities
- k. Drinking fountains
- l. Bulletin board
- m. The way requests for repairs are met
- n. Office equipment
- o. Supplies
- p. Parking area
- q. Traffic flow

Please comment on all items rated 4 or 5 above. Additional comments may be added for other items.

Teacher School Climate Survey

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning _____ Lutheran School. For each item circle one number:

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 Disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree

You are invited to comment or give an example to illustrate your response.

- 1. A loving, Christian climate is obvious throughout the school and during all school activities.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 2. An appropriate teaching/learning environment is evident.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 3. Students, teachers, and administrator respect each other as individual, fellow members of the body of Christ.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 4. Where desirable and practical, faculty members, parents and students participate in making school decisions.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 5. Students are helped to love all people out of love for Christ.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 6. Student behavior is appropriate for the school's chosen teaching/learning environment and in accord with the school philosophy.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 7. The legal rights of parents, teachers and students are protected.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 8. Corporate worship is held daily either in each classroom or in a whole school worship experience.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 9. Students are helped to grow in self-control out of love for Christ.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

- 10. Faculty members and administrator are supportive of one another.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

11. Students and staff demonstrate a positive school spirit.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

12. As a teacher I feel safe and not threatened.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

13. I can freely express my concerns to the administrator, school board and pastors.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Student School Climate Survey

Grades 3-8

Please circle one word below each statement to show how you feel about that statement. Then comment, if you want, below that word.

1. Students in this school are respected.

True False Unsure

Comments:

2. I am learning things I need to know.

True False Unsure

Comments:

3. If I have a problem, I feel there is an adult I can talk to.

True False Unsure

Comments:

4. I understand the school rules and know what will happen to me if I do not follow them.

True False Unsure

Comments:

5. If I have a problem with another student, the teachers will listen to both sides of the problem.

True False Unsure

Comments:

6. We have fair and consistent rules at this school.

True False Unsure

Comments:

7. My teacher knows me and respects me.

True False Unsure

Comments:

8. Restrooms here are clean and safe.

True False Unsure

Comments:

9. I have had chances to make friends here.

True False Unsure

Comments:

10. I enjoy coming to school most of the time.
True False Unsure
Comments:
11. School is often interesting and challenging.
True False Unsure
Comments:
12. I feel good about the way my school looks.
True False Unsure
Comments:
13. I feel safe while I am at school (hallway, playground, classroom, etc.).
True False Unsure
Comments:
14. Teachers do not embarrass students in front of the class.
True False Unsure
Comments:
15. I am comfortable going to the school office for help.
True False Unsure
Comments:
16. It is easy to tell that this is a Christian school.
True False Unsure
Comments:
17. My schoolmates accept me as a fellow Christian.
True False Unsure
Comments:
18. I feel comfortable talking to the principal about any problems I may have.
True False Unsure
Comments:
19. I am proud of my school.
True False Unsure
Comments:

Parent School Climate Survey

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning our Lutheran school. For each item circle one number:

- 1 strongly agree
- 2 agree
- 3 neither agree nor disagree
- 4 disagree
- 5 strongly disagree

You are invited to comment or give an example to illustrate your response.

1. When I attend school functions, a Christian atmosphere is evident and I feel welcome and comfortable.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

2. The students demonstrate a Christian attitude toward me and others.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

3. The school staff demonstrates a Christian attitude toward me and others.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

4. Our Lutheran school provides a positive learning environment for my child.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

5. My child(ren) is(are) learning about Jesus and what it means to be a Christian on a daily basis.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

6. My legal rights as a parent and the rights of my child are protected by the staff of _____ Lutheran School (e.g. confidentiality of school records and family information is maintained).

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

7. My opinions are solicited and considered when decisions about our Lutheran school are made.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

8. The quality of education at our Lutheran school is at least as good as other area schools.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

ADDENDUM J

Sample Financial Plan

This is a model. You may use this format for your exhibit, or you may create your own. Categories are only suggestions. Items can be altered to meet local circumstances. In developing a financial plan a school can consider (but not be limited to) salary changes, pupil population changes, creative funding approaches, funding alternatives, new programs, fixed cost changes, program and/or expansion, etc.

Income Projections

Item	1st Year		2nd Year		3rd Year	
	\$	% of change	\$	% of change	\$	% of change
Congregational Support						
Tuition						
Fees						
Gifts and Grants						
Fund Raising						
Parent Group						
Government Programs						
Others						
Total						

Expense Projections

Item	1st Year		2nd Year		3rd Year	
	\$	% of change	\$	% of change	\$	% of change
Professional Staff						
Non-Professional Staff						
Curriculum						
Co-Curricular Activities						
Student Services						
Office						
Contracted Services						
Facilities						
Utilities						
Maintenance						
Repair						
Insurance						
Taxes and Licenses						
Insurance						
Reserve						
Total						

Discuss any significant or unusual features of your plan.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

_____ Lutheran School of _____ was awarded National Accreditation by the National Lutheran School Accreditation Commission, which met in St. Louis, Mo., on _____.

One of approximately 500 schools in the national that has achieved this recognition, _____ Lutheran School has demonstrated the quality of its educational program to a visiting team and district accreditation commission. All have agreed that _____ Lutheran School was worthy of National Lutheran School Accreditation. The certificate for seven years of accreditation will be awarded to Principal _____ at a public ceremony on _____ by _____.

Contact person _____ Date _____

School _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

ADDENDUM L

Standards Based Cumulative Annual Report

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

(Please use this form and complete on computer.)

Part I:

Basic Information

School: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

LCMS District: _____ School E-mail address: _____

School Administrator: _____

Co-accredited by (if applicable): _____

Report is for year (Circle one) 1 2 3 4 (Time to re-apply) Date of most recent NLSA site visit: _____

Administrator's Signature _____ Date _____

School Board Chair's Signature _____ Date _____

(By this coming from the e-mail address above, I state that each recommendation in the Visiting Team Report either has or will receive serious consideration for action.)

This report is due in your district office no later than May 15. The district accreditation committee will review by June 15.

The annual fee is due in the NLSA office no later than October 15.

Part II:

List any significant School Improvements or changes this year: *(Fill in as needed.)*

Part III:

Recommendation Report: *(List any Major Deficiencies first.)*

(Parenthetical comments are samples of how the form is to be completed.)

(List any Major Deficiencies first.) (To move to the next column, click "Tab.")

Section & Standard Number	Visiting Team Concern and Recommendation	Target Year	Year Addressed	Action Taken
(X Student Services 10A:04)	<i>(The School Discipline Policy is not in the Faculty Handbook. Include this policy in the Faculty Handbook.)</i>	<i>(2005)</i>	<i>(2005)</i>	<i>(Faculty Handbook revised summer of 2004. Student Discipline Policy now included.)</i>

TO ADD LINES TO THE TABLE FOR MORE CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, PUT THE CURSOR IN THE LAST (BOTTOM RIGHT) BOX AND CLICK "TAB."

ADDENDUM M

Ongoing Improvement Based Cumulative Annual Report

ONGOING IMPROVEMENT CUMULATIVE ANNUAL REPORT/School Improvement Plan
(Please use this form and complete on computer.)

**Part I:
Basic Information**

School: _____
 Address: _____ City, State, ZIP: _____
 LCMS District: _____ School e-mail address: _____
 School Administrator: _____
 Co-accredited by (if applicable): _____
 Report is for year (Circle one) 1 2 3 4 (Time to Re-apply) Date of most recent NLSA site visit: _____
 Administrator's Signature _____ Date _____
 School Board Chair's Signature _____ Date _____

(By this coming from the e-mail address above I state that each recommendation in the Visiting Team Report either has or will receive serious consideration for action.)

This report is due in your district office no later than May 15. The district accreditation committee will review by June 15.
 The annual fee is due in the NLSA office no later than October 15.

**Part II:
Recommendation Report for Standards**

(List any Major Deficiencies first.) (To move to the next column, click "Tab.")

Section & Standard Number	Visiting Team Concern and Recommendation	Target Year	Year Addressed	Action Taken

**Part III:
School Improvement Plan (SIP) Goal Completion Report — Sample**

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Lutheran High School – Somewhere, USA

Visit Date: 4/14-16, 2006

Administrator: John Doe

Annual Report Date: May 2007

GOAL 3: LHS provides facilities that give ongoing support to its mission (4/08) [date goal to be completed]

OBJECTIVE 2: Develop an on-going maintenance and renewal plan for present facilities and equipment (4/08) [date objective to be completed]

Goal Obj.	Strategy	Target and Status	Action	Person	Target and Status	Validation/Effect
3:2	1. Assess present equipment and furnishing needs	4/07 Current	1. Inventory all equipment and furnishings 2. Prioritize items on inventory list for replacement or repair (safety, appearance, usage) 3. Replacement, repair, upgrading of equipment and furnishing are included in budgeting process	Prin Prin Ex Dir	8/06 Current 11/06 Current 1/07	All items inventoried with value for insurance purposes as well Items prioritized in four levels—replace, repair, clean/revitalize—maintain Items identified for replacement are included in the 07/08 budget plans
3:2	2. Ongoing maintenance of the building, grounds and equipment reflects care and good stewardship	1/08 Future	1. A schedule for regular maintenance and upkeep of the facilities and equipment is developed. 2. The Executive Director includes resources for the regular maintenance and care of facilities in the budget. 3. The plan is used as a guide for hiring personnel. 4. The maintenance plan is reviewed and revised on a yearly basis.	Prin Ex Dir Admin Admin	4/07 Current 1/04 Future As needed Ongoing	Schedule has been developed—maintenance has been scheduled according to the plan

TO ADD LINES TO THE TABLE FOR MORE CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, PUT THE CURSOR IN THE LAST (BOTTOM RIGHT) BOX AND CLICK "TAB."

**Part III:
School Improvement Plan (SIP) Goal Completion Report — Sample**

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Lutheran High School – Somewhere, USA

Visit Date: 4/14-16, 2006

Administrator: John Doe

Annual Report Date: May 2007

GOAL 3: LHS provides facilities that give ongoing support to its mission (4/08) [date goal to be completed]

OBJECTIVE 2: Develop an on-going maintenance and renewal plan for present facilities and equipment (4/08) [date objective to be completed]

Goal Obj.	Strategy	Target and Status	Action	Person	Target and Status	Validation/Effect

TO ADD LINES TO THE TABLE FOR MORE CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, PUT THE CURSOR IN THE LAST (BOTTOM RIGHT) BOX AND CLICK "TAB."

ADDENDUM N

National Lutheran School Accreditation Face Sheet

This form is to be used for every report the national office receives from either the school or the visiting team. Copies to district offices should be in whatever form and quantities the particular district requires.

Accreditation Type: Standards I Standards II Ongoing Improvement Early Childhood Other

Date of Report: _____

Please check type of report: The number of reports that should be sent to national office does not include the number that is required by the district.

____ Annual Report for School Year _____ *(copy to district office only)*

____ Self-Study *(one hard copy, CD, or e-mail report to national office; copy to district office)*

____ Site Visit Report *(school forwards two copies to national office)*

____ Mid-Cycle Visit Report *(copies to district office; e-mail preferred)*

LCMS District: _____

NLSA accreditation is dual with or reciprocal to _____

School Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Administrator Contact Information: Name _____

Phone: Home: _____ Office: _____

Cell: _____

E-Mail: _____

Name of person preparing report: _____

Position of person preparing report: _____

Preferred contact information of person preparing report: _____

For On-Site Visit Reports include:

Name of Consultant _____

Phone: (H) _____ (O) _____ (C) _____

Name of Captain _____

Phone: (H) _____ (O) _____ (C) _____

Checklist of Tasks Required by Schools

- Ask at your district office to find out about NLSA and consider what type of process will be best for your school.
- Assess your school's readiness for accreditation by using the "Getting Ready for Accreditation" checklist.
- Secure an application from your district office or the NLSA office in St. Louis (1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122). Complete the application form and submit the application fee, sending two copies to your district office.
- Receive your NLSA CD and be advised of the appointment of your assigned NLSA Consultant. You will complete your NLSA self-study process using the directions on the CD you received at the time of your application.
- Invite your assigned NLSA consultant to visit your school and discuss a timeline to complete the project.
- Appoint your Steering Committee and subcommittees.
- Work with your consultant and steering committee to establish an accreditation timeline for your work.
- Conduct the self-study process. Submit documents and exhibits to your consultant as they are completed.
- Select a date for the team visit and secure a team captain from the list of trained captains in your district.
- Select the members of your visiting team and confirm their involvement. Use e-mail to gain formal approval of the visiting team from the National Accreditation Director.
- Arrange for a meeting of the accreditation coordinator and the team captain to determine specific details related to the visit.
- The school and consultant determine that the school has successfully completed the self-study process. Readiness is reported to the team captain.
- The team captain reviews the self-study report and required documentation and communicates readiness for the visit to the school and members of the visiting team.
- The team captain and accreditation coordinator finalize the details of the schedule for the team visit.
- The school submits copies of the self-study report to the DAC, NAC and every member of the visiting team. This must be done one month in advance of the team visit.
- The school prepares for the team visit.
- The assigned team members visit and observe the school in session. Observations and conversations provide data used in the preparation of a written team report that will be shared with the school.
- The verbal exit report is presented to the school on the final day of the team visit. The team captain is responsible to distribute the written report to the school within two weeks of the conclusion of the visit.
- Within two weeks of their receipt of the report, the school sends two copies of the unedited visiting team report to the national office in St. Louis and conforms to district submission requirements for visiting team reports.
- The school completes cumulative annual reports that document specific progress toward addresses each concern listed identified by the visiting team in their report. The report is completed and submitted annually for actions taken each year during its accreditation cycle. Cumulative Annual Reports are submitted to the District Accreditation Commission for review.
- Approximately 18 months before expiration of accreditation, the school begins the re-accreditation process, by submitting a new NLSA application and fee and beginning a new school self-study.

Accreditation by National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) indicates that the school successfully completed the NLSA process of self-study, reporting, and evaluation by a visiting team and that the visiting team recommended NLSA accreditation as a result of that visit. It is determined, through this process, that the school is worthy of NLSA accreditation. Neither NLSA nor its authorizing agency, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, assume responsibility for the school's quality (or lack thereof) or for variations from NLSA standards either at the time of initial accreditation or at any time during NLSA accreditation.



National Lutheran School Accreditation

1333 S. Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
Phone: 1-800-248-1930

<http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=595>
click on "introduction to NLSA"