



NLSA

National Lutheran
School Accreditation

NLSA Executive Committee Clarification Document

July 27, 2017

Printed below are the suggestions presented to the National Accreditation Commission at the 2017 annual meeting that required additional discussion and clarification. This information should be shared with all District Commissioners, District Executives, Team Captains, and Principals currently accredited through NSA or seeking NLSA accreditation.

1. All NLSA documents should be completely aligned with each other.

The Executive Committee and NLSA office staff has worked very hard over the past two years to provide updated, accurate, fully aligned EBA documents. The updated documents will be available on www.luthed.org by September 1.

2. There continues to be questions on how to evaluate curriculum.

Written curriculum is a requirement of accreditation. Curriculum mapping takes curriculum development to a higher, more functional level, and should be a part of a school's program. Curriculum should be focused on learner outcomes. It is the responsibility of each district to determine the best way to monitor curriculum. (See attachment)

3. It would be helpful if we could use typed signatures on required reports.

At this time, signatures will need to be written on all required reports. Those reports will then need to be scanned and sent to the appropriate people. Alternative signature formats will be considered in the future. Ensuring integrity and security in the process will continue to be important.

4. The classroom observation tool created by Dr. Jon Mielke from the Indiana District should be used by all schools.

The aforementioned classroom observation tool will continue to be encouraged to be used by all schools. In the future, this tool could become required. Work will be done this year to align the observation tool with synodical branding requirements. (See attachment)

5. There needs to be stricter guidelines on extension requests.

The NLSA Executive Committee will work to have deadlines established regarding extension requests.

6. Clarify the new fees structure.

EBA: \$600

EBA and EC – one board: This amount will be more than \$600, but the amount still needs to be determined.

EBA and EC – two boards: \$1,200

Dual Accreditation: \$600

Extension Fee: This amount will increase, but the amount still needs to be determined.

7. There needs to be a universally accepted Cumulative Annual Report.

It is the responsibility of the districts to administer Cumulative Annual Reports. A recommended template is available on www.luthed.org and in the new binder provided by Matt Bergholt.

8. There needs to be clarity on how AdvancED schools should complete the annual NLSA Cumulative Annual Report.

It is the responsibility of the districts to administer Cumulative Annual Reports. A recommended template has been provided to all attending the National Accreditation Commission meeting. (See attachment)

9. Captains should follow up with schools one year after the accreditation visit.

This is a great idea, but it will not be mandatory. Districts can establish their own requirements in this regard.

10. There needs to be clarity on what protocol should be used for elementary schools that have preschools and/or early childhood centers.

Currently, there are three options available.

- 1) If an elementary school and preschool operate under one governing board, the EBA protocol may be used.
- 2) If an elementary school and preschool operate under one governing board, the EBA protocol and the EC protocol may be used.
- 3) If an elementary school and preschool operate under two separate governing boards, the EBA protocol and the EC protocol must be used.

11. Consider changing benchmark requirements for 4:02, 'Full-time faculty members are on the roster of the Synod, eligible to be on the roster of the Synod, or are actively enrolled in the colloquy program.'

In order to receive a "3" for this indicator, all full-time faculty members must be on the roster of Synod, eligible to be on the roster of Synod, or actively enrolled in the colloquy program. This indicator will not change. NLSA needs to align its personnel standards and indicators to the direction of Synod.

12. Detailed guidelines should be given explaining how to move from a "3" to a "4" on every indicator.

Receiving a "3" is an outstanding score. This is the desired rating for every indicator. Additional guidelines on this are not available. Please refer to the rating explanations.

Highly Functional (4) — This is an area of outstanding strength of the school. It not only meets ALL of the benchmarks related to the general indicator, but is supported by extensive documentation and/or observable practices that exceed expectations related to this indicator. This indicator establishes practices for other Lutheran schools to consider. The Visiting Team will verify that these practices and/or documentation exceed the Operational (3) level.

Operational (3) — This is the expected rating for a strong Lutheran school. ALL benchmarks must be met completely for this indicator to be considered Operational. The condition is supported with documentation and/or observable practices that support the rating.

13. Consider making financial responsibilities for schools going through the accreditation process clear.

It is the responsibility of the school hosting the visit to pay for all travel, lodging, and meal expenses of the visitation team. This expense is in addition to the application fee and yearly accreditation fee.

14. Guidance needs to be given on how to evaluate Standard 3A, Governance, for schools operating under a policy based governance structure.

Some indicators with Standard 3A are not applicable for policy based governance. These indicators should be skipped when completing the Self Study. Additional guidance on this will be available in the future.

15. NLSA should move forward with affiliation efforts with other regional or national accreditation program.

NLSA has partnerships with multiple other accreditation entities, including AdvancED, WASC, Middle States, and.... NLSA will also work to become affiliated with the National Council of Private School Accreditation (NCPA.) These additional affiliations make it possible for Lutheran schools to be recognized by various states, allowing for the transfer of high school credits and the reception of state voucher money, where applicable.