

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 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 will present the report to the accrediting association.

PLANNING AND ACCREDITATION: Accreditation Standards

I. Mission 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 philosophy is a statement of beliefs and values that provides direction for the entire educational effort of the school.

Indicators for Membership

- 1A The school has a written mission statement that is a clear, concise expression which reflects the shared understanding of the school community.
- 1B The policies, procedures and actions of the school community are consistent with the written mission statement and philosophy of the school.
- 1C The mission statement and philosophy are consistent with sound educational and psychological principles reflecting how children learn, grow and develop.
- 1D The philosophy reflects family participation in educational planning for all students.
- 1E Formation and annual review of the mission statement and philosophy of the school involve families, staff, school board members, other stakeholders, and when appropriate students.
- 1F Current staff and families are educated annually on the mission statement and philosophy of the school.

Indicators for Improvement

- 1.1 The mission statement and philosophy of the school community are made evident to students, families and staff in a variety of ways.
- 1.2 The school demonstrates that the mission statement and philosophy of the school community are used to guide its program and activities.
- 1.3 The mission and philosophy of the school community reflect a commitment to meet the needs of all students.

II. Climate

The school maintains a climate that is productive, peaceful, respectful, safe and orderly, and conducive to the processes of effective learning and teaching.

Indicators for Membership

- 2A The school provides programs that promote respect and tolerance for diversity.
- 2B The school has an established written discipline policy that positively reinforces accepted behavior and promotes self-discipline.
- 2C 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.
- 2D Programs and activities are in place that encourage home-school relationships (i.e. home and school organizations, family nights and newsletters).
- 2E The educational program enables students to take an active part in their learning process by offering programs such as decision making, problem solving, and conflict management.
- 2F The school climate includes exploration, experimentation, movement, and activity.
- 2G School handbooks outline guidelines that facilitate communication and interaction between members of the school community.
- 2H The school cooperates with other programs within the religious and civic communities.
- 2I The school has implemented harassment/bullying prevention policies and programs for students and personnel.

Indicators for Improvement

- 2.1 New students are given orientation into the educational program when they enroll in the school, as they move from early childhood to the elementary school, and as they move from one grade to the next.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 Opportunities are provided to instruct and encourage families on their role as primary educator of their children and on ways to build harmonious school-home relationships.
- 2.4 The administration fosters communication with the receiving school/class regarding the needs of students transferring from their school/class to another educational program.

III. Leadership

The governing authority of the school provides leadership in setting policy. A qualified administrator insures the successful functioning of the school in all phases of the program.

Indicators for Membership

- 3A The school has a local governing authority/board/committee that is responsible for formulating the policies of the school.
- 3B Members of the local governing authority/board/committee are oriented to their roles and responsibilities.
- 3C The local governing authority/board/committee operates out of written constitution/guidelines.
- 3D Written minutes are kept for meetings of the local governing authority/board/committee.
- 3E The local governing authority/board/committee has a policy manual.
- 3F A process is in place to evaluate the administrator at least every three years.
- 3G The administrator is responsible for carrying out the day-to-day policies.
- 3H The administrator possesses at least one of the following:
- state certification in administration.
or
 - a minimum of a Master's Degree with at least twenty hours of graduate work in educational administration/leadership.
or
 - a written plan to complete degree/certification in educational administration.
- 3I The administrator understands and is committed to the mission and philosophy of the school.
- 3J The necessary qualifications and the job description of the administrator are clearly stated.
- 3K The administrator is involved in the selection, assessment, evaluation, retention, and dismissal of professional and support personnel for the school.
- 3L The administrator provides training for professional and support staff in regard to the laws pertaining to the reporting of child abuse.

Indicators for Improvement

- 3.1 The local governing authority/board/committee annually evaluates the effectiveness of its roles and responsibilities.
- 3.2 The administrator provides the spiritual (if appropriate), instructional, and managerial leadership for an effective educational program.

- 3.3 The administrator has an ongoing personal plan for professional and spiritual (if appropriate) development with evidence of a commitment to life-long learning.
- 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 administrator has appropriate non-teaching time to carry out administrative responsibilities (recommended 1/4 of the day per 50 students).

IV. Personnel

Personnel are committed, qualified individuals who 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.

Indicators for Membership

- 4A All full-time teachers have either:
- a state teacher certificate.
or
 - are working toward this certification.
or
 - a written plan to complete degree/certification.
- 4B For sectarian schools, teachers of religion/theology fulfill the requirements and/or certification, either:
- as designated by the local authority or sponsoring agency.
or
 - have a written plan in place as to how they will fulfill this requirement.
- 4C Background checks and child abuse and neglect screening are completed for all personnel and volunteers who work with students. This screening is done upon initial service and periodically thereafter.
- 4D All personnel have current health records of medical examination and tuberculosis testing, as required by the local health department.
- 4E All teachers are evaluated regularly.
- 4F All teachers participate annually in ongoing professional development and in-service opportunities which are developed in light of:
- best practices in professional development.
 - staff identified needs.
 - needs of learners and the school.

- 4G An orientation and mentoring program is in place for new teachers.
- 4H Each teacher has a written plan for ongoing professional development on file with the administrator.
- 4I Non-discriminatory practices in regard to race, ethnic background, or sex are used in hiring of school personnel. In church-affiliated schools, preference may be given to members of that faith.
- 4J The school supports all teachers holding a Missouri State Teaching Certificate in the areas of mentoring, professional evaluation, and record keeping/reporting necessary for teachers to maintain their certification.
- 4K Teachers have an understanding of, and are committed to, the mission, philosophy, and goals of the school.

Indicators for Improvement

- 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 Professional development opportunities are made available for all staff.
- 4.3 At least one staff member on duty has current certification in first aid and/or CPR.

V. Curriculum

The school provides a research-based curriculum that includes all concepts, skills, and values representative of identified student needs.

Indicators for Membership

- 5A A written curriculum guides and clearly defines the actions, assessment, and educational goals of the school.
- 5B The curriculum addresses the fundamental principles of student growth and development.
- 5C The curriculum includes, but is not limited to, the following: religion (where applicable) science, mathematics, fine arts, language arts, physical education, social studies, and health.
- 5D A systematic standardized testing program is in place.
- 5E The curriculum addresses the spectrum of academic achievement and attends to individual student learner needs through differentiated instruction.
- 5F The curriculum is regularly evaluated and revised.

Indicators for Improvements

- 5.1 Multiple approaches are used to assess and guide student progress.
- 5.2 The systematic standardized testing program is utilized in diagnosis and prescription of student learning as well as evaluation and revision of the curriculum.
- 5.3 The school system regularly offers staff development to support the staff in implementing researched-based learning theories as related to curriculum.
- 5.4 The school has a process in place to report curricular growth to the appropriate constituencies.
- 5.5 The stakeholders within the school have appropriate involvement with the development and implementation of the curriculum.

VI. Instruction

The school uses instructional methods that deliver the curriculum to facilitate student achievement.

Indicators for Membership

- 6A Instruction gives evidence of each of the following:
 - instructional objectives reflect curriculum goals.
 - effective direction and guidance are provided during learning activities.
 - varied types of instructional materials are selected and used.
 - methods and organization are adjusted to meet the needs of students as a group and as individuals.
 - varied instruments and procedures are used in the evaluation of student learning and the quality of instruction.
- 6B Instructional materials and equipment are adequate in quality and quantity to meet the curricular goals and objectives of the school.
- 6C Instructional materials and equipment are evaluated, inventoried, classified, and catalogued.
- 6D Provisions are made for identifying and assisting students with diverse needs.
- 6E The school fulfills state requirements for days and hours of instruction.
- 6F The school has a planned program for reporting the academic performance of students.
- 6G Technology is appropriately used in instruction.

Indicators for Improvement

- 6.1 Teaching strategies reflect the current understanding of best practices and are appropriate for student age, interest, and achievement level.
- 6.2 Formative as well as summative assessments guide instructional goals.
- 6.3 Student use of technology is integral to the instructional process.
- 6.4 The school has a written plan to effectively integrate and connect technology with classroom goals.
- 6.5 Resources available outside the school community are utilized to enhance the learning of students and support the educational objectives.

VII. Services

The school provides a variety of quality services to meet the needs of the whole child.

Indicators for Membership

- 7A The school maintains cumulative permanent academic records for each student which are stored in a secure location.
- 7B The school has a crisis management plan that is communicated, tested, and updated annually.
- 7C Requirements for safety are met:
 - fire, tornado, intruder, and other drills are conducted and recorded.
 - a plan to deal with blood-borne pathogens.
 - CPR and first aid training.
 - training in administration of medication.
- 7D Initial and on-going child abuse and neglect screening is completed for volunteers who work with students on a regular basis.
- 7E Provisions are made for the safety of students when being transported by the school.
- 7F Reasonable procedures are in place for children at arrival and dismissal.
- 7G The use of potentially hazardous materials and tools by students is supervised and in compliance with state and federal regulations.
- 7H Supervision of students is provided during the school day and as appropriate at school-sponsored activities.

- 7I The school has a Wellness Plan that has been communicated to staff, students, and families.
- 7J If a food 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.
- 7K Technology “Acceptable Use” policies for students and staff have been developed, communicated, and implemented.
- 7L The school maintains up-to-date health records in a safe and secure location.
- 7M The school adheres to communicable disease, immunization, and screening requirements from the state and local health departments.
- 7N The school follows established policies for the administration of medication.

VIII. Facilities

The facilities are adequate and well-maintained to achieve the purposes of the school.

Indicators for Membership

- 8A The location, school grounds and physical plant support an adequate instructional program that is consistent with the school’s mission, philosophy, purposes, and needs of the students.
- 8B Effective housekeeping provides a safe, sanitary, and attractive environment for learning.
- 8C The physical plant and grounds are in good repair and meet the local and federal regulations for heating, ventilation, illumination, room size and capacity, etc.
- 8D The school is in compliance with asbestos regulations.
- 8E An adequate number of regularly inspected fire extinguishers are placed throughout the building.
- 8F Exit routes are described and copies posted in each room.
- 8G An adequate warning system is maintained for fire, tornado, earthquake, etc.
- 8H The school building is locked and access is controlled during the school day.
- 8I The kitchen and dining areas used by the school meet health and safety regulations.
- 8J The school is in compliance with insurance regulations.
- 8K Inspection of the physical plant and grounds to identify safety hazards is made regularly, with the school taking steps to remedy any identified deficiencies.

- 8L The school has taken appropriate steps for the safety of students on playgrounds/athletic fields.
- 8M Crossing guards, lanes and school pick-up and drop-off zones and dismissal procedures are implemented.

Indicators for Improvement

- 8.1 A plan is in place to enhance the school facilities in order to meet emerging instructional needs and the overall needs of the school community.
- 8.2 The school facilities plan is annually reviewed.
- 8.3 Technological equipment, internet access, and appropriate bandwidth are made available to teachers and students to meet the needs of the 21st century.

IX. Finance and Planning

The school employs effective financial management and accountability in the use of its resources. Strategic planning is in place to insure the viability of the school.

Indicators for Membership

- 9A The school operates by means of a carefully planned and regularly monitored annual budget.
- 9B The school's mission, philosophy, and priorities are reviewed as a part of the budget process.
- 9C The budget is planned through collaboration of boards/committees, principal, and pastor (in sectarian schools).
- 9D Resources are available to implement a quality instructional program and maintain financial viability.
- 9E The school engages in short-term and long-term planning as a part of the improvement process.
- 9F The annual plan for improvement is formulated and updated by appropriate constituencies.
- 9G Annual funding is allocated for staff development activities/programs.
- 9H The school has strategies and resources to assure its ongoing operation.

Indicators for Improvement

- 9.1 Development activities, marketing, and advancement activities are in place and evaluated yearly.

- 9.2 A public relations program provides local and wider communities with information and news about the school's program, activities, and operations.
- 9.3 The school plans for future capital and technology needs.

Optional Program Standards

The following membership standards apply only to those schools that have:

- **Early childhood programs.**
- **Before and after school care programs.**
- **Special education schools or programs.**

X. Early Childhood Program

An early childhood program as defined for MNSAA accreditation is an educational program for three to five-year old children. The principal of the elementary school is administratively responsible for the program.

Indicators for Membership

- 10A** Adult-child ratios for supervision meet state standards.
- 10B** Background checks and child abuse and neglect screening are completed for all personnel and volunteers who work with students. This screening is done upon initial service and periodically thereafter.
- 10C** Non-instructional personnel meet the state minimum age requirements for carrying out their assigned responsibility.
- 10D** Early childhood 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.
- 10E** Early childhood assessment includes regular observations, anecdotal records, developmental checklists, and portfolios.
- 10F** A variety of learning materials is available in the following areas: science, drama, housekeeping, construction, transportation, creative arts, language, library, manipulatives, fine and gross motor, and music and movement.
- 10G** A variety of materials is accessible, so that all children can make choices independently.
- 10H** Space is provided for children to work individually and in small or large groups.

- 10I** Well-defined areas are provided where children can freely move about without interfering with one another's activities.
- 10J** State standards are met for classroom square footage.
- 10K** Toilets and sinks are appropriate for student use.
- 10L** Furniture is child-sized and adequate for the number of children served.
- 10M** Opportunities are provided to instruct and encourage families on their role as primary educator of their children and on ways to build harmonious school-home relationships.

XI. 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 school is administratively responsible for the program.

Indicators for Membership

- 11A** Philosophy, policies, and procedures are consistent with those of the school.
- 11B** Adult-child ratios for supervision meet state standards.
- 11C** Background checks and child abuse and neglect screening are completed for all personnel and volunteers who work with students. This screening is done upon initial service and periodically thereafter.
- 11D** Background checks and child abuse and neglect screening are completed for all personnel and volunteers who work with students. This screening is done upon initial service and periodically thereafter.
- 11E** Staff has appropriate pre-service and in-service training.
- 11F** A minimum of two adults, eighteen years of age or older, are on the premises. At least one must be a paid school employee.
- 11G** The program provides a variety of safe activities and experiences to meet the needs and interests of students.

XII. Exceptional Learning Needs School or Program

An exceptional learning needs school or program serves children with learning needs that require the services of teachers who have specialized degrees in exceptional learning.

Indicators for Membership

- 12A** Exceptional learning needs administrators are trained and prepared for working with exceptional learning needs students.
- 12B** Exceptional learning needs teachers are appropriately certified (or working toward) for the area in which they teach.
- 12C** Teachers are trained in developing a service plan/strategic plan appropriate to the needs of each student.
- 12D** Curriculum is adapted to allow students to progress at their individual learning rate and to facilitate transition from level to level.
- 12E** Least restrictive environment provisions are made to allow students to attend regular classes as appropriate, and plans for transition are in place.
- 12F** Service plans/strategic plans are available in each student's file.
- 12G** Interdisciplinary services (physical therapy, speech, occupational therapy, counseling, etc.) related to physical conditions are either provided or referral resources are communicated to the families.
- 12H** Reasonable accommodations are made in the physical plant for accessibility.