



## TEAM VISIT REPORT FOR:

Grace Lutheran School

Fargo, North Dakota

April 28-30, 2014

Team Members:

Muriel Stark, Captain

William Sharpe, Consultant

Kathy Jones, Lutheran School Principal

Peggy Pulst, Public School Teacher

Rev. Chris Waldvogel, Pastor of Association School



## FOREWORD

Becoming accredited is a strenuous task. The school and its administration are to be highly commended for their efforts in this accreditation process. The self-study document, School Improvement Plan and the various arrangements for the accreditation team were done exceptionally well. It is the hope and prayer of the members of the visiting team that the enclosed document is one that is accurate and helpful for the continued improvement of Grace Lutheran School.

The committee hereby expresses sincere gratitude to the faculty, staff and students at Grace Lutheran School for the opportunity to serve on the visiting team and for the many acts of kindness shown to us during our visit. Each of us on the committee has grown as a result of the experience.

Grace Lutheran School is a good school. This was reflected in your self-study but also by the observations made by the members of the visiting team. We were delighted with Grace Lutheran. The school speaks out for the Christian faith to the students and to the community very effectively.

Our report is carefully written and includes specific recommendations which should be considered seriously by the school and its congregation. Not every recommendation needs to be followed but each should be given serious consideration.

The members of the visiting team were given responsibilities for writing portions of the team's report. This report is the effort of the entire team combines the talents of every team member. The report contains the findings and recommendations of the team has been written and edited by the team as a whole. Wherever possible, specific, practical recommendations have been made to help remedy the concerns expressed.

Team members pledge their continued support and assistance should you care to call upon us in the implementation process.

May the Lord richly bless the faculty and constituents of your school so that through the power of the Holy Spirit they might continue to proclaim His Gospel ever more effectively to the students they serve and to their families.

## **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 be considered a privileged document, to be submitted by the captain of the visiting team directly to the administration of the school. The distribution of the report and its availability for public consideration beyond that point rests solely in the hands of the school administration.

Neither the captain nor the other members of the visiting 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 visiting team has been to examine the educational setting of the school, including courses of study, learning materials, student needs and interest, staffing and facilities. The visiting team has attempted to assess the effectiveness of the total school program in meeting the educational objectives the school has established for itself and in meeting national NLSA standards.

It is not been the purpose of the visiting team to evaluate individual teacher performance. The use of this report as an official assessment of any staff person's professional competency would be a violation of the process and the intent under which the school evaluation was conducted. Such use would be inherently since at no time during the team visit has the team been concerned with the evaluation of individual teacher performance.

The members of the evaluation team have utilized their best professional judgment in drawing the conclusions reported in the document. Team members are not to be held accountable for any injudicious or unauthorized use of this document.

## Visiting Team Member Biographical Information

### **Muriel Stark - Captain**

**Current Position:** Teacher – Zion Lutheran School, 300 Lake Street, Alexandria, MN 56308;  
Phone: 320-763-4842 extension 14

**Education:** Concordia College – St. Paul, MN – B.A. Degree Major: Education; Double Minor:  
Math, History

**Home Address:** 25132 250<sup>th</sup> Avenue - Glenwood, MN 56334

**Cell Phone:** 612-940-3359

**Areas Examined:** Purpose

### **Previous Experience on Accreditation Team:**

Faculty Member at Schools Going Through Accreditation

Principal at a School Going Through Accreditation

Team Member on 6 Visiting Teams

Consultant for 6 Teams Going Through Accreditation

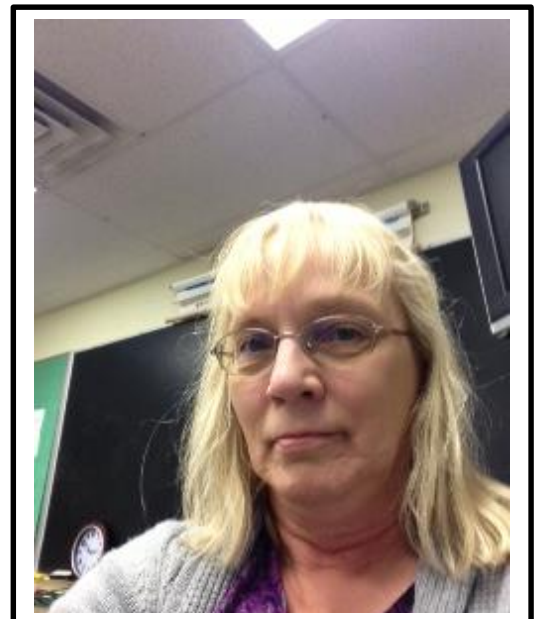
School Coordinator for Zion – Alexandria, MN 2013-2014

Captain – Corcoran (2013); Willmar (2014); Fargo (2014)

Consultant and Captain Training

MN North District NLSA Commissioner

**E-mail:** [mstark@zionalex.org](mailto:mstark@zionalex.org)



**William Sharpe - Consultant**

**Current Position:** District Executive – ND LCMS – 2601 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue SW - P. O Box 9029 - Fargo, ND 58106-9029 Phone: 701-293-9001 Fax: 701-293-9022

**Education:** Concordia Seward – Biology, Administration; Florida Atlantic University – Administration and Supervision

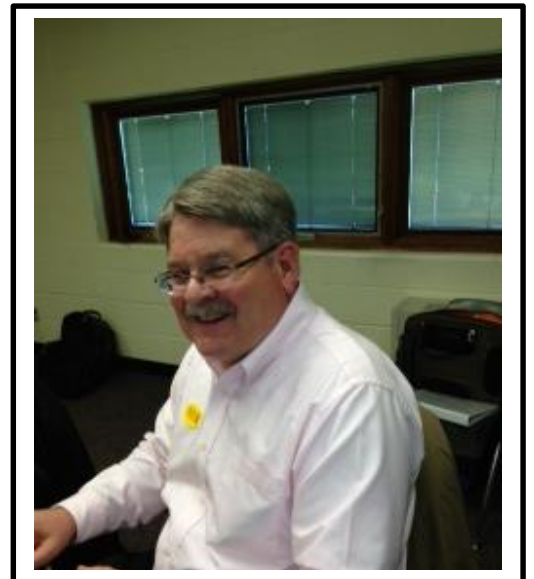
**Home Address:** 2201 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue South Fargo, ND 58103

**Cell Phone:** 701-3610-0867

**Areas Examined:** Relationships, Student Services

**Previous Experience on Accreditation Team:** Member, Consultant, Captain

**E-mail:** [nddadsum@aol.com](mailto:nddadsum@aol.com)



**Kathryn Jones**

**Current Position:** Principal - Martin Lutheran School - 413 East Avenue D - Bismarck, ND 58501  
Phone: 701-224-9070 Fax: 701-250-9487

**Education:** Master of Education: Curriculum & Instruction, University of MN; B.A.: Elementary Education, St. Paul, MN

**Home Address:** 1834 East Capitol Avenue #129 Bismarck, ND 58501

**Cell Phone:** 651-246-7113

**Areas Examined:** Leadership, Student Services

**Previous Experience on Accreditation Team:**

Visiting Team Member – 3 times (Corcoran-2008; Cologne-2006; Edina – 1998)

Consultant – 1 Time (Trinity Lone Oak 1996-1997)

Consultant Training

**E-mail:** [jones@lutherschools.org](mailto:jones@lutherschools.org)



**Peggy Pulst**

**Current Position:** ELL Language Arts Teacher - Davies High School, 7150 25<sup>th</sup> Street South, Fargo, ND 58103; Phone: 701-446-5600

**Education:** BSEd – University of North Dakota (1986); Master of Education – University of North Dakota (2010)

**Home Address:** 1342 10<sup>th</sup> Street South Fargo, ND 58103

**Cell Phone:** 701-541-0488

**Areas Examined:** Teaching and Learning, Facilities

**Previous Experience on Accreditation Team:** None

**E-mail:** [pulstsp@fargo.k12.nd.us](mailto:pulstsp@fargo.k12.nd.us)



**Rev. Christopher Waldvogel**

**Current Position:** Pastor – Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, 2601 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue SW, Fargo, ND 58103; Phone: 701-293-1047

**Education:** Bachelor of Journalism (BJ) – University of Missouri-Columbia (1994); Master of Divinity (M.Div.) – Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (2008).

**Home Address:** 1316 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue South Fargo, ND 58103

**Cell Phone:** 701-893-6995

**Areas Examined:** Professional Personnel, Facilities

**Previous Experience on Accreditation Team:** None

**E-mail:** [pastorchris@bslcfargo.org](mailto:pastorchris@bslcfargo.org)





## **Report Summary**

### **Overall School Performance Level: 2.96**

#### **The Visiting Team's Overall Impression of the School:**

Grace Lutheran School is tucked a block off of two main thoroughfares in Fargo, North Dakota. The cities of Fargo, West Fargo and Moorhead, Minnesota, comprise a metropolitan area of more than 200,000 people. The area is often rated highly in a variety of media "as a good place to live." This high quality of life rating usually includes a caveat concerning harsh winter weather. The area is diverse with nearly 20,000 university and college students in residence. Two universities and a liberal arts college offer a wide range of athletic and cultural opportunities.

Grace Lutheran School was founded in 1908 by Grace Lutheran Church and operated until 1916. It reopened in 1948. It operates today in a one-story brick building, which was dedicated in 1952. A gymnasium and additional classrooms were added in 1977. This year there are 125 students spread out from prekindergarten through eighth grade. The students are served by a faculty of 14. The facility is used from 7:15 a.m. till 6:15 p.m. Monday through Friday. After hours, numerous local sports teams and clubs use the gymnasium.

The NLSA visiting team was warmly welcomed by the staff and faculty. The flow of activities through the day appeared well-organized. The students and staff interacted with obvious Christian care and respect. Parents were in and out of the building conversing with faculty during drop off and pick up times. We witnessed (or heard) a wide range of learning activities in the building that included sports, band, and a room to room math survey conducted by the fourth graders. It was a good visit.

#### **Outstanding Strengths:**

- 1. The staff and faculty are very dedicated.**
- 2. The staff and faculty relate to students and family and each other in an exemplary manner.**
- 3. A marketing director has been hired to promote the school.**
- 4. The facility is made available to community groups for use.**
- 5. The school is supported either through monetary support and verbal promotion by the association congregations.**
- 6. This school is a place where God's message is central.**
- 7. The summer program (Camp Grace) is a good recruitment tool.**

**Deficiencies (\*\*Starred items are Major):**

**1:6 - A regular evaluation of the school's purpose, vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes, and student activities is not documented.**

**\*\*2A:07 – An intentional evangelism plan needs to be written down and followed so that unchurched members can be connected with an association church.**

**3A:08 – There is no evidence of governing body members being required to participate in professional development regarding roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members.**

**\*\*3A:12 – Although the principal was evaluated this spring, this has not been done on a yearly basis.**

**3A:13 - There is no written policy delineating the relationship between the administrator and the association pastor.**

**3A:20 – Currently there is no annual financial audit being done.**

**3B:24 – The administrator does not hold nor is she currently working on a master's degree in education.**

**4:10 – No evidence was found for training of volunteers.**

**\*\*4:19 – Salary is nondiscriminatory, but it is very low. Increased benefit costs are burdensome for the employees who have a family plan and may impact staff retention.**

**6A:04 – There is no written procedure for handling students' emotional, social, and psychological needs.**

**\*\*6C:13 – Volunteers (including parents that work directly with students) do not have a background check.**

**6D:15 – There is no cold storage for food and drinks brought from home.**

**General Concerns:**

**2A:04 – Students do not regularly participate in congregational life through planned activities coordinated between the association churches and the school.**

**2B:12 – Parents are not made aware of parenting workshops.**

**3A:15 – A school-wide needs assessment is not performed.**

**3B:46 – An audit of the auxiliary groups has not been done.**

**4:03 - Only 4 of 11 full-time staff are synodically trained.**

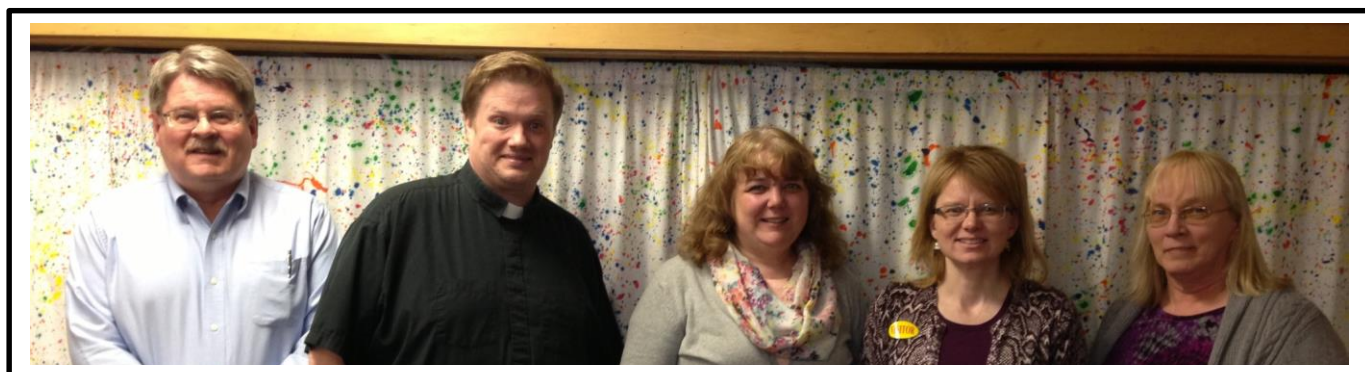
**7:11 – There is currently no isolated space for sick children waiting to be picked up, little room for the library, and not very much office space.**

**7:16 – Outside doors were unlocked after school hours while we were here. Access to custodian’s closet, downstairs, and science closet was accessible to students and present potential hazards to students.**

## Accreditation Recommendation:

**We, the members of the visitation team,  
recommend granting accreditation for:  
Grace Lutheran School in Fargo, North Dakota.**

Signature of the Team Captain

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Stark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

## **Team Findings**

The Findings section presents the visitation team's evaluation of the NLSA Standards and Indicators. It also identifies Strengths, Concerns and related Recommendations that were identified by the visitation team through review of the schools prepared documentation and observations and interview 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 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 complication 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 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.

## Standard 1: Purpose

*The schools purpose/philosophy/mission statement serves as the basis for forming goals, learner outcomes and actions plans, as well as determining a direction for all activities for the school.*

*Throughout the self-study process, every phase of the school program is evaluated in order to determine if they are being carried out in accordance with the schools stated purpose.*

1) Does the school comply with Required Indicators for Standard 1? **YES**

1.1 The school's written purpose statement is rooted in Holy Scripture, agrees with the Lutheran Confessions and reflects sound educational and psychological principles.

1.2 School leadership and staff members understand and accept the purpose of the school.

2) Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 1 prepared and in good order? **YES**

The written purpose/philosophy/mission statement.

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
1.3	The school's purpose is engaged, aligned and enacted with its vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes and student activities.	*The school's vision is still a work in progress and it needs to be disseminated and included in school promotional materials.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
1.4	The school purpose was developed in accordance with governance policy.	*School board minutes.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
1.5	The school's purpose is communicated effectively to staff, students, and stakeholders.	*Stated in the family handbook  *Stated in the faculty handbook  *Stated on promotional materials  *Television Commercial	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
1.6	The school regularly evaluates and reviews the alignment of purpose, vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes and student activities.	*Although the school states that this is being done - evidence does not support this	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
1.7	The school's purpose is displayed and reflected in the teaching/learning environment in classrooms.	*All classrooms have Bible verses posted	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
1.8	New employees are informed about the school's purpose and its appropriate engagement.	*Interviews by faculty and staff stated that new employees were informed at orientation by the principal  *Information is also found in the Faculty Handbook	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

What is the overall rating for this standard area? **2.83**

Based on your findings what are the strengths of the school in this area?

1. **Grace Lutheran School has a purpose that is clearly defined. It states that one comes to know Jesus as their loving and forgiving Savior; that one is able to respond to Christ's love by living a Christian life; that one will develop their talents and use them to the glory of God; that one will be a responsible citizen; and that one will be instilled with a love for knowledge.**
  
2. **The purpose was developed by the School Board as they reviewed the philosophy, mission, and vision of the school.**
  
3. **The purpose is clearly stated in the Family handbook and all promotional materials.**

Based on your findings what concerns have you identified?

**There is no evidence of an evangelism program for unchurched students.**

Do the concerns you have identified agree with the concerns that were listed in the school's self-study process? **YES**

What recommendations would you make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its self-study process? **The school should have accurate written records of annual evaluations of the purpose, vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes, and student activities.**

## Standard 2: Relationships

*Standard 2 is divided into three categories: school and congregation, school and community and climate. Establishing and maintain healthy, positive relationships within all three areas contributes to the overall effectiveness of the school's ability to accomplish its purpose.*

*Some Lutheran schools operate outside of a highly developed relationship with a single congregation or group of congregations. In that case, the school and congregation section may be omitted.*

1) Does the school comply with Required Indicators for Standard 2? **YES**

2A:01 The school is operated by one or more congregations of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod or maintains an active RSO status with the Synod.

2B:08 A statement of nondiscrimination is evident in school printed material and assures that students are admitted without regard to race, color or national origin.

2C:18 The climate of the school flows from and supports the school's purpose.

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

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
2A:02	The pastor is acknowledged as the spiritual leader of the school.	*Interview with Rev. Waldvogel	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
2A:03	The congregation provides spiritual support for the school and its students.	*Association congregations' websites, newsletters & bulletins	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
2A:04	Students participate in congregational life through planned activities available regularly and coordinated with school events.	*The choir and praise band systemically visit RRLSA to participate in worship	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
2A:05	Called person employed by the school are actively involved in worship and congregational life in their parish.	*Staff described many congregational responsibilities during interviews	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2A:06	The pastor and staff evidence support for each other and each other's ministry.	*During interviews staff described personal situations where they received spiritual support  *Faculty Handbook	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>



General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
2A:07	The school and church have a plan and work together on behalf of families with children in the school who do not have an identified church home or attend church regularly.	*The need for an intentional plan has been acknowledged but has not been developed.	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
2B:09	An effective public relations program communicates information about the school to its constituents and to all segments of the community where it is located.	*Print copies of brochures & ads  *Video on website and to be used in TV ads  *Yard signs	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
2B:10	The school engages community resources and volunteers to facilitate student's growth.	*Parent and faculty handbooks	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
2B:11	The school has an active parent-teacher organization and/or other parent groups.	*Parent & faculty handbooks  *Newsletters	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2B:12	Parent education programs are available through the school	*Parent & faculty handbooks  *Newsletters	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
2B:13	The school encourages staff members to participate in community activities and service organizations.	*Faculty handbook	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2B:14	The school seeks ways to involve its students and teachers in service to the community.	*Parent and faculty handbooks  *Press releases	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2B:15	The school facilities are available, when practical, for use by appropriate community groups.	*School board handbook  *Personal observations	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
2B:16	The school maintains good relations with local public schools.	*Interview with Mrs. Syverson	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:18	The school Christian climate is on display and evident to visitors.	*Posters, Bible verses, pictures throughout the classrooms	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:19	Teachers and administrators respect and support one another as individual, fellow members of the body of Christ.	*Clearly expressed by faculty and staff  *Faculty Handbook	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
2C:20	A developmentally appropriate teaching environment is evident throughout the school.	*In-service training *Faculty handbook *Interviews	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:21	Where desirable and practical, faculty members, parents, legal caregivers and students participate in making school decisions.	*Interviews	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
2C:22	Students demonstrate love for others in response to Christ's love for them.	*Faculty and parent handbooks *Posters throughout the building	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:23	Student behavior is appropriate to encourage growth and to maintain the school's chosen teaching/learning environment.	*Family & faculty handbooks *Interviews *Observing students during the school day	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:24	Student's spiritual needs are given appropriate support by church and school.	*Family handbook *Newsletters	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:25	The legal rights of parents, legal caregivers, teachers and students are protected.	*School board, family and faculty handbooks *Printed materials	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:26	Students worship together daily either in each classroom or in a school-wide appropriate worship experience with other students.	*School board, family & faculty handbooks *Visiting team participated daily devotions in several classroom	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:27	Through the school's discipline code, students are assisted to grow in self-control out of love for Christ.	*School board, family and faculty handbooks *Faculty interviews	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
2C:28	Faculty members and administrators demonstrate support of one another in tangible ways.	*Daily devotions and prayers  *Faculty interviews *Regular Bible study with association pastors	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:29	Students and staff demonstrate a positive and appropriate school spirit.	*Parent surveys  *Student surveys  *Faculty interviews	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:30	Staff members understand and related appropriately with students and their families.	*In-service training  *Family and faculty handbooks	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
2C:31	Parent and family members of prospective, former and current students, whether members or non-members, are made to feel welcome at the school.	*Special events and announcements	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

What is the overall rating for this standard area? **2.82**

Based on your findings what are the strengths of the school in this area?

- 1. Grace has gathered a variety of resources (human, financial and material) in order to renew its efforts at building relationships with the association members and the community at large.**
- 2. The staff and faculty feel that they are spiritually supported.**

Based on your findings what concerns have you identified?

- 1. There is a school-wide discipline plan. However, in order to better achieve a family environment in the school, each staff and faculty member should be encouraged to discipline all students even though that child is not in their class. Staff and faculty should get to know children in other rooms so that this task becomes easier.**
- 2. Time and money are being used to implement a new marketing plan. Measurable outcomes should be adopted in order to measure “success.”**

- 3. More intentionality is needed to identify unchurched school families and refer them to an association pastor for follow up.**

Do the concerns you have identified agree with the concerns that were listed in the school's self-study process? **No**

What recommendations would you make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its self-study process?

- 1. Develop a systematic process for gathering constituent input on the life of the school. This could be done through a variety of methods: computer survey, focus groups, and individual interviews. Acknowledge that we are doing things well; but, can always improve.**

### Standard 3: Governance

*Leadership of the school is a major factor in the successful development implementation and evaluation of the school. Leadership is provided through a variety of groups and people. The two primary leadership components are the governing board and appointed administrator(s). Schools may function effectively without a school board. In that case, Section 3A: Governance, would not apply.*

1) Does the school comply with Required Indicators for Standard 3? **YES**

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.

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

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

3B:21 The administrator demonstrates a personal Christian faith, a commitment to Lutheran education and a dedication to the teaching ministry of the governing authority.

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

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
3A:04	The governing authority provides for grievance and due-process resolution procedures.	*This is supported through the adopted Grievance Policy.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3A:05	The governing authority meets regularly and has clearly defined policies regarding open attendance at meetings and executive sessions.	*School calendar indicates monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of the month. Minutes of board meetings support this.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
3A:06	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	*Copies of board meeting minutes include voting results on policies and policy updates.  *Administrator indicates that all board members receive monthly minutes.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3A:07	Governing authority policies are collected into a policy manual, separate from the minutes.	*Policies are gathered into the board policy manual and distributed to all board members.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
3A:08	Governing body members are required to participate in professional development regarding roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members.	*This is a stated goal but there is no evidence of implementation.	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
3A:09	The governing authority makes appropriate reports to the operating organization(s).	*As shared by the administrator quarterly board updates are distributed at the association congregations' voters meetings.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3A:10	Comprehensive job responsibilities and/or limitations are in place for the administrator.	*Administrator's job description lists responsibilities and limitations.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3A:11	The governing authority receives reports from the administrator at each meeting.	*Board Meeting agendas include a report from the administrator.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3A:12	The governing authority evaluates the head administrator annually based on job description.	*This policy has not been followed every year.  *The administrator was evaluated in March 2014.	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
3A:13	The governing authority has written policies or position descriptions clearly delineating relationships between the head administrator and pastor(s)	*The administrator's job description delineates this relationship but no written policies address the relationship between the administrator and association pastors.	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
3A:14	The governing authority establishes policies that provide for sound budget planning and fiscal operations.	*Accountant interview detailed her role in budget preparation and reporting to the board.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3A:15	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 outcome are developed from this planning process.	*Administrator indicated school needs are evaluated in some areas such as technology or staffing. A school-wide needs assessment is not performed.	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
3A:16	The governing authority has established process policies that set forth the style and rules by which the governing authority will complete its tasks and processes. (Note: in Policy Based Governance.)	*Policy manual includes process policies or procedures to be followed to complete a task.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
3A:17	Neither the governing authority nor its individual members involve themselves in the day-to-day operations management of the organization.	*Administrator interview indicates she is solely responsible for day-to-day management of the school.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3A:18	The governing authority monitors itself for adherence to policies.	*Administrator noted that board members refer to the policy manual during board discussion as a means for monitoring adherence to those policies.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3A:19	The governing board approves the budget (including annual tuition and fees) for the school or has developed policies to empower individuals with that responsibility.	*The administrator and accountant stated that they work with the finance committee in developing the budget.  *Administrator and accountant are empowered to spend within the approved school budget.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3A:20	The governing board accepts, reviews and devises strategies to react to concerns expressed in the annual financial audit.	*It is a stated goal to strive for annual financial audits. At that time this standard can be developed.	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
3B:22	The school administrator is on the LCMS roster or is actively working toward a colloquy.	*As stated by the administrator she earned her colloquy in 2003.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3B:23	The administrator holds current, appropriate state certification or is actively working toward obtaining required certification.	*A current North Dakota state teaching license is on file in the school office.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3B:24	The administrator has a master's degree in education, with no less 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 less than 18 semester hours in early childhood education, or is actively working toward accomplishing this requirement.)	*The administrator does not hold, nor is currently working toward, a master's degree in education.	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
3B:25	The administrator participates in conferences and conventions which are required by the Synod Handbook and in other appropriate conferences	<p>*The administrator works with other ND LCMS schools in planning/hosting a fall Lutheran Educators Conference.</p> <p>*The administrator attends other conferences and conventions as time and money allow.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:26	The administrator demonstrates leadership through involvement with professional organization and regular reading of educational blogs and periodicals.	*Administrator is a member of LEA and NAESP.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:27	The administrator is active in the whole educational ministry of the operating congregation.	*The new vision plan calls for providing additional opportunities to build stronger relationships with the seven RRSA congregations.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:28	Adequate time is provided for administrative duties. The school administrator is released from teaching duties for at least 1/4 of each day for every 50 students enrolled. (If administrative duties are shared, then released time should be shared.)	*According to class schedules and interview with administrator, she works full-time on principal duties.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3B:29	The administrator works together with the local public schools at every opportunity.	<p>*According to administrator interview, the relationship with the public schools is good.</p> <p>*Monthly meetings with area principals are attend by the administrator.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:30	Adequate secretarial help is available. A secretary is available for school purposes for at least 1/4 of each school day for every 50 students enrolled.	*Grace has a full-time office secretary.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3B:31	Levels of responsibility and accountability are clearly defined for all support staff (secretarial, maintenance, cafeteria, transportation, etc.).	*Approved job descriptions include responsibilities and accountability.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>



General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
3B:32	The administrator consults regularly with pastor(s) and teachers individually and collectively.	<p>*Teacher interviews indicate that the administrator is very approachable. Teachers feel comfortable coming to her with concerns.</p> <p>*Interview with marketing director indicates that it is her responsibility to do some of the communication with assoc. congregations.</p>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:33	The administrator engages in an ongoing program of professional staff supervision for the improvement of instruction. Performance evaluation visits with every teacher are conducted at least annually. The results of these visits are discussed with the teacher and then reported in summary to the board.	*Teachers shared that the administrator makes several informal visits in the classroom throughout the year as well as one formal visit. The formal visit includes a post-observation discussion with the classroom teacher, and is shared with the board.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:34	Accurate, current files are kept for each staff member (professional and support) and students.	*Personnel files and student cumulative files were observed in the school office.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3B:35	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.	*All of these areas are addressed in the administrator's job description.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:36	Levels of responsibility and accountability are clearly defined for all professional and volunteer staff persons.	<p>*Job descriptions for professional staff have been developed and were available in documentation.</p> <p>*Job descriptions for volunteers were not observed.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:37	Responsibility and limitations for the development and administration of the school's budget and finances are clearly defined.	*As documented in job descriptions for the administrator and the accountant.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
3B:38	The administrator provides spiritual leadership for the school community and in the congregation(s) through word and example.	*Teacher interviews spoke highly of the administrator’s spiritual leadership.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:39	The administrator relates appropriately with students of all ages.	*Teacher interviews indicate that the administrator has a good rapport with the students and is an effective disciplinarian.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
3B:40	The administrator relates appropriately with families.	*Parent surveys indicate that all parents agree or strongly agree that the administrator is approachable and receptive to parent questions and concerns.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:41	The administrator provides leadership for implementation of current educational technology—including necessary staff development and training.	*Teacher interviews indicate that a technology committee has been formed and is making decisions re: technology needs.  *Documentation shows training provided for STAR testing program.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:42	The administrator provides leadership in securing funds and resources which may include individual, private, corporate and/or governmental sources.	*Interview with administrator indicated that they were successful in securing two different grants for their physical fitness program.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:43	The administrator compiles such policies, procedures or practices as appropriate for effective communication to the various school communities into student and/or parent handbooks/manuals	*A copy of the Family Handbook contains policies for parents and students.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:44	The school administrator is responsible for developing and recommending a budget and managing the budget (expenditures).	*Both the accountant and administrator spoke of working closely in developing, recommending, and managing the school budget.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
3B:45	The budget is managed responsibly, using appropriate bookkeeping procedures and safeguards.	*The school accountant has the responsibility of managing the bookkeeping.  * Appropriate safeguards and procedures are in place.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
3B:46	Funds provided by auxiliary organizations are allocated according to governing board policy and in consultation with the school administrator and regularly audited.	<p>*The administrator indicated that the PTL reports to the board regarding allocation of their funds.</p> <p>*The auxiliary organizations have not been regularly audited.</p>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

What is the overall rating for this standard area? **2.95**

Based on your findings what are the strengths of the school in this area?

**The governing board meets regularly and produces clear documentation of those meetings as seen in the monthly minutes. The list of board actions for the year indicates an active board. Policies have been adopted and are followed by board and administration.**

Based on your findings what concerns have you identified?

- 1. Some policies need and/or still need to be developed (such as attendance at meetings and executive sessions; administrator and pastor relationship position statement).**
- 2. School board member orientation and training should be developed.**
- 3. The administrator is not evaluated on a regular basis.**
- 4. Long-range goals have not been developed in response to a school-wide needs assessment.**
- 5. A financial audit is not being done.**

Do the concerns you have identified agree with the concerns that were listed in the school's self-study process? **YES**

What recommendations would you make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its self-study process? **NA**

## Standard 4: Professional Personnel

A dedicated professional and support staff is essential for a quality accredited Lutheran school. Qualified and competent staff members should align their activities with the stated purpose and work together to create a safe and productive learning environment for students.

1) Does the school comply with Required Indicators for Standard 4? **YES**

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

2) Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 4 prepared and in good order? **YES**

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
4:02	Teachers demonstrate a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a dedication to teaching in the Lutheran school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Classroom devotions and decorations</li> <li>* Faculty devotions</li> <li>* Recurring theme in interviews</li> <li>* Student surveys</li> <li>* Parent surveys</li> <li>* Teacher involvement in various churches</li> </ul>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
4:03	Full-time faculty members are on or eligible to be on the roster of Synod.	* Only four of 11 full-time faculty fit this indicator.	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
4:04	Professional staff members have appropriate teaching certificate(s) from the state and meet requirements for their specific assignments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* On file in office in binder</li> <li>* In personnel portfolios</li> </ul>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
4:05	Teachers have been prepared and vetted following prescribed federal and state mandates for background checks and training.	* On file in office	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
4:06	Teachers hold a baccalaureate degree.	* On file in office	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
4:07	<p>The average student/professional personnel ratio is appropriate for the age and level of the students and ensures optimal student growth.</p> <p>The number of staff people is adequate to provide effective instruction and supervision for students at all school activities.</p>	* Classroom observation	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
4:08	Support staff (e.g. teacher assistants, student teachers, nurse) meets state standards for their specific assignments.	<p>*Background checks done</p> <p>*Appropriate specialized requirements done and on file.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
4:09	Appropriate policies related to support staff are established and practiced.	* Staff handbook	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
4:10	Appropriate policies and training for volunteers are in place	* No evidence found	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
4:11	Adequate training for support staff is provided.	* Interviews indicate this indicator is being met.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
4:12	If specialists (e.g., counseling, guidance, special education, physical or occupational therapy, reading, speech) are needed by students in the school, the school provides them or makes referrals to specialist as appropriate.	* Interviews and records indicate Learning Disabled and counseling referrals	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
4:13	Academic transcripts, copies of state teaching certificates, background checks and other necessary or required information about all professional personnel are kept on file in the office.	<p>* Transcripts for recent hires on file.</p> <p>* All other records kept in office</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
4:14	New teachers receive thorough and precise orientation and induction and are supported with experienced, assigned teaching mentors.	* Interviews indicate this is being followed – sometimes with mentors, other times with entire staff	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
4:15	Programs for teacher supervision/evaluation/growth have been adopted and are implemented by the administrator.	* Interviews from all educators indicate strong evaluation and ongoing support.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

General Indicators		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
4:16	Teachers attend workshops, conferences, seminars and training appropriate to their position and discipline. LCMS rostered teachers are provided opportunity to attend LCMS events.	<p>* Interviews indicate this is being done</p> <p>* Scholarships mentioned as well as other programs from LCMS offered to faculty through announcements</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
4:17	Teachers hold membership in professional organizations.	* Personnel files indicate this is being met in LEA (more outside memberships would be appropriate)	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
4:18	A program of staff development is provided wherein professional personnel have opportunities and support for professional and spiritual growth.	<p>* Faculty devotions, support groups noted as excellent</p> <p>* Interviews and documentation training schedule indicate this indicator is being met.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
4:19	A nondiscriminatory salary and benefit scale has been adopted and implemented for all personnel.	* Salary and benefit scale is nondiscriminatory but low. There are concerns among faculty.	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
4:20	Teachers who are in a shared ministry arrangement are given appropriate time and compensation for these responsibilities.	<p>* One faculty member shares time between the school and Dakota Boys Ranch with totally independent relationship.</p> <p>*Better corroboration and communication between entities is encouraged.</p>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
4:21	The school provides opportunity, training and support so that teachers may effectively and appropriately engage technology in classroom instruction.	* Interviews and documentation indicate STAR/AR training as well as available other courses as needed.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
4:22	Staff members understand and relate appropriately with students.	<p>* Interviews with students indicate agreement.</p> <p>* Student surveys very positive.</p> <p>* Classroom observation indicates agreement</p>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	School Performance Level Rating
4:23	Staff members understand and relate appropriately with families.	* Family legacies  * Interviews with families indicate agreement  * Parent surveys	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

What is the overall rating for this standard area? **3.09**

Based on your findings what are the strengths of the school in this area?

- \* The teachers and school do an excellent job of incorporating faith into the daily life of students at the school.**
- \* Evaluation and improvement process are done in a way that builds up and demonstrates care**
- \* Classroom size (10:1) provides ample opportunities for personalized care.**

Based on your findings what concerns have you identified?

- \* Salaries are nondiscriminatory, but low. Compensation is low even in comparison to our sister elementary school in North Dakota. Several faculty members mentioned the difficulty in living on current compensation.**
- \* Coming off of this concern, Grace has a low ratio of full-time Synodically trained full-time teachers.**
- \* Interviews indicate great communal support and mentoring, but the school may benefit from one-on-one mentoring and accountability.**
- \* Policies, training and expectations must be better developed for volunteers, subs, etc.**

**\*Appropriate staff to student ratios for before and after school should be maintained.  
Review and adopt standards for this program.**

Do the concerns you have identified agree with the concerns that were listed in the school's self-study process? **NO**

What recommendations would you make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its self-study process?

**Standards need to be reviewed and adopted for before and after school care.**



## Standard 5: Teaching and Learning

Student learning requires the integration of 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.

1) Does the school comply with Required Indicators for Standard 5? **YES**

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.

5:02 The written curriculum has been developed and is being implemented for every subject area taught at the school.

2) Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 5 prepared and in good order? **YES**

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
5.03	The school community builds and maintains a vision, direction, and focus for student learning.	<p>* Mission statement is re-evaluated each year.</p> <p>* Faculty and principal use monthly faculty meeting as well as grade-level meetings to maintain the direction, purpose, and focus on student learning.</p> <p>* Annual scripture verse/theme provide additional focus for student learning activities.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
5.04	The curriculum meets or exceeds state expectations.	<p>* Curriculum is regularly evaluated and updated according to a rotating schedule.</p> <p>* Minimum number of minutes per subject often exceeds minimum state requirements.</p> <p>* Teacher interviews indicated some level of frustration with age of curriculum.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
5.05	Curriculum is used as an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel.	* Teachers integrate the gospel into subject areas as per lesson plans, long-range plans, observations, and teacher interviews.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
5.06	Curriculum offerings provide challenging learning experiences and ensure that all students have sufficient opportunities to develop life skills, critical thinking skills, and applied learning.	*Evidence includes lesson plans and use of teacher manual differentiation ideas.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
5.07	Curriculum, instruction and assessment are regularly monitored and systemically adjusted in response to ongoing assessments of student learning.	*Principal does both informal and formal observations and meets with teachers to provide feedback and recommendations for improving instruction.  *Staff does not intentionally make specific plans to adjust instruction or curriculum according to standardized, STAR, and AR assessments.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
5.08	Teachers work together to share responsibility for student learning.	*Evidence includes daily morning devotions/meeting (observed), monthly faculty meetings (documentation), monthly grade-level meetings, and pre- and post- school year planning meetings (documentation and interviews).	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
5.09	Service learning is a key component of the school's required program.	*Evidence includes designated chapel offerings, bulletin boards, special fundraising, and documentation of students going into the community to volunteer.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
5.10	Teachers engage students in their learning using a variety of instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	*Teachers were observed using a variety of strategies.  *Lesson plans indicated the use of various instructional strategies.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
5:11	Technology is integral to curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and helps teachers to individualize, enhance and improve instruction.	*Evidence from interviews with teachers.  *Smart boards in all 1 <sup>st</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade classrooms.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
5:12	Technology skills are sharpened and advanced through integration into the learning process.	*Documentation includes lesson plans and classroom schedules.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
5:13	Teachers regularly participate in staff development activities designed to provide professional growth opportunity, improve instruction and student learning.	<p>*Teacher interviews indicated participation in STAR/AR training, CPR and First Aid.</p> <p>*Individual teacher classes for past 3 years documented.</p> <p>*Annual teachers' conference with Martin Luther faculty in Bismarck.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
5:14	Teachers use a variety of strategies and settings that identify and accommodate individual learning styles and engage students having divergent abilities.	<p>*Lesson plans show numerous strategies to accommodate learning styles.</p> <p>*Enrichment programs or attempts to engage advanced students are not evident.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
5:15	Multiple forms of student assessment drive instructional strategies.	*Curriculum assessments, NDSA, Accelerated Reader, STAR, scripture memory, annual Geography/Science/Art Fair, class plays, and public speaking are the types of assessments utilized.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
5:16	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices used by teachers to ensure student success.	*Interviews with principal and teachers indicate observations and feedback are used to improve instructional practices.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
5:17	Student learning is monitored, tracked, recorded, and reported from the time they enroll until the time they leave.	<p>*Comprehensive cumulative files in the office are evidence.</p> <p>*Student work samples/ portfolios are not consistently kept/maintained.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
5:18	The school evaluates what a student should know, be able to do, and believe.	*Teachers in the process of aligning curriculum to common core standards.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
5:19	The school has in place a comprehensive program that tracks student success at the next level compared to their current course of study.	<p>*High school student successes (e.g. honor roll, National Honor Society, academic scholarships) are documented and published.</p> <p>*It's not evident that the tracking is comprehensive.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

What is the overall rating for this standard area? **3.47**

Based on your findings what are the strengths of the school in this area?

**Teachers proclaim the Gospel in curriculum, discipline issues, and role modeling. Faculty and staff members have ample opportunities to participate in on- and off-site professional development and feel encouraged by the principal to engage in opportunities. Classes and expenses are either paid for or reimbursed at 50-100%.**

Based on your findings what concerns have you identified?

**Faculty analysis and use of test score data to adjust instruction, in particular to meet the needs of partially proficient and advanced students, is not evident.**

Do the concerns you have identified agree with the concerns that were listed in the school's self-study process? **YES**

What recommendations would you make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its self-study process?

- 1. Interpret and use data from ongoing assessments to intentionally adjust curriculum and instruction for students performing below proficiency or above proficiency (i.e. advanced) levels.**
- 2. Teach age-appropriate students (e.g. grades 5-8) to lead parent-teacher conferences in an effort to increase student accountability.**
- 3. Use graduate follow-up surveys to inform instruction and learning.**

## Standard 6: Student Services

Accredited Lutheran schools support students and their families with a wide variety of services that enrich the education experience of students. Section 6: Student Services is divided into four categories: Guidance and Counseling, Extracurricular Activities, Health and Safety, Food Services.

1) Does the school comply with Required Indicators for Standard 6? **YES**

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

2) Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 6 prepared and in good order? **YES**

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
6A:02	Student applicants are admitted according to established written admission criteria	*Printed admission packet *Family handbook	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6A:03	Permanent cumulative records for each student are maintained, stored, and shared as appropriate in adherence with state and federal law.	*Inspected file cabinets	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6A:04	The school has written procedures for handling students' emotional, social and psychological needs.	*During the interview Mrs. Syverson reported that several referrals are made each year for special services. No written procedures exist	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
6A:05	The school has established procedures for evaluating students for promotion and/or graduation.	*Faculty and family handbooks	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6B:06	The school provides a variety of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities which meet the needs and interests of the students and reflect the purpose of the school.	*Faculty and family handbooks *Printed brochures *Website *Interviews of staff	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6B:07	Extracurricular activities are carefully supervised by appropriately trained personnel.	*Faculty and family handbooks	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
6B:08	All those who supervise activities have undertaken background checks and know and accept the purpose of the school.	*Faculty and family handbooks	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6B:09	Immunization documentation, health tests and screenings conducted at the school conform completely with local and state laws.	*Family handbook	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6C:10	First aid supplies are available and readily accessible to authorized personnel	*First Aid kit and AED were observed by gym entrance.  *Classrooms are equipped with first aid kits.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6C:11	Requirements for safety are met which include: fire, tornado, intruder, and other drills which are conducted and recorded.	*Records reviewed  *Procedures posted in each room  *In-service training	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6C:12	Plans have been developed and are implemented for blood-borne pathogens, asbestos, CPR training, first aid training and the distribution of medication	*Teachers interviewed about procedures  *Teachers verified that they have blood-borne pathogen kits.  *Blood-borne pathogens, CPR and First- Aid and Distribution of Medicine training was held on 8-15-13.  *There is no asbestos in the building.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6C:13	Volunteers who work with students on a regular basis have had background checks and completed child-abuse training and neglect screening.	*A background check was performed and filed on one regular volunteer.  *Volunteers for field trips or classroom activities are not background checked.	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
6C:14	The school ensures the safety and security of its students when online.	<p>*Teacher interview indicated a technology agreement is in place.</p> <p>*GLS has some internet filtering that blocks inappropriate sites.</p>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
6D:15	Provisions are made for appropriate storage of food and drinks brought from home.	<p>*Administrator indicated there are no plans to provide storage of lunches brought from home.</p> <p>*Students must use insulated lunch boxes with cold packs.</p>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
6D:16	Care is taken to ensure cleanliness where meals or snacks are eaten.	<p>*A daily Kitchen Cleaning &amp; Sanitizing Schedule was posted.</p> <p>*Kitchen workers were observed following the schedule.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
6D:17	If a 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 local, state and federal regulations	<p>*Kitchen worker interview revealed a depth of experience cooking for schools.</p> <p>*Head cook indicated she will be participating in 3-day training session Summer 2014.</p> <p>*It was observed that Grace offers a salad bar on a daily basis.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

What is the overall rating for this standard area? **2.63**

Based on your findings what are the strengths of the school in this area?

- 1. Grace is well prepared and equipped to deal with emergencies should they arise.**
- 2. Grace is located in a large community that has a cacophony of services available for students.**
- 3. Grace has a three-person administrative staff which helps in meeting or exceeding record keeping requirements.**

Based on your findings what concerns have you identified?

- 1. A review of other schools' procedures is needed for identifying and referring students with special needs: whether they be social, emotional, or psychological.**

Do the concerns you have identified agree with the concerns that were listed in the school's self-study process? **NO**

What recommendations would you make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its self-study process?

- 1. In the admission policy a "school visit/tour with the principal is recommended, however, this is not required." A required preadmission school visit/tour would be a positive step towards acclimation of a new student and their family to Grace.**



## Standard 7: Facilities

*The Lutheran school's physical facilities include the building, land, equipment, maintenance of the property, and provisions for health, safety, and sanitation. The school is both a place for learning and an instrument of learning. As a place for learning, it should help children grow spiritually, physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, and aesthetically. As an instrument used in the learning process, it should demonstrate principles of beauty, harmony, order, and utility. Its decor should point people to the God they love and serve.*

1) Does the school comply with Required Indicators for Standard 7? **YES**

7:01 Facilities are well maintained, free from hazards, and provide for a safe and productive learning environment.

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

2) Are required evidentiary pieces for Standard 7 prepared and in good order? **YES**

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
7:03	Buildings, grounds, and equipment are well maintained, attractive and appropriate for the age and number of students.	*Facilities are adequate, but exhibit minor wear.  *Interviews indicated leaky and drafty windows.  *Interviews indicated lack of immediate repair due to part-time custodial staff and budget constraints.  *Some custodial demands are placed on faculty and staff due to lack of a school hours custodian.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
7:04	The playground/athletic field has fences or other restraints to prevent students from going onto streets or adjoining property and to prevent vehicular traffic during school hours.	*Playground and field are adequate in space but may need future safety upgrades.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
7:05	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.	*Teachers indicated in interviews that facilities are adequate for programs.  *Student surveys indicate improvements could be made.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
7:06	The buildings are cleaned daily and the washrooms are sanitary.	*Observable privacy and cleanliness concerns, especially in boys' restroom.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
7:07	School furniture is appropriate to the physical requirements of the students, adequate for the demands of the program, and sufficient in quantity and age appropriate.	*Classroom visits show this indicator is being met.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
7:08	The school administrator(s) participates in the supervision of those who maintain the physical facilities.	*Supervision is primarily observing the results of the maintenance, but not usually at the time of the work.  *Board member projects are supervised and discussed monthly.	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
7:09	Physical facilities give specific (crosses, signs, etc.) and non-specific (attractive, adequate, etc.) Christian witness to the community.	*All classrooms, hallways, offices, and gym space exhibit scripture verses, crosses, artwork, and other Christian signs.  *A large cross is on the building near the main entrance as well as on the school sign.	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
7:10	All teaching/learning areas are properly ventilated and lighted and have adequate space for the number and size of the students.	*Building does not have an air exchange system.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
7:11	Adequate and appropriate space is provided for offices, health rooms, recreation, a library/media center, and small group instruction.	<p>*Interviews indicate that sick children do not have an appropriate space. They are limited to the school office or the classroom.</p> <p>*Main office space is inadequate. Privacy issues exist with access to principal.</p> <p>*Library/media center space is inadequate.</p>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
7:12	The school limits public access to the facilities to provide a safe environment for students.	<p>*All doors are locked and secure during the school day.</p> <p>*During after care hours, the north door and the main door are not always secure.</p> <p>*Faculty handbook indicates procedures for school lockup, external threats, and internal threats.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
7:13	The school environment supports and enables the integration of technology and learning.	<p>*Classrooms for grades 3-8 have a Smartboard.</p> <p>*Students in grades 6-8 have school-issued laptops on a 1:1 ratio. All other students have limited laptop access.</p> <p>*Teacher interviews indicate that not all computers are up-to-date and not all are dependable.</p>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

General Indicator		Sources of Evidence	School Performance Level Rating	Team Performance Level Rating
7:14	Crossing guards, lanes, and school speed zones are provided where needed.	*Teachers are assigned after-school door duty to supervise students until all have been picked up or have signed into after care.  *One-way street along with signs for unloading and loading are in place.	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
7:15	A safe, carefully supervised procedure for loading and unloading students in cars, buses, and other vehicles is in effect.	*One way street is available for student drop-off and pick-up  *After school pick-up is supervised daily; morning drop-off is not	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
7:16	The school has locked entrances and is a secure facility during normal school hours.	*External access is limited. Doors are locked and secure. Visitors must be buzzed in with video surveillance.  *Access to custodians' closet, hallway, and basement is accessible to students and presents a potential hazard. Both of these doors were unlocked during the day.	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

What is the overall rating for this standard area? **2.93**

Based on your findings what are the strengths of the school in this area?

**Physical facilities exhibit exemplary Christian witness to the external community as well as the school community through artwork, scripture verses, crosses, posters, and banners. A 1:1 laptop ratio in grades 6-8 exceeds the norm for area middle schools. Smartboards are present in all classrooms for grades 1-8.**

Based on your findings what concerns have you identified?

- 1. The need for cleaner restrooms, especially the boys' restroom**
- 2. The janitor closet, science closets, and hallway to the basement must remain locked throughout the day**

### **3. Identify dirty areas that would benefit from more frequent cleaning**

Do the concerns you have identified agree with the concerns that were listed in the school's self-study process?

**We have three additional concerns, as listed above.**

What recommendations would you make for concerns that were not addressed by the school in its self-study process?

**We recommend that the school considers alternative uses for the auction room (e.g. library or classroom).**

## Review of the School Action Plan:

As a school conducts its self-study process it identified areas needing improvement. These items are usually rated as **(2) Emerging** – 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. There is room for improvement in this area. Or **(1) Not Evident** – There is observable conflict or deficiency with the condition at the school. The school does not enact this condition.

Items that have been identified as emerging or 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. A 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** – 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. The school may but is not required to develop ways to improve in this area.

### Grace Lutheran School – Fargo, ND – Action Plan 2014

Section and Standard Number	Self-Study Concerns and Strategies	Target Year	Year Addressed	Responsible Party
2A:07	Work with the pastors of the RRLSA to establish a procedure of disseminating family names so they can be invited to worship, VBS, and/or Sunday school.	2014-15		Principal and Pastors
2B:12	Explore opportunities such as webinars, parenting books, and workshops. Distribute through email, newsletter, and the school website. Enlist the help of our Parent-teacher League to coordinate/offer parenting workshops.	2014-15		PTL, Principal & Board
3A:08	Schedule an annual school board training to help Board members understand duties and responsibilities of serving on the Board. (LEA Webinar, speaker, etc.)	2014		Board of Ed.

3A:12	Make a regular schedule of having the Board evaluate the principal, including staff and faculty input	2014		Board President
3A:20	Determine a schedule for an annual internal audit	2015		Board
6A:04	The school will compile a list of referral agencies to use when referring families to outside services, as well as a protocol to follow when student is referred for emotional, social, and psychological needs.	2014-15		Teachers & Principal

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

- What is the team’s evaluation of the realistic attainability of the plan (as a whole)?

**We believe that the Action Plan that Grace has set for itself should be attainable by the dates that they have set. These goals are listed above.**

- Were any items not addressed in the school action plan that were identified by the school in its self-study?

**The school did not address the following items:**

**2A:02 – The pastor(s) is acknowledged as the spiritual leader of the whole congregation, including the school.**

**2A:04 – Students participate in congregational life through planned activities available regularly and coordinated with the school.**

**3A:13 – The governing authority has written policies or position descriptions clearly delineating relationships between the head administrator and pastor(s).**

**4:03 – Full-time faculty members are on or eligible to be on the roster of Synod.**

**4:10 – Appropriate policies and training for volunteers are in place.**

**6D:15 – Provisions are made for appropriate storage of food and drinks brought from home.**

**7:11 – Adequate and appropriate space is provided for offices, health rooms, recreation, a library/media center, and small-group instruction.**

Does the team wish to target additional action items not identified by the school in its self-study process?

**The two items that we particularly wish them to target are:**

- **4:19 – Salary is nondiscriminatory, but it is very low. Increased benefit costs are burdensome for the employees who have a family plan and may impact staff retention.**

**The principal stated that colleges are turning her down for calls because of their low salaries. Teachers had tears in their eyes as they explained how they did not know how they were going to be able to make ends meet anymore because the cost of their health benefits went up. This school has very good teachers --- they need to be able to continue to do the Lord's work.**

- **6C:13 – Volunteers (including parents that work directly with students) do not undergo background checks.**

**The following items were also given a "1" or a "2" by the team. We would also like the school to look at these items:**

- **3B:24 – The administrator does not hold nor is she currently working on a master's degree in education.**
- **3B:46 – An audit of the auxiliary groups has not been done.**
- **4:03 - Only 4 of 11 full-time staff are synodically trained.**
- **4:10 – No evidence was found for training of volunteers.**
- **6D:15 – There is no cold storage for food and drinks brought from home.**
- **7:11 – There is currently no isolated space for sick children waiting to be picked up**
- **7:16 – Outside doors were unlocked after school hours while we were here. Access to custodian's closet, downstairs, and science closet was accessible to students and present potential hazards to students.**