

NLSA Accreditation

An introduction to this important process

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Background

- ▶ National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) serves as the accrediting body for the LCMS, and has been accrediting schools since 1978.
- ▶ The purpose of an NLSA self-study is to evaluate the actual conditions in place that are related to essential indicators of school quality.
- ▶ As part of the process, each school is required to construct a school action plan that will serve as a road-map for the future of the school.



Background

NLSA encourages and recognizes schools that provide quality, Christian education and engage in continuous improvement (their mission).

The purpose of NLSA:

- ↴ Help all Lutheran schools improve.
- ↴ Help all Lutheran schools evaluate themselves based on national standards.
- ↴ Give appropriate recognition to those schools that complete the process successfully.



Why is Accreditation Important?

- ▶ NLSA fosters excellence in education.
- ▶ NLSA encourages improvement through a process of continuous self-study.
- ▶ NLSA assures parents, the sponsoring congregation, and the community that the school has a vision and clearly defined goals and a plan to accomplish those goals.
- ▶ NLSA helps a school to complete a plan of action to take the school through the next 5-6 years.
- ▶ NLSA serves as a great form of professional development for staff.
- ▶ NLSA is a public acknowledgement of excellence.

Some important things to remember as a church and school family:

Don't think this is something one person can do alone! A director sitting in her office working on this alone is NOT the answer!

Don't look at the length and immediately be overwhelmed....they put ONE standard on each page so that eventually, it will be all electronic.

Don't forget to include various stakeholders from lots of groups in your accreditation process. This includes the pastor and other church leadership.

Don't worry about getting 100% on this document....we all have areas of strength and areas of growth! This helps us to see where we are going!

DO start early! This is an ongoing process! Surveys (See on LUTHED WEBSITE) are a great place to start!

DO PRAY regularly as a staff that the Lord would guide you and that you would be able to clearly articulate the strengths.

Utilize Your Consultant! I can't stress this one enough! Reach out if you are unsure or have a question.

This process is meant to be meaningful for your school and ministry as a whole.

What will the school be looking at, specifically:

- ▶ General Information about the school
- ▶ Standard 1: Purpose
- ▶ Standard 2: Relationships (home, family, congregational, elementary school to early childhood center)
- ▶ Standard 3: Leadership (both governing authority and director)
- ▶ Standard 4: Personnel
- ▶ Standard 5: Staff/ Child Interactions
- ▶ Standard 6: Facilities
- ▶ Standard 7: Wellness (health and safety as well as food and nutrition)
- ▶ Standard 8: Curriculum
- ▶ Standard 9: Infants/Toddlers (omit section if it doesn't apply)
- ▶ Standard 10: Continuous Improvement
- ▶ **Preliminary School Action Plan**
- ▶ **ACTION PLAN!**

Action Plan!

- ▶ The action plan will help you to have a framework or “road map” that will help your church and school create a plan for the future!



God's Richest Blessings!

- ...as you prepare to embark on a journey that will lead your center through self-discovery and an awesome action plan for the future!

