National Lutheran School Accreditation
Validation Team Report

Revised September 2021

Rochester Central Lutheran School

Rochester, MN

March 7th-9th, 2022

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NLSA
National Lutheran School Accreditation

FOREWARD

Becoming accredited is a strenuous process. The school and its administration are highly commended for their efforts in this ongoing accreditation process. The preparation and the arrangements for the Validation Team were well done. It is the hope and prayer of the members of the Validation Team that the enclosed document is accurate and helpful for the continued improvement of **Rochester Central Lutheran School**.

The members of the Validation Team express sincere gratitude to the administration, staff and community of **Rochester Central Lutheran School** for the opportunity to serve on the Validation Team and for the kindness shown during the visit.

Rochester Central Lutheran School is a good program. This was reflected not only in the Self-Study Report but also in the comments and observations of the Validation Team. The school effectively represents the Christian faith and values not only to its children and families, but also to the surrounding community.

The Self-Study Report is carefully written and includes specific recommendations to be considered seriously by the school and all constituents of **Rochester Central Lutheran School** and its sponsoring congregation, **Rochester Central Lutheran School**. Not every suggestion must be followed, however, each is to be considered and addressed in follow-up reports, specifically the annual ongoing cumulative report submitted to the school's district office.

The report was written collaboratively and edited by the Validation Team with minor editing completed by the Team Captain. The report reflects the talents and expertise of all team members. Wherever possible, specific and practical recommendations were made to help address concerns.

The Team Captain, Team Members and the Consultant pledge their continued support and assistance in the implementation process and look forward to hearing about and/or seeing the progress of the School Action Plan.

May the Lord richly bless the staff and constituents of **Rochester Central Lutheran School** so that with the power of the Holy Spirit they might continue to proclaim His Gospel ever more effectively to the children and families they serve.

In His Service,

Brett Hardecopf
Validation Team Captain

DISCLAIMER

Limitations on the distribution, use and scope of this document.

It is the official intent of the National Lutheran School Accreditation Commission that this report is considered a privileged document, to be submitted by the Team Captain of the Validation Team directly to the administration of the school. The distribution of the report and its availability for public consideration rests solely in the hands of the school administration.

Neither the Team Captain nor the other members of the Validation Team are authorized to release any of the information contained in this report without the approval of the administration of the school.

The primary purpose of the Validation Team was to examine the educational ministry of the school, including curriculum, learning materials, student needs and interests, staffing and facilities. The Validation Team assessed the effectiveness of the total school program in meeting the educational objectives and National Lutheran School Accreditation Standards.

It is not the purpose of the Validation Team to evaluate individual teacher performance. The use of this report as an official assessment of any staff member's professional competency is a violation of the process and is not the intent of the school evaluation. Such use is inherently invalid since at no time during the Validation Team Visit was the team concerned with the evaluation of individual teacher performance.

The Validation Team and the Validation Team Report assist the school in its own process as a guideline for continuous growth. Neither the team nor the report is presumed to be the authority for validating any claims regarding health, safety or personnel issues. Such matters are the sole responsibility of the school.

Validation Team Member Biographic Information

Brett Hardecopf currently serves as the Principal of St. John Lutheran School in Elk River, MN. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska. He completed a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota. His professional experience includes teaching in Kindergarten through 8th grade classrooms in Illinois, Indiana, and Minnesota. He has been the Principal at St. John in Elk River for 8 years, and has served on several accreditation teams in the Minnesota South District of the LCMS and the Indiana District.

Sean Martens serves as the Assistant to the President, Education and Commissioned Ministers for the Minnesota South District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He has been a Lutheran school principal, instructor, and coach in Minnesota, Nebraska, and Nevada at the elementary, high school and college levels. He earned Bachelor's degrees in Chemistry, Biology, and Secondary Education and Education Masters Degrees (2) in Curriculum and Instruction and Administration from Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska. Martens is a certified AoR Reconciler, a 2003 graduate of the School Leadership Development (SLED) program, and has been a SLED program mentor. Martens has served as a Consultant, Team Captain or team member on more than 25 accreditation teams and serves on the Minnesota South District Accreditation Commission. Martens also serves on COGNIA (AdvancED) accreditation teams and is ELEOT certified.

Brenda Lovhaug serves as the Director of Loving Shepherd Early Learning Center in Golden Valley, MN. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education with a concentration in Early Childhood from Concordia College in St. Paul, MN. Her professional experience includes teaching in a toddler classroom for 7 years before moving to administration. Brenda'a experience with National Lutheran School Accreditation includes serving as a Consultant, Team Captain and team members on various accreditation teams.

Kelly Lamkin currently serves as the principal at Crown Christian School in Crown, MN as well as serves on the Board of Directors at Good Shepherd Lutheran High School in Elk River, MN. She earned a BA in English and a MS in Teaching and Leadership from University of Wisconsin. She also earned a MA in English from Mount Mary University in Milwaukee. Kelly completed the LCMS teacher colloquy through CUW. Her professional experience includes teaching students from middle school through college, serving on the education faculty at CSP, and as a Director of Academics and Students Services at a PK-12 school. Her experience with National Lutheran School Accreditation includes serving as a consultant and team member of several accreditation teams.

Kelly Mack
Kelly currently serves as the Director of Academics and Student Supports at Concordia Academy in Roseville, MN. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Literature and Writing at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, MN. She earned a post-baccalaureate degree in Secondary Education in 5-12 Language Arts and a Lutheran Confessional minor from Concordia University in St. Paul, MN. She earned a Masters of Arts Degree in Differentiated Education from Concordia University in St. Paul, MN. Her professional experience includes teaching Language Arts and working in administration at Concordia Academy in

Roseville, MN. Her experience with National Lutheran School Accreditation includes serving as a team member on accreditation teams.

Jay Schutte

Jay Schutte currently serves as the principal at King of Kings Lutheran School in Roseville, MN. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education and Health from Concordia University - St. Paul, MN and a Master's Degree in Athletic Administration from Concordia University - Irvine, CA. Jay's professional experience includes teaching physical education in grades 6-12 at Faith Lutheran MS/HS - Las Vegas, NV, Elementary Dean of Students at Community of Peace Academy - St. Paul, MN, and Middle School Athletic Director at St. Paul Academy and Summit School - St. Paul, MN. His experience with National Lutheran School Accreditation includes serving as a team member.

REPORT SUMMARY

Overall School Performance Level

Standard	Rating Total	Possible Score
Standard 1	12	16
Standard 2	32	40
Standard 3	30	40
Standard 4	12	16
Standard 5	21	24
Standard 6	12	16
Standard 7	10	12
Total	129	164
Average (total ÷ 41, rounded to hundredths decimal)	**3.14**	**4.00**

The Validation Team's Overall Impression of the School

Rochester Central Lutheran School has a culture of learning that is obvious to all who visit. The students, teachers, and leadership are all committed to lifelong learning. There is a commitment to the use of technology as a tool for learning and there is strong leadership in this area. The teachers show a desire for collaboration that is evident in all they do and the students model this in the classrooms. The school provides a safe learning environment for all students and families feel welcome and valued. Rochester Central Lutheran School is the school of choice in the Rochester area.

Outstanding Strengths
- Use of technology as a learning tool
- Professional development and teacher collaboration
- The principal has continued to place strong emphasis on professional development
- Excellent teachers who inspire best practices

Major Deficiencies

NONE

Accreditation Recommendation

We the members of the Validation Team recommend

Accreditation in Good Standing	X		Provisional Accreditation			Denying Accreditation	

for **Rochester Central Lutheran School** of **Rochester, Minnesota**

Signature of the Team Captain

TEAM FINDINGS

The Team Findings section presents the Validation Team's evaluation of the NLSA Standards and Indicators. It also identifies Strengths, Concerns and related Recommendations that were identified by the Validation Team through a review of the school's prepared documentation along with observations and interviews that were conducted during the visit.

Accreditation Standards and Indicators

Standards define what's important for schools to be successful. In an accreditation self-study process they provide the educational community with the opportunity to evaluate a school's effectiveness, identify strengths and concerns and plan for intentional and continuous improvement. They establish benchmarks that schools must achieve through intentional planning and assessment. The NLSA standards are a compilation of expectations related to what is most important for Lutheran schools. They have been refined and adjusted and align closely with the research based standards that have been prepared by secular partner accrediting agencies. They allow Lutheran schools to use the very best that the educational community has prepared while staying true to the mission of sharing Christ with children and families.

This section contains an evaluation of each NLSA Accreditation Standard and Indicators, conclusions related to strengths and concerns that were identified by the visiting team and evidence and practices that led to the team's conclusions. Indicators are evaluated and rated individually by the visiting team using a four-level performance rubric. The Standard Performance Level is the average of the indicator scores for the standard.

Highly Functional (4) — This is an area of outstanding strength of the school. It not only meets ALL the benchmarks related to the General Indicator of Success, but is supported by extensive documentation and/or observable practices that exceed expectations related to the indicator. This indicator establishes practices for other Lutheran schools to consider. The Validation Team verifies 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.

Emerging (2) — Improvement is required in this area. If one or more benchmarks are not fully met, the rating must be Emerging. This indicator is recognized as important by the school, but is inconsistently applied. Any benchmark not fully met must be addressed in the School Action Plan.

Not Evident (1) — There is observable conflict or deficiency with this indicator at the school. A majority of the expected benchmarks are not met or addressed with sufficient practices, evidence or documentation. This rating may result in the assignment of Provisional Status. This must be addressed in the School Action Plan.

Standard 1: Purpose

The purpose/philosophy/mission statement serves as the basis for forming school goals, learner outcomes and action plans, as well as determining a direction for all activities of the school. Throughout the Self-Study process, every area of the school program is evaluated to determine if each aligns with the stated purpose.

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 1?

1:01*   The school's written purpose embraces a Lutheran identity that is rooted in Holy Scripture and is committed to faith formation, academic excellence and Christian service.

| X |
YES

| |
NO

1:02*   School leadership and staff members understand and accept the purpose of the school.

| X |
YES

| |
NO

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 1 prepared and in good order?

Standard 1 Required Evidence*: Written purpose/philosophy/mission statement

| X |
YES

| |
NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
1:03 School leadership (administration and governing board) uses the mission statement as the foundation and reference for all planning.	● The school's purpose was developed in accordance with governance policy. ● The school's purpose is engaged, aligned and enacted with its vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes and student activities. ● The school's mission statement supports and aligns with the congregational mission statement.	● Narrative and interviews indicate that RCLS includes all the stakeholders in every step of their planning process ● Developed a joint statement of faith with association congregations ● The narrative shows evidence of this and has links such as: mission projects, annual letter, student project, middle school department notes, and others	4	3
1:04 School leadership (administration and board) regularly assembles school constituencies (including but not limited to faculty, staff, parents, students and congregational stakeholders) to review, clarify and renew the school's stated purpose.	● The school's purpose is communicated effectively to staff, students and stakeholders. ● The school regularly evaluates and reviews the alignment of purpose, vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes and student activities.	● Conducted surveys to determine if mission statement was being followed ● Faculty are members of LEA, are provides daily devotionals, and participate in professional development activities ● Appears in student and parent handbooks ● Each element of the mission/vision is demonstrated specifically in the teaching and learning	4	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
		environment of each classroom.		
1:05 The school's purpose is displayed and reflected in school activities and in the teaching/learning environment in classrooms.	• The school's purpose is displayed in each classroom and in the hallways. • The school's purpose is readily seen on the school's website. • The school's purpose is included in written communications distributed to families, such as the PTL handbook and promotional materials that are supplied to prospective families. • School events, curriculum and discipline are aligned with the school's mission statement and purpose and promote a positive teaching/learning environment.	• Mission statement is posted in hallways and classrooms • Mission statement is displayed on the website • Mission statement appears in the handbook • Mission statement appears in all communications from the school • Each element of the mission/vision is demonstrated specifically in the teaching and learning environment of each classroom.	4	3
1:06 New employees are informed about the school's purpose and its appropriate engagement.	• New employees are given an orientation packet and have an orientation meeting with the school administrator.	• Teacher mentors are in place to guide new teachers • There is a Personnel Manual • New teachers receive a New Faculty Handbook	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	• New employees utilize mentors to assist them in learning about the school's purpose and how to carry it out. • The school's purpose is outlined in the job description for each employee.	• Each job description includes the school's mission		
Total			15	12
Standard One Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3.75	3

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 1? 3

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

X

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

The standards were met but not exceeded.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?

The delineation of the mission statement into three key words helps clarify and live out the mission value (the three pillars).

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?

None

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

None

Standard 2: Relationships

The Lutheran school has a special relationship with its operating congregation(s). The school concerns itself with the ministry of the whole church to fulfill its purpose as a Lutheran school. To do this, the school seeks opportunities to enhance relationships with the local congregation(s), its district and the national church body.

Note: Section 2 is divided into three categories: school and congregation, school and community and school climate. Section 2A, School and Congregation, does not apply when a Lutheran school is operating outside of a highly developed relationship with a single congregation or group of congregations.

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 2?

2A:01* The school is operated by one or more of the congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) or maintains an active Registered Service Organization (RSO) status with the Synod.

X
YES

NO

2B:01* A statement of nondiscrimination is evident in school-printed materials and assures that students are admitted without regard to race, color or national origin.

X
YES

NO

2C:01* The climate of the school flows from and supports the school's purpose.

X
YES

NO

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 2 prepared and in good order?

Standard 2 Required Evidence*: Written nondiscrimination statement

X

YES

NO

Standard 2 Required Evidence*: School discipline code

X

YES

NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
2A:02 The school is an extension of the ministry of its sponsoring congregation(s). Church and school work together effectively to accomplish goals related to a well-defined purpose.	● The pastor is acknowledged as the spiritual leader of the whole congregation, including the school. ● The pastor demonstrates that he is the spiritual leader of the school and congregation. ● The congregation provides spiritual support for the school and its students. ● Pastor(s) and school staff regularly demonstrate	● Churches listed in family handbook ● Church bulletins include mention of RCLS ● Pastors are advisory members on the board of directors ● Pastors conduct chapels ● Called staff are members of an association congregation ● Pastors visit campus regularly based on an agreed-upon schedule ● There are members of the board of directors	4	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Stud y Rating	Team Rating
	support for each other's ministry.	who are also members of one of the association churches ● Students and music groups participate in worship at association churches ● School and church websites link to each other		
2A:03 The school concerns itself with the ministry of the whole church and seeks opportunities to support and enhance relationships with its congregation, its district and the national church body.	● Students participate regularly in congregational life through planned activities available and coordinated with the congregation. ● School staff members are actively involved in worship and congregational life in their parish. ● The school and congregation plan and work together on behalf of families who do not have an identified church home or who do not attend church regularly. ● The school supports LCMS missions.	● Students and music groups participate in worship at association churches ● Called staff are members of an association congregation ● RCLS supports disaster relief ● VBS ● Narrative suggests that presentations to congregations are given to keep them informed ● Narrative and staff biographies note that several staff participate in association churches in various ways ● Staff participates in district and national conferences and	3	2

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	● Called teachers participate in required district conferences and events.	are members of LEA ● A staff member participated in Tech21 ● Professional development ● Narrative notes that should a family request information about finding a church home, each congregation has its own procedures		
2B:02 The school's student population reflects the ethnic, racial and economic diversity of the community in which it is located.	● The school studies the community demographics and compares the information to the demographics of the student body. ● The school embraces and celebrates the demographic diversity of the students it serves and the surrounding community. ● The school has developed ways to enroll students from the community who do not have the economic resources to support	● Narrative notes that teachers strive to include diversity in their lessons ● There is a variable tuition program and member churches subsidize the tuition	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	tuition-driven enrollment.			
2B:03 The school promotes and encourages the involvement of its teachers and students in community activities.	• The school seeks ways to involve its students and teachers in service to the community. • Staff members are encouraged and provided with opportunities, planned by the school and its congregation, to participate in community activities and service organizations. • Staff members are engaged in community service.	• Many service projects throughout the city: Olmsted County Foster Care Closet, collection for The Landing, Ruby Pantry, and others. • Overflow Hours - volunteer hours required for students • Promoted a "Field of Faith" event • Some staff members participate in community programs such as United Way, 4H, and coaching	4	4
2B:04 The school has an active Parent-Teacher Organization and/or other parent support groups.	• The school sponsors educational opportunities for parents and provides a wide variety of parenting resources. • Support groups (i.e., Parent Teacher League, Booster Club, prayer support groups) contribute to the overall good of the school and congregation to support and	• Parents at RCLS have a number of opportunities to be connected to RCLS - Moms in Touch, the Grace Foundation, volunteering in the classrooms, events, and the library. • Grace Foundation • Tech in the house	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	maintain the school's mission and goals.			
2B:05 The school is known, respected and maintains a positive perception in its community.	• The school is known and respected in its community. • The school regularly and frequently shares information with its constituents. • Good relationships exist with the local public schools. • School facilities are available, when practical, for use by appropriate community groups and activities.	• RCLS is viewed as a place for community groups (Skating Club, 4-H, baseball) to gather • Surveys, observation, interviews, and narrative suggest that RCLS has a reputation as the school of choice in Rochester • In the parent handbook, it states that people chose RCLS because they have been referred to this school by others.	4	4
2C:02 The school's Christ-centered ethos is visible and evident to visitors.	• Students demonstrate love for others in response to Christ's love for them. • Teachers' care for student needs is prominently enacted throughout the school. • Students worship together daily, either in each classroom or in a school-wide appropriate worship	• Handbook includes bullying policy and discipline code • Mission statements are visible in hallways and classrooms • Observations indicate that almost every classroom had prayer requests listed on a white board • Observations showed teachers being encouraging to students	4	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	experience with other students. ● Classroom environment, hallway decorations and posted classroom projects demonstrate respect for teachers and peers. ● Student behavior is appropriate to encourage growth and to maintain the school's chosen teaching/learning environment.	● Posters and other decorations on walls are encouraging and uplifting, classrooms were well maintained and clean. ● Observations and interviews showed that new students assimilate seamlessly ● Observations indicate that the students, parents, and teachers all know expectations ● Chapel takes place every week ● Teachers do devotions with students ● School wide morning announcements that included prayer and opening		
2C:03 Teachers and staff members recognize, value and respect the needs of students.	● Teachers demonstrate love for all students in Christ. ● Teachers attend to the individual needs of students. ● Teachers integrate faith principles throughout the day and pray with their students.	● Handbook includes bullying policy and discipline code ● POST is an after school homework assistance ● There is a resource teacher available ● There is a student support team ● Work with Rochester Public	4	4

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Stud y Rating	Team Rating
	• Students are challenged to do their best. • Students' spiritual needs are given appropriate support by church and school. • Law and Gospel are properly divided when discipline is administered. • Staff demonstrates positive school spirit. • Through the school's discipline code, students are assisted to grow in self-control out of love for Christ. • When desirable and practical, students are given the opportunity to participate in making school decisions.	schools to assess students • Teachers do devotions with students • School wide morning announcements that included prayer and opening • Observations indicate that almost every classroom had prayer requests listed on a white board • There is an accelerated math program • Observations and narrative show that students feel safe and are challenged to do their best • The eighth graders make the decisions on Chapel projects. They are also involved in the planning of dress up days for NLSW. Teachers and students love to get involved on school dress up days and on Chapel t-shirt days • Flexible seating is used where appropriate		

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
2C:04 School personnel model Christ's love in their relationships with parents and guardians.	• School personnel are approachable and receptive to parental questions or concerns. • Parents are viewed by teachers as school partners in the education process. • Staff members understand and relate appropriately with school families. • Parents and guardians are made to feel welcome at the school. • The school provides opportunities for parents to be involved at the school. • The legal rights of parents and legal guardians are protected. • Parents are encouraged to be positive and supportive of the school.	• Interviews with the board indicated that teachers are approachable and available, board members felt this was one of the strengths of the school. • Narrative states that teachers conference with parents when needed • Parent volunteers are in classrooms • Observations showed parents being greeted at the beginning of the school day • Parents have access to student grades through Blackbaud • Volunteer opportunities are available, there is a volunteer handbook to guide them. • Student and Parent Handbook	4	3
2C:05 Faculty and administration respect and support one another as individual, fellow members of the body of Christ.	• Faculty and administration gather for	• Faculty devotions happen twice a week	4	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	devotions regularly. ● Faculty and administration speak positively about their co-workers at the school. ● Faculty and administration demonstrate support of one another in tangible ways.	● Teachers share success stories weekly ● Each department meets regularly ● Faculty prayer partners		
Total			37	32
Standard Two Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 10, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3.7	3.2

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 2? 3.2

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

X
YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?
Standards were met but not exceeded.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
The teaching staff is very involved with professional development at the district and national level.
The culture and atmosphere is obvious to all who enter the school.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
A more clearly defined plan to reach unchurched families is needed.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

The team recommends that a more intentional plan to reach unchurched families is put in place by Rochester Central Lutheran School in cooperation with its association churches.

Standard 3: Leadership

Leadership of the school is a major factor in the successful development, implementation and evaluation of the school. Leadership is provided by a variety of groups and people. Two primary leadership components are the board or governing authority and the appointed administrator(s), although some schools may function effectively without a school board. In that case, Section 3A: Governance, would not apply.

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 3?

3A:01* The operating organization designates the governing authority and has written policies clearly defining lines of authority, responsibilities and/or limitations of the governing authority.

X
YES

NO

3A:02* The operating organization has written policies clearly defining governing authority membership.

X
YES

NO

3A:03* The governing authority establishes written policies or administrative limitations that empower the administration in operating the school.

X
YES

NO

3B:01* The administrator demonstrates a personal Christian faith, a commitment to Lutheran education and a dedication to the teaching ministry of the governing authority.

X
YES

NO

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 3 prepared and in good order?

Standard 3 Required Evidence*: Board or governing authority handbook or policy manual including policies relating to roles of board, administrator and pastor

X

YES

NO

Standard 3 Required Evidence*: Administrator's job description

X

YES

NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
3A:04 The governing authority is organized around written policy and understands and operates within its role and function.	● The governing authority provides for grievance and due process resolution procedures. ● The governing authority meets regularly and has clearly defined policies regarding open attendance at meetings and executive sessions. ● The governing authority has established process policies that set	● The governing authority policies and board minutes are available to RCLS faculty and staff on the RCLS Board of Directors website ● Policy changes and board actions are communicated to school families via the monthly school newsletter, the Pawprint. ● Board of Director Policy Manual,	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	forth the style and rules by which the governing authority will complete its tasks and processes. ● Governance policies are determined at official meetings and recorded in the minutes, including appropriate updates and changes to policy. ● Minutes are recorded for each meeting and circulated to all members. ● Governing authority policies are collected into a policy manual, separate from the minutes. ● The governing authority makes appropriate reports to the operating organization(s). ● Neither the governing authority nor its individual members involve themselves in the day-to-day operations of the school.	Student and Parent Handbook ● Board of Directors meet regularly and keep minutes ● Job descriptions		
3A:05 Governing authority policy supports effective personnel.	● Written policy delineates roles and responsibilities of	● Job descriptions for board members are in the policies	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	the board or governing authority. ● Comprehensive job responsibilities and/or limitations are in place for the administrator. ● The governing authority evaluates the head administrator annually based on the job description. ● The governing authority receives reports from the administrator at each meeting. ● The governing authority has written policies or position descriptions clearly delineating relationships between the head administrator and pastor(s).	● Board of Director Policy Manual ● Job descriptions for principal, assistant principal, office manager, and others are available. ● Principal provides a report to the board at each meeting ● Board of directors evaluated principal ● Board of Directors policy manual ● Organizational chart		
3A:06 Governing authority members meet prescribed qualifications and are trained regarding roles and responsibilities.	● Written policies define qualifications for board or governing authority members. ● Governing authority members are required to participate in professional development regarding roles and responsibilities of the governing body	● Board of Director Policy Manual ● Board of Directors job description ● Board of directors had a training about best practices for boards	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	and its individual members.			
3A:07 The governing authority establishes and employs systematic planning for school improvement.	• The governing authority has a process in place for evaluating the effectiveness of the school that includes a needs-assessment process integral to school-wide systematic planning. • Long-range goals or desired outcomes are developed from the planning process.	• The governing authority policies and board minutes are available to RCLS faculty and staff on the RCLS Board of Directors website • Surveys • Board of directors Policy manual • RCLS Vision 2019 Full Analysis	3	3
3A:08 The governing authority provides strong financial leadership for the school.	• The board or governing authority establishes policies that provide for sound budget planning and fiscal operations. • The board or governing authority approves the budget (including annual tuition and fees) for the school or has developed policies to empower individuals with that responsibility. • The board or governing authority accepts, reviews and devises strategies to react to concerns expressed in the	• Board of Director Policy Manual	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	annual financial audit.			
3B:02 The administrator meets qualifications required for the position.	• The principal is a member of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, Rostered or eligible for Roster status. • The administrator holds active membership in the congregation supporting the school and is regular in Church attendance and Bible study. • The administrator holds current, appropriate state certification or is actively working toward obtaining required certification. • The administrator has a master's degree in education, with no fewer than 12 semester hours in administration or supervision or is actively working toward such a degree. (The administrator of an early childhood center has a bachelor's degree, with no fewer than 18 semester hours in early childhood	• Board of Director Policy Manual • Principal Job Description • Principal is a rostered LCMS worker and a member of an association church • Principal holds two masters degrees and a MN state principal's licensure	4	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	education, or is actively working toward accomplishing this requirement.)			
3B:03 The administrator is provided adequate support to complete required tasks.	● Release time is provided for administrative duties for the school's primary administrator. ● The school administrator is released from teaching duties for at least one-fourth of each day for every 50 students enrolled. (If administrative duties are shared, then release time may be shared.) ● Secretarial assistance is available for school purposes for at least one-fourth of each school day for every 50 students enrolled. ● In a school with more than 200 students, an individual is designated as assistant administrator with associated administrative duties.	● Principal is a full-time principal ● There are several office support staff including an enrollment director, office manager and office assistant	3	2

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
3B:04 The administrator is an effective communicator.	● The administrator communicates frequently and regularly with pastor(s) and teachers individually and collectively. ● The administrator communicates effectively and frequently with families and students of all ages. ● A wide variety of venues both personal (one-to-one) and public are regularly used to facilitate effective communication. ● The administrator regularly spends a significant percentage of time listening, observing and speaking with parents, students and teachers. ● The administrator effectively communicates and works together with local public school officials. ● The administrator compiles such policies, procedures or practices as appropriate for effective communication to	● Observation and interviews suggest the principal is a capable and effective communicator, and this is one of the school's main strengths ● Emails and announcements ● Paw Print ● Weekly Newsletter ● Principal gives report to association congregations	4	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	the various school communities into student and/or parent handbooks/manuals.			
3B:05 The administrator is engaged in the process of developing and managing the budget.	● The administrator is involved in developing and managing the budget, including expenditures. ● The administrator has overall responsibility to assure that the budget is managed responsibly, using generally accepted bookkeeping procedures and safeguards. ● The administrator provides leadership in securing funds and resources, which may include individual, private, corporate, and/or governmental sources. ● Funds provided by auxiliary organizations are allocated per governing board policy, in consultation with the school administrator and regularly audited.	● Board of director policy manual ● Principals job description ● Meeting minutes ● Organizational chart	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
3B:06 The administrator is committed to personal development and the development of staff members.	● The administrator provides spiritual leadership for the school community and in the congregation(s) through word and example. ● The administrator is a member of professional organizations. ● The administrator provides leadership in curriculum development, staff development, congregational service, public relations, student evaluation and other school-related activities. ● Levels of responsibility and accountability are clearly defined. The administrator provides leadership for implementation of current educational technology, including necessary staff development and training. ● The administrator engages in an ongoing program of professional staff supervision.	● Administrative observation scheduled ● Blackbaud training ● RCLS faculty engage in a goal setting activity in the fall of each year. ● Principal visits classrooms regularly ● RCLS faculty attend the one-day MN South Teachers Conference. ● RCLS faculty attend the multi-day LEA Convocation ● Principal leads book study ● RCLS faculty are enrolled as members of the LEA ● Various trainings have been provided to the staff by the principal ● Interviews suggest that this is a strength of RCLS	4	4
Total			33	30

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
Standard Three Overall Rating (Total ÷ 10, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)			3.3	3.0

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 3? 3.0

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

X

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?
Standards met but not exceeded

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
Rochester Central Lutheran School has an intentional and beneficial professional development plan for the teachers and staff.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
The office staff has been required to take on too many duties and too many lines of accountability go through the principal.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
Consider restructuring leadership whereby Rochester Central Lutheran School administration includes a principal with lines of authority over academics of the school and an executive director role charged with developing the school, working primarily with the Board of Directors, and with lines of authority over the Principal and office staff. The team also recommends a current strategic plan based on a needs-based analysis with support/consulting by an external agency.

Standard 4: Professional Personnel

Maintaining a qualified and competent staff is an essential quality related to an accredited Lutheran school. The performance of the instructional, administrative and auxiliary personnel, functioning as a unit, should reflect the stated philosophy and objectives of the school.

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 4?

4:01*   All school personnel express and demonstrate agreement with the stated school purpose.

X
YES

NO

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 4 prepared and in good order?

Standard 4 Required Evidence*: School's staff development plan

X
YES

NO

Standard 4 Required Evidence*: Non-discriminatory salary and benefit scale or policy

X
YES

NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
4:02 Christ-centered teachers have qualities and qualifications necessary for success in	● All teachers demonstrate a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a dedication	● Teachers' relationship with Jesus Christ and	3	2

their defined areas of service.	to teaching in the Lutheran school. ● Full-time faculty members are on the Roster of the LCMS, eligible to be on the Roster of the LCMS or are actively enrolled in the colloquy program. ● Teachers have been prepared and vetted following prescribed federal and state mandates for background checks and training. ● Full-time professional staff members have appropriate teaching certificate(s) from the state and meet requirements for their specific assignments.	their commitment to the mission of RCLS is evident upon classroom observations, peer interactions, and interviews. ● Background checks ● Teachers have or are working toward MN state licenses ● Interviews and observations		
4:03 Teachers are informed of, and subsequently evaluated and supported in the continuing pursuit of professional growth and development.	● Programs for teacher supervision/evaluation/growth have been adopted and are implemented by the administrator. ● Teachers engage in professional development, including spiritual development and are accountable for implementation that supports student learning. ● Teachers attend workshops, conferences, seminars and training appropriate to their position and discipline. ● LCMS Rostered teachers are provided opportunities to attend LCMS events. ● Teachers hold membership in professional organizations.	● Interviews and provided evidence of regular evaluations ● Members of LEA ● Teachers attend MN South and national LEA conference ● Professional development plan ● Teachers are provided with professional development in-house ● Principal leads professional development	4	4

	• The school provides opportunity, training and support so that teachers may effectively and appropriately engage technology in classroom instruction.	on a regular basis • RCLS has a teacher who is gifted in the area of technology who guides the teachers and school • One-to-one Chromebooks in K-8		
4:04 Teachers and support staff are empowered and equipped to effectively accomplish their assigned task.	• New teachers receive thorough orientation and are supported with experienced, assigned teaching mentors. • Teachers demonstrate and continuously improve knowledge and skills necessary for effective instruction and modeling of Christ-centered values. • Policies related to teachers and support staff are established and practiced. • The average student-professional personnel ratio is appropriate for the age and level of the students and ensures optimal student growth. • The number of staff members is adequate to provide effective instruction and supervision for students at all school activities. • The nondiscriminatory salary and benefit scale is adopted and implemented for all personnel.	• New teacher handbook • New teachers are assigned mentors, there is a handbook • Accountability partners • Prayer groups • 13:1 student teacher ratio • Interview and observation • Faculty Handbook • Salary and benefit scale	3	3

4:05 Employees and volunteers serving in support roles have the qualifications and training necessary for success in their defined area of service.	- Support staff (e.g., teacher assistants, student teachers, nurse) meets state requirements for their specific assignments. - Appropriate policies related to support staff are established and practiced. - Adequate training for support staff is provided. - Appropriate policies and training for volunteers are in place. - Staff members understand and relate appropriately with students and their families.	- Volunteer handbook - Interviews - Local school district - CPR training for all staff - Stepping Stones Employee Handbook - Clubhouse Employee Handbook	3	3
Total			13	12
Standard Four Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3.25	3.0

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 4? 12

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

X

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?
Some of the standards are not fully met.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
Rochester Central Lutheran School has a culture of professional development and the teachers model lifelong learning.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
Sources of evidence indicate that not all teachers are currently rostered or going through colloquy.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
The team strongly recommends that RCLS strives to have all teaching and lead administrative staff (Assistant Principal, Principal, Executive Director, Etc.) to be called, synodically trained, or working toward colloquy as stated in Benchmark of Standard 4.02 and RCLS Bylaw 5A, "All Teachers employed by the Association must be graduates of terminal schools of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and must be communicant members of an Association congregation." The unique LCMS Lutheran school niche that sets it apart from other non-public Christian schools is to have a teaching staff prepared in a unified way, the Concordia University system. Teachers are the heart and core of education and in the LCMS, such teachers are considered Commissioned Ministers for the important calling they do in schools. Lutheran teachers are prepared to properly integrate the faith into all subject areas, utilize a law and Gospel approach, and share the love of Jesus to families that do not have a church home.

The team recommends incentivizing being a called member of the teaching staff through salary.

An evaluation of the current salary scale is encouraged in order to develop a plan for more equitable compensation in the current market.
The team recommends that teachers are better supported through the providing of substitute teachers when needed.

Standard 5: Teaching and Learning

Student learning requires the integration of a well-developed curriculum and instructional design supported by intentional and ongoing assessment. When teaching, learning and assessment are correctly aligned and students are engaged, learning results. In this way, Lutheran schools accomplish one of their primary objectives.

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 5?

5:01* The teaching of the Christian faith is recognized as the major purpose of the school, is allotted appropriate time in the daily schedule and is integrated intentionally throughout the curriculum and instruction.

[X]
YES

[ ]
NO

5:02* The written curriculum is developed and is implemented for religion, mathematics, science, reading, language arts, social studies, art, music, physical education and any other subject taught by the school. (Early childhood centers need not segment learning outcomes into specific subject areas.)

[X]
YES

[ ]
NO

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 5 prepared and in good order?

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: Written curriculum is developed for every grade level for religion, mathematics, science, reading, language arts, social studies, art, music, physical education and any other subject taught. (Early childhood centers need not segment learner outcomes into specific subject areas.)

[X]
YES

[ ]
NO

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: A current schedule is prepared for each classroom, indicating clearly when subjects (activities) are taught and during what periods.

☒ YES

☐ NO

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: A chart is prepared illustrating the percentage of each school week allocated to each subject (activity), at each level, including a comparison with state guidelines.

☒ YES

☐ NO

Standard 5 Required Evidence*: Analysis of the results of standardized tests administered for each grade level for the past three years, including a description of how this information is used to evaluate and improve student learning, is provided.

☒ YES

☐ NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
5:03 The school community builds and maintains a vision, direction and focus for student learning.	- The school prepares students for the next level of education and life. - The school aligns its goals, curriculum and measures to those of the next level so that students	- Interviews with board and parents - Master curriculum documents - NWEA Map testing - Teachers are provided with professional development	4	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	transition successfully. ● The school quantifies, tracks and publicly celebrates student success. ● School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices used by teachers to ensure student success.	● Teachers are evaluated by principal ● Teachers regularly monitor NWEA test scores ● Website has information about alumni of RCLS ● Facebook celebrates current student success ● Blog for student achievement		
5:04 The school's Christ-centered, written curriculum provides challenging learning experiences and ensures that students have sufficient opportunities to develop life skills, critical thinking skills and applied learning.	● The curriculum is aligned with delineated standards. ● The curriculum is documented, assessed, monitored and challenges all students. ● The curriculum reflects research, best practices and high standards in education and it is designed to ensure that every student receives Christ-centered, rigorous and sequential academic preparation.	● MN State standards where it does not conflict with doctrine ● NWEA Map scores ● Master curriculum documents ● Observations show evidence of best practices and high standards ● CPH curriculum is used, information is available on the website to show how the curriculum is aligned with the LCMS ● Music program ● Spanish program ● Art and other "specials"	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	• The curriculum is aligned with LCMS teachings. • The curriculum ensures that students can pursue their God-given talents and passions. • The curriculum is used as an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel.			
5:05 Teachers use a wide variety of instructional strategies that engage students and ensure mastery of learning expectations.	• Teachers implement classroom instructional strategies that provide students with the knowledge, creativity, skills and understanding to become problem solvers, decision makers and socially responsible global citizens. • Classroom instruction involves a variety of strategies and settings that address diverse student needs and accommodate individual learning styles as fully as possible. • Evidence of active student	• Observations and interviews • Project based learning is evident, service learning • Professional development of the teachers • Overflow Hours is a service learning program guided by the teachers and led by the students • Students are involved in choosing the theme for the school year • Maker space • Science fair • Students take educational trips to FL and Washington DC i	4	4

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	engagement exists in every classroom. ● Service learning is a component of the school's required program.			
5:06 Teachers intentionally communicate and collaborate to improve instruction and student learning.	● Teachers regularly participate in staff development activities designed to provide professional growth, improve instruction and enhance student learning. ● Teachers pursue opportunities to interact with colleagues seeking ways to improve. ● Teachers work together to share responsibility for student learning. ● Teachers regularly share content, resources, instructional techniques and management skills. ● School leaders empower teachers with time and resources that facilitate opportunities for communication and collaboration.	● Collaboration in departments and team teaching ● Professional development ● Regular meetings with teams and departments ● Interviews ● Principal allows for time for professional development and provides it for the teachers ● Teachers able to observe other schools ● Teachers collaborate with the resource lead	4	4

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
5:07 Technology enhances and enriches the students' learning environment.	● Faculty members are users, instructors and participants in the process of engaging technology with the learning process in schools. ● Faculty members acquire the necessary technology skills to use personally and integrate and guide student learning. ● Clear and intentional planning and protocols for technology are in place. ● Technology is integral to curriculum, instruction, assessment and a tool for teachers to personalize, enhance and improve instruction. ● Student technology skills are sharpened and advanced through the integration of technology into the learning process.	● Observations and interviews ● One teacher has done Tech21 and that teacher has guided the staff ● Every classroom has a smartboard ● One-to-one chromebooks ● Technology curriculum map ● Recent upgrade for internet access ● Parent and student handbook ● Chromebook teacher training	4	4
5:08 Curriculum, instruction and assessment are regularly monitored and adjusted systematically in response to	● The school monitors, reviews, evaluates and modifies its	● NWEA Map testing ● Observation and interviews	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
multiple assessments of student learning and examination of professional practice.	curriculum based on the use of school-wide student data that is generated by multiple tools and surveys. ● Multiple forms of student assessment drive instructional strategies. ● Student learning is monitored, tracked, recorded and reported regularly and continuously during the time the student is enrolled at the school. ● A comprehensive program that examines student achievement with frequent progress monitoring is used to individualize instruction for student success.	● Classroom assessments		
Total			22	21
Standard Five Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 6, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3.67	3.5

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 5? 3.5

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

X

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?
Standards were met but not exceeded.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
Evidence shows that Rochester Central Lutheran School has a thorough technology curriculum, professional development opportunities, and teacher collaboration.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
There is a need to have a gifted and talented program and more developed services through the resource room to meet student needs.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
None

Standard 6: Student Services

Lutheran schools provide student services that support and enrich the educational experience of each student. Some of these services in this section are required by state or federal mandate. The school may choose to provide others to promote the training of the whole child. It is important that these programs are run efficiently and enhance the overall image of the school in its community.

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 6?

6:01*   Services offered by the school meet or exceed federal, state and local requirements.

☒
YES

☐
NO

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 6 prepared and in good order?

Standard 6 Required Evidence*: Enrollment / admission policy

☒
YES

☐
NO

Standard 6 Required Evidence*: Crisis emergency plan

☒
YES

☐
NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
6:02 Admission policies, guidance services, behavior-management programs and ancillary services provide a protective framework of necessary support for students to successfully complete the school program.	• Student applicants are admitted per established written admission criteria. • Permanent cumulative records for each student are maintained, stored and shared in compliance with state and federal law. • The school administers and practices written procedures for addressing students' emotional, social and psychological needs. • Procedures are established for evaluating students for promotion and/or graduation.	• Admissions policy in the Parent/Student Handbook and online. • Records are kept confidential, but are available as requested. • School works with the local school district to provide counseling services. • Teacher team meetings to address student needs. • RTI plan in place. • Master curriculum, the narrative indicates that quarterly report cards are provided. • The narrative indicates that the parents will be contacted with any concerns academically or social/emotional..	2	3
6:03 Extracurricular activities provide opportunities for students to further enhance God-given talents and abilities.	• The school provides a variety of extracurricular activities that meet the needs and interests of the students and reflect the purpose of the school. • Extracurricular activities are carefully supervised by trained personnel.	• Many extracurricular activities are offered to students that support the purpose of the school. • Volunteer Handbook and orientation. • Background checks are on file.	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	• Those who supervise extracurricular activities accept the purpose of the school. • Background checks are completed and on file for those who supervise extracurricular activities.			
6:04 The school enacts a wide variety of policies and procedures that ensure the safety of each student and allow the school to comply with national, state and local mandates.	• Immunization documentation, health tests and screenings conducted at the school conform with local and state laws. • First-aid supplies are available and readily accessible to authorized personnel. • Requirements for safety are conducted and recorded (i.e., fire, tornado, intruder and other drills). • Plans are developed and implemented for blood-borne pathogen, asbestos, CPR, first-aid training and the distribution of medication.	• The narrative indicates that the parents complete a health questionnaire on Black Baud. • Immunization records? • Observations note that first aid kits are in each classroom. • Emergency drill document in evidence. • AED located next to each main door (2 in total). • Teachers are trained in CPR and First Aid every two years. • Emergency binders and daily meds in the nurse's office. • Background checks on file. • Staff receive training videos regarding child abuse issues as noted in the narrative.	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	• Background checks are conducted for all who have contact with students on a regular basis. • Training for the recognition of child abuse and the protection of children is required for all who have contact with students on a regular basis. • The school ensures the safety and security of its students when online.	• The narrative indicates that "net" etiquette was taught during distance learning. • Mandated reporting is explained in the employee handbook.		
6:05 School food services meet or exceed national and state guidelines.	• Care is taken to ensure cleanliness where meals or snacks are consumed. • Where food service is provided, adequate and qualified personnel are available to plan and serve a variety of well-balanced, wholesome meals in full accordance with federal guidelines.	• Cleaning schedules are listed including sanitation. • Observation of a clean facility. • Licenses are current.	3	3
Total			11	12
Standard Six Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 4, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			2.75	3.0

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 6? 3

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

x

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?
Standards were met.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
The school offers a robust list of extracurricular activities.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
There is a need for additional student support staff.

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?

1. Minnesota law provides for nursing services for nonpublic schools from the public school district. This service has not been provided by the Rochester public school district and has placed a burden on the RCLS staff. The recommendation is to continue to work with the public school district to secure this right under Minnesota law. Consider using the power of collaboration with MINNDEPENDENT and/or the MNS District office education executive to assist in this effort.
2. The team encourages the consideration of retaining a counselor on staff.

Standard 7: Facilities

The Lutheran school's physical facilities include the buildings, land, equipment, maintenance of the property and provisions for health, safety and sanitation. The school is both a place and instrument for learning. As a place for learning, the facilities help children grow spiritually, physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. As an instrument used in the learning process, the facilities demonstrate principles of beauty, harmony, order and utility. Its furnishings and décor are reflective of the Christian mission and purpose of the school.

Does the school comply with the Required Indicators for Standard 7?

7:01*   Facilities are well-maintained and free from hazards, providing a safe and productive learning environment.

X
YES

NO

7:02*   Facilities fully conform to all applicable laws, including health, safety and building codes.

X
YES

NO

Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 7 prepared and in good order?

Standard 7 Required Evidence*: School floor plan

X
YES

NO

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
7:03 Buildings, grounds and equipment are well maintained, clean and appropriate for the age and number of students.	● The size and design of the buildings and teaching/ learning areas are appropriate for the school's programs and achievement of learner outcomes (objectives), meet state and local code requirements and provide for special needs. ● All teaching/ learning areas are properly ventilated, lighted and have adequate space for the number and size of the students. ● The buildings are cleaned daily and the restrooms are sanitary. ● School furniture is sufficient in quantity and age appropriate. ● The school administrator(s) participates in the supervision of those who maintain the physical facilities. ● Adequate provisions exist for offices, area for students needing care, recreation,	● Whole building is ADA accessible ● Safety data sheets are available, fire department inspection reports are available, food service licenses are available, etc. ● New air conditioning units have recently been installed ● Custodial and cleaning staff have job descriptions and checklists (for both wings of the building) ● Job description for facilities manager ● Facilities manager meets with principal daily ● Technology is used in each classroom, one teacher has been trained by Tech21 ● Adequate internet service throughout the building ● Observations show that furniture is sufficient, building is clean and orderly, and space is available for all learning needs	4	4

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	library/media center and space for small-group instruction. ● The school facility supports and provides for the integration of technology and learning.			
7:04 Physical facilities provide specific (crosses, signs, etc.) and non-specific (attractive, adequate, etc.) Christian witness to the community.	● The Christian flag flies alongside the American flag at the same entrance. ● Christian banners, pictures and posters are displayed in the hallway, entryway, gymnasium and classrooms. ● A cross is hung in a prominent place. ● An outdoor sign is a witness to the community.	● Christian flag and American flag hang by entrance ● Christian banners, posters, and pictures in hallways and classrooms ● There is a sign on the side of the building ● Crosses are seen in several areas	4	3
7:05 The building and grounds provide a safe school environment.	● Policies and procedures are in place to maintain a safe school environment. ● The playground and athletic field have fences or other restraints to prevent students from entering streets or adjoining property and to prevent vehicular	● Doors have security locks and are monitored during and after the school day ● Observations showed that drop off and pick up procedures are well organized and safe ● Student "safety patrol" assists students and	3	3

General Indicator of Success	Operational Benchmarks	Sources of Evidence	Self-Study Rating	Team Rating
	traffic during school hours. ● The school limits access to the facility, has locked entrances and is secure during normal school hours. ● Crossing guards, lanes and school speed zones are provided where needed. ● A safe, carefully supervised procedure for loading and unloading students in cars, buses and other vehicles is in effect.	families in the parking lot ● Some playgrounds are enclosed and the others have clear boundaries ● Parent handbook shows procedures		
Total			11	10
Standard Seven Overall Rating **(Total ÷ 3, Rounded to the Nearest Tenth)**			3.67	3.33

What is the overall Validation Team rating for Standard 7? <INSERT NUMERICAL VALUE HERE>

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

X

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?
Standards were met but not exceeded.

What strengths have been validated by the team in this area?
The building is very secure.

What concerns have been validated by the team in this area?
None

What recommendations does the team make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its Self-Study process?
None

Review of the School Action Plan

As a school conducts its Self-Study process, it identifies areas needing improvement. These items are usually rated as **2 (Emerging)** showing that the condition is recognized as important by the school but is inconsistently or irregularly applied. It is not supported with sufficient practices, evidence or documentation and there is room for improvement in this area. A rating of **1 (Not Evident)** means there is observable conflict or deficiency with the condition at the school or that the school does not enact this condition.

Items that have been identified as **2 (Emerging)** or **1 (Not Evident)** require planned improvement actions. Over the course of the school's accreditation cycle, the items must be targeted (with a completion date), assigned, evaluated and completed. The School Action Plan is the organization's roadmap, guiding the improvement process during the school's accreditation cycle.

Certain items will be rated as **3 (Operational)**, and while the condition is in place and functionally supported and practiced, it may not always be fully enacted or easily evidenced in every aspect of the school program. The school functions acceptably in this area and the school is not required to develop ways to improve in this area.

In a narrative, please address the following aspects of the school action plan:

The Validation Team believes Rochester Central Lutheran School's Action plan is attainable and well thought out. There were no items within Self-Study Report that were not identified in the School Action Plan, but the Validation Team did add additional items that were not identified in the Self-Study Report. There were two items as follows:
- **3A:07 - Strategic plan based on a needs-based analysis by an external agency.**
- **3B:03 - Restructure leadership whereby RCLS administration includes a principal with lines of authority over academics of the school and an executive director role charged with developing the school, working primarily with the Board of Directors, and with lines of authority over the Principal and office staff.**

Potential Powerful Practices

Validation Team visits assure that a school provides quality, Christian education and is committed to ongoing improvement. Occasionally a team observes a school that exceeds quality expectations and exhibits unique, replicable best practices. If such a practice is observed, a Validation Team may nominate a school for a potential **Powerful Practice**.

Practices associated with General Indicators of Success that are rated as "highly functional" (4) by the school have the potential for identification as a **Powerful Practice** when the practice is transformational and replicable.

NLSA seeks to identify and share unique practices that set a school apart and make it a highly respected educational institution in its community. Powerful Practices are carefully researched, collaboratively established and dynamically affect student learning and/or ministry opportunities in a Lutheran school. These are the practices that have the potential for replication in other Lutheran schools.

A school's Powerful Practice is much more than an expectation that quantifies Standard compliance. It innovates and exceeds accreditation expectations. It is a calculated risk that results in significant reward for students. Therefore, it is a desirable condition that has ramifications for schools throughout the LCMS.

The following potential Powerful Practices were identified by the Validation Team:

There is a culture of professional development and teacher collaboration at Rochester Central Lutheran School. The teachers clearly apply what they learn through professional development within their classrooms and they work together to enhance student learning. The teachers regularly meet with each other, plan activities and learning opportunities, and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching. Best practices are in place, especially in the area of technology, which is mapped, integrated, and supported in each classroom. Teachers are a part of professional organizations, participate in district and national conferences, and look for different opportunities for learning.

NOTE: Please be as detailed as possible when including potential Powerful Practices to enable NLSA reviewers and the NLSA National Office to determine the exceptionality of submissions.

NOTE: If no potential Powerful Practices were identified, please remove this page from the final Validation Team Report prior to submission to the school.

PRELIMINARY SCHOOL ACTION PLAN

A preliminary School Action Plan is developed as the concluding process of the school's Self-Study. The plan must address every area of concern ("emerging" [2] and "not evident" [1]). Each concern must be noted and addressed. "Operational" [3] indicators may also be addressed in the preliminary School Action Plan. The preliminary School Action Plan must be attached to the Self-Study document.

NLSA Preliminary School Action Plan										
School Name: Rochester Central Lutheran School										
School Address: 2619 9th Avenue NW, Rochester MN 55901										
LCMS District: Minnesota South										
Administrator: Suzanne Lagerwaard (Interim)										
Date of Most Recent NLSA Validation Team Visit: (Previous visit: 2017) March 7th - 9th, 2022										
Accreditation Year	X	Preliminary		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	Year 4	Year 5

Standard & Indicator Number	Self-Study Concerns & Strategies	Target School Year	Responsible Party	Action Taken	School Year Addressed
1:06	Orientation for technology components will be scheduled the week of August 15 of each school year as part of the new staff mentoring program.	2022-2023	Technology Director		
1:06	Standard sign off form between mentor and mentee will be completed monthly to show accountability for meeting the monthly objectives.	2022-2023	Administrator Mentor Mentee		

2A: 03	We would like to see more information made available in the Pawprint in regards to classes, Bible studies, and other functions that are happening within the Association congregations. More information provided to association congregations about the events and activities happening at RCLS.	2022	Administration and Office Staff and Association Churches		
2A:03	Continue striving towards calling trained LCMS teachers and providing education/support to understand the practices and beliefs of the LCMS.for non-called teachers.	2022	Administration and Board of Directors		
2A: 03	RCLS and the Association congregations need to develop and follow a deliberate plan of ministering to families who are seeking a church and having faith based questions.	2023	RCLS and Association Congregations		
2B: 04	Continued efforts should be made to provide opportunities for parent education and parents to be involved in the activities at RCLS.	2022	Administration and Teachers		
3A:07	Strategic plan based on a needs-based analysis by an external agency.				

3B:03	Given the increase in enrollment at RCLS in the past 5 years, demands on administrative/office staff have increased. Currently, school administrator and administrative staff regularly serve as school nurse, lunch and recess monitor, counselor, and as other needs arise in school. Areas of administrative need include enrollment support, development, human resources, and event management.	2023	Head Administration and BOD		
3B:03	Restructure leadership whereby RCLS administration includes a principal with lines of authority over academics of the school and an executive director role charged with developing the school, working primarily with the Board of Directors, and with lines of authority over the Principal and office staff.				
3B:05	Committee notes leadership plans for and manages the budget appropriately, but note the need for increased transparency regarding an annual budget. This	2023	Head Administrator and BOD		

	could be accomplished via the Annual Meeting.				
3A:04	Committee notes Board of directors hold monthly meetings and posts minutes, but a concern arises around whether all staff anticipate these monthly meetings (date/time) and then know where to locate minutes following the meeting. Provide staff with clear knowledge of meetings and where minutes can be accessed.	2022	Board of Directors		
4:05	Increase the number of classroom paraprofessionals working at RCLS contingent upon student needs.	2023-2024	Administration		
5:04	An ad-hoc task force will evaluate the current Resource Program and make recommendations for increasing this program to serve students on both ends of the learning continuum.	2022-23 (Research) 2023-24 (Begin Implement ation)	Administration, Faculty, and Parents		
5:08	Individualized Student Learning - RCLS will use NWEA data to develop individual student	2022-2023	Administration, Faculty, and Parents		

	goals to jumpstart student motivation and success			
6:02	Research and develop an assessment for new students who transfer from other schools as well as an assessment when entering kindergarten.	2022-2023	Administration and BOD	
6:04	Provide monthly checks of our first aid kit to ensure adequate supplies are available in classrooms at all times. A part-time nurse would help support the needs of our growing student population.	2022-2023	Teachers, Administration, BOD	
7:01	Although much of the property already has fences or natural barriers, a few additions are needed.	2023-2024	Administration and Trustees	
7:03	Refreshing the mulch in the playground areas.	2022-2023	Administration and Trustees	