



About

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

How does NLSA allow for different levels of schools?

National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) has relevant and appropriate accreditation processes for all three levels: early childhood (free-standing or attached to an elementary school), elementary, and secondary. Notes of clarification and special helps for early childhood directors, elementary principals, and secondary administrators are available for schools that apply. The associated manuals assist administrators from all three levels to understand the fundamental differences in the processes that apply to their schools.



How does a school apply for NLSA?

1. The school administrator expresses initial interest to the District Accreditation Coordinator, Sue Domeier. Her email address is Sue.Domeier@nidlcms.org.
2. The school reviews the initial information at nlsa-lcms.org/school-resources.
3. The administrator completes the application form and submits it, along with the application fee (subject to change annually), to the District Accreditation Coordinator.
4. The District Education Executive signs the forms, and the District Accreditation Coordinator sends a copy to the NLSA office along with the school's application fee.

5. The school is now ready to begin work on its self-study process. The NLSA District Coordinator will assist the school with the process. The NLSA office must receive the application and fee at least nine months before the site visit occurs, and the team visit must occur within two years from the time of application to NLSA, or a second application must be filed and another fee paid.

Does NLSA have other accrediting partners?

NLSA has established co-accrediting partnerships with several well-respected secular regional accrediting agencies. Reciprocity allows a school to gain accreditation from two agencies using a simple process. The NLSA partner in the Northern Illinois District is *Cognia*. Contact Sue Domeier to obtain more information about the benefits of co-accreditation.

Can Lutheran early childhood centers be accredited?

The accreditation needs of LCMS early childhood centers can be accommodated by using a process specifically for early childhood centers. NLSA standards for early childhood centers are challenging, appropriate, and relevant.

Where are NLSA materials located?

Current news and information about National Lutheran School accreditation is located at nlsa-lcms.org/school-resources. Follow the NLSA link found there. This site is updated frequently with important information for schools accredited by NLSA.

What standards are addressed in NLSA?

NLSA Standards for Accredited Lutheran Elementary and High Schools:

1. The school is purpose driven.
2. The school demonstrates its purpose through relationships.
3. The school is governed and administered effectively following written policy.
4. A qualified and competent staff serves the school.
5. The school's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning.
6. Student services and activities are offered to meet the needs and foster the growth of each student in a safe and healthy environment.

7. Buildings, grounds, and equipment provide a safe and healthy environment that serves to enhance student learning.
8. The school has a financial plan to accomplish its mission. A Financial Review/Audit is a part of this process.
9. Staff members partner with parents to cooperatively work toward developing the full potential of each infant and toddler. (Not applicable for centers without infant/toddler programs).
10. The school uses data to guide continuous improvement.

NLSA Standards for Accredited Lutheran Early Childhood Centers:

1. The school is driven by its Christian Mission.
2. The school demonstrates its Christian mission through relationships with the congregation, community, staff, students, and families.
3. The school is governed and administered effectively according to written policy.
4. A qualified and competent Christian staff serves the center.
5. Staff members relate appropriately and effectively with all children.
6. The center maintains a safe environment that supports student learning.
7. The school implements a wellness plan based on best practices and ensures that children learn healthy habits.
8. The center has a written curriculum that integrates the faith, is developmentally appropriate, and is supported by

Who oversees NLSA?

The National Accreditation Commission

The National Accreditation Commission, comprised of representatives from various participating districts of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, serves NLSA. The process is owned and operated by the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod as a service of LCMS School Ministry.

For Further Information Contact:

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