

PLANNING AND ACCREDITATION: Long-Range Planning

All schools are to have a long-range plan, based upon recommendations from the in-depth self-study and the visiting team. The plan follows diocesan directives, ordinarily extending five years.

The school places its objectives within this five-year plan of action which specifies the needed action, the target date, persons responsible, etc. The superintendent of Catholic schools and/or associate superintendent with an appropriate board determines whether the long-range plan includes sufficient attention to all unmet criteria, to implementation of the school's educational mission, and to other important recommended improvements. If the plan is not approved, it requires revision. Approval is needed for a school to seek or continue accreditation by an outside agency.

After approval, the school is to proceed to implement its long-range plan and is to report annually to the Catholic School Office. If the progress report is acceptable, the superintendent of Catholic schools and/or associate superintendent will present the report to the accrediting association.

PLANNING AND ACCREDITATION: Accreditation Standards

Mission Statement and Philosophy

The mission statement is a clear, concise expression that references the identity and purpose of the school, its commitment to a quality education, and unique elements and special features of the school. The mission statement is a necessary and powerful tool for planning, implementing, and evaluating the desired outcomes of the school.

The philosophy is a statement of beliefs and values that provides direction for the entire educational effort of the school, including how students learn and what is to be learned. This statement gives direction to goal setting, curriculum development, selection of instructional materials and methods, and administrative procedures.

Membership Standards

- 1.0a The school has a written mission statement that is a clear, concise expression which reflects the shared understanding of the school community.
- 1.0b The school has a written philosophy that is consistent with sound educational and psychological principles reflecting how children learn, grow, and develop.
- 1.0c The mission statement and philosophy are consistent with the doctrines and beliefs of the Church, institution, or board with which the school is affiliated, the needs of students, and the requirements of a global society.
- 1.0d The philosophy reflects parental/guardian participation in educational planning for all students.

Improvement Standards

- 1.1 The total school program is consistent with the written mission statement and philosophy.
- 1.2 Formation and revision of the mission statement and philosophy involve the school staff, board members, families, students, and others when appropriate.
- 1.3 New staff members and new members of the school community are oriented to the mission statement and philosophy.
- 1.4 The mission statement and philosophy are effectively communicated to students, families, staff, and sponsoring agency.
- 1.5 The school demonstrates that the mission statement and philosophy are used as the guiding documents for the school community and its program and activities.
- 1.6 The educational rights of all students are addressed in the philosophy, with a commitment to meeting the particular needs of students not learning within the limits of the traditional school setting.

Climate

The school climate is productive, peaceful, safe, and orderly. This type of atmosphere is conducive to the processes of effective learning and teaching. The school community maintains high expectations for both learners and teachers, fostering positive self-concepts, academic competence, and personal confidence.

Students, teachers, and parents/guardians are full and active participants in the school community. Effective communication between and among all segments of the community is maintained to foster a positive and harmonious school climate.

Membership Standards

- 2.0a The school climate is based upon respect for all persons.
- 2.0b The school has an established written discipline policy that positively reinforces accepted behavior and promoted self-discipline.
- 2.0c The school handbook includes a statement that requires school personnel to report to the Missouri Division of Family Services, if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child known to them in their professional capacity may be abused or neglected.
- 2.0d Programs are in place that foster home-school relationships.
- 2.0e The educational program enables students to:
 - a. take an active part in their learning process;
 - b. grow in self-management, decision-making, and problem-solving;
 - c. resolve conflicts in peaceful ways;
 - d. feel positive about their academic competencies and themselves; progress in all areas of their development.

Improvement Standards

- 2.1 The school climate invites exploration, experimentation, movement, and activity.
- 2.2 Training is provided to instruct and encourage parent/guardians on their role as primary educator of their children and on ways to build a harmonious school-home relationship
- 2.3 Guidelines are published that facilitate communication and interaction between members of the school community.
- 2.4 The school cooperates with other educational programs within the parish and civic communities.
- 2.5 Scheduled time for study and reflection is provided to the students and staff.

- 2.6 Students are appropriately transitioned in to the educational program when they enroll in the school, as they move from pre-school to the elementary school, and as they move from one grade level to the next.
- 2.7 Information is available to families regarding educational alternatives, when the present educational program is completed or judged no longer appropriate for the student's needs.
- 2.8 The administration fosters communication with the receiving school/class regarding the needs of students transferring from their school/class to another educational program.

Leadership

The aim of leadership in the educational setting is to provide a climate conducive to learning, where individuals in the school may exercise the right to develop their potential to the fullest.

The administrator of the school is given the authority by a pastor, board, or governing body to insure the successful functioning of the school in all phases of its program. This leader guides the school community in the identification of shared beliefs and establishment of agreed-upon goals. In addition, the administrator facilitates the development of a healthy learning environment and instructional program that moves the school forward to the realization of the mission. The quality of leadership provided by the administrator (principal) is a prime factor in the effectiveness of the school.

The board of education (board of directors) of the school provides leadership in setting policy for the school. The board, working closely with the administrator, concerns itself with such issues as policy development, long range planning and development, and budget.

Membership Standards

- 3.0a The administrator possesses a minimum of a Master's Degree with at least twenty hours of graduate work in educational administration/leadership or state certification in administration or has a written plan to complete his/her degree/certification in educational administration.
- 3.0b The administrator understands and is committed to the mission and philosophy of the school.
- 3.0c The administrator's qualifications and job description are clearly stated.
- 3.0d The administrator is evaluated regularly as required by the sponsoring agency.
- 3.0e The school has a board of education that is responsible for formulating the policies of the school.
- 3.0f The administrator is involved in the selection, assessment, evaluation, retention, and dismissal of all professional and support personnel hired for the school.

- 3.0g The administrator provides training for professional and support staff in regard to the laws pertaining to the reporting of child abuse.
- 3.0h New board of education members are oriented to their role and responsibilities.
- 3.0i The board of education operates out of a written constitution.

Improvement Standards

- 3.1 The administrator provides the spiritual (if appropriate), instructional, and managerial leadership for an effective educational program.
- 3.2 The administrator has an ongoing plan for professional and spiritual development. There is evidence of personal commitment to life-long learning.
- 3.3 The administrator is certified in educational administration.
- 3.4 The administrator is knowledgeable in the traditional heritage of the Church or institution as well as the current teachings, documents, and direction.
- 3.5 The board of education is appropriately involved in policy issues.
- 3.6 The board annually evaluates its effectiveness in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

Professional Staff

Members of the professional staff are committed, qualified individuals who are willing to support the mission and philosophy of the school. The staff is adequate in number and diversity to provide for the educational needs of all students with focus on the whole child.

Professional development programs focus on school improvement and professional growth as these relate to the goals of the school mission and philosophy. Staff members are actively involved in planning their professional growth.

Membership Standards

- 4.0a All full-time teachers have a state teacher certificate or are working toward this certification.
- 4.0b For sectarian schools, teachers of religion/theology fulfill the requirements and/or certification as designated by the sponsoring agency or have a written plan in place as to how they will fulfill this requirement.
- 4.0c Child abuse and neglect screening is completed for all professionals staff who work with students. This screening is done upon initial employment and periodically thereafter.

- 4.0d All professional staff have current health records of medical examination and tuberculosis testing, as required by the local health department.
- 4.0e All professional staff are evaluated regularly as required by the sponsoring agency.
- 4.0f All professional staff participate annually in ongoing professional development and inservice opportunities which are developed in light of best practices in professional development, their identified needs and the needs of the learners and the school.
- 4.0g An orientation and mentoring program is in place for new teachers.
- 4.0h Each member of the professional staff has a written plan for ongoing professional development on file with the administrator.
- 4.0i Discriminatory practices based on racial, ethnic background, or sex, are not used in hiring of school personnel. In church-affiliated schools, preference may be given to members of that faith.
- 4.0j The school provides to all professional staff holding a state teaching certificate the procedures and programs in the areas of mentoring, professional development, professional evaluation, and record keeping/reporting necessary for these staff members to maintain their certification.

Improvement Standards

- 4.1 All teachers are aware of the traditional heritage of the Church or Institution as well as the current teachings, documents, and directions.
- 4.2 Teachers have an understanding of and are committed to the philosophy and goals of the school.
- 4.3 Professional development opportunities are made available for all staff.
- 4.4 At least one staff member on duty has current certification in first aid and/or CPR.

Curriculum

The school curriculum includes all concepts, skills, and values that are planned, guided, and sponsored by the school. The students' needs, abilities, and interests are taken into consideration when the curriculum is developed. The curriculum reflects the mission statement and philosophy of the school and develops the student's responsibility and care for self, family, community, and the world.

Membership Standards

- 5.0a The school has a written curriculum that reflects the mission and philosophy of the school.
- 5.0b The curriculum meets the needs of its students and reflects the fundamental principles of student growth and development as well as the specific learning theories accepted by the school.
- 5.0c The curriculum includes, but is not limited to, the following:

religion (where applicable)	science
mathematics	fine arts
language arts	physical education
social studies	health and safety
technology	
- 5.0d The school has a systematic standardized testing program in place.

Improvement Standards

- 5.1 The curriculum relates to the life experiences and environments of the students and reflects an awareness and appreciation of the cultural diversity found in the local community, nation, and the world.
- 5.2 The board of education, staff, families, students, and the community have appropriate involvement with the curriculum.
- 5.3 The school regularly evaluates and revises the curriculum.
- 5.4 A comprehensive approach to student assessment is in place.
- 5.5 A systematic standardized testing program is utilized in diagnosis and prescription of student learning as well as evaluation and revision of the curriculum.

Instruction

Instruction is the process of delivering the school's curriculum to students. Instruction helps students learn and enables them to develop and meaningfully use concepts and skills. Instruction also fosters the development of attitudes, understandings, values, and beliefs by students. Instruction is the establishment of an environment, the accessibility to resources, and the facilitation of experiences that support all learners in constructing and exhibiting knowledge.

Instructional materials, equipment, and community resources are selected to support the curriculum and the instructional process. A variety of print and non-print manipulative materials and technology is provided to accommodate individual differences in students.

Membership Standards

- 6.0a The school provides an instructional program that meets the needs of its students.
- 6.0b The school meets state requirements for days, attendance, and hours of instruction.
- 6.0c Materials and equipment are adequate in quality and quantity to meet the needs of students and the curricular goals and objectives of the school.
- 6.0d The school has a planned program for reporting the academic performance of students.

Improvement Standards

- 6.1 Instruction gives evidence of the following:
 - a. effective direction and guidance during learning activities;
 - b. well-defined curriculum goals;
 - c. selection and use of varied types of teaching and learning materials and experiences;
 - d. adjustment of method and organization to conditions and needs of students as a group and as individuals;
 - e. use of varied instruments and procedures in the evaluation of students' learning and the quality of instruction;
 - f. use of appropriate technology to deliver curriculum and enhance learning.
- 6.2 Teaching strategies reflect the current understanding of best practices and are appropriate for student age, interest, and achievement level.
- 6.3 Provisions are made for identification of and assistance to students with special needs.
- 6.4 Materials and equipment are selected on the basis of their potential to fulfill the mission statement, philosophy, and curriculum goals of the school.
- 6.5 The school has a written plan to effectively utilize technology within instruction. Resources promote and enhance student knowledge, use, and application of technology.
- 6.6 The collection of instructional/learning materials and media is inventoried, classified, and catalogued according to a recognized and accepted system.
- 6.7 Instructional materials and equipment are regularly evaluated, updated, maintained, and serviced.
- 6.8 Resources available in the wider community are utilized when this enhances the learning of students and supports the educational objectives.

Services

Education encompasses every area of student development. The school is concerned with the quality and variety of services offered to provide for the needs of the whole child.

Membership Standards

- 7.0a The school maintains cumulative health and permanent academic records for each student. These records are stored in a secure location.
- 7.0b The school has a crisis management plan that is followed in cases of accidents, emergencies, and disasters. These procedures are made known to the staff, students, and families.
- 7.0c Standard requirements for safety are met including:
 - fire and other drills,
 - a plan to deal with blood-borne pathogens,
 - CPR and first aid training,
 - training in administration of medication.
- 7.0d Child abuse and neglect screening is completed for all volunteers who work with students. The screening is done upon initial employment and periodically thereafter.
- 7.0e Inspection of the physical plant and grounds to identify safety hazards is made periodically, with the school taking steps to remedy any identified deficiencies.
- 7.0f Provisions are made for the safety of students when being transported by the school; reasonable precautions are made for safety when children arrive and leave the school premises.
- 7.0g The use of potentially hazardous materials and tools by students is supervised and in compliance with state and federal regulations.
- 7.0h Adequate supervision for students is provided at all times.
- 7.0i The kitchen and dining areas used by the school meet health and safety regulations.
- 7.0j The school has developed a Wellness Plan that has been communicated to staff, students and families.

Improvement Standards

- 7.1 The school provides for adequate health services.

- 7.2 Faculty and staff receive training in recognizing the signs and symptoms of substance abuse (and other behaviors of concern) and are trained in implementing the school's intervention strategies.
- 7.3 If a cafeteria program is provided, adequate and qualified personnel are available to plan and serve a variety of well-balanced, wholesome meals in full accordance with local, state, and federal regulations. If there is no cafeteria program offered, adequate accommodations and supervision are provided for whatever type of program is available.
- 7.4 A variety of extra-curricular activities is provided to adequately meet the interest and needs of students.

Facilities

In order to achieve the purposes of the school, facilities need to be adequate and well-maintained.

Membership Standards

- 8.0a The location, school grounds, and physical plant support an adequate instructional program that is consistent with the school's purposes and needs of the students.
- 8.0b There is evidence of effective housekeeping designed to provide a safe, sanitary, and attractive environment for learning.
- 8.0c The physical plant is in good repair and meets the various requirements for heating, ventilation, and illumination.
- 8.0d The physical plant is in compliance with all government regulations.
- 8.0e All appropriate safety standards, as required by local safety officials and insurance requirements, are met.
 - a. An adequate number of regularly inspected fire extinguishers are placed throughout the building;
 - b. Exit routes are described and copies posted in each room;
 - c. An adequate warning system is maintained for fire, tornado, earthquake, etc.;
 - d. Appropriate safety drills are conducted and recorded.

Improvement Standards

- 8.1 The physical plant is energy efficient.
- 8.2 The physical plant provides a comfortable environment for the staff and students throughout the year.

- 8.3 There is a plan to enhance the school facilities in order to meet emerging instructional needs and the overall needs of the school community. The plan is reviewed periodically.

Financing and Planning

The school demonstrates accountability for the use of its financial resources. Plans for recruitment/retention of enrollment, development, marketing, and public relations are in place within the educational community.

The school systematically and comprehensively evaluates educational programs and services. The planning process clearly delineates a strategy for school improvement.

Membership Standards

- 9.0a The school operates by means of a carefully planned and regularly monitored annual budget. This budget reflects its mission, philosophy, and priorities.
- 9.0b Sufficient resources are available to implement a quality instructional program.
- 9.0c The school engages in short term and long term planning as part of the school improvement process. The annual plan for improvement is formulated and/or updated by the staff and board of education.
- 9.0d Annual funding is allocated to staff development activities/programs.

Improvement Standards

- 9.1 The budget is planned through collaboration of board, principal, and pastor (in sectarian schools).
- 9.2 The school has adequate financial resources to maintain its operation.
- 9.3 Development activities and fundraising are to be promoted by board, staff, and families. These activities are evaluated regularly.
- 9.4 The school engages in marketing activities that promote adequate enrollment for the school.
- 9.5 The school maintains visibility in the parish and neighborhood community it serves. A public relations program provides appropriate publics with information and news about the schools program, activities, and operations.

Pre-School Program

A pre-school program is an educational program for three to five-year old children. The principal of the elementary school is administratively responsible for the program. The following membership standards apply only to the pre-school program as defined above.

Membership Standards

- 10.0a There is an adequate adult-child ratio for each group of children. Minimum ratios of qualified adults to children are:
 - a. at least 1 adult to 10 children, age 3 & 4.
 - b. at least 1 adult to 16 children, age 5 and up.
- 10.0b Non-instructional personnel meet the minimum age requirements for carrying out their assigned responsibility.
- 10.0c Pre-school teachers shall be educated in early childhood education/child development and hold appropriate certification or have a written plan in place as to how they will fulfill this requirement.
- 10.0d Pre-school assessment includes regular observations of the child, anecdotal records, developmental checklists, and portfolios.
- 10.0e A variety of learning materials is available in the following areas: science, drama, housekeeping, construction, transportation, creative arts, language, library, manipulatives, large muscle, and music and movement.
- 10.0f Furniture is child-sized and adequate for the number of children served.
- 10.0g A variety of materials is accessible, so that all children can make choices independently.
- 10.0h Space is provided for children to work individually and in small or large groups.
- 10.0i There are well-defined areas where children can freely move about without interfering with one another's activities.

Before and After School-Care Programs

These programs provide the service of before and after school-care to school-age students. The principal of the elementary school is administratively responsible for the program. The following membership standards apply only to the before and after school-care programs as defined above.

Membership Standards

- 11.0a Philosophy, policies, and procedures are consistent with those of the school.
- 11.0b Staff is adequate in number.

- 11.0c Staff is screened by the appropriate agencies, have appropriate pre-service and in-service training, and meet age requirements.
- 11.0d There is always a minimum of two adults, eighteen years of age or older, on the premises. At least one must be a member of the school staff.
- 11.0e The program provides a variety of safe activities and experiences to meet the needs and interests of students.

Special Education School and Program

A special education school and program serves children with learning needs that are severe enough to require the services of teachers who have specialized degrees in specific disabilities. The following membership standards apply only to the special education school and program as defined above.

Membership Standards

- 12.0a Administrators have experience and preparation for working with special-needs students.
- 12.0b Teachers are appropriately trained to work in the area of special education in which they teach.
- 12.0c Teachers are trained in developing a service plan/strategic plan appropriate to the needs of each student.
- 12.0d Curriculum is adapted to allow students to progress at their individual learning rate and to facilitate transition from level to level.
- 12.0e Provision is made to allow students to attend regular classes when appropriate, and plans for transition from one placement to another are in place.
- 12.0f Interdisciplinary services (physical therapy, speech, occupational therapy, counseling, etc.) related to handicapping conditions are either provided or referral resources are communicated to the families.
- 12.0g Service plans/strategic plans are available in each student's file.
- 12.0h Reasonable accommodations are made in the physical plant to allow easy use of facilities by handicapped students.